

THE EDINBURGH

STAR

No.70
March 2013
Nisan 5773



THE MAGAZINE FOR THE EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY

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Did you know the Edinburgh Star costs on average £3000 to produce in its current form and send out to everyone?

We currently have only enough in our bank account for the current issue. If every person who received the Star in the post gave £20 now, this would fund two more issues of the Star, that is Rosh Hashanah 2013 and Pesach 2014.

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The Edinburgh Star

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Editorial	5
Pesach Message – Rabbi David Rose	5
Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation – Edward Green	6
The Shammash at 60 Gershon Mendick – Edward Green	7
A moving service – Tony Gilbert	7
Three Men In The Kitchen – Micheline Brannan	9
An Indian Pesach – Judy Gilbert	10
Jewish Community Centre Events	13
Where are they now? – Michael Adler	22
LIMMUD 2012	25
Adam Ognall – Micheline Brannan	25
Review of Sean Altman, 'Jewmongous' – Vivien Andersen	25
Hugo Rifkind I Journalist and broadcaster – Micheline Brannan	26
Vicki Prais – Micheline Brannan	27
Daniel Reisel – Micheline Brannan	28
Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society	33
David Neville – Avery Meiksin	33
Film Night: Aviva Ahuvati – Micheline Brannan	33
End of Chanukah Event – Micheline Brannan	34
Shirli Gilbert – Rabbi Rose	36
Strangers No More – Micheline Brannan	37
The Book of Judith – Norman Crane	37
Edinburgh Holocaust Memorial Day – Matt Iord	39
Holocaust Memorial Day Event at Queen Margaret University – Joe Goldblatt	39
Ingrid and Henry Wuga – Edward Green	40
Holocaust Memorial Day – Rabbi Rose	41
Letters to the Star	42
Keeping the Faith – Janet Mundy	43
EHC Purim Celebrations – Micheline Brannan	44
Sunday Morning Purim Fancy Dress Parade	45
Obituaries	46
Letters to the Star (continued)	49
Purim at Sukkat Shalom – Gillian Raab	50
Congratulations	51
Forthcoming Events	

Thank you

The Edinburgh Star would like to express its appreciation to all those who support the magazine with their continued subscriptions, and all those who make donations over and above this.

.....
If you'd like to become a patron, please contact Sidney Caplan (Treasurer) for further details.
.....

The Board would also like to thank Mr & Mrs Harold Mendelssohn for kindly defraying the cost of sending The Edinburgh Star overseas.

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We would like to ask our readers to support the people who have kindly agreed to advertise in The Edinburgh Star, in return for the support that they themselves give us.

Editorial

Since Rosh Hashanah, EHC has been enjoying services in a delightful warm small synagogue which always looks full. The development of the new Beit HaMidrash and the opening ceremony were covered in Star 69. ELJS has had an AGM and elected a new Chair. Both communities are doing as well as they can but the Star is concerned also to reach out to Jewish people living in Edinburgh who don't identify with either community. The forthcoming results for the 2011 census will tell us how many people living in our area identified as Jewish, so we will have some idea of how many are missing but not who they are. If every Star reader were to lend their copy to one Jewish friend who does not already receive the Star it might encourage that person to make contact and be included.

As further encouragement, we include for the first time a page of contacts to help readers to find the person they need to speak to about the Jewish services and activities available here.

About half the Star readership have Edinburgh connections but don't live here. Most of our young people have left Edinburgh and in this issue we are starting a new feature to celebrate their diverse achievements. In these days of Facebook, our young people are keeping in touch with each other from a distance. Former cheder and Maccabi friends are in contact, creating a virtual community of their own. It is a delightful outcome of this that Rowan Hendry-Horne was able to interview Karrie Fransman about her graphic novel, 'The House that Groaned' and this interview is published in the Star along with Rowan's review of the book. Meanwhile Anthony Gilbert has reviewed 'Alex's Adventures in Numberland' by former Edinburgh Jewish boy, Alexander Bellos. Separately, we have reported on Hugo Rifkind's contribution to Limmud 2012, another well-known scion of Edinburgh.

At our Editorial Board we could name about a dozen former cheder pupils who have done something interesting that the Star would like to publicise. That is just the ones who come readily to mind. So this feature will continue – and we would like to hear from you about any of our former young people who deserve to be written about in the Star, whether or not they still live here.



The Editorial Board has been thinking about themes for the next Star. Our discussion on the future of the Jewish Community in Edinburgh is still live and Lesley Danzig's letter continues that debate. Let's hear more on this subject. In addition, it has been a while since the Star featured creative writing. If anyone would like to submit their own poems or short stories (no more than 2000 words) they will be considered by the Editorial Board.

In addition we are making progress on setting up web pages for a Star Extra, so that any pieces for which we can't make room in the printed edition can be printed, and readers can exchange views. There will be more information about this in the next edition.

It remains for me to wish you all the best for Pesach, whether you are staying here and attending one of the communal Seders, or going abroad for the whole hotel / cruise ship Pesach experience, or just doing your own thing.

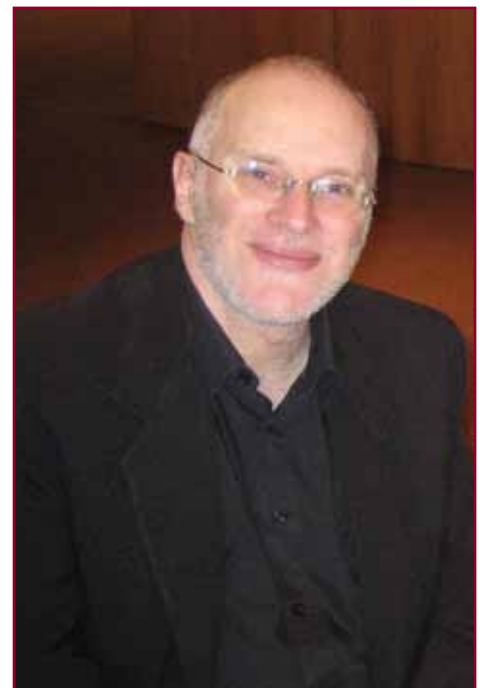
Micheline Brannan

Pesach Message

We sit down at the Seder and recall the Exodus from Egypt. We virtually do not mention the actors in the drama, except for G-d, whose actions and our acknowledgement of them, are at the centre of the evening. Yet the Exodus could not have happened without the actions and courage of human actors: the women of Israel who kept up the spirits of their exhausted menfolk, Miriam who gave hope to her despairing parents and saved her brother, the midwives and Pharaoh's daughter who defied Pharaoh's genocidal decree, Nachshon, who went first into the sea, and the leadership of Moses himself. All these people created the basis for the miracles that enabled the Exodus. Each had the courage to come forward and do what needed to be done. Freedom does

not come about by itself, even with Divine intervention, but needs people who are prepared to stand up and be counted. This is a good lesson to remember as we sit down at the Seder. Nothing of worth can be achieved without people being prepared to sacrifice for it. No organisation can go forward without people to lead it, no community can survive without people prepared to come forward and contribute to it. As we recount the story of the Exodus and internalise its lessons, let us also think what our role can be in the next chapter of the Edinburgh Jewish story.

A Happy and Kosher Pesach
Rabbi David Rose



Message from the Chairman of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

Edward Green



It has been over nine months now since I became Chairman of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation. It would be untruthful to say that some of that time has not been fraught, but overall it has been a period of enormous pleasure seeing how much is achieved within our Community to benefit so many.

I would like to preface my words by thanking our previous Chairman, Hilary Rifkind, for her diligence, energy and good humour throughout her extended term of office. She has worked tirelessly for the benefit of all, and to our great advantage continues to do so. So much of what is achieved within the community is done through her good efforts and we would have a very different community without her and Arnold who has remained as Convenor of Religious Affairs. Our thanks stay with them for their graciousness, hard work and enduring interest in all to do with the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation.

Sadly, the past few months have seen the loss of valued members who were visibly part of our community and are sorely missed. There is a subsequent decline in our membership and more importantly the loss of these members as regular shul attendees. We continue to struggle to attract new members and whilst our Cheder is well attended in ratio to our membership numbers, our numbers at services remain spasmodic. I have already spoken over the High Holydays for the need for increased 'marketing' of the EHC to attract those within Edinburgh who are not part of the community and I shall be looking to myself and the other members of the Board of Management to tackle this problem over the coming months.

But the true strength of our synagogue must come from the actions of each of us to one another. So much is done behind the scenes by an army of volunteers; events are put on, lunches cooked, the sick are visited, minyans fulfilled, and Lord Provosts entertained to name but a few. And let us not forget the true kindness that is so often shown by one member to another. It is truly humbling when one looks at the numbers that we are; I see that in this instance it is a strength and not a failing, as we have now become not so much a community but an extended family with such quantity of the good that that word contains.

Maryla and our son Freddie join me, together with my fellow Honorary Officers and Board of Management members, to wish all the readers of the Star a happy Pesach – Chag Kashar v'Sameach.

The Shammass at 60

Gershon Mendick

Edward Green

The Star and all its readers congratulate our very popular and likeable Shammass and Beadle, Gershon Mendick, who celebrated his milestone 60th birthday in October just past.

Born and bred in Edinburgh, the son of Chia Sarah and Max Mendick, Gersh, as he is affectionately known, is the first person one meets on entering our shul. He assumed the honorary position when Willy Caplan, who was so loved, died ten years ago. Gersh has ably filled his shoes, greeting our visitors and members alike, making them feel at home and guaranteeing they have all they need to be able to participate in the service. His engaging smile and warm sense of humour are always in evidence. Nothing fazes him and he always ensures that our visitors and members are comfortable and included.

Gersh is kind-hearted and generous and has always been a 'giver'. In addition to his Shammass duties, Gersh is a member of the Board of Management, an active life member and auditor to Lodge Solomon, the Recorder for the Edinburgh Burial Society, and a fully paid up member and sometime attender of the Luncheon Club. In the past, Gersh was a most valued member of the cast for any amateur dramatics that were put on by the Congregation, always performing with an enthusiastic 'joie de vivre'.

Whenever he is called upon to assist, if possible Gersh will always respond in the most positive of fashions, and all this in addition to his work as a tax accountant for the well known accountancy firm, PKF, here in Edinburgh.

Gersh enjoys travelling and in recent years has visited Portland, Oregon in the United States, Prague, and Riga to name just a few destinations. He has a brother, Copell, who lives between London and Israel, and seven half brothers and sisters, not all of whom survive.

Our continued thanks go to Gersh Mendick for undertaking the duties of Shammass with such dedication and in making our shul so much more welcoming.



Gershon assists Rabbi Rose to light Havdalah Candle at Chanukah Dinner

A moving service

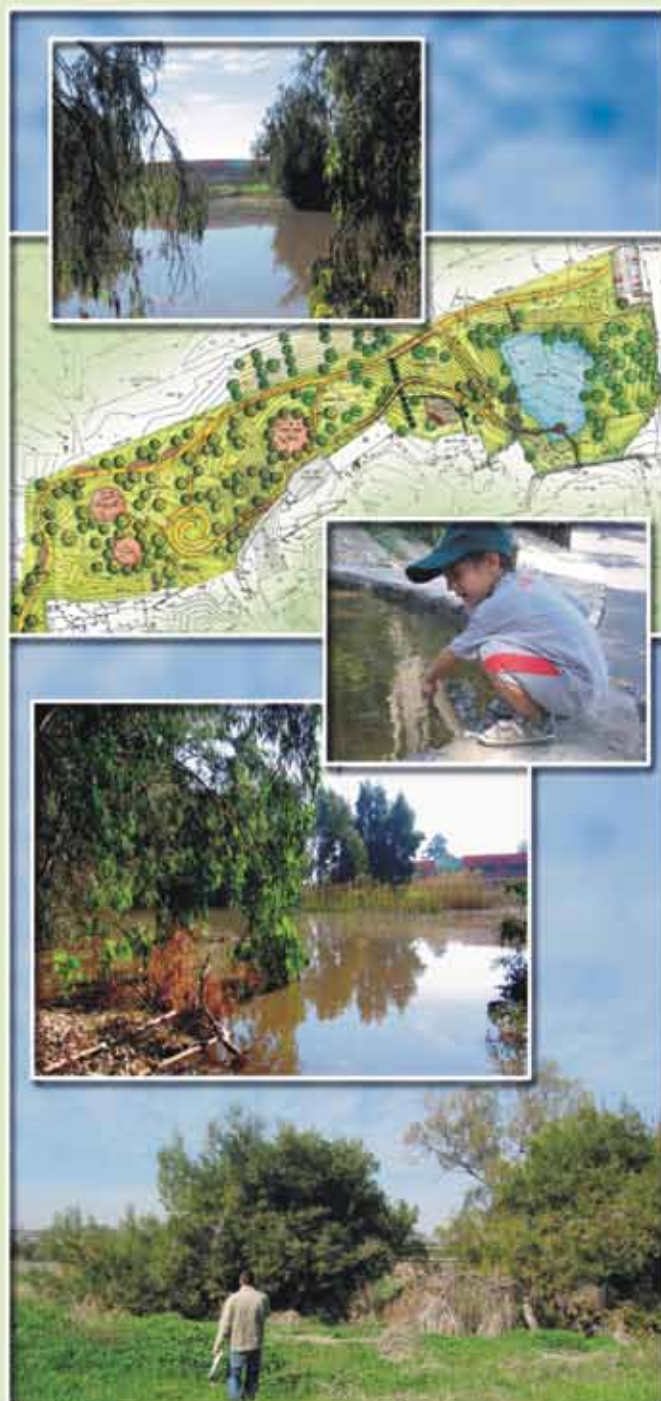
Tony Gilbert

Every Shabbat, Gershon and I gently spar over my (lack of) shul attendance. At kiddush, he will waltz over to me. 'Come to the Sunday service tomorrow at 9am', he gently coos. Now Gershon knows fine well that I find shul attendance one Shabbat a week a very elegant sufficiency, but he is never discouraged. My customary counter to Gershon's blandishments is to remind him that for me, Sunday mornings are reserved for knocking up some pleasurable miles on my bicycle; my justification for missing the Sunday service being that, in my estimation, I never commune better with my maker than when I am in Lothian's green and pleasant land astride my bike.

Last Shabbat, we went through the usual motions, but I thought I would make a novel counter-proposal: instead of coming to shul, why don't all those wishing to attend the service on Sunday accompany me and hold a service en velo? Gershon paused at this suggestion, but only for a moment... for he is a thoroughly modern man and never short of a crisp reply. 'Ah,' he mused, '... pray as you go.'



דג שמה



KKL JNF SCOTLAND are developing a park around a winter pool in Mercaz Shapira, a community and education centre in the Shafir Regional Council on Israel's southern coastal plain. The pool, which has an area of approximately one hectare (2.5 acres), fills in winter and dries in the summer, creating a unique ecosystem. The park will include an intensive section and a less developed extensive periphery, extending over approximately five hectares (12.5 acres). The project will include pool maintenance, footpaths, cycling trails, lawns, illuminations, picnic areas and playgrounds. Controlled access to the pool will enable educational and scientific activities while protecting flora and fauna. The site can be reached from the regional school and Mercaz Shapira. Educational projects will be developed in co-operation with the surrounding educational institutions and communities.

**JNF KKL Scotland is an independent Committee within the worldwide
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Three Men In The Kitchen

Giffnock Synagogue – Tuesday 6 November 2012

Micheline Brannan

Rumours began to circulate in October that our own Rabbi Rose was to be taking part in a group of three cooking clergymen and anyone interested was invited to contact the organisers. Full of enthusiasm, your editor joined a small band of supporters to cheer on our Rabbi.



Rabbi Rubin introduces Rabbi Rose

This event was part of the Glasgow Learning Programme, devised by Ruth Levey and Anne Hyman (sister of Carol Levstein) – a series of events designed to combine laughter and Torah learning. An audience of at least 80, mainly from the Glasgow Jewish Community, assembled at the Giffnock Synagogue Banqueting Suite, prepared for anything.

The 'three men in the kitchen' were Rabbi Rose of EHC, Rabbi Rubin of Giffnock Shul, and Revd Soudry of Newton Mearns. Despite a late arrival (two and a half hours on the M8) Rabbi Rose was soon appropriately dressed in chef's hat and long apron for his demonstration of his signature Friday night dish of chicken with pineapple. Rabbi Rubin, also in long apron but with kippah instead of hat, promised us a demonstration of potato kugel, while Revd Soudry remained formal in his suit and tie.

There was sceptical laughter from the Glasgow ladies as Rabbi Rose described that he could prepare a Shabbat meal in one and a half to two hours, and explained his timetable for doing so. This was the first chance for a bit of learning as he outlined the concept of Tosefot Shabbat which protects Shabbat by drawing the line where work must stop slightly earlier than sunset time demands – normally 15 minutes – to allow some flexibility for over-running the timetable. Rabbi Rose explained that he aims to finish preparations by 1400 in winter to give the dishes time to cook fully before Shabbat and to prepare himself as

well; so he normally starts on Thursday night by marinating the chicken in wine and herbs. He then demonstrated how to marinate the chicken, being very careful to wash the raw chicken pieces and also to wash his hands both before and after handling the chicken, to avoid risk of food poisoning.



Rabbi Rose makes a point

Not everything went according to plan as the chicken pieces turned out to be still somewhat frozen, and as Rabbi Rose went on with his demonstration, the audience became more reduced to fits of laughter, until finally he took the whole dish away to put into the oven.

Rabbi Rubin then took over, to perform a hilarious demonstration of how to make potato kugel under supervision of his ever-helpful Rebbezin, who stood ready on the sidelines with ingredients, utensils and quiet words of advice. The lesson that it is good for men to help their wives prepare for Shabbat was reinforced and Rabbi Rubin also provided some handouts about the importance of hot food on Shabbat, which might explain the origins of the kugel. Once the kugel was away to the oven, Revd Soudry explained his own dish, which he had prepared at home, called 'Purim Crunch' and consisting of toasted sesame seeds in syrup, set in a pan and then cut up to make a delicious sweet snack – inspired by learning from the Book of Daniel and a traditional way of breaking the Fast of Esther.

Kugel was available to taste from 'one we made earlier' and also the Purim Crunch, but sadly the chicken was not suitable for tasting on the night, as it was fleishik and the refreshments were milchik. We were informed that Revd Soudry was going to take it away and actually use it for Shabbat. We who have had it in Edinburgh, thanks to Rabbi Rose's kind hospitality, know that it will have been greatly enjoyed.



Supporters in audience, Raymond, Jackie and Lawrence Taylor

An Indian Pesach

Sinora Judah's memories of Pesach as celebrated by her family in Bombay

Judy Gilbert

Rich in mingling cultures and exciting exotic smells; that is the Bombay (now Mumbai) that Sinora Judah (née Nora David) and her family grew up in. 40,000 Jews lived there in the 40s but many emigrated to Israel and America. The numbers dwindled to half that by the 50s and by the time Sinora left for Britain with her husband in 1972, they had all but disappeared.



Sinora in her engagement Sari

Sinora painted a picture of the very Jewish neighbourhood that she grew up in with its tall luxurious apartment flats housing prosperous or professional people. Sinora and her family were members of the Magen Chasidim Shul which was just opposite the home that they lived in for most of the year. On her last visit she observed that a myriad of tiny huts now squatted on the pavement directly in front of the flats, leaving no space to walk except in the road. Sinora explained that those huts in this bustling city provided a vital and most sought after address for



David family with Sinora sitting right

a growing population of aspiring actors seeking 'Bollywood' stardom!

The David family spent holidays in their large country house surrounded by orchards, and flower and herb gardens. The gates at the front led straight out onto the sand and into the sea. Their rice fields were nearby and the combined produce from both these locations was plentiful enough to sustain a commercial business.

Coconut, betel nuts and nutmegs were grown. There were jackfruits, which could weigh up to 20lb; custard apples; paw paws as big as footballs; pineapples and red, yellow and green bananas all in abundance. There were chikoo (sapodilla trees to you and me), mango and orange trees and many more besides. Lemons were grown too; plucked from the trees and squeezed onto jaggery (the juice pressed from sugar cane) they made 'really tasty sherbet drinks'.

All fruit, vegetables and herbs had to be fresh in order to satisfy the culinary criteria for Passover in the David household, and it was their own produce that allowed them to fulfil this mitzvah.

Sinora said that looking for chometz would begin a month in advance with complete cleaning, floor scrubbing and the repainting of walls and doors.

I was interested to find out some of the Sephardic recipes of dishes which

her family ate for the coming festival of Pesach.

The one major difference between Sephardi and Ashkenazi practices during Pesach is the inclusion of rice in the meals. Rice has always been a staple food in Asia and without this very necessary ingredient, many very basic elements of their diet would be compromised.

Sinora comes from a family that never shirked from the more arduous tasks of preparing delicious dishes. The 'no pain no gain ideology' of preparing and creating anything for Pesach was taken to the 'nth' degree. Recipe components had to be independently grown, picked and crushed or grated before use. No running round to the local supermarket to pick a jar or packet off the shelf. Rice had to be ground... yes, even the rice!



Holiday house

One week before the hallowed days of commemoration, a nearby industrial machine had to be hired. Thousands of Jews from all over Bombay would arrive with their thoroughly washed and dried sacks of rice for ritual grinding. The machines were owned by non Jewish companies; they would be inspected and approved by the customer's local Shul authority. In the Magen Chasidim it would be the Chazzan, as there was no Rabbi. The sequence of events would be: customer's order; machine clean; check by Chazzan; grind and pay. No short cuts!



House on the sand by the sea

Matzos were hand-made from approved flour and formed into a 'hard chapatti' type of mixture. Grandma would be in charge of the dough mixture. The dough would become very hard in a matter of minutes so speed was of the essence. Sinora and her sisters 'helped' until they became surplus to requirements! Other Jewish ladies of the neighbourhood would join grandmother, mother and daughters in a community rolling out. I imagine a sort of production line of women. Grandma hands a lump to mother who rolls it out, she hands it to a lady who puts it in the oven and hey presto, unleavened bread for friends and family.

Wine would be made from black grapes that had been soaked and cooked until soft, left to cool and then strained.

The Seder plate would more or less resemble the Western version with one or two differing customs. Celery leaves would represent bitterness, instead of lettuce or parsley, and lemon juice brought tears to the eyes as efficiently as chrane. Charoset would consist of

Coconut Rice

(serves 4-6)

- 2 cups basmati rice
- 3 cups unsweetened coconut milk
- 2 to 2 ½ cups water;
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon powdered cardamom
- ¼ teaspoon fresh turmeric;
- (nutmeg/cinnamon optional)
- pepper and salt to taste.

Cook washed rice in a pot of the boiling coconut milk, 2 cups of water and salt. Stir gently to remove any grains sticking to bottom. Add cardamom and turmeric. Reduce heat to medium-low and cover pot. Simmer for 30 to 40 minutes, adding the remaining water, if needed, to keep rice moist. To serve, fluff rice with a fork. Add salt and white pepper to taste.

fresh dates, pitted and cooked until soft, then combined with ground almonds, pistachios and cardamom.

I asked Sinora to paint a picture of a day's worth of meals. She emphasised it was their custom to avoid sugar over the period of Pesach and that they used only fruits for sweetening.

The first meal of the day was a porridge made with shredded coconut and puréed dates.

Lunch might consist of fish or chicken prepared with mint, ginger, chilli, garlic, coriander and cumin. Rice chapattis or coconut rice would be the accompaniment. (See recipe below) Fruit would often end a meal.

Another favourite dish was meat pâtés but could be adapted using fish to suit 'piscivores', or just vegetables for vegetarians. (See recipe below)

Meat Pâtés

For the potato case:

About 1 ¼ pounds potatoes, peeled boiled and mashed. Add a small amount of vegetable oil and salt and pepper to taste. Knead to a smooth consistency.

For the filling

- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 pound uncooked finely chopped meat e.g. chicken or beef
- 1 onion finely chopped
- About 1 teaspoon each of chilli pepper; ginger, garlic & coriander all finely chopped, or ¼ teaspoon of each of the dry powder versions
- ¼ to ½ cup of water with meat or vegetable bouillon powder to make stock
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

- Briefly fry all the ingredients in the oil. Add the stock, stirring occasionally until cooked. Remove from heat and set to one side
- Take a small handful of mashed potatoes (tangerine size) and press into your palms to make a slight cup. Put some of the meat mixture inside and draw the potato round it to enclose
- Roll the pâtés in beaten egg. Roll in matzo meal to completely cover and fry in oil until golden brown



The David playground

Sinora's family would set off to Shul with the women wearing a new set of holiday saris, finished off with beautiful jewellery. Throughout the rest of year they usually wore western style outfits and sometimes traditional Indian clothes. She explained that it was impractical to wear long saris walking on roads often flooded by the monsoon rain. For Shul, men would wear smart suits, never the stereotypical dhotis, salwars or dishdashas worn by other ethnic races. Sinora's grandfather would wear a white suit throughout the year, as seen in the family photograph. Amusingly Sinora remembers that he would not sit for the photo and that the children decided to go on 'hunger strike until he agreed to join them...he did!

Pesach was a festival taken very seriously but with plenty of community spirit and fun that I am sure Sinora looks back on with nostalgia.

Modak

Sinora described the following recipe for a kind of sweet dumpling called 'Modak'. Her family would not eat this over Pesach because of the necessary inclusion of the sugar. Ashkenazis might not make it at Pesach because of the rice, but it still looks worth trying another time.

The pastry was made from 1 cup of rice flour slowly added to 1 cup of boiled water with a pinch of salt and teaspoon of cooking oil; then stir for 2-3 minutes to form a lump of dough. It would be kneaded and small tangerine size lumps of dough would be flattened into a thin (puri) disc. A combination of coconut, pistachio, almonds, raisins and sugar was placed in the centre of the puri and the edge lifted and slowly pleated until it was closed. Sinora said she formed a flower out of the excess dough at the top. The pouch was then steamed.

Kalpna Restaurant



Often described as an Edinburgh institution, **Kalpna Restaurant** has been around for over 30 years, not only standing as one of the finest vegetarian restaurants but also one of the finest Indian restaurants in the country.

Kalpna has consistently provided fresh and innovative ideas in the field of Indian and vegetarian cooking. Their signature dish uses a delightful combination of two sauces; one with saffron, almond and cashew nut, the other a tomato, honey, butter and ginger sauce. The potato barrels that are in this combination are stuffed with a texture and taste rich stuffing with nuts, mixed vegetable and Indian homemade cheese.

The menu is filled with a variety, ranging from the simple and authentic to the innovative and luxurious. Their incredibly good value lunchtime buffet is also a treat not to be missed, but for the full effect of the stunning hand-crafted decor, an evening time meal is a must.

Kalpna is fully licensed with all the usual, as well as an Indian whiskey and rather pleasant Indian wine which they serve as their house.

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Opening times:

Mon-Sat: 12pm-2pm (buffet).
5.30pm – 10.30pm

Vegetarian, vegan, Indian,
gluten-free options.

Rabbi Rose of the EHC has checked out the restaurant, found it to be using only raw or otherwise kosher vegetarian ingredients and therefore personally finds it acceptable to eat there.

Jewish Community Centre Events

COFFEE, CHAT, CAKE AUCTION

On Sunday 9 September 2012 the Community Centre Committee held their annual pre-High Holydays coffee morning. Around 40 members and visitors had the chance to bid for home baking, browse the bookstall, by some plants, and chat to friends over a relaxing cup of coffee.

Pictures by Gershon Mendick



Carol Levstein and Hilary Rifkind preparing in the kitchen



Coffee morning gets going



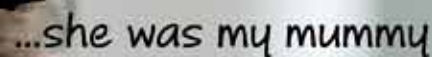
David Gonshaw at bookstall



Lord Julian relaxing with Janet and Blanche Mundy



Norma Brodie enjoys her coffee, chatting to Jonathan Kish



Thank You

www.wizouk.org

AJR IN EDINBURGH

Jonathan Kish

If you google 'AJR', the history and wide-ranging activities of a wonderful, nationwide organisation, the Association of Jewish Refugees will unfold before you. Their Regional Coordinators organise get-togethers locally, roughly every other month and in our case the group is known as the Edinburgh Continental Friends ('not a lot of people know that').

'Continental' because we are all refugees from pre and post WWII Europe and with the passing of time and of the older AJR regulars, increasingly second generation members help bolster our numbers.

In August, Festival season, we met at the Overseas League - guests of Francoise Robertson, our local AJR Organiser, who is a member there. Sitting by the window overlooking Princes Street and the Castle we enjoyed lunch and conversation which is always competitive, wide-ranging and multi-lingual.

To aid digestion and give our ears respite from the sound of many tongues, we were treated to a spirited, not to say decibels-heavy recital of Chopin and Debussy pieces by a young pianist.

In October, our speaker Flora Selwyn gave us a glimpse into her absorbing retirement hobby of how she single-handedly initiated, compiles and distributes her publication 'St Andrews Focus' with little or no support from any quarter. Its aim is to provide accurate, up to date local information, foster unity of town/gown, promote local businesses. It was a fascinating example of what one capable and dedicated person can achieve.

As usual, the occasion was concluded by enjoying a delicious and wholesome afternoon tea (all the more pleasurable for being served on the family Meissen) provided by Vivien Andersen whose hobby and more is Scandinavian jewellery. Those interested in joining any of the groups, please contact Agnes Isaacs on 0755 196 8593 or AJR direct.



Flora Selwyn flanked by Marianne Laszlo and Vivienne Anderson (Far Left, Agnes Isaacs, AJR Organiser)



Francoise Robertson with Joe Henderson (Hecht) and other guests



On the course



Prizewinners

GOLF REPORT

Syd Zoltie, Chairman of the Edinburgh Golf Society

Forget the Olympics, the Queen's Jubilee and the Football Euro 2012, in September we had the annual Shul Golf Tournament on the nine hole Princes Golf Course at the Braid Hills.

We do not have the lush bougainvillea, tropical palms or the romantic perfumes of the hibiscus plants of Augusta, but it is more than made up for by the views of the Castle and the plethora of the wild untamed jasmine yellow broom and gorse bushes which proliferate on the Braid Hills course.

The Reuben Zack Trophy was awarded to Steven Levey, who scored a formidable net 24, only one over par for the course.

The Maccabi Team cup was won by Brian Caine, Steven Levey and Syd Zoltie.

The longest drive competition was won by Denis Seatter and the ubiquitous Steven Levey, and the nearest to the hole event was awarded to Brian Caine. Orange Bowl Trophies were won by Isaac Ansell and Aaron Levey.

A special award for the Best Dressed player in the field was awarded to Lionel Freedman.

Thanks are due to Lennie Berger for organising the Event and to the Braid Hills Coffee Shop for allowing us to use the premises for our prize giving ceremony. The coffee and shortbread biscuits were appreciated by all, to wind up a most enjoyable outing.



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THE CONTINUING SAGA OF THE BEIT HAMIDRASH TOUR GARDENS GET SOME ATTENTION TOO

Edward Green



During the recent refurbishment of the Beit Hamidrash, there were many options available as to how gifts could be given. Many chose to contribute for articles that would be used in the Beit Hamidrash for religious purposes or for items that would embellish the Beit Hamidrash and my colleagues and I on the refurbishment committee remain most grateful for those most welcome gifts.

Joyce Davidson, of London, who grew up in Edinburgh, and is sister to Bernard Dorfman, decided however that she would like to give the specific gift of refurbishing the gardens in honour of their parents, Samuel Nathan and Mary Dorfman, who both so enjoyed sitting in their own garden here in Edinburgh.



Our pictures show the newly planted area to the left of our entrance on Salisbury Road, our new garden urns at the doors planted with olive trees, lavender and ivy plants, and the tidied up area at the back of the synagogue with a dedicated seating area outside the Beit Hamidrash. This together with the new lighting at the entrance has helped to soften the somewhat severe exterior to the synagogue and to make it that much more welcoming.

Our thanks go to Joyce Davidson and her family for their wonderful generosity.



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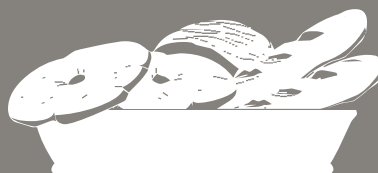
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CHEDER REPORT. SUCCOTH CELEBRATIONS

Elaine Levy

The EHC Cheder and Toddler Group combined one Sunday morning to celebrate Succoth. The morning started with a "Build a Succah" quiz, organised by Hannah Cohn-Simmen and Omri Gardi. The children listened intently to the story of "The Missing Etrog" written by Omri, as not only did the story tell of how one of the Etrogs had gone missing but it contained a number of clues to help the teams answer the quiz. The story was followed by a quiz in which the children had to win pieces of their Succah by answering questions relating to the recent Yamim Tovim or by completing tasks such as forming the shape of a Lulav or a Hebrew letter. The quiz was narrowly won by Team Lulav (Connor Finlay, Sam Adler, and Lotem Gardi, assisted by Leo Finlay). Team Etrog (Dorothy Sharrat, Ruth Adler, Aiddie Finlay, Shlomit Gardi) came a very close second.

The Rabbi then took all the children into the Succah to explain how and why we build a Succah and demonstrated how to take the Lulav and Etrog. The children learnt about Hashonna Rabbah and participated in the Beating of the Willows.

The morning finished with the children making Shoebox Succahs and flags in preparation for Simchat Torah.

Special thanks go to Hannah and Omri for organising the story and the quiz for the children.



Demonstration

Shlomit builds her Succah



Flag making



Team Lulav



Hannah and Omri



Lotem building her Succah



Team Etrog



Sukkat Shalom celebration of Sukkot 2012/5773 with new Succah thanks to Claudette Hudes and Robbert Hermans

NEW SUKKAT SHALOM COUNCIL FOLLOWING RECENT AGM

Chairman: Norman Crane

Treasurer: Gillian Raab

Council members:

Marjory Broadie

Jonathan Broadie

Helen Ford

Ricky Hogg

Sue Lieberman

Claudette Hudes

Catherine Lyons

Maurice Naftalin

Nick Silk

Phil Wadler

Rebecca Wober

Anna Duncan-Nitzan

COMMUNITY QUIZ – SUNDAY 28 OCTOBER 2012

Elaine Levy



Quizmasters, Betsy Dorfman and Arnold Rifkind

At 7 pm on Sunday 28 October about 60 competitive enthusiasts took their places at 6 tables for the community quiz at the Jewish Community Centre, 4a Salisbury Road. Compères Arnold Rifkind and Betsy Dorfman introduced the proceedings. Four rounds would be held before the dinner break and 4 rounds after; each team would write answers on a sheet; after each round sheets would be exchanged with a neighbouring team to be marked; a running tally of scores would be kept on a laptop and displayed on the big screen.

Round one featured food and drink and favoured those who had watched the Great British Bake-Off series or at least could name the judges. Heads were scratched to recall what exactly is an Orinoco or a Cavendish? Round 2 was a complete contrast – a picture round of medallists in the recent Olympic Games, really showing up those who had watched the games for two solid weeks but had no memory for the faces of the winners. Everyone agreed it was a challenging round.



Quizzers hard at it

Relief came with round 3, which asked the first names of famous fictional characters. Most people could remember at least a few of these but a special prize should have gone to Omri Gardi who recited perfectly from memory not just one but four first names – “Albus Percival Walfric Brian Dumbledore” from the Harry Potter series.

In round 4, another picture round, teams had to identify famous ‘Bobs’. Controversial among these, but fortunately easy to identify, was actress Julia Roberts, while a scruffy young man in

a woolly hat had many puzzled, and none the wiser even when he was named.

By dinner, tables 3 and 5 were in joint lead. Over a delicious meal of salmon, potatoes, coleslaw, and a sweetcorn salad, everyone started to puzzle over the marathon of cryptic pop bands, dingbats and famous first lines of novels. However all teams had to pause to indulge themselves in the amazing Rice Krispie refrigerator cake served as dessert, which one seasoned quizzer described as a ‘revelation’.



Omri Gardi, with mother Merav

All too soon it was time to score the marathons and move on to the second half, round 5 being general knowledge, round 6, to recognise logos of famous products or firms, 7 to identify either the colour or the number hinted at, and 8 an audio round, to listen to extended extracts from concertos and name their composers. Finally the running tallies revealed the winning team, team 3 with 127 points. Team 2 followed close behind with 120.5 and Team 5 next with 116.

Thanks are due to Arnold Rifkind and Betsy Dorfman for compiling and compèring the quiz, and to Lesley Danzig, Susan and Steven Hyams, Joyce Sperber, Jackie Taylor, Hilary Rifkind, David Gonshaw, David Ellison, Carol Levstein and Gershon Mendick for, variously, helping to set up, prepare and serve the meal, and clear up afterwards. Most of them did a bit of everything. We are fortunate to have an active community with a few key people and several willing volunteers to make events like this happen. It was a truly delightful evening, absorbing and fun for all guests of all ages.



The Winners

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Edward Green

Our annual Remembrance Service this year was held on the actual Armistice Day, Sunday the 11th November. The service, led by our Rabbi, once again proved to be a most fitting and emotive tribute to those members who lost their lives in the world wars and Sinai in 1967.

We were fortunate this year to have the services of the choir, under the direction of David Mendelssohn, together with recitals from two of our youth, Clare Levy and Hannah Cohn-Simmen. This year, Lennie Berger was Standard Bearer, ably assisted by Freddie Green.

After the bugler's moving rendition of the "Last Post" and subsequent "Reveille", the service continued with Aleinu, Kaddish, and Benediction from the Rabbi, and a rousing Adon Olam and the National Anthem concluded the proceedings. All attending repaired to the Marian Oppenheim Hall, where Hilary Rifkind together with the events committee had laid on a wonderful tea, once again sponsored through the most generous bequest of the late Violet Oppenheim, set up for this purpose in perpetuity.



Lenny Berger laying a wreath from the EHC at the Edinburgh City Chambers on Remembrance Sunday morning

CHEDER MITZVAH DAY PROJECT

Omri Gardi

As their Mitzvah Day project the Edinburgh cheder has been making donations to the Jabulani project. The Jabulani or 'happiness' project is a charity devoted to improving life for children in Durban, South Africa. The project involves volunteers from James Gillespie's High School and from other areas in Scotland coming to South Africa and helping in crèches, schools, and other organisations. Isaac Ansell Forsyth was among these volunteers for several months, and his mother, Jane Ansell, who also visited the project, came to give the cheder children a talk about the charity.

The children were asked to collect school items such as pens, pencils and calculators, as well as others, such as toothbrushes and underwear. They were given little bags to put them in. We planned to gather the items over the next few months, for Isaac to arrange shipping to Africa.



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Where are they now?

Young and Talented

Michael Adler

In this issue of The Edinburgh Star, we review two much-acclaimed books, written by two very talented young people, Karrie Fransman and Alex Bellos. Karrie, the younger daughter of Tammy and Martin Fransman, who grew up in Edinburgh and lived here until she left to study sociology and psychology at the University of Leeds, is now a well-known cartoonist whose evocative graphic novel **The House That Groaned** came out last year. It is published by Random House, under its 'Square Peg' Imprint and is available from bookshops at £14.99. Alex lived in Edinburgh for 10 years until his parents Ilona and David moved away to Southampton. After working as a journalist (he was The Guardian's Correspondent in Brazil for several years). Alex has now written a best-selling book about mathematics for the lay reader. **Alex's Adventures in Numberland** was published in 2010 by Bloomsbury Press and is available from bookshops at £8.99. The Edinburgh Star offers its congratulations to both of them.

Karrie Fransman

Rowan Hendry-Horne, who was in Karrie Fransman's Cheder class, introduces Karrie Fransman and then reviews her book. She writes as follows:

Karrie Fransman's autobiographical comic strips were published in The Guardian and her comic serial **The Night I Lost My Love** ran in The Times. Her graphic novel, **The House That Groaned**, has been chosen as Graphic Novel of the Month in The Observer. She has also created comics for Time Out, The Telegraph, The New Statesman, The Young Vic and Psychologies Magazine. You can see more of her work at www.karriefransman.com or follow her on Twitter @KarrieFransman

The eponymous The House That Groaned is as much of a character in Karrie Fransman's beautifully detailed graphic novel as the six inhabitants around whom the stories revolve. As we follow the new tenant, Barbara, into the decaying building, it becomes the frame around which their relationships build. I found myself relating to many of the characters as we met them: to Barbara, the new face in the building of odd housemates; to Janet, the slimming class leader to whom food has become a lifelong foe; to Mrs Durbach, who has become so forgotten that she simply disappears into the furniture and can only be found by the sound of her voice. Most of all, however, I related to the gloriously corpulent Marion, whose hedonistic feeding parties tease and taunt Janet to breaking point.

Karrie's background sociology and psychology, and in creative advertising, shines through in this novel in which the both the art and the characters are beautifully detailed and surprising. The dark humour and graphic depictions are certainly not for the faint of heart and nothing, other than the house, is quite what it seems to be.

Rowan also asked Karrie four questions which, with Karrie's answers, are set out below:

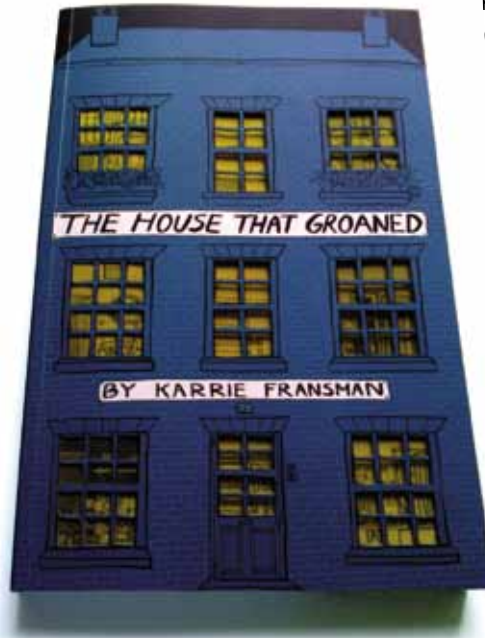


Rowan: What path led you from being my favourite Cheder teacher in Edinburgh to creating graphic novels in London?

Karrie: Aaw- bless you. But once you'd progressed past the

'Aleph Bet' I couldn't have taught you much else at Cheder! I always used to scribble comics and stories in the privacy of my own bedroom as a child, but as I grew older I discovered such wonderful things as 'graphic novels' and realised I could inflict my weird scribbles on a wider audience. I started self publishing my own comics and selling them at comic conventions all over the UK and in Camden Market in London. Soon I'd been bitten by the comic bug and decided I wanted to try and go professional. I was lucky enough to be picked up by The Guardian and had my comic strips published there before moving on to serialising a 20-part graphic story in The Times and finally published *The House That Groaned* in 2012. I also draw illustrated articles for newspapers from The Telegraph to Time Out and The New Statesman and built comic sculpture in jewellery boxes and dolls houses.

Rowan: Through the course of the book, I found myself relating to most of the characters in some way or another. Where did you find inspiration for the house mates and are any (or all of them) aspects of yourself?



Karrie: Unlike my comic strips in The Guardian which were autobiographical, I enjoyed escaping into make-believe worlds in *The House That Groaned*. However, of course, autobiography crept in. The six main characters in the book seem fairly extreme at first. However through flashbacks in the book we learn how these characters became this way through events in their childhood or earlier life. To write empathetic characters it's important that the emotions are real so

I really tried to draw on personal experiences – being ill as a child with meningitis, people I've met, our society's obsession with and fear of our own bodies.

Rowan: The house in the book is very familiar and very unusual at the same time. What inspired it?

Karrie: The front cover of the book has little cut-out windows which inspires voyeurism in the reader and at the same time is based on my childhood dolls' house. I love that feeling of passing outdoors by yellow-lit houses on an indigo night and catching glimpses of other people's lives. Of course any residents of Edinburgh would recognise the Victorian architecture which the book was based on. The house in the book is lovely outside, but inside is (like each of us) slowly decaying with pipes bursting and electricity failing. It is a metaphor for our own bodies and is filled with six characters who have strange relationships with their own and other's bodies- from those obsessed with controlling the body with their minds, to those unaware of the body's biological limits.

Rowan: So what do you have planned next?

Karrie: Good question! I have just finished the pitch for my new graphic novel and am showing it to folk at the moment. It's getting a great reaction so I'm pretty excited. The story is about a group of friends, birth, growing up and death – all of life's big themes. But that's why I love storytelling – it helps you get to grips with the important stuff!

Alex Bellos

After a brief account of Alex Bellos' life and accomplishments, Tony Gilbert reviews his tour-de-force Alex's Adventures in Numberland.

Alex was born in Oxford in 1969 and moved to Edinburgh with his parents in 1972. His father David was a lecturer in French at Edinburgh University and his mother Ilona worked in IT. Although his family were secular Jews, he went on a few occasions to Cheder in Salisbury Road. In 1982 his father was appointed to the Chair of French at Southampton University and the family moved to the south of England. His father David now lives in the USA, where he is Professor of French and Comparative Literature at Princeton University, author of a number of award-winning literary biographies and, most recently, a much acclaimed book on translation *Is That a Fish in Your Ear? Translation and the Meaning of Everything* (Faber and Faber, 2011). After the break-up of her marriage, his mother Ilona returned to Edinburgh in 1990 and remarried. She is one of the co-directors of the French Film Festival UK, which is now in its 21st year. Alex studied mathematics and philosophy at Corpus Christi



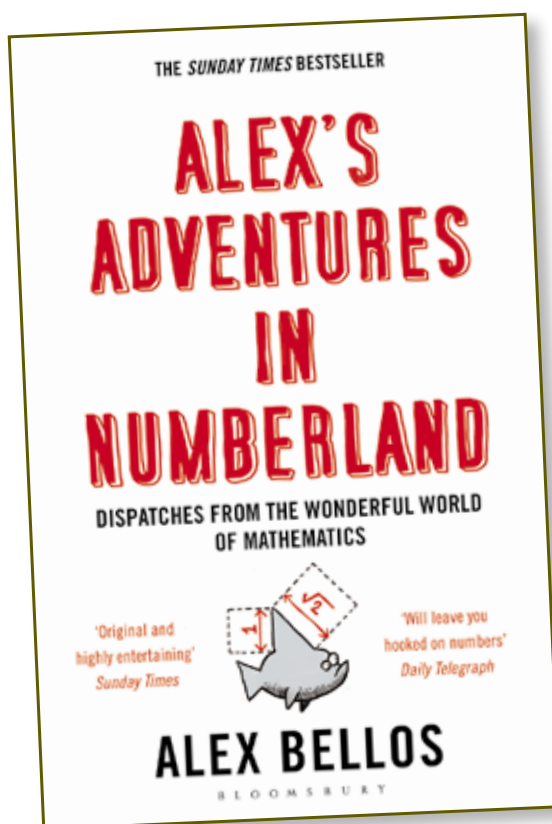
College, Oxford, where he was the editor of the student newspaper *Cherwell*. This led him into a career in journalism and, for five-years, from 1998–2003, he was the Guardian's correspondent in Brazil. During his time in Brazil, he wrote *Futebol: the Brazilian Way of Life* (Bloomsbury, 2003). The book was well received in the UK, where it was nominated for Sports Book of the Year at the British Book Awards. In 2006, he ghostwrote *Pelé: The Autobiography* (Simon and Schuster, 2007), about the soccer player Pelé, which was a number one bestseller in the UK.

Returning to live in the UK, Alex decided to write about mathematics, the subject he had studied at university. *Alex's Adventures in Numberland* came out in 2010 and featured in the Sunday Times' top ten bestsellers' list for four months. The book was shortlisted for three awards in the UK, including the BBC Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction, where it was narrowly beaten into second place. Several translations of the book have been published. The Italian version won both the Galileo Prize for science books and the Peano Prize for mathematics books. In the United States, where Lewis Carroll is less of a national institution than in the UK, the book was given the title *Here's Looking at Euclid*.

Alex presented the BBC TV series *Inside Out Brazil* (2003) and wrote the documentary *Et Dieu créa...le foot*, about football in the Amazon rainforest. He has also directed a number of short films on Brazil which have also appeared on BBC and other channels. After *Alex's Adventures in Numberland* came out in 2010, Alex has frequently appeared on the BBC talking about mathematics. He now lives with his girlfriend in London, where he is finishing his follow-up to *Numberland*, provisionally called *Alex Through the Looking-Glass*.

Tony Gilbert, who is himself a professional mathematician, has this to say about the book. I am a bit wary of populist science. In the last couple of decades, there has been quite a move to popularise science by portraying it as 'fun'. It may seem a bit po-faced, but I have always felt that while it indeed may attract some youngsters into an inherently difficult area, portraying science merely as fun runs the serious danger of detracting from the genius of the men and women who made major advances. So it was with considerable caution that I approached Alex's book; but to my delight, my unease was completely misplaced: Alex has covered a range of mathematical topics giving a lucid exposition, which I believe would be readily understood by a non-specialist, and yet has done so in a way that is light, attractive, informative and frequently very amusing.

The book does not try to sketch the whole of mathematical endeavour, but focuses primarily on numbers and arithmetic with a bit of a foray into geometry; this is an important adjunct to the story of numbers as a route to, in particular, $\sqrt{2}$ and then the development of so-called irrational numbers, i.e. numbers which cannot be represented by fractions like $1/3$. The book is couched as a sort of journey. Alex travels around the world meeting all sort of luminaries in the field of numbers. Roughly speaking, in each chapter he meets someone new who is a world expert in that particular area of number; he tells you their story, but uses that as a way in to tell you about the maths that they do, and his clarity is such that he rarely has to compromise on the underlying ideas for the sake of the layman. In addition he also frequently digresses into the history of the maths of that particular area, and this, to my mind, is a real bonus, as the history of both the development of the ideas and the great intellects that inspired such ideas is full of interest.



While the bulk of the book concerns number, towards the end, he gets really quite ambitious and gives us a tour of probability which arose as a sort of science for gamblers, the so-called normal distribution which underlies statistics, and then to cap it all, he has a go at two subjects which in their time posed enormous logical conundrums to mathematicians: transfinite arithmetic, namely an elaboration of infinity; and non-Euclidean geometry, essentially the creation of self-consistent geometries different from the familiar geometry of planes and 3-dimensional space. Arguably, this last chapter might be a bit testing for the non-specialist, but it is only the last chapter, and in my view, practically everything before that is very approachable.

This may make the book sound like heavy-going, but I really don't think it is: if you are even slightly mathematical in taste, perhaps trying the occasional Sudoku, then I think you will enjoy this book and get a

lot from it. And as already mentioned, the book has frequent touches of humour: the description of the war of words between the philosopher Thomas Hobbes and the mathematician John Wallis over the former's 'solution' of the historic problem of squaring the circle is particularly diverting, and finally I chuckled over the British title of the book, amusingly paying homage to another Oxford mathematician of an era rather earlier than Alex himself.

Tony might have mentioned that the American title Here's Looking at Euclid is just as amusing. One great title would be enough for most people, two is quite remarkable. (Ed.)

LIMMUD 2012

Adam Ognall – Chief Executive, New Israel Fund ZIONISM 20:20

Micheline Brannan

Who remembers the wording of Israel's Declaration of Independence?

The first exercise in Adam Ognall's interactive session was to divide into small groups to study the actual text of the Declaration, and identify how current it still appears to be. It is an aspirational document, still reflecting the challenges faced by Israel 72 years on:

"We appeal – in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months – to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship...."

"We extend our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness....."

A wide range of views was expressed by the participants in the crowded classroom, with many feeling proud of the State of



Adam Ognall, New Israel Fund



L to R Jonny Sperber, Judy Sischy, Adam Ognall, Susie Kelpie, John Danzig

Israel, and believing that it is still trying to achieve its aspirations although sadly against many obstacles, while a minority felt concern that Israel had weakened its moral position. This reflects the position of Jews in Britain generally, of whom 77% regard Israel as relevant to their Judaism while 27% are uncomfortable about events in Israel.

This hour long session focussed on the heated public debate within Israel itself about the future direction of legislation and citizenship. For example, the equality of Arab citizens is threatened by those who would abolish the equal language status of Arabic. Gender equality is threatened in many ways by the polarisation of orthodoxy, for example Rabbis instructing Charedi soldiers to walk out of official ceremonies featuring female choirs. Israel's reputation as a safe

haven is threatened by those who resent the arrival of many asylum seekers from North Africa.

The purpose of the session was to stimulate participants to react to that debate. Adam's skill was to expose the deeper conflicts in the participants' own feelings. For example the issue of Women of the Wall being forcefully banned from praying at the Kotel was not clear-cut, given that Jews of all 'denominations' and none are represented at Limmud. For those who chose to attend, the session was an excellent scene setter for the themes of the day which included women's participation, can Israel be one nation, and the position of refugees and asylum seekers recently arrived in Israel.

The New Israel Fund exists to promote equality and democracy among all Israel's citizens.

Review of Sean Altman, 'Jewmongous'

Vivien Andersen

It was a cold, wet and dark November Sunday morning which saw a small group huddling for shelter at the bus stop near Haymarket.

We were waiting for the coach to take us across to Limmud in Glasgow. We were

joined by a very tall (6'3") young man carrying a guitar. He looked a bit out of place, so we asked him where he was going. He replied in a strong New York accent that he was going to Limmud, that his name was Sean Altman and that he would be performing as 'Jewmongous' in session 2. We made some polite noises, probably all trying to hide the fact that we

had never heard of him.

And so it was, that I stayed in my seat after the first session in classroom D2, and awaited Sean Altman's performance with anticipation. The competition, including Klezmer Dance and celebrity Hugo Rifkind, was just too great for many others to experiment, so less than a dozen

people savoured his performance of his own songs, which were extremely funny, slightly risqué, irreverent, but offensive only to the most orthodox. Altman is well known in his native New York, primarily as the founder and former leader of the vocal group Rockapella - stars of the TV series "Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego?" - for which Sean co-wrote the famous theme song with Broadway's David Yazbek. He went solo in the late nineties, and has had considerable success as a singer songwriter, only more recently turning his attention to his Jewish

origins, which as a committed secular Jew, he has long neglected. As he says *"I felt an increasingly urgent longing to be more connected with my Jewish lineage. But how? Synagogues intimidated me and I'd long forgotten how to read Hebrew. Then it hit me: the only things I know how to do - period - are sing and write songs and crack wise. In lieu of shul, then, I started writing naughty ditties that both celebrate and lovingly skewer the trials and tribulations of the tribe"*.

From a Passover take-off song "They

Tried to Kill Us (We Survived, Let's Eat)", via "What the Hell is Simchas Torah", and "Blow, Murray, Blow!", about a Yom Kippur shofar (ram's horn) blower so proficient that his playing purges listeners of all their sins, Sean led us through his concerns and complexes (male circumcision fixated), ending with a positive affirmation of his identity in "Too Jew for You".

What a shame there wasn't a bigger audience to hear the boy from the Bronx.

Hugo Rifkind – Journalist and Broadcaster

'How does a Jewish Journalist cover the Middle East?'

Micheline Brannan

We all know and love Hugo Rifkind from his Times column, and from his deadpan performances on 'The News Quiz' and other BBC formats.

So it is not surprising that the classroom was packed for his session, with many seated on the floor and others standing throughout.

His session reflected his experiences on a recent trip to the Middle East at the invitation of the Britain and Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM).

He had planned a light-hearted session, but recent events in Israel and Gaza had made that difficult. Nevertheless, Hugo managed to inject humour as he described how he and a photographer sat in their hotel one night discussing a proposed excursion to meet the Palestinian Authority, feeling 'like two hobbits about to go into Mordor'. They needn't have worried. As soon as they crossed the 'Green Line' they were welcomed with a message from the Palestine mobile phone network inviting them to taste the coffee and smell the jasmine, and on arriving in Ramallah, it looked like another leafy suburb of Jerusalem. Relative calm in the West Bank has had its dividends.

Meeting Palestinian Ministers was quite different from meeting Israeli Ministers –

Hugo told us. The Palestinian Authority outer offices were full of excitable teenage boys with Kalashnikovs. The Israeli offices were even more scary – full of teenagers with rifles, only they were girls.

BICOM facilitates British journalists to access places and people that they would have great difficulty in reaching on their own. Its purpose is to put across Israel's side of the story. Hugo is a supporter of Israel, but recent events have prompted him to ask himself the question, 'What is my red line? What would Israel have to do to invite me, as a journalist, to condemn their actions?'

As we know, for some journalists – even Jewish ones – that is not a real question. They have no hesitation condemning. The journalist Richard Ingrams allegedly said 20 years ago, that if he sees an article about Israel by someone with a Jewish name he does not bother to read it. However that is not something one can assume nowadays. Jewish journalists can park their Judaism, and they do not see defending Israel as their fight. For some it is quite the contrary. Have they got double standards? Why so much more on Israel and its 'misdeeds' than about any other trouble spot?

As Hugo explained, Israel is a great place to write about. There is so much colour and detail in a small geographical area. In other countries, the conflict zones are genuinely dangerous and difficult to reach, but for those seeking to cover



Hugo Rifkind

the Middle East, the safety of Tel Aviv is never far away. You can be standing in front of a tank in Gaza in the morning and eating pizza on Dizengoff at night. The area is heavily lobbied. There is no lack of organisations like BICOM who facilitate reporters. There is a whole peace process industry which will leave many people at a loose end if peace ever comes.

The British press is inaccurate about all sorts of facts but for Hugo, inaccuracies about Israel hurt more, just as they make many ordinary Jewish readers bristle. The coverage of the Gaza flotilla from Turkey was a case in point. And, during the recent operation, there were more deaths in Syria on a daily basis than in Gaza, but Syria went completely out of the news.

On the other hand, however irritating, a phrase like 'Gaza Occupation' cannot

be rebutted on the basis that Israel withdrew its settlements, because it still controls the airspace, border and seaboard. Some slurs on Israel carry a baggage of centuries of anti-Semitism which is not apparent to the ordinary reader, for example, portraying Netanyahu as puppet-master to Obama, but is it wise to argue about every detail? It can be tiresome to have leaders grumbling about anti-Semitism at every high power gathering. In any case, Hugo is no stranger to persecution – he is much more likely to be attacked as a Conservative in Scotland than as an Israel supporter.

What is more difficult for pro-Israel journalists (and even neutral ones) is the way the Israeli Government appears to have lost the ability or the will to argue its own case, to even try to refute labels like 'Apartheid State'. Footage of soldiers

corralling Arab citizens plays into a lot of templates and it is an open goal. BICOM does its best to correct public opinion, but some newspapers will not let their journalists accept BICOM trips. In any case, declaring (as one must) that BICOM has funded a trip could lead commentators to question neutrality.

Another factor which is challenging to journalists reporting on Israel is how fast the situation changes. The Middle East experts of two years ago are no longer experts. The Arab Spring has changed everything. The dynamic between the Muslim Brotherhood Government in Egypt and the Hamas Government in Gaza may help the peace process, because Hamas will see that like-minded people do not see war as an answer, but that remains to be seen.

In the West, comment is becoming increasingly polarised. The Left and its media have abandoned Israel – one of the most bewildering developments in public attitudes to Israel in recent years. Ordinary journalists are no longer well resourced, managed or mentored, the structure has disappeared, there is less money and the result is an uncritical approach, in which immature and uninformed opinion easily finds an audience.

The session was too short and it was not possible to reach any conclusion, especially to Hugo's possibly rhetorical question about where he would find his 'red line'. It was amusing, well-informed and enjoyable, however, and it was a privilege to have a national figure with us who is also an Edinburgh lad.

Vicki Prais – Today's Exodus, Modern Slaves Seeking Refuge In Israel

Micheline Brannan

Vicki Prais works at the Scottish Human Rights Commission in Edinburgh and as an international human rights lawyer with extensive experience in immigration and asylum law.

At Limmud, she was talking on behalf of René Cassin, a human rights charitable organisation that uses the experience of the Jewish people to campaign for the rights of all people. René Cassin was a Nobel Laureate and French jurist who co-drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The purpose of the session was to highlight the situation of North African refugees who began to flee into Israel in 2005 after Egypt violently dispersed Sudanese refugees from civil war. They were followed by more Sudanese, along with Eritreans. According to Israeli Government statistics, published in April 2012, there are over 60,000 refugees and asylum seekers in the State, of whom 82% are from Eritrea or Sudan.

These refugees have undergone a



Sir Gerald Gordon with Vicki Prais

horrendous journey at the hands of smuggling networks which bring them up through Sinai, where they are often held hostage by Bedouin tribesmen and tortured until they contact their families to raise enough money for a ransom. Some of the audience had heard an item on BBC Radio 4 news on 24 November 2012 which gave dramatic and poignant reality to this story – a Sudanese victim and his captors being interviewed by telephone by the BBC. The victim had been given 5 days to raise his ransom, following

which he would be killed. The captor was completely unashamed, and stated on air that this was how he made his money and he had killed many people before.

The new arrivals in Israel are not welcomed, however. There is a public atmosphere of mistrust and hatred, there have been violent riots, and even a statement by Likud's Miri Regev during the May 2012 riots that they are 'a cancer in our body'.

The Israeli Government faces a growing crisis and, according to the speaker, is making up policy in an ad hoc and contradictory manner. Like many other countries, their asylum system involves long interviews, repetitive questions and unprofessional interpreters. Refusal is the most likely outcome.

Since January 2012, there has been a new law allowing the Israeli Government to detain 'infiltrators' for up to 3 years, or indefinitely in the case of a 'hostile enemy state' such as Sudan.

It is now planned to detain new arrivals en masse. Until mid 2012, most were detained in the Saharonim detention

facility on the Egyptian border, whose conditions have been criticised by the Israeli Public Defender. Nine thousand new places were to be opened at the end of November 2012, a tent city of 4000 more was to be built and the Ministry of Defence had announced 20-25,000 holding cells for migrants by the end of 2013.

Those who have already managed to get to Tel Aviv have no entitlements, and are forced into low paid, black economy work, poor housing, and petty crime. Inter-group tensions are prevalent in various urban areas, such as south Tel Aviv. There are some human rights organisations within Israel trying to help

the asylum seekers and refugees but they are having great difficulty accessing those in detention.

Vicki Prais had much more information in her hand outs about forced labour, sex trafficking and other issues affecting Israel's migrant workers. It was a nasty glimpse of the grimy underside of the country, something of which those of us who only visit hotels and beaches can barely be aware.

This was a depressing lecture and left those of us at Limmud who had been struggling to find good news about Israel in an even worse state of despondency.

Daniel Reisel

The no-brainer for full female participation in Jewish ritual life

Micheline Brannan

It was a pleasure to welcome Daniel Reisel back to Limmud. Last time he was still a medical student (a late career change) but now he is a busy A & E doctor with 60-70% female doctors on his team, and in his spare time he has been involved in creating a new independent orthodox community in London.

Despite being so busy, he has lost none of his edge as a Jewish educator and had a meticulously prepared hand out of sources within the Orthodox canon, which can be used to justify female participation in Jewish ritual life. He explained that his community had wanted to establish equality from within the system rather than develop their own rules. The session was therefore of great interest to the few orthodox participants and something of an insight to those who come from a background where women's equality is taken for granted.

The first section was: 'The depressing, awful, terrible, no good role of women in traditional Jewish life'. It highlighted the key sources from the Talmud, firstly exempting women from positive time-bound Mitzvot, and secondly declaring



L to R, Elaine Samuel, Isaac Ansell-Forsyth, Daniel Reisel, Jane Ansell and Keziah Berelson

that a person cannot perform a Mitzvah on behalf of the whole community if he himself is not bound to perform it. These two rulings form the basis for excluding women from a minyan and from participation in synagogue worship. The apologetics followed – the argument that women are already on a higher spiritual plain and therefore do not need periodic reminders of their religious duties. However in one scholar's version, that argument depends on the assertion that women have an easier life than men as men are busy in their professions and this is why they require the periodic reminders. Given that women are now equally represented in the professions and now outnumber men in some areas, that argument falls apart.

So how to move forward? The next stage was to look at the principles behind women's non participation – particularly the concept of 'kibud hatzibur', the honour of the community. The Talmud argues that a woman should not read from the Torah because that might give the impression that no man present was capable of doing it. This would undermine the honour of the community. In other words it would undermine the dignity of the men. On that basis, one can start to argue that once women are equally represented in all areas of public life, it is a matter of women's dignity to be included also in religious worship. The conclusion reached by Daniel Sperber in *Congregational Dignity and Human Dignity* (2003) is that there is a clash between communal dignity and

individual dignity and that in such a case individual dignity should trump communal dignity.

In the final phase of his argument, Daniel presented a number of sources entitled: “A new way forward: Rabbi David Hartman’s plea to gently retire the meta-halakhic God of stasis and to discover a new God-intoxicated Halakha.”

This section started with the law of the ‘stubborn or rebellious child’. This is a problematic set of verses (Deuteronomy 21: 18-21) which enables both parents of such a child to request of the elders of the city that their child should be stoned to death.

The Talmud had great difficulty with this law and therefore hedged it around with all sorts of provisos. For example,

the mother must be exactly like the father in voice, appearance and stature (interpreting the word ‘bekolenu’ to our voice [the son does not listen to our voice]). The purpose of these conditions was to make it impossible for the law ever to be implemented because people could actually die.

It is not the fact that both parents are equally involved in the law of the stubborn and rebellious child that creates the argument for equality. It is the inference from the commentary on that law that, where the Rabbis recognised that the system would have adverse consequences and could create real injustice, they found ways of rectifying this from within the system itself.

The sources closed with two quotes from Rabbi Moses Maimonides further

emphasising the peaceful and pleasant nature of the Torah, and the need for compassion to all G-d’s creatures.

Daniel Reisel concluded that the differentiation between men and women in ritual was now causing real injustice and indignity to women and that the sources showed in such an instance it was within the powers of the Rabbis to rectify it. This challenges the usual Orthodox view that Halakha is built on an unchanging substratum which cannot be altered (the G-d of stasis). If priority is given to the principles of justice, compassion and respect for individual dignity which are also part of the Torah (a new G-d-intoxicated Halakha), then moves towards women’s equal participation become possible.

Edinburgh delegates relax over a buffet lunch



Molly Seckl with Dan Kelpie



Joyce and Jonny Sperber with Michele and David Neville



Lesley Danzig and Betsy Dorfman



Omri and Shlomit Gardi

COMMUNITY CENTRE CHANUKAH DINNER SATURDAY 8 DECEMBER 2012

Lesley Danzig

Over 80 people attended the Community Centre's annual Chanukah Dinner. A reception held beforehand allowed guests to mingle and catch up socially before Rabbi Rose lit the first Chanukah candle. Everyone then sat down to a sumptuous festive meal of soup, chicken, latkes and Hilary's secret greens, with marmalade pudding to finish, all prepared by members of the Committee and enjoyed before the start of the evening's entertainment by singer, Wendy Carle Taylor.

With a voice that sends shivers and an amazing stage presence, Wendy Carle Taylor is making her mark internationally and it was a privilege to have her sing at Salisbury Road. Wendy is originally from Aberdeenshire in Scotland and the story goes that she sang before she spoke. Best known for her moving and utterly beautiful interpretations of contemporary and traditional song, Wendy performed effortlessly through a range of languages and styles from folk to chansons, jazz and blues.

Thanks to all the Committee and helpers for organising this event. And of course thanks to everyone who attended!



Rabbi Rose lights first candle with help of Gershon Mendick



Singer Wendy Carle Taylor



Guests enjoying the Chanukah dinner



CHANUKAH SERVICE AND CHILDREN'S PARTY

Janet Mundy

The children of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation formed a special Chanukah choir to light the Chanukah, recite the brachot and perform Maoz Tsur and Ha'Narot Halalu with gusto. Led by Lord Julian Goodman, they then surprised the congregation with two rounds – Al Ha'Nissim and S'vivon – and other traditional songs. Their cheder teachers, Elaine Levy and Merav Gardi, had helped the children design head-dresses, each representing a different number of candles, to wear as they performed.

After the service, the children lit their myriad Chanukahs, then adults and children sat down to a seasonal feast of latkes and sufganiot prepared by the parents and served by the community centre committee.

Educational entertainment was then provided by ThinkScience. The children demonstrated to each other how electricity can make their hair stand on end, witnessed the effect of helium on the speed of sound and what causes the cracking sound of the whip. They saw how combining dry ice with hot water creates clouds and had a tug of war to break a vacuum. Presenter Jon Davies did not allow the children to try the last experiment for themselves – they had to watch him lie on a bed of nails! Everyone present, aged from 1 to ... considerably older... thoroughly enjoyed the show and learned something about science as well.



Children in Shul with Chanukah



Children with Chanukahs

CHANUKAH EVENT AT ST ANDREW SQUARE 2012

Janet Mundy

The Chanukiah lighting at St Andrew Square, organised by Chabad Edinburgh and Harvey Nichols, took place on 9 December. Professor Joe Goldblatt lit the candles, in memory of the late David Goldberg, and Howie Nicholsby recited the brachot, before Eli Atad led the community singing of Ha'Nerot Halalu and Maoz Tzur. Although the weather was relatively mild, the crowd was happy to retire to the kind hospitality and warmth of the top floor of Harvey Nichols for speeches, music and refreshments. Rabbi Weinman thanked all the the sponsors, including EHC's chairman, Edward Green, and Gordon Drummond of Harvey Nichols welcomed all the guests.



Eric Milligan, former Edinburgh Lord Provost

Professor Joe Goldblatt, Queen Margaret University

Zoja Bazarnic, Principal Officer at US Consulate General Edinburgh

Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development

Rabbi David Rose, Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

Rabbi Pinny Weinman, Chabad

Edward Green, Chairman, Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

Gordon Drummond, General Manager of Harvey Nichols

Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development then welcomed the Jewish community on behalf of the First Minister. Although a Muslim himself, he was raised in East Renfrewshire, close to the largest Jewish community in Scotland and his year 4 teacher was Jewish.

Rabbi Rose linked the story of the Maccabees 2500 years ago with modern Scotland, reminding us that Chanukah is about recognising the validity of different opinions.

Zoja Bazarnic, Principal Officer at US Consulate General Edinburgh, wished everyone a Happy Chanukah and Eric Milligan, former Lord Provost and an old friend of the Edinburgh Jewish community, also addressed the audience.

However, I suspect that all present were happy to be upstaged by Olivia Barnett, who recently celebrated her Bat Mitzvah, who made a confident speech on the symbols of Chanukah – dreidls, latkes, candles and the miracle of the oil.

Musical accompaniment to the refreshments was provided by Amit Nevo on guitar and Boris Sores on piano.



SUKKAT SHALOM CCHANUKAH PARTY 2012

Claudette Hudes

It was wonderful to have such a big crowd at our Chanukah party this year. Huge thanks to everyone who worked to make the party such a success.

We had games including adult and children's dreidl competitions, singing games, wonderful impromptu piano music and lots of volunteers who helped set things out and stayed to clear up at the end. This last is a special mitzvah much appreciated by shul regulars.

A special mention must go to the cheder parents and teachers for providing great latkes, other food and drink and even a dreidl shaped piñata – sorry we didn't manage any photos of it or the kids scurrying after its contents.

RECEPTION FOR MICHAEL FREER MP WEDNESDAY 6 DECEMBER 2012

Micheline Brannan



L to R Sylvia Donne, Michael Freer MP, John Donne, Micheline Brannan, Andrew Robertson, Rabbi Rose, Carol Levstein

Michael Freer was elected to Parliament in 2010 as MP for the Finchley and Golders Green constituency, which has a 25% Jewish population. Though non-Jewish himself, he was keen, during a short tour of Scotland, to meet as many Jewish people as possible. As he said in his introductory words, "Sixty per cent of the UK Jewish population live 10 minutes from my house. There is the full spectrum from Lubavitch to United Synagogue, to Reform. There are 4 Eruvs. They

have relative freedom of worship. The main issues for them at present are circumcision and kosher food. However many of my Parliamentary colleagues have few or no Jews in their constituency. They are not aware of the issues facing Jewish communities in the UK today. I want to find out what it feels like to be part of a small Jewish community so that I can educate them."

About 18 members of the community attended the reception at the home of Edward and Maryla Green. There was a wide ranging discussion about public attitudes to Israel, whether or not people experience anti-semitism in Scotland, harassment of Jewish students in Scottish universities and how to deal with hate propaganda against Israel and Jews. Mr Freer was due to meet ScoJeC the next day to get a more formal take on these matters.



Edward Green and Michael Freer MP

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Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

DAVID NEVILLE – Sunday 4 November 2012

Avery Meiksin

The opening meeting of the Lit 2012-13 was addressed by David Neville, drama producer for BBC radio and a well known member of our community.

The Lit was privileged to rare insight into the creativity of a playwright as David spoke on the influences and inspirations which have shaped his own works. Raised in Glasgow, his earliest encounter with live drama was at the old Metropole Theatre. Performances that he found especially memorable from his youth included Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" and Cecil B. Taylor's "Bread and Butter." Another influence was Jack Rosenthal ("Bar Mitzvah Boy"). But perhaps more than any other, the plays of Arthur Miller most influenced his own writing, especially Miller's "Death of a Salesman," possibly because David himself is the son of a salesman. Those who've seen his plays, like the hilarious "Audition," recounting a young rabbi's interview, will appreciate the touch of Morecambe and Wise in his works as well.

On a more personal note, he admitted as a young aspiring playwright he faced what so many face, the question of what to write about. What did he have new to say? His first success came from drawing on a visit to his grandmother in hospital. There she spoke freely to him for the first time of her life in Russia. He realised that his grandmother was once young and



David Neville with Avery Meiksin, chair of the Lit

had had a life before becoming a grandmother. This led to his first play for television, "Martha and Mary," about two retired ladies who set out on a grand adventure to Hollywood. The play was a success, and brought David recognition as a young talent. Since then his plays have touched on a wide range of topics, many related to his Jewish background, like "Dough" about a kosher bakery, a play on refuseniks, one related to Anne Frank, and, although not ostensibly Jewish in content, a play about religious strife in Ireland and bigotry, a subject all too familiar.

The meeting was chaired by Avery Meiksin and the vote of thanks was given by author, Ellen Galford.

FILM NIGHT – AVIVA AHUVATI (Aviva my love) SUN 2 DECEMBER 2012

Micheline Brannan

The Lit film night featured Shemi Zarhin's family drama about a hotel cook who dreams of becoming a writer.

The star, Assi Levy, a well-known Israeli TV actress, portrays Aviva Cohen, the pillar of a dysfunctional family living in Tiberias, who negotiates time off her job as a chef to concentrate on her aspirational writing career. She has signed up for classes in Tel Aviv, with Oded Zar (Sasson Gabbay) a famous novelist, formerly from Tiberias, who eventually confides that it has been ten years since his last novel, he is under pressure, and has writer's block.

Aviva doesn't have her troubles to seek – she has an antsy daughter in the army

who has just cost her thousands of shekels in dental crowns, a son who has avoided the army and is in therapy; and another son who just hangs around the flat, as teenage boys do. Her husband is unemployed and bitter about this. Her attractive sister Anita (Rotem Abuhav) is wrestling with an infertility problem and a violent husband who wishes they had never left Holon. Her mother is verging on psychosis, while all her father ever does is cut out recipes from magazines and file them meticulously in box files. The film gets its title from the eccentric mother always calling her daughter 'Aviva, mon amour'.

Against this turmoil, Aviva sits at her desk, writing in an exercise book about a



Elaine Samuel introduces the film

woman whose life experience very much reflects her own, and makes it sound like poetry. There is real talent, but confidence and connections are lacking. Over 1 hour 47 minutes the plot develops, with Aviva



Assi Levy as Aviva Cohen

holding the centre. Will she manage to avoid catastrophe in her family life? Will she get anything published? Will she even finish her book, or will she have to go back to work in the hotel, simply to make ends meet?

The film shows ordinary life in one of Israel's less likely film venues, a Tiberias shikkun (housing estate) near the Sea of Galilee, and when we are not in Tiberias, we spend a lot of time on Egged buses,

going to and from Tel Aviv. There is a lot of love among the characters and many conciliatory gestures, which lifts it from being a kitchen sink drama into something extraordinarily lyrical.

As someone who is going to Tiberias for a hotel Pesach for a second time this year, I very much hope that Aviva is not going to be cooking my dinner and will have finished her novel and become famous!

END OF CHANUKAH EVENT SUNDAY 16 DECEMBER 2012

Micheline Brannan

The last day of Chanukah was celebrated by a special afternoon event at 4 Salisbury Road, compèred by Lord Julian Goodman. Anyone could contribute, whether a member of the Lit or not.

Lord Julian was the ideal compere, given his own love of music and particularly Chazzanut. (He has been our temporary Chazzan during the Rabbi's absence in Israel at a wedding and on many other occasions.) He invited each contributor to say a few words about their own Jewish roots and how they had come to select their piece, including the particular recording chosen. After the introduction, the piece was played on our audio-visual equipment, to general hilarity, when the machinery developed a mind of its own and played something completely different, although the right piece was always found eventually.

In order of appearance the selectors and pieces were as follows.

1, Ellen Galford,
Kum aher du filosof,
Theodore Bikel,
Partisaner lid: "Zog
nit keynmol", Shura
Lipovsky



Ellen Galford being interviewed by Lord Julian Goodman

Ellen's first choice was an ironic Yiddish song in which the Chasidic Jew hits back at the enlightenment 'filosof', citing the miracles his Rebbe can perform. Ellen is a stalwart of Heather Valencia's weekly Yiddish class and she first heard this song at a music workshop at the Ot Azoy Yiddish course. The version by Theodore Bikel is well known and took your editor back to childhood, when this song was regularly played in her home on a vinyl album.

Ellen's second choice, also sung in Yiddish, was the Song of the Partisans, by H Glik. The partisans were the heroic resistance movement where some of the most resourceful Jews managed to survive the Holocaust and even to hit back – now better known

thanks to the film Defiance, starring Daniel Craig. We stood up for this one, in tribute to their courage.

2, Maurice Naftalin, Story of Isaac,
Leonard Cohen



Maurice described a complex and ambivalent Jewish journey, reflected in his choice of this profound song exploring one of the Torah's iconic tales, the near sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham, in response to a test of faith by G-d. Leonard Cohen concludes his dialogue with the roots of our faith with an a magisterial anti-war message that resonates anew with each generation, including each decade of American history since its composition.

3, Elaine Samuel, Gesher tsar meod,
Whitney Houston's children's choir,
Mayn roo'e plats, Pennywhistlers



Elaine's first choice was a song based on the words of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, "The whole world is a narrow bridge. But the main thing is not to be afraid of anything". Elaine interpreted it to mean that we should never fear to widen that narrow bridge and, in attempting to do so, we may even hope to conquer fear itself. Elaine first heard it 18 years ago when the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn z"l was interviewed for Desert Island Discs. Only three days later Rabbi Hugo Gryn spoke at the Yahrzeit of Ruth Adler z"l and a few months after that he himself passed away. She thought it was an appropriate tribute to both of them.

Elaine's second choice was an intensely moving Yiddish ballad, written by Morris Rosenfeld, one of the New York Yiddish 'sweatshop poets', and sung in harmony by a female ensemble, the Pennywhistlers. It reminded Elaine of when she left for Israel via New York and ended up staying 7 years there - and of how her love affair with Yiddish began all that time ago. But she observed a wondrous continuity in her life by the fact that Berthold Feiweil, the grandfather of her now good friend,

Sue, first translated Morris Rosenfeld's poems from Yiddish to German. They were published in 1902, in a remarkable book which was beautifully illustrated by E. M. Lilien, one of the founders of Bezalel.

4, Tony Gilbert, Sunrise Sunset,
Zero Mostel

Tony said that he had come to a time of change in his life, with retirement, the loss of his dear mother, and the birth of grandchildren. He thought he might have gone to Fiddler on the Roof when dating Judy, and that this song by Tevye and his wife from the movie reflected some of nostalgia and change that Tony and Judy were personally experiencing. Julian made everyone laugh when he said, "A word of advice, Tony, when you talk about courting your wife, don't say 'I might have gone to that movie', say that you did go..."



5, Carol Levstein, Balada Yoel Moshe Solomon, Arik Einstein

Carol told a very moving story about her personal involvement with Israel in the Yom Kippur War. Her choice of song was motivated also by fascination with the character of Rabbi Yoel Moshe Salomon (1838-1912). Rabbi Salomon had not practised as such but had been a journalist and one of the 19th Century Zionist modernisers, like Moses Montefiori. He had established one of the first suburbs outside the Old City of Jerusalem, had raised funds to build Sha-arei Tsedek hospital and had founded Petach Tikvah. The song is based on a legendary expedition along the banks of the Yarkon river where Rabbi Yoel Moshe Salomon is said to have had a dream or perhaps have really left his body and taken flight, and to this day the birds in the reeds along the Yarkon sing his name. It symbolises his visionary contribution as one of Israel's pioneers.



6, Avery Meiksin, Churshat haoocalyptus, The Eucalyptus Grove, Naomi Shemer

Avery's father was an Israeli and he had an album of Naomi Shemer's songs arranged for piano. After the Six Day War, he took his family to live in Israel for six months where they actually got to hear Naomi Shemer singing her songs on the radio and on records. This song is not one of the best known of Naomi Shemer's numbers but the Bulgarian singer Preslava Peycheva sang it in the Eurovision Song Context in 2007, having apparently learned the Hebrew lyrics off by heart. The Lit heard it in Naomi Shemer's own performance on an album owned by your editor.



7, Simon Carlyle, Yanovski's Tish nign, Beregovski's Chaseneh, Joel Rubin on clarinet

Simon, another participant in Heather Valencia's Yiddish class, who has his own Klesmer band, spoke movingly about his passion for European klesmer music. The sheet music started to disappear even before the havoc of the Holocaust and is only now being retrieved by researchers from various archives. Moshe Beregovski, who annotated this tune in 1938, never got to play it with a proper klesmer band.



8, Micheline Brannan, Oyfn pripetchik, Chava Alberstein, Yigdal, Avraham Perera

Micheline's Yiddish choice was for her mother, who is a doyenne of Yiddish in Glasgow. Oyfn pripetchik is a nostalgic song about the Rebbe teaching children their Hebrew letters in a little room heated by a stove. It ends with the thought that as these children endure their exile in later life, the letters will give them comfort. The performance chosen was by Chava Alberstein.



Her Hebrew choice was for her late father who had a lifelong passion for the Hebrew language, including the liturgy, although he was not 'frum'. Yigdal is familiar to everyone as the singable version of Maimonides' Thirteen Principles of Faith, composed in 1404 by Daniel Ben Judah Dayan. Micheline came across Avraham Perera (1934-1984), a Israeli Judaeo Espagnol and Ladino singer, by chance on Youtube, while looking for a High Holydays version of Yigdal. She fell in love with Avraham Perera's version and was able to obtain a collection of his songs from Steimatzky's at Tel Aviv airport. No-one had heard this particular tune before but the audience was very taken with it.

9, Mike Valencia, El norah, Bevis Marks Choir

Mike's father had been a member of Bevis Marks Sephardi Synagogue, but made the leap to the United Synagogue, and Mike himself subsequently joined Reform. Somewhere in his heritage he got to know this choral piece which is about the Gates of Repentance, and was uplifted by it. We were similarly uplifted by the lusty singing of the Bevis Marks Choir, and Julian commented, "I'm also of mixed ancestry but we cope as well as we can."



10, Francoise Robertson, Zocharti lach, Lewandowsky version sung by Revd Ernest Levy z"l

Francoise, the head of the Association of Jewish Refugees in Edinburgh, was also



of mixed background. She was born in Brussels and her father joined the Belgian airforce while her mother somehow managed to get to the UK carrying baby Francoise in her arms. She had picked a recording of the late Cantor Levy z"l, of Giffnock Synagogue, singing this High Holydays piece with a choir. It is the same version as we hear from the EHC choir under the direction of David Mendelssohn. Rabbi Mark Solomon and Julian both said that had they been choosing chazzanut for the programme this is exactly what they would have chosen.

11, Oron Joffe, Shirat hasticker, Hadag Nachash (David Grossman)

Oron was so fed up with the conflicts in Israel which he experienced as a young man, that he decided to leave the country and start a totally new life. Ironically, since leaving Israel and settling in Edinburgh, he has felt more Jewish and more Israeli than ever. On a visit to his family in 2005, he had heard the Sticker Song which was being played everywhere. The band's very name (translating as 'The Fish Snake') is actually a spoonerism of nahag chadash 'new driver', itself a bumper sticker. What the author David Grossman did was to take commonly appearing bumper sticker slogans and put them together into a savagely subversive song about trends in Israeli society, from the most peaceable to the most intolerant and violent.



12, Shirley Bennett, Bay mir bistu sheyn, Andrews Sisters

Shirley had sat patiently through all the selections by others which together amounted to over 2 hours, when finally it was time for her immensely popular selection, which she has performed many times herself. On this occasion she chose a rendition by the Andrews Sisters. It reminded her of her childhood in Edinburgh, where Yiddish expressions were frequently used at home. The song itself had been composed for a show called "I would if I could" and the rights were sold for only \$30 but later bought back, fortunately for the composer and librettist as it became such a big hit. Shirley commented how the song was popular with all audiences and it was great to see the reaction from non-Jewish and Jewish audiences alike. The song provided a rousing finale to a wonderful afternoon's entertainment.



A vote of thanks was given by Elaine to Julian for compèring the afternoon in such an entertaining way and to everyone who had contributed their songs and their stories.

Shirli Gilbert – A Jewish Refugee in Apartheid South Africa – 6 January 2013

Rabbi Rose

When doing historical research one never knows what you'll find. So historian Shirli Gilbert found when researching Jewish attitudes to apartheid.

She discovered more than 2000 letters from Ralph Schwab, a German Jew who fled Germany for South Africa in the 1930s. Shirli's talk concentrated on three main areas: the worsening situation in Germany, Ralph's attitude to the situation in his adopted homeland and his correspondence with a boyhood friend who was a Nazi official.

Ralph's letters to his parents in the thirties reveal both the self-delusion of the Jews in believing that things would improve and their increasing desperation to escape once these illusions were shattered. For example Ralph's father not only objected to his efforts to get his younger brother out but even regretted at the outbreak of war in 1939 that the Nazis wouldn't let Jews fight for the Fatherland. After 1938, we see increasingly desperate efforts to get his family out, which unfortunately didn't succeed. Shirli also spoke briefly about what we can learn from the letters about Ralph's attitude to the situation in South Africa. Although seeing the National party as somewhat analogous to the fascists in Europe he shared the same prejudices as his white countrymen towards the black community.

Ralph also, following the war, carried on a correspondence with a boyhood friend who had also been a Nazi official. He helped Ralph and his family obtain reparations from the post-war German authorities. Interestingly, he only hints at his own role in the war, which Shirli thinks may have involved war crimes.

This was a fascinating insight and different perspective on the German Jewish refugees that leaves us wanting to know more.



Strangers No More – 13 January 2013

Micheline Brannan

As explained in its official website, “in the heart of Tel Aviv, there is an exceptional school where children from forty-eight different countries and diverse backgrounds come together to learn.

Many of the students arrive at Bialik-Rogozin School fleeing poverty, political adversity and even genocide. Here, no child is a stranger.

“Strangers No More follows several students’ struggle to acclimatise to life in a new land while slowly opening up to share their stories of hardship and tragedy. With tremendous effort and dedication, the school provides the support these children need to recover from their past. Together, the bond between teacher and student, and amongst the students themselves, enables them to create new lives in this exceptional community.”

As reported by the Jerusalem Post, “Strangers no More focuses on the educators at the school, in particular principal Keren Tal and teacher Smadar Moeres, as well as three students;



Rabbi Rose and Jeremy Beecham

Johannes from Ethiopia, Esther from South Africa, and Muhammad from Darfur. The film follows the students through the course of a school year, painting a picture of the hardships they faced before they left for Israel, and the ways in which the Bialik-Rogozin has been a sort of refuge for them in the country they now call home.”

This was a beautiful and moving film which would have made us really proud of Israel if we did not know from Vicki Prais’s talk at Limmud and from media reports how hostile some branches of Israeli society can be to the refugee and asylum seeker community and how high is the risk of deportation for the resilient but still vulnerable young people who featured in the documentary. Vicki Prais is a lawyer who is an activist for refugees and asylum seekers in Israel, and she reminded us of the problems facing this group in her remarks after the film was shown.

The Lit was privileged to have this film introduced and shown to us by Lord Jeremy Beecham. Jeremy Beecham, Baron Beecham, Kt, DL, is a British Labour politician and a senior figure in English local government. He was leader of Newcastle City Council and the first Chairman of the Local Government Association. He was the elected Chairman of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party (October 2005 -



Some of the children featured in the film

September 2006). He is better known to us as a Board Member of the New Israel Fund, who spoke to the Lit a few years ago about the treatment of Israel’s minorities. We are very fortunate that long-standing Lit member (and organiser of the Windows for Peace visits to Edinburgh) Judy Sischy, has an excellent relationship with Lord Beecham that allows the Lit to benefit from the generous use of his time and resources to visit us. The meeting was chaired by Rabbi Rose and the vote of thanks was given by Elaine Samuel.

The Book of Judith, A Tale of Gender Sex and Politics – 3 February 2013

Norman Crane

Norman Crane has very kindly summarised his own talk for the Star as follows.

On the surface, and put as simply as possible, Judith is a tale of a female hero who at a time of crisis takes dramatic action to save her people. She cuts off the head of the enemy general, Holofernes. ‘Judith’ was written as a disguised attack on 1 Maccabees, which tells, for the most part, the history of Judea in the thirty years after the rededication of the Temple and which is familiar from the story of Chanukah. The attack was disguised because by the time of Judith’s publication in 134/133 BCE many of the opponents of the Hasmonean regime had been killed. Judith’s author provides an alternative fictional history to the actual history in 1 Maccabees. His alternate for Antiochus Epiphanes is a fictional Nebuchadnezzar presented as an Assyrian and as an archetypal wicked pagan oppressor who

regards himself ‘Lord of the whole earth’. He is also presented as a pompous and ineffectual windbag. The nations round about simply ignore requests to do his bidding.

He sends his general Holofernes to restore order but he too is ridiculed. When Holofernes invades Judea he is warned by Achior, the Ammonite leader of a section of his army, that when Israel does not sin against God they prosper but when they do sin they are utterly defeated. Holofernes reacts angrily, “What God is there but Nebuchadnezzar? He banishes Achior to the fictitious town of Bethuliah, the gateway to a successful invasion of Judea. Holofernes besieges Bethuliah and cuts off their water supply. The townsfolk ask their chief magistrate to surrender. He says they should wait another five days to see what God will do for them.

Enter Judith. She is given an amazing genealogy stretching back through sixteen generations of named ancestors against a background of unnamed female characters in the Bible simply designated as the wife or daughter of a male character. It also draws attention to the small number of named antecedents given for the Hasmonean family in 1 Maccabees. Judith's ancient lineage enables her to summon the Council of Elders of Bethuliah to appear before her. She upbraids the elders for "putting G-d to the test" and trying to bind His purpose. Judith's speech expresses serious theological thinking and an intensity of religious feeling noticeably absent from 1 Maccabees.

Judith is a widow of blameless integrity, modesty and piety, who is nevertheless ready and willing to play a role to save her people, for she is also shapely and beautiful. She dresses in her finery so that she might entice the eyes of all the men who might see her. She prays to G-d to give her, a widow, a strong hand and cunning lips to crush the enemy by the hand of a female. She sets out at night accompanied by her maid.

Brought into Holofernes' tent, Judith 'plays' with Holofernes in a scene sparkling with irony. She refers to "My Lord" referring to G-d, but interpreted by Holofernes as referring to himself. She thoroughly flatters his male ego and then provides him with a plan of campaign. This involves Judith going out from the camp each night to find out from G-d when the people have sinned. For three evenings she refuses to dine with Holofernes because she knows the banquets are aimed at her seduction, and she eats and drinks her own food and wine she has brought with her. This serves to stoke up Holofernes' lust for her. He is determined to have her. On the fourth evening she agrees to dine with him but still eats her own food. Holofernes is nevertheless so thrilled at the prospect of at last having her that he drinks far far too much. Judith is left alone with Holofernes, who is in a drunken stupor. She takes his own sword, and, praying to G-d for strength, she cuts off his head.

Back in Bethuliah, she directs the counter-attack on the Assyrians, combining in her own person the role of Deborah the strategist and Jael the assassin. Achior confirms the head is that of Holofernes and is so impressed by what G-d has done for Israel, he becomes Jewish. Judith is highly praised by all, including the High Priest, who comes from Jerusalem. Judith sings a hymn of praise in which victory over the Assyrians is attributed to G-d. This is a contrast with the hymn of praise which Simon Maccabee, the last of the Hasmonean brothers, composed to mark the apogee of his career, and which deals with military and political achievements. Missing from it is any mention of G-d - typical of a hymn of praise on behalf of a male character but not of a female character. The use of Judith as a female hero has enabled the author to use male / female

conventions to underline the absence of G-d from Simon's hymn and indeed from almost anywhere else in 1 Maccabees.

Indeed 1 Maccabees is a story of military expeditions culminating in territorial expansion and the seizure of the High Priesthood and kingship by Jonathan and then Simon Maccabee. These positions were endorsed by the Hasmonean dominated Great Assembly and made hereditary to Simon and his descendants in 141 BCE with copies of the decree inscribed on bronze tablets for public display. The author of Judith criticises these developments in a number of ways, often simply by contrast.

In Judith, the role of the High Priest is sacerdotal rather than military or political. After the celebrations for her great deed are over, she retires to live out her life on her estate. She is honoured throughout the country although she does not seek honour. Judith's modesty is contrasted with the glory actively sought by the Hasmoneans, culminating in the display of the bronze tablets. It would have been open to the Hasmoneans to revert to their quiet positions as members of a priestly family in Modiin. Much play is made of the donning of royal apparel by Jonathan and Simon. Judith returns to her modest widow's garb.

Judith retains her independence by remaining a widow despite the press of many suitors. Consequently she remains childless, yet Judith is a mother in a figurative sense. She is 105 years old when she dies. The only woman in the Bible to have her

age at death stated is Sarah, the mother of the Jewish people, who died at age 127. Judith's victory is new life to the Jewish people. Simon Maccabee, a father of a dynasty, passes on his wealth and position to his own sons. Judith's hymn of praise states that the childless Judith, like any good mother, holds in highest value people, not possessions, and she dedicates all her spoils of war to G-d. Simon Maccabee builds a monument over the family tomb, based on design of the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, dubbed one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Judith's simple but standard cave burial stands as a silent rebuke.

It is not possible to name any given individual as the author of Judith but internal evidence strongly suggests that the writer was an early Pharisee, ideological opponent of the Hasmonean priest rulers, who were Saducees. Whoever the author was, the book was skilfully and entertainingly written. The book makes use of gender stereotypes, sexual titillation and a cutting irony, to construct a biting if hidden commentary on the political and religious developments of Second Century Judea recorded in 1 Maccabees. Although the book starts with a fictional spoof history, its female hero is a person of serious intent. Judith is indeed a parable for her times.



Edinburgh Holocaust Memorial Day

Matt Lord, Edinburgh Inter-faith Association

On 24th of January Broughton High School hosted the Edinburgh's Holocaust Memorial Day Event. The evening was organised by a small group of 5th and 6th year Broughton students in partnership with Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association and proved to be a great success. The night's programme was tremendously varied and featured international guest speakers alongside moving contributions from students themselves.



Jean Paul Samputu

Jean Paul Samputu for many proved to be the highlight of the evening, performing award winning musical pieces and sharing his experiences of the Rwandan genocide. His message of forgiveness was especially powerful when considered next to the various readings given by the student organisers of the event who respectfully shared testimonies from the Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

Musical pieces were performed wonderfully by the talented students of Broughton High School and the audience also heard from Sello Hatang, a spokesperson from The Nelson Mandela foundation who had travelled from South Africa to appear at the Edinburgh and Glasgow Holocaust Memorial Day events.

The event was closed by Rabbi David Rose of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation. Rabbi Rose read a Jewish prayer for the dead, a fitting end to a memorable evening in remembrance of all those whose lives were ended or changed forever by the Holocaust and subsequent genocides.



Broughton pupils give their readings

Holocaust Memorial Day Event at Queen Margaret University

Professor Joe Goldblatt, FRSA

The "Look to the Sky" film event on 3 February 2013 at Queen Margaret University was sponsored by the International Centre for the Study of Planned Events, the Social Justice Programme and the Media Studies Programme at Queen Margaret University. Our community partners included

Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, Chabad of Edinburgh and the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community. Approximately 70 persons attended including the Federal Republic of Germany Consul General and Deputy Consul General and the Romanian consul general. The film was inspired by a book written by Dr. Jona Oberski that

described his childhood memories of the Holocaust. Dr. Oberski's son, Dr. Iddo Oberski is a senior lecturer in the Centre for Academic Practice at Queen Margaret University and he originated the idea for having the film's public UK premiere at Queen Margaret University in conjunction with Holocaust Memorial Day.

Ingrid and Henry Wuga

Edward Green



Ingrid and Henry Wuga, the well-known former kosher caterers from Glasgow, and parents of our own Gillian Field, were guests of honour at a Holocaust Remembrance Day event held this year at Fettes College in Edinburgh.

Invited by Freddie Green, they spoke most movingly and at times with a refreshing humour to the over 200 students who crushed together to hear and meet them. The Wugas spoke of their escape from Nazi Germany through the Kindertransport and their journeys to the United Kingdom ending up in Scotland and proved to be a fantastic success eliciting many letters from staff and students alike with grateful thanks for their presence and indeed motivation to all that heard them. After their Edinburgh visit, they were leaving for London for the week to speak with schools there, and were subsequently due to travel later on in the month with Blesma (British Limbless Ex Service Men's Association), raising funds for the charity.

In their late eighties, Ingrid and Henry Wuga continue to be an inspiration to all that meet them and it is a joy to be in their company.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Anti-Semitism and European Jewry

Rabbi Rose

Holocaust Memorial Day has become a staple fixture of life in Britain and in some ways throughout Europe.

Many people within the Jewish communities, including myself, had great reservations about this day and especially with its name. The years in between have only, I believe, proved those reservations to be justified. I was not against a 'Genocide Day' to commemorate the many instances of genocide and ethnic cleansing since the beginning of the last century. It was the specific designation as of a national day to commemorate the Holocaust that was I believed misplaced and potentially damaging. Many people at the time were concerned that the day would be used by opponents of Israel to highlight the Palestinian issue. By and large this has not happened. What has happened is that the Holocaust has been joined to Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur as examples of man's inhumanity to man. These events together are used to teach the importance of combating prejudice, standing up for the persecuted and building bridges, to name a few. All of these are worthy aims. But in all this the uniqueness of the Holocaust and, especially, the unique lessons that need to be learnt, are forgotten. That is dangerous for Jews.

The Holocaust is unique and its lessons are unique because anti-Semitism is unique. People may hate certain groups because of how they look or where they live or what they believe. Jews have been hated for all these reasons. But fundamentally and uniquely Jews are hated for what they stand for. Jews are hated because they represent, even if only subconsciously, a certain idea about the world. Thus anti-Semitism transcends national boundaries, specific situations and can even exist in countries where there are no Jews. Furthermore, it means that anti-Semitism, unlike other prejudices, can be extremely logical and even, if you accept the worldview or vision of the anti-Semites, quite justified. For example, to believe that someone's skin colour makes them inferior can be demonstrated to be wrong and political or territorial disputes can be resolved. But to understand that the very existence of Jews poses a threat to your worldview or place in the world is more difficult to combat.

The source of anti-Semitism in Europe, traditional Christianity, demonstrates this point. Classic Christianity regarded the existence of Jews as fundamentally opposed to their worldview. The fact that Jews existed in the world posed a mortal threat to their vision for the world. The fact that the people of their saviour remained unconverted, irrespective of any actions of actual Jews, was a direct contradiction to the Church's claim of universality. Christianity had replaced Judaism, so Jews had no right to exist.

While this could for most Christians be achieved by conversion, in Spain after 1492, this was also not accepted. Even converted Jews were still Jews and a distinction was made between Old Christians and New Christians. A Jew, even if he converted, remained a Jew. Jewish blood, not religion, was the determining factor. This of course was expanded on by the Nazis. Jews were a mortal threat to the Nazi vision of a world ruled by the law of the jungle. Jews stood for looking after the weak rather than killing them, compassion rather than cruelty and G-d rather than paganism. One of the charges against the Jews was that they had infected pagan Europe with 'the sickness of Christianity'. These values were intrinsic to Jews, whatever they believed, and therefore the Nazi world could never be safe while Jews existed.

For this reason the Holocaust is unique in its ideological basis and in the specific lessons that need to be learned if it is not to be repeated. General messages against prejudice and in favour of tolerance are not enough. Without dealing with the specific roots of anti-Semitism that led to the Holocaust we are in danger of history repeating itself. It is a frightening statistic that in the decade since the establishment of HMD anti-Semitism has increased not lessened.

Under the cover of comment on the Middle East conflict anti-Semitic caricatures have returned to the European media and supersessionism and replacement theology to the churches. Holocaust Memorial Day rather than helping combat this phenomenon occasionally even contributes to it. Jews are compared to Nazis and the specific evil of anti-Semitism is subsumed under the rubric of prejudice and Jews left open to attack, especially by the left that uses concern for human rights as a cover for attacks on both Israel's and the Jew's right to exist as Jews. Furthermore, HMD, in its current form at least, enables European society to escape their specific guilt for the Holocaust by wrapping it up in other genocides. Thus the specific cause of the Holocaust, the attitude of European society to Jews, is covered up and the same attitudes allowed to again take root in new forms. As many of us feared, HMD has removed the Holocaust from its specific Jewish context and thus also removed an important barrier to it happening again. We need to think again.

Letters to the Star

From Rabbi Shalom Shapira

Dear Editor

Edward Green's interview with me together with all the photographs was very impressive and gave me lots of pleasure and pride and even widened my reputation among all my friends in Israel and in my Synagogue in Raanana.

There is only one important remark which I feel I am obliged to make. My heartiest gratitude and thanks for enabling me to fulfill my mission successfully go to those three extraordinary personalities, John Cosgrove, Malcolm Cowan and the late Dr. Nate Oppenheim who served as presidents during my 7 years of service.

I will always appreciate and never forget their cooperation, advice and support, and particularly their honorable way in solving any faults and mistakes, for which I still feel I owe them my apologies.

And, last but not least, my thanks go to the now president- chairman, Mr. Edward Green, as specified in my following letter:

Dear Edward

I have just heard that your interview was printed in the Rosh Hashana issue and it came out in a very nice and honorable manner. It brings up very fond memories to those who shared their life with me and my late wife during our 7 years of service. I have not seen it yet in print, as I am now in Germany, fulfilling my duties at the High Holiday Services, but it is amazing that it was printed in the Rosh Hashana issue, which closes a circle, since the first issue, in 1989, was also a Rosh Hashana issue.

I think it is surprising that a Jewish community should publish an interview with one of its Rabbis, 17 years after his retirement. It shows the high values and impressions of a period which a community would like to memorize for the generations to come. It gives me so much pleasure and pride in that period of my life which includes my greatest achievements I was lucky to be able to carry out in this extraordinary community.

I wish to thank you, Edward, for your kind efforts you made writing this interview and bringing it to print in the most appropriate way. Please convey also to Micheline my heartiest thanks for her cooperation and all the work she had done to complete this issue just in time for Rosh Hashana.

With kindest regards and best wishes to you and to all your family for a very happy, successful and prosperous New Year, and well over the fast.

Rabbi Shalom Shapira

From Clarice Osborne

(Chairman of Scottish Friends of Alyn)

On behalf of the Scottish Friends of Alyn Hospital, Jerusalem, I should like to thank all those who responded so generously to our 2012 appeal to help the children in this hospital.

I should also like to thank everyone who marked the celebration of birthdays, anniversaries and other happy events by donating to Alyn. This is much appreciated.

Enabling EXTRAordinary children to do ORDINARY things by transforming DISabilities into ABILITIES using All the Love You Need.

Clarice Osborne

Letters continued
on page 49



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Keeping the Faith

Film Night 17th February 2013

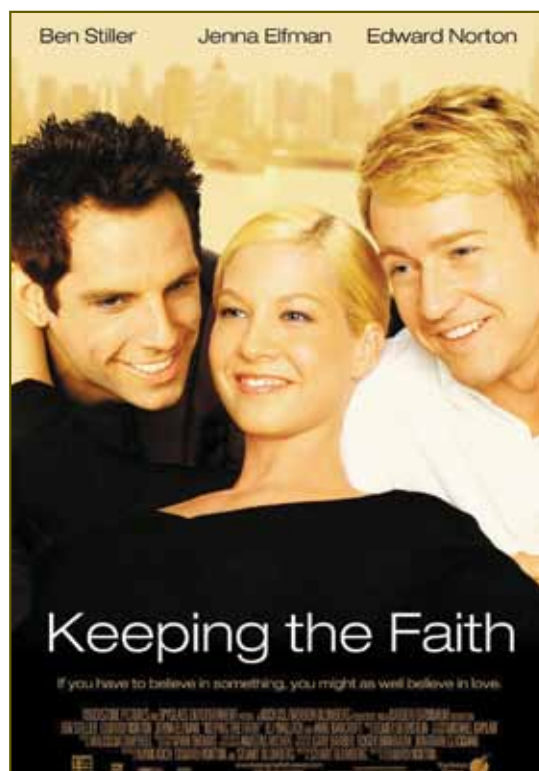
Janet Mundy

The Marian Oppenheim Hall is occasionally turned into part Odeon, part café for one of the ever popular Community Centre film nights.

The February choice was “Keeping the Faith”, a hilarious rom-com starring Ben Stiller and Edward Norton (who also directed) as a rabbi and a priest who both fall in love with the same girl, played by Jenna Elfman. What the film lacks in subtlety, it makes up for in charm and amusement, with a decidedly 21st century take on religious inclusion. (The scene where a gospel choir performs “Ein Keloheinu” is worth seeing on its own.) The supporting cast are also a joy, including director Milos Forman (“Amadeus”, “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”) and scene stealer Anne Bancroft as a classic Jewish mother with a twist.

The other stars of the show were the Community Centre committee, who prepared and served a delicious buffet meal and acted as latter day projectionists.

All in all, it was a thoroughly enjoyable way to spend a Sunday night. Check the Edinburgh Jewish Community Centre cinema listings for the next production!



The Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

Festival Open Day Sunday 18th August 2013

12.00 – 3.00pm

at the Synagogue, 4 Salisbury Road, Edinburgh (near the Commonwealth Swimming Pool)

Join us for bagels, coffee, cake and a taste of Jewish cultural events and shows at the Edinburgh Festivals!

See our exhibition – the history of the Edinburgh Jewish Community.

The Event will include Festival performers in conversation with writer/producer David Ian Neville

Suggested donation £ 5.00

Students & children £ 3.00

Children under five free

Programme subject to change. Further details on Synagogue website in August.

email: secretary@ehcong.com for further details

EHC Purim Celebrations

Micheline Brannan

The Purim celebrations at EHC began with Rabbi Rose reading the Megillah in his usual variety of voices, changing hats and other props as he went, with the able assistance of Joseph Shackman. The reading was followed by Havdalah and a light supper including Hamantashchen in the Marian Oppenheim Hall. Some adults attended in slightly fancy dress, but the main parade of outfits was reserved for Purim morning, when, instead of Cheder, the Megillah was read, a collection was taken in Shul for Matanot LaEvyonim (gifts to the poor), and a children's fancy dress parade was held, compèred by Janet Mundy, resplendent in Indian Salwar Kameez. All the children were given medals rather than prizes. Following the parade we sat down to a Purim brunch. Thus people at EHC were able to fulfil at least 3 of the 4 Mitzvot of Purim, hearing the Megillah, charity and the Purim Seudah. Those who also brought Mishloach Manot for their friends scored the whole four. Grateful thanks go to the Shul Events Committee for preparing two fantastic meals and for creating a lovely atmosphere for our celebration.



Rabbi Rose's hats



Rabbi Rose changes hats and wands as he reads the Megillah, with the help of Joseph Shackman



Listening to the Megillah in the Beit Hamidrash



Rabbi Rose makes Havdalah



Members enjoying buffet after the Saturday night reading of the Megillah



Lord Julian Goodman in his fez



Marcia and Lennie Berger as bride and groom



Carol Levstein and Sara Lurie with flowers in their hair

SUNDAY MORNING PURIM FANCY DRESS PARADE



Editor and Janet Mundy in Indian costume with 'Moses' (Elaine Levy)



The editor in Indian costume, with Jane Ansell in African costume



Janet (compering) introduces Merav Gardi as a Jewish mother, with jug of chicken soup



Orli Meiksin as King Ahasuerus



Shlomit Gardi as Curious George



Connor Finlay as King David



Aiddie Finlay as Captain America



Lotem Gardi as an Israeli Cheer Leader



Joseph (Clare Levy) and Moses (Elaine Levy)



Dorothy Sharratt as American Revolutionary Soldier



Sigal Finlay as Darth Vader, with Leo Finlay as Yoda



Ruth Adler as hula hula dancer

Obituaries

Rose Orgel 1924-2012

Micheline Brannan (with contribution from nephew Barry Gordon)

Rose Orgel (née Gordon) was one of the most consistent members of EHC. She attended services regularly from 1970, when she moved to Edinburgh on her marriage to the late Geoffrey Orgel, and continued to do so until shortly before she passed away in November 2012.



Rose with the late David Goldberg

Rose was born in Glasgow. Her father ran a kosher delicatessen in Battlefield Road until the outbreak of the Second World War. When he became an official of Giffnock Synagogue the family moved to Robbslee Road. She had an older sister Ruby, who passed away 6 years ago, and a younger brother Basil, who moved to London and brought up his family there. It was Basil's children, Barry, Martin and Danya, who accompanied Rose to her grave and were the chief mourners at



Rose with Rabbi Shapira on his visit to Edinburgh in 2012

her well-attended funeral. The other nephew, Andrew, could not attend. The family remember Rose as a loyal aunt who always remembered their birthdays.

Before marrying Geoffrey, Rose was in business. She sang in the Glasgow Jewish Choral Society. She is remembered by Glasgow friends as being very kind and elegant. After moving to Edinburgh, she devoted herself to communal activities. She was chair of the Edinburgh Synagogue Ladies Guild and was also secretary of the Edinburgh Council of Christians and Jews for 16 years. She was always committed to inter faith activities and was much in demand as an official Jewish speaker to churches and other non-Jewish organisations, to which she gave very generously of her time. She is still remembered fondly by a number of church clergy who were shocked at her passing. Sadly Geoffrey passed away in

1982. In later years Rose and the late David Goldberg enjoyed a marvellous companionship in which, as she said, 'there were no barriers between us'. They regularly went on holiday together right up to 2011, and it was after their last cruise that David was suddenly hospitalised. It was a terrible shock for Rose to lose David last year and it is a tribute to her that David's children, Philip and Hazel, continued to support her after his death, visiting regularly and helping her out.



Rose with her brother Basil

Rose is remembered as a 'real lady', always beautifully turned out, friendly and thoughtful, putting others at their ease. She was a great ambassador for the Jewish faith. She loved life, was interested in this world, and wanted to be part of it, however hard that became at times because of her health problems. There will be many little reminders of her in people's lives. G-d bless her memory and may she rest in peace.

In Memoriam Robert Lionel Bindman 1939-2012

Michael Bindman

Robert Lionel Bindman was born on May 23rd 1939 in Simpsons Maternity Hospital and passed away on December 14th 2012 in Greece. I am led to believe that he was suffering from influenza at the time. He was predeceased by his wife Margaret who passed in 2011. He and Margaret had moved to Greece in 1987 and he worked as a TV soap opera actor and latterly as a teacher. He was educated at James Gillespie's primary school and George Watson's High School. He served in the Royal Air Force and was an avid rugby and cricket player. As a young man he was a member of Habonim and Maccabi.



Phillip Harris

1922 – 2013

Sadly Mr Phillip Harris, the distinguished neurosurgeon, to whom tribute was paid in Star 69, along with his wife Sheelagh, passed away on 22 February 2013.



Although his parents were from Leeds, Phillip was born and bred in Edinburgh. There are many wonderful anecdotes of his childhood, and younger life with his brother David, relayed in his memoirs, "To be a Neurosurgeon", published in 2009. A brilliant mind and a thirst for learning propelled Phillip to become a distinguished neurosurgeon, with a start to his academic career at the Royal High School, Edinburgh. Telling his teacher one day of his ambition to become a doctor, he was warned that he would have to work "very much harder"!

Phillip Harris married Sheelagh Coutts, a Glasgow girl, in 1949. As well as his career in surgery, he was involved with a number of organisations; including non-governmental organisations. He was President of the Bnei Brith, President of the Rotary Club of Edinburgh, Chairman of the Epilepsy of S E Scotland, Founder, President and the Honorary President of the Scottish Disability Sport, President of the British Cervical Spine Society, Editor of the International Journal: Spinal Cord, Chairman of the UK Government body to examine and assess overseas doctors wishing to practise medicine in the UK, and a Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

He was an active member of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, including singing in the synagogue choir. He also found time to be an active member of the Editorial Board of the Edinburgh Star, serving since its inception, and being involved in editing and proof-reading 68 of the issues to date. All the Editorial Board deeply regret his passing and send their sympathies, condolences and wishes for a long life to the family. Phillip Harris is survived by his wife Sheelagh, their daughter, Frances, and their son Harvey, along with their four grandchildren.

Maurice Penn

The late Maurice (Maurie) Penn passed away on 12 February 2013. The family has very kindly given the Star permission to print the eulogy delivered by daughter, Samantha Penn, at the funeral.

Our deepest condolence, sympathy and wishes for a long life go to his widow Dinah and his daughter Samantha, on their tragic and unexpected loss. Maurie Penn was a regular attender at Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and his quiet, friendly, and dignified presence will be sadly missed by all his fellow congregants. Samantha's tribute follows:

"Those of you who grew up with Maurie, will know that at an early age, following the loss of his father, he assumed the responsibilities of caring for his mother & young sister Sandra.

After his two years National Service in the armed forces, he found it difficult to resume his studies in Accountancy & decided to go into business.

His grandfather in Glasgow was a great influence in spurring his interest in religion, which he followed with enthusiasm, playing an active role in his local community.

Maurie's main interests were reading, solving crossword puzzles, gardening, cinema & watching sports. A great raconteur, he loved socialising, whether it be talking about family history or discussing the latest news.

A devoted husband, father, brother, uncle & cousin, he will never be forgotten by his family & friends. Our family would like to thank everyone for their overwhelming kindness, generosity & support."

Doris (Dolly) Bierman

25.4.1927 to 5.1.2013

Stella Bierman

Dolly was one of seven children of Jack and Josephine Levey. As the eldest daughter, Dolly was expected to help her mother in the house and to assist her father in his jewellery shop. To accomplish this, Dolly had to leave school at 14.



In 1947, Doris met Morris Bierman, proprietor of his own upholstery business. Doris and Morris were married in 1948 and had 3 children together before Morris's untimely death in 1975 at the age of 42. Dolly continued to work and bring up her family.

Later, she went to Australia to help raise her Australian grandchildren. She then returned to live in Edinburgh with her devoted daughter Stella, who took care of her.

When Dolly was 60, she went to night school to gain the academic qualifications that she had missed out on in her youth and scored so highly that she went on to become a member of MENSAs.

Dolly's increasingly severe Alzheimers meant it was necessary that she went into residential care in Musselburgh, where Stella was her daily visitor for the 5 years that she was in care until her death in January 2013.

She will be sadly missed by all her surviving family.

Norman Kreitman

Joyce Caplan

Norman Kreitman who died on the 15th December 2012 was truly 'a lad o' parts'. An eminent clinical psychiatrist, poet and lately a philosopher he contributed much to all three disciplines. As a poet he wrote poetry from his early days in London, where he began a life long friendship with Dannie Abse. He was interested in the relationship between the poet and the reader - "together we make a fable" he said and his poems, rooted in his experience of life, affirmed the power of art to make sense of the chaos and uncertainty of life. He was a secular Jew, interested in the scope and complexity of Jewish identity. He enjoyed the Lit meetings he attended, relishing discussion and debate.

In his poetry he always questioned what being human meant, both to the individual and the society in which he placed himself. His poems combined this thoughtful, reflective self with the events of his domestic and personal life, the inner and outer experience combining to produce lyrical and moving works. Of his four volumes of acclaimed poems the latest, 'Dancing in the Dark', was published just two years ago. He was a man of impeccable courtesy and great integrity: a mentor to many and a dear friend who will be missed by all who had the privilege to know him.

GRANDFATHER SMILING

Norman Kreitman

A twinkling, chubby man still beams at me
amid Edwardian clutter, lapped by his family
of bosomed wife, my infant mother, uncles
of assorted heights. And still, Zaida, I hear
the cadence of your accent, chained to your first
and alien language, recall the smell
of your new clothes, the bristly kiss,
how rounded your love, and its closed assumptions.



Like any grandson I look back and see
chiefly a landscape, a time of trams and certainties
on iron rails, yet a room ruby with warmth,
bread and china roses on the velvet tablecloth,
and you, waiting to greet us, always delighted.
Should I have made more of your legacy
who envied and despised your simplicity?

If we met today you would chuckle, bemused
at the Englishman, Scotsman, Jew, two-trade jack,
impatient with superstition yet fierce for his own;
one who has travelled beyond Cambridge Road
yet still puzzles how a citizen of the world
should live in his home village, and pays
for never getting the balance right. Dearest man,
daily remind me whence I came,

stand there in sepia, a hand on the back of a chair
and smiling under your moustache; hold your place
in a composition I will not achieve.

Letters to the Star continued

From George & Elizabeth Grubb 18 Sep 2012

Dear Sidney

May I thank you most sincerely for sending us the latest edition of The Star. We were delighted to get all the news and to read the articles. I have scoured it from cover to cover!!

The pictures of your newly refurbished sanctuary are beautiful and it will be a joy for you to worship in such beautiful surroundings.

We were also glad to remember the solemn holiness of the Remembrance in the Peace Park last April. We were thankful still to be in office so we could be there never to forget.

A happy notice was Sara Lurie's engagement to Matthew Schapps. We wish them both every happiness. Sara and I were colleagues when we worked together at Donaldson's School for the Deaf.

The magazine is just wonderful throughout as we recognise so many names – especially in the New Year Greetings – and so many happy events which we shared in your company.

We hope you had a lovely day yesterday celebrating Rosh Hashanah and blessings through every day of the year ahead.

Greetings to all the congregation and thank you again.

George and Elizabeth

From Lesley Danzig

Dear Editor

Gillian's vision for a Jewish Community Centre ('A Vision of the Future'-Sharing Premises/A New Jewish Centre) (Star 69) is shared by many of the Jewish Community in Edinburgh but having two kitchens would be immediately divisive and defeat the purpose.

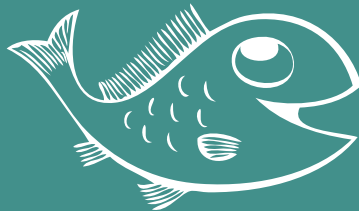
Working together and sharing the preparation of meals in a communal kitchen plays a seminal role in the life of any group be it religious or otherwise. Keeping kashrut is a key element in maintaining a Jewish identity which presumably would be one of the purposes of a Jewish Centre.

'Divided we fall-United we stand'. One kitchen could bring us all together - an experience not without recent history in Edinburgh.

Lesley Danzig

If you want to make any comments on the Edinburgh Star, please contact the Editor:

**Micheline Brannan 31/3 Rattray Grove,
Edinburgh EH10 5TL
0131 447 0818 michelinehbrannan@msn.com**



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Purim at Sukkat Shalom

Gillian Raab

Ever since the early days of Sukkat Shalom our Purim celebrations have been something special, but this year has been the best of all. We started with two dragons making havdalah, a fancy dress parade and then a strange creature descended upon us waving the ultimate weapon "A megillah" and proceeded to read a tale from it. A further version of the tale followed from our talented group of Purimspielers. This time the story had

some different twists. Queen Vashti escaped from her autocratic husband to pursue a career in politics with Alex Salmond. King Achashveros was so addicted to burgers that he somehow managed to lose his horse and Haman had to be led round on Daisy the cow. And the story had a Liberal ending too when Haman was not hanged, though he might have preferred it to his fate of spending the rest of his years under the thumb of Shushan Court beauty Crystal, seen on left at the curtain call.



Curtain call L to R

Michael Elam as Crystal, Anna Duncan-Nitzan as a townspeople, Sadie Budd and Connie Dover as Daisy the cow, Itamar Nitzan as a guard, Gillian Raab as cowherd, Helen Sherbourne as the King, Jenni Underwood as Vashti, Kat Angus as Esther, David Mackie as Mordechai, Sarah Nisbet townspeople, Maurice Naftalin as narrator and Solly Duffy looking on.

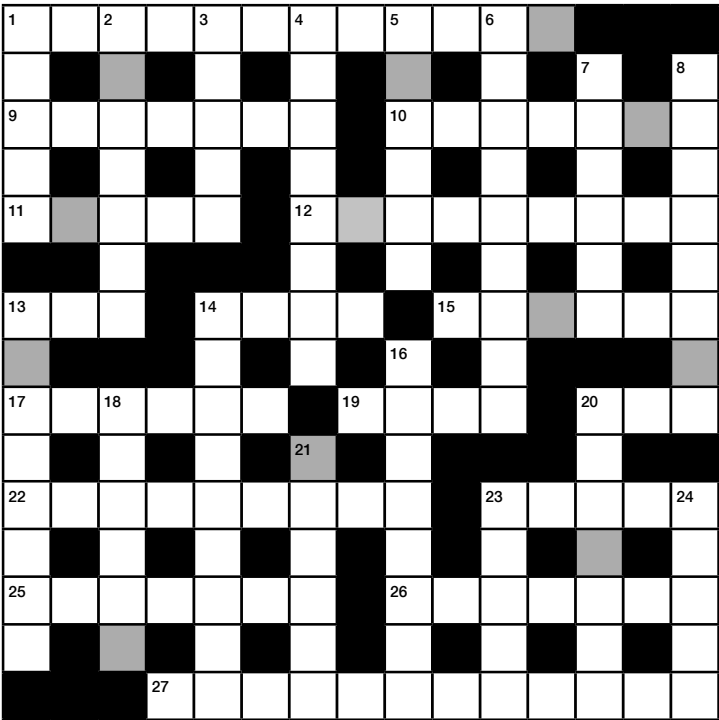


Star Crossword Issue 69

CONGRATULATIONS to Tony Gilbert for the only solution submitted. Bottle of kosher wine on its way to you.

SOLUTIONS:

- | Across | | Down | |
|--------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1. | Rosh Hashanah | 1. | Remus |
| 9. | Memento | 2. | Symptom |
| 10. | Pigment | 3. | Honey |
| 11. | Satay | 4. | Snowdrop |
| 12. | Dress Down | 5. | Apples |
| 13. | Yom | 6. | Augustine |
| 14. | Book | 7. | Recoup |
| 15. | Kippur | 8. | Stingray |
| 17. | Shofar | 13. | Yeshivot |
| 19. | Life | 14. | Blattodea |
| 20. | Day | 16. | Kingston |
| 22. | Inputting | 18. | Osprey |
| 23. | Sushi | 20. | Deserve |
| 25. | Overdue | 21. | Wise up |
| 26. | Tendril | 23. | Sinew |
| 27. | Happy New Year | 24. | Idler |



Congratulations



Sara Lurie and **Matthew Shaps** are delighted to announce they were married on 16th December at Ohav Sholom, on Manhattan's Upper West Side. It was a wonderfully happy day, followed by an amazing honeymoon to the Dominican Republic. They now look forward to dividing their time between Edinburgh and London.



Mazal tov to the Edinburgh team who competed in the WIZO online quiz in January at the home of Carol Levstein and Tom Griffin. They were 3rd in the UK. Left to right: Back row **Tom Griffin, Carol Levstein, John Danzig, Susie Shenkin, Jonathan Adler, Elaine Samuel, Arnold Rifkind, Hilary Rifkind**. Front row: **Lesley Danzig, Steven Hyams, Susan Hyams, Betsy Dorfman, Stan Raffel**



Mazal Tov to **David Gonshaw** on winning a £50 prize for a short story from the Craigmillar Writers Club.

To **Hannah Rebecca Cohn-Simmen** on her Bat Mitzvah, celebrated on Shabbat 2 March 2013 at EHC.



Mazal Tov to **David** and **Sheryl Kaplan** on the birth of Cameron Blair (Boruch Mordechai) on 24 October 2012 – a grandson for **Morris** and the late **Myrna Kaplan**.

Mazal Tov - Sukkat Shalom

Mazal Tov to **Elad Schreiber** and **Genevieve Patenaude** on the birth of Samuel Olivier Patenaude on October 4th, 2012 6lbs 11oz. His brit milah was carried out by Dr Howard Cohen, who is also our link person to the Liberal Judaism executive, when he was given the Hebrew name Shmuel.

Mazal tov to **Helen Sherbourne** and **Stewart Zollinger** on their engagement.



Ian & Rachel Sandra & Sidney Caplan would like to thank family & friends for the good wishes and lovely gifts on the birth of Daniel Matan Caplan on 27th February 2013.

Forthcoming Events



Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

Shabbat morning services take place every week at 10.00am in the Synagogue at 4 Salisbury Road.

Community Centre Committee events take place in the Marian Oppenheim Hall, Jewish Community Centre, 4 Salisbury Road.

Monday April 8	Yom Hashoah Ceremony, Peace Park, Princes Street Gardens
Monday April 15	Yom HaZikaron
Tuesday April 16	Yom HaAtzmaut Celebration
Sunday April 21	Bridge & Games Evening
Sunday May 12	Coffee Morning
Saturday Aug 17	Civic Service
Sunday Aug 18	Festival Open Day
Sunday Sept 1	Coffee Morning
Sunday Oct 27	Quiz
Saturday Nov 30	Chanukah Dinner

Further details, including time and ticket price where applicable, will be circulated for each event nearer the time.

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

Contact Avril Berger
t: 0131 664 2938
email: avril.berger@btinternet.com

Sukkat Shalom

Services

Erev Shabbat service will be on the **SECOND** Friday (7 pm) of each calendar month.

Shabbat morning service on the Saturday (11 am) after the **FOURTH** Friday.

These services take place in the:
Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace.

Kabbalat Shabbat Services will be on **FIRST** and **THIRD** Fridays

These services take place at:
Marchmont St. Giles, 2a Kilgraston Road, 6:15 pm

We also have a Tea and Talmud group – to coincide with Rabbi Mark Solomon's visits, in members' homes, and a Philosophy Discussion Group

For further information go to our website and follow the link to the diary:

www.eljc.org

Jewish Festivals

Yom HaAtzmaut Tuesday 16 April

Lag BeOmer Sunday 28 April

Shavuot Wednesday 15 (and Thursday 16) May

Fast of 17 Tammuz Tuesday 25 June

Fast of 9 Av (Tisha BeAv) Tuesday 16 July

Erev Rosh Hashanah Wednesday 4 September

Rosh Hashanah Thursday 5 & Friday 6 September

Kol Nidrei Friday 13 September

Yom Kippur Saturday (Shabbat) 14 September

Erev Sukkot Wednesday 18 September

Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

Sunday 28 April 2013 at 20:00 in the Marian Oppenheim Hall, 4 Salisbury Road

Alex Guilherme
Lecturer in Education Studies, Liverpool Hope University

Martin Buber and Gandhi-a political exchange of letters on the Jewish Problem