

THE EDINBURGH

# STAR

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**SHANA TOVA  
EDINBURGH**

**~ ON YOUR ~  
200<sup>TH</sup> YEAR!**



THE MAGAZINE FOR THE EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY

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## 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.

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THE EDINBURGH

# STAR

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# Editorial

Finally, we are back in print. Thanks to the generosity of patrons, advertisers and you, the readers and donors who sustain the Star, we are able to bring out the 80th Issue of the Edinburgh Star in all its glossy glory, in time for Rosh HaShanah.

What a year this has been and is going to be! There has been an organised Jewish community in Scotland for 200 years, starting from the Hebrew year 5777. We now number only around 6000 according to the 2011 Census, roughly the same as Sikhs, Hindus and Pagans. The miracle is that we still are a vibrant and active sector of Scotland's public life. Not only do we continue to run a myriad of institutions to support the community from the cradle to the grave, but we also have individuals playing a prominent part in the civic space – the law, healthcare, business, charities, the arts and politics.

In 5777 we will celebrate all that, starting with Edinburgh, where it began. Harvey Kaplan's article inside launches the Star's appreciation of our 200th year. We take the opportunity to profile Edward Green DL, who has become the first Jewish Deputy to the Lord Lieutenant of Edinburgh. We report on the success of one of our former members abroad – Canadian MP Michael Levitt. We once again round up events of Jewish interest

at the Edinburgh Festival, founded in 1947 as an antidote to the horrors of World War II, by Sir Rudolf Bing, a refugee from Nazism. The Jewish flavour of the Festival has recently suffered from virulent campaigns to exclude Israeli artistes, but in 2016 this was overcome by the International Shalom Festival, reported within, which is set to become an annual event. Sadly, we pay tribute to two well-known and well-loved members who have passed away, the late Ian Shein and the late Robin Spark, and we add condolences on the loss of the late Arnold Glass.

I personally am seeing Scotland's Jews from a new perspective as Chair of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities. No, I have not moved to Glasgow, keeping my principal residence in Edinburgh, and not indulging in any 'flipping'. However my centre of gravity has undoubtedly moved to Glasgow and people are seeing less of me here.



The Editorial Board will be relying on others to report events in Edinburgh on a regular basis so that we can keep the Star pdfs going throughout 5777, and Edward Green has kindly stepped in as guest editor for the Rosh Hashanah print edition in 2017. I am so grateful to Edward and also to my amazing Editorial Board for all the help they have given me over the last 5 years.

With best wishes for a *kativah vechatimah tovah*

Micheline Brannan

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## Rosh Hashanah Message

On Rosh Hashanah, after each Shofar blowing in Musaf, we say a paragraph that encapsulates the meaning of the Day. In it we make two statements; 'today is the birthday of the world; today you arraign in judgement all the creatures of the world'.



These two ideas, the concept of Rosh Hashanah being the anniversary of creation and a day of judgement or evaluation are intimately connected. Because it is the birthday of the world G-d evaluates his creations. When we reach a significant milestone in our lives or the life of a nation, city or community, it is time to take stock. It is an opportunity

to evaluate where we have been, where we are today and where we want to go in the future. This coming year marks the 200th anniversary of the establishment of the Edinburgh Jewish community. It is a time to commemorate the past, celebrate the present and ponder the future. This anniversary comes at a time when our community is somewhat unsettled. We seem unsure of how to secure our future or even who we are or who we want to be. This state of affairs can often lead to dissension. Yet Rosh Hashanah is also a day of unity. By standing together as a people when G-d is sitting in judgement over us we believe that we increase the chances of a favourable outcome. The same is true of our community. If we preserve our essential unity while conducting the rigorous evaluation appropriate for this period we will surely ensure a favourable outcome and secure our future for many years to come.

לשנה טובה תכתבו

A Happy New Year  
Rabbi David Rose

# 200 YEARS

# A Timeline of Jewish Life in Edinburgh

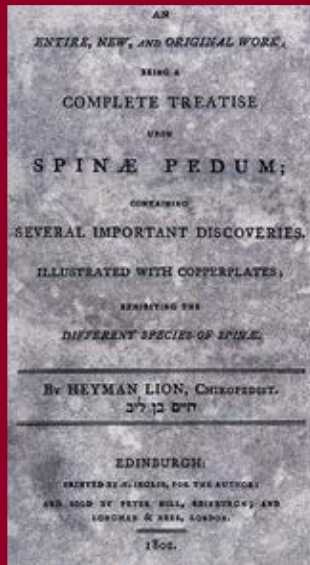
Harvey L Kaplan

## The first Jews in Edinburgh

The first firm evidence of Jews in Scotland dates back to the mid-17th Century, when some converted European Jews were to be found teaching at Scottish universities. Julius Conradus Otto from Vienna became Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Tongues at Edinburgh University in 1641.<sup>1</sup> In 1691, David Brown became the first openly-practicing Jew permitted to reside and trade in the city.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the 18th century, other Jews arrived in small numbers. There were Jewish medical students at Edinburgh University as early as 1767. For example, Joseph Hart Myers from New York graduated MD at Edinburgh University in 1779.<sup>3</sup> Another early Jewish resident of Edinburgh was Herman Lyon (Heyman Lion), dentist and chiropodist, who came to Edinburgh from Prussia in 1788, and obtained a burial plot for himself and his family on Calton Hill in 1793.<sup>4</sup> In 1802, he published his book on Spinae Pedum (Corns).

In the 1780s and 1790s, a small group of Jews was living in Edinburgh in the Canongate area, although we have no evidence of a formal community at that time. They included Herman Lyon and his family, Abraham Barnet (Francis Burline), Rose Nathan, Henry Daniel and students such as Levi Myers and Solomon de Leon.



Lyon treatise cover

## 1831 Moses Joel

By around 1828, Moses Joel, who came from Bavaria, was Chazan (Reader) and Shochet (ritual slaughterer) of the Edinburgh community. SJAC has a copy of Joel's circumcision register, showing that he circumcised 95 babies 1830-1860. Moses Joel died in Edinburgh in 1863 aged 76.<sup>8</sup>



Moses Joel

## 1822 First Jewish marriage in Edinburgh

The first Jewish marriage in Edinburgh (and Scotland) is likely to have been that of Abraham Prince, silk hat and fur manufacturer, and Nancy Moses, as announced in the Glasgow Herald in 1822.<sup>7</sup>

## 1820 First Jewish Cemetery in Scotland

In 1820, a small Jewish cemetery was opened in Braid Place (now Sciennes House Place), which was used until 1867. The Scottish Jewish Archives Centre (SJAC) has a list of approximately 30 burials.



Braid Place cemetery

## 1816/1817

### First synagogue in Edinburgh



Phillips book cover



Richmond Court synagogue

The first synagogue was established in Richmond Court in 1816 or 1817.<sup>5</sup> Michael Tobias has made a study of this period and is convinced that this photograph of 5-6 Richmond Court is the location of the synagogue at this time.<sup>6</sup> From around 1818, Meir Rintel was the first minister of the congregation.

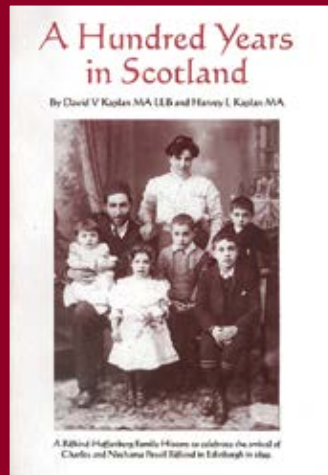
Balance sheet of Edinburgh Chovevi Zion  
Tent. 1890-1892



## 1880s – 1914

### Jewish immigration to Edinburgh

Many East European Jewish immigrants settled in Edinburgh, so that by 1911, there were around 2,000 Jews in the city. Typical immigrant families included the Rifkind and Hoffenberg families, whose descendant, Malcolm Rifkind, was to become British Foreign Secretary.



Rifkind centenary brochure, 1999

## 1909

### Edinburgh University Jewish Society

The Jewish Chronicle of 15 January 1909 reported the creation of the first Jewish student society in Scotland, now perhaps one of the oldest in Europe. The membership had an international flavour. In the 1920s and 1930s, a number of South African Jews came to study in the city and there have often been American students.



Edinburgh Jewish Students magazine, 1923

## 1896 Graham Street Synagogue

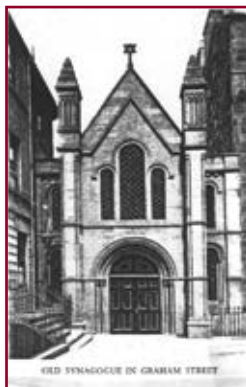
By the 1890s, there were around 1,000 Jews in Edinburgh. In 1896, the EHC moved to a converted chapel in Graham Street. The *Scotsman* newspaper of 14 February 1898 reported on the consecration of the new synagogue by Chief Rabbi Adler – an occasion of

*'great rejoicing yesterday among the Jewish community in Edinburgh'*

Dr Adler passed under the arched arms of the young stewards "... who wore evening dress with rosettes, and carried wands of office decorated with blue and white ribbons..."

Graham Street Synagogue was enlarged in 1913 and in use until the present synagogue in Salisbury Road was opened in 1932. There was a *cheder* in its basement.

Rev. Jacob Mendel Teitleman was *Chazan* or *Reader* for more than a quarter of a century at Graham Street Synagogue. There were other small congregations in the city, other than Graham Street and Dalry. A group of Jewish workers had come from Leeds to work in the slipper factory in Guthrie Street, where one of the rooms was fitted out as a synagogue. In Richmond Street (later Roxburgh Street), there was a Yiddish-speaking congregation – the 'Greener Shul' – founded in 1895 and in use until 1921. This was led by Rabbi Jacob Rabinowitz. Another small synagogue in Lothian Street (later South Clerk Street) was known as the 'Bolshie Shul'.



## 1914 – 1918 First World War



Edinburgh Jewish servicemen, 1917

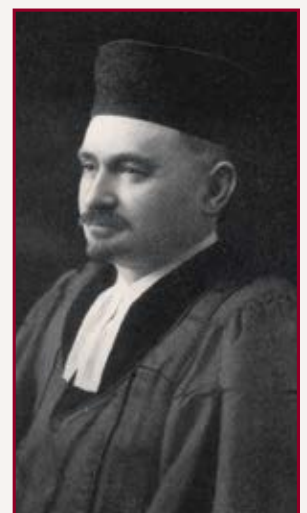
Edinburgh Jews played their part in the armed forces in the First World War. The memorial in Piershill Cemetery lists 19 Edinburgh Jewish soldiers who died in the war.

## 1919 Appointment of Rabbi Dr Salis Daiches

In 1919, the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation appointed a new spiritual head, Rabbi Dr Salis Daiches, born in Vilna, Lithuania, and educated in Koenigsberg, Berlin and Leipzig.

Rabbi Daiches made it his job to unite the various congregations in the city and remained in post until his death in 1945. He was greatly respected by the wider community in the city. His son, Professor David Daiches, wrote in his 1956 book *Two Worlds*:

*'...one of my father's great aims in life was to bring the two worlds – the Scottish and the Jewish – into intimate association, to demonstrate, by his way of life and that of his community, that Orthodox Jewish communities could thrive in Scotland, true to their own traditions, yet at the same time a respected part of the Scottish social and cultural scene...'* [p5]



Rabbi Dr Salis Daiches



## 1934

### Edinburgh Maccabi

In 1934, a Jewish sports association in Edinburgh applied for affiliation to the British Maccabi movement.<sup>11</sup> Maccabi was active in Edinburgh for many years, including in the field of football.



Edinburgh Maccabi Junior Football Team c1960

## 1938 – 1940 Refugees

In the 1930s, the Edinburgh Jewish community raised funds for the relief of Jews in Germany and Poland. In the late 1930s, hundreds of Jewish children and teenagers came to Scotland on the *Kindertransport*, many of them to Edinburgh. Rabbi Daiches was active in assisting the refugees.



Rabbi Daiches greets refugee children arriving in Waverley Station in 1938

The Scottish Domestic Bureau for Refugees was founded in August 1939 by Edinburgh Quakers and Jews. The Bureau ran a hostel in Colinton Road, where young women refugees could live before placement in domestic service.

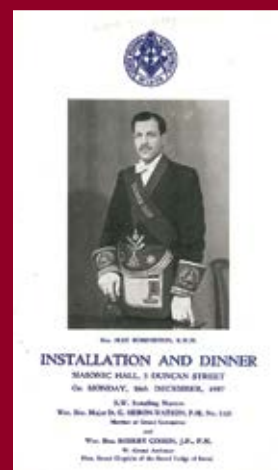
In 1940, Edinburgh became a protected area and the refugees had to move to Glasgow and elsewhere.

## 1932 Salisbury Road Synagogue



Salisbury Road synagogue sketches

In 1932, when the community was 1,600 strong, a new synagogue was consecrated by Chief Rabbi Dr J H Hertz in Salisbury Road – 'a house of worship worthy of the mother community of Scotland' –, in the presence of the Lord Provost and other civic worthies. 1,400 guests were entertained at a reception in the Palais de Danse.



Lodge Solomon installation programme for their new Master, Alec Rubenstein, 1957

## 1920

### Lodge Solomon

In 1920, the Grand Lodge of Scotland granted a charter to Lodge Solomon, a Jewish masonic lodge which still meets in the synagogue premises.

## 1939 – 1945 Second World War



World War 2 plaque in Edinburgh Synagogue

Edinburgh Jews served their country again in the Second World War, with six of them killed in action. Rabbi Daiches gave a sermon in which he declared that 'no sacrifice can be too great to remove the Nazi terror from Europe.'<sup>12</sup>

## Reverend Gentlemen

Since the death of Rabbi Daiches, a number of ministers have served the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, including Rabbi Isaac Cohen, Rabbi Dr Jacob Weinberg, Rev. Abraham Brysh, Rev. Sam Knopp, Rev. Dr Daniel Sinclair, Rabbi David Sedley, Rabbi Shalom Shapira, Rabbi David Katanka and Rabbi David Rose, the present incumbent.



Rabbi Dr Jacob Weinberg



Rev. Sam Knopp



Rabbi Dr Daniel Sinclair



Rabbi Shalom Shapira



Rabbi David Sedley

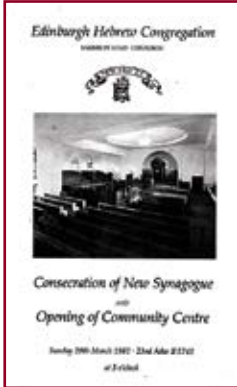


Rabbi David Rose

## 1981

### Remodelling of the Synagogue

In 1980, the congregation sold its communal hall and reconstructed the interior of the synagogue, with a function suite on the ground floor and a synagogue on the upper level. The synagogue was reconsecrated in 1981.

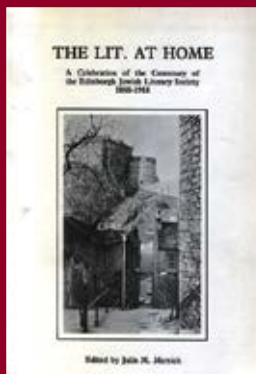


Cover of reconsecration programme

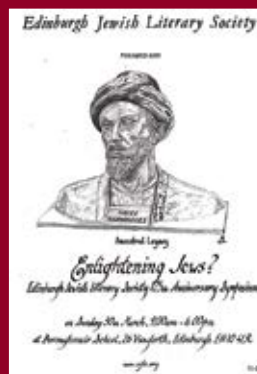
## 1988

### Centenary of Edinburgh Lit

The Lit celebrated its centenary in 1988, with a symposium on British Jewry 1888-1988, and its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014 with a symposium on 'Enlightening Jews.'



Lit centenary history



Poster for 125th anniversary event

## 1989

### The Edinburgh Star

1989 saw the first issue of the community's magazine, the *Edinburgh Star*, edited by Eitan Abraham, which still provides a quality magazine with news of the community and a wide range of articles on history, religion, culture and current affairs.



Cover of 1st Edinburgh Star

## 2004 Sukkat Shalom (Liberal) congregation established

*Sukkat Shalom* is affiliated to the national movement, Liberal Judaism. The congregation now has over 100 members, with a part-time rabbi, Mark Solomon, and a burial plot in the Dean Cemetery. In 2004 the congregation purchased a 150-year-old Torah Scroll which was restored by the sofer Marc Michaels. Here we see him bringing it into the siyum (rededication ceremony) under a chuppah carried by members of the community and accompanied by pipers, Hugh and Ronald Cheape.



- <sup>1</sup> A. Levy, *The Origins of Scottish Jewry*, p1
- <sup>2</sup> Levy, p8
- <sup>3</sup> Collins, Kenneth: *Go and Learn – the International Story of Jews and Medicine in Scotland*, Aberdeen, 1988, pp.34,43.
- <sup>4</sup> A. Levy, 'Origins of Scottish Jewry', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, 1958, p12; Lionel H. Daiches: 'The Jew of Calton Hill', *Edinburgh Star*; No 3, September 1989; AOC Archaeology Group: Herman Lyon's Mausoleum, Calton Hill, Edinburgh; Historic Building Survey Report, 2013
- <sup>5</sup> Abel Phillips - *A History of the Origins of the First Jewish Community in Scotland – Edinburgh 1816*, p3; Tobias, Michael: *A Study of 19th Century Scottish Jewry*, MSC thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2012, p35.
- <sup>6</sup> Tobias, Michael: *A Study of 19th Century Scottish Jewry*, MSC thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2012, pp35-40  
Photograph of the south side of Edinburgh (124) 5-6 Richmond Court. F.44 . Available online (National Library of Scotland): <http://digital.nls.uk/photographs-of-the-south-side-of-edinburgh/pageturner.cfm?id=74507074>
- <sup>7</sup> Glasgow Herald, 1 March 1822; see Michael Tobias: *A Study of 19th Century Scottish Jewry*, MSC thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2012, p28
- <sup>8</sup> Cecil Roth, *The Rise of Provincial Jewry* (1950), p58; A. Levy, *The Origins of Scottish Jewry*, p14; Phillips pp 19-20; sketch courtesy of Edinburgh City Libraries
- <sup>9</sup> Tobias, p61.
- <sup>10</sup> Levy, *ibid*, p.14; *Edinburgh Synagogue Opening* volume, 1932, p.14. JC 2 October 1868
- <sup>11</sup> *Jewish Chronicle*, 9 November 1934
- <sup>12</sup> *Jewish Chronicle*: 15 September 1939, p23

# A Scottish Jewish Heritage Centre and Scottish Holocaust Era Study Centre

Deborah Haase

It was announced in August that the Heritage Lottery Fund have earmarked £348,900 and awarded a £52,000 development grant for a Scottish Jewish Heritage Centre, including a Scottish Holocaust-era Study Centre, to be based in Garnethill Synagogue in Glasgow.

The Centre, a partnership between the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre and Garnethill Synagogue Preservation Trust, now has a Project Working Group with members from both organisations taking the project forward.

Centre highlights will include:

- A digital catalogue and learning resources based on the Archives Centre's internationally important Holocaust-era archives documenting the experiences of adult and child refugees fleeing from Nazi Europe before the outbreak of the Second World War and of those who came after as survivors of the concentration camps, showing how they found a safe haven in Scotland.
- Displays on the heritage of the Grade A listed Garnethill Synagogue (opened 1879) and histories of pioneering congregants' contributions to the development of modern Glasgow.
- A walking trail APP developed in partnership with the University of the West of Scotland and Glasgow City Council, which will show that the Garnethill area was a hub for Jewish refugees in the 1930s and 1940s.
- A schools visit service, a weekday public guiding service and a weekend events and activities programme.

Raising all the funding needed to create the Centre and identifying income to run the Centre once it is open will be key tasks.

The project will enable the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre and Garnethill Synagogue Preservation Trust to be equipped to support each other and contribute to wider community benefits. There has been a significant increase in demand for access to the Holocaust-era collections, especially from primary and secondary schools, undergraduate students and postgraduate university researchers. At the same time, an increasing number of former refugees and their families have donated their memorabilia and documents to the Archives Centre.

The Association of Jewish Refugees has pledged £100,000 for the Centre and teachers and specialists in Holocaust education here in Scotland, including Dr Paula Cowan, will help us enormously.

SJAC Director Harvey Kaplan said: "It is wonderful that we can take this project forward now while survivors are still alive and they can see their history being preserved and being used and they and their families can be actively part of it all. Scotland's record in welcoming Jewish refugees fleeing from Nazi Europe has much to teach us, which is relevant to migration and anti-racism issues today."



Refugees Lore Zimmermann and Susanne Schaeffer fostered by the Hamilton Family at Roselle House c1939.



Refugee boys at Birkenhead hostel for Jewish Refugees, Skelmorlie, Ayrshire.



Refugee teenagers at Whittinghame House, East Lothian during World War.

To find out more, get involved or help with information or funding please email Deborah at [info@sjac.org.uk](mailto:info@sjac.org.uk) or telephone the Archives Centre on 0141 332 4911.

*Images: Copyright from the collections of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre.*



# Our very own Deputy Lord Lieutenant Edward Green

Micheline Brannan



Along with wife Maryla and son Freddie, Edward Green has been a staunch member and benefactor of EHC for over 20 years and is an honorary Vice-President and past Chairman, and our representative to the Board of Deputies. As well as redecorating the synagogue and the community centre to their present high standard, he also fund-raised and oversaw the conversion of the Beit HaMidrash to our present 'winter shul'. Edward has been a great supporter of the Star and will be guest editor for the Rosh Hashanah 2017 (5778) edition.

In January Edward again surprised and delighted the Jewish Community by being appointed the first Jewish Deputy Lord Lieutenant in the City of Edinburgh. Deputy Lieutenants are appointed by the Lord Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh, the Lord Provost of the day, in this case the Rt Hon Donald Wilson, to assist him with his duties.

I recently had the pleasure of speaking to Edward at the Greens' beautiful family home in Murrayfield. As usual, I was warmly welcomed with excellent coffee, while we sat in an elegant drawing room, surrounded by paintings, objets d'art and photos, each with its own story to tell.

Edward is a specialist in jewelry and antiques. During his 40 years' career, he held the positions of Deputy Chairman of Garrard the Crown Jewellers and Managing Director of Mappin & Webb, and was responsible for taking both companies into Asia. Following that, he was a main board director of Asprey and President of Asprey in the United States.

The Green family are from London but Edward's mother is a Sagman by birth hailing from Glasgow. Edward began his Scottish connection with regular visits to his grandparents and other family in Glasgow and then attending Strathclyde University where he obtained a BA in business and administration (HCM). He has an identical twin brother, Philip, and two more brothers, Richard and David and a sister, Kate, who has a daughter who is the Rabbi for Finchley Progressive. One of his brothers is a previous Chairman of Norwood Ravenswood, the Jewish mental health and children's charity, another was Deputy Chair of Jewish Care, and Edward himself is a former member of the Executive of Nightingale House, the largest Jewish residential old-age home in Europe. His sister is a past Chair of the Oxford Jewish Community. His Scottish connection is reinforced by having for step-father, Arthur Lawson, a former AJEX national chairman, who served in Burma with the Highland Light Infantry and who was at one time Chair of the Glasgow Representative Council and a leading light of the Glasgow Jewish community.

Since moving to Edinburgh from New York in 1996, Maryla and Edward have immersed themselves in both the secular and the Jewish communities. Edward was involved in the Lyon and Turnbull specialist antique, fine art and jewellery auction house. Having 'retired', Edward was appointed a Trustee of the Board of the National Galleries of Scotland in January 2014. Edward said to me, "I find the work enormously rewarding. Legally, we own the artworks in trust for the nation. Our duty as board members is to ensure the smooth running of the gallery, to liaise with the Scottish Government for funding, to sanction all purchases, and to supervise the outward face of the galleries, representing them at meetings and events. One focus for me is the retail and online offering of the galleries which I love."

Edward went on to outline his new role as Deputy Lord Lieutenant. "My job is to meet and greet any member of the Royal Family visiting Edinburgh and to look after them while they are here. The role involves a formal welcome on behalf of the City to any Royal visitor. I could but don't wear a uniform – the Scottish DLs generally don't – but I have a badge of office which I wear with the dress appropriate to the occasion. I accompany the Royal visitor on all his or her engagements."

I was keen to know details. Edward told me about a visit from the Duchess of Cambridge. "I welcomed Her Royal Highness to her first event, and introduced her to the Chair of the charity which she was visiting. The Chair turned to me and said, "Don't I know you?" It turned out she was a friend of my sister from childhood. The second event was a visit to a charity for which Maryla and her friends have raised a substantial sum of money. She and her cohorts were lined up to shake hands with their Royal visitor – accompanied by myself! Only Maryla was in the know – it was one of those wonderful moments when her friends were duly astonished to see me with my badge of office. Coincidentally both the Chair of the first charity and the person running the second are Jewish ladies from down south."

Edward's duties also involve representing the Royal family or the City of Edinburgh at ceremonies, including openings and funerals. In the Order of Precedence, he is seated in the place that the Royal Family would occupy, if present. Edward recalled, "An emotional occasion for me recently was the 20th anniversary of Strachan House, where Sammy Latter a"n lived during the last years of his life. I only wished I could have been popping in to see Sammy at the same time."

Reminding me of his words at the Kiddush held in his honour in the spring, Edward said, "I was delighted to accept this honour not just for myself but for the whole Jewish community." We can be confident that Edward will do us proud – the appointment lasts for life but has him working for 10 years, so we can look forward to many years of credit to the community from Edinburgh's first Jewish Deputy Lieutenant.





# Chief Rabbi Mirvis Launches Edinburgh Hebrew congregation bicentenary

Micheline Brannan

EHC was honoured to start off this our Bicentenary year by welcoming Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, the 11th Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, along with his wife Valerie, to spend a whole *Shabbat* with us on 16 and 17 September.

The Mirvises attended a *Kabbalat Shabbat* service which featured the haunting tunes of the late Shlomo Carlebach, and a Friday night dinner with around 70 guests, including EHC members, their relatives and friends. After a traditional meal of chicken soup, roast chicken and apple pie, catered by Kosher Kitchens of Glasgow, the Chief Rabbi gave his first address, speaking movingly about the contribution that carers and volunteers make to our society.

On *Shabbat* after *leyning*, in which Sam Adler gave a sterling performance of his Bar Mitzvah *parshah*, from the Sedra *Ki Tetse*, the Chief Rabbi preached his *drashah*. He discussed the concepts of Universalism and Particularism, from the point of view of contemporary politics. He identified a new political divide, which has replaced the certainties of 'east v west'; it is the gulf between those who believe in isolationism and pulling up the drawbridge, and those who continue to strive for a more inclusive, open world. The victory of the 'drawbridge up' group is evidenced by the Brexit vote. The Chief Rabbi acknowledged that the language of *Hashem* in the *Torah* is exclusive. The Jews are chosen from all other nations and they are constantly told how to differentiate themselves. However, that specialness is required in order that Israel can fulfil its mission 'to be a light

unto the nations', and it is not an end in itself. Therefore, in being particular, Judaism is also universal. Instances of this may be found in the overseas aid activities of many Jewish bodies, such as Jewish-run projects for slum-dwellers in India, which the Chief Rabbi and Mrs Mirvis visited last winter, as well as disaster relief in places like Haiti and Nepal and even aid to Syrians fleeing the conflict.

At a lunch of salmon and salads, catered by the Shul Events Committee, Rabbi Mirvis spoke again, this time about words in Hebrew that appear in the plural form and have no singular. These are 'chayim' (life), 'mayim' (water) and 'shamayim' (heaven). These words stand for infinite concepts. There were about 90 people at lunch, and we were able to offer places to everyone who had come along as visitors – including a police officer from the Safer Communities Unit, who arrived in uniform and was fascinated by the service, having never been to a synagogue before.

Finally, about 30 people returned for a *Seudah Shlishit* – the obligatory third meal of *Shabbat* – which was held after the *Minchah* service. On this occasion the Chief Rabbi spoke about the 7 words for 'gift' in Hebrew and their connotations. Gifts are obviously very important both inter-personally and in a religious context, as sacrifices. Chief Rabbi Mirvis and his lovely wife Valerie gave a huge gift to EHC by observing a full *Shabbat* cycle in our company and imparting so much inspirational learning. We could not take pictures until after *Shabbat*. This line-up shows the Chief Rabbi and Mrs Valerie Mirvis at the centre of the EHC members and guests who attended the *Seudah Shlishit*, and was taken after *Havdalah* had been made.







# INTERNATIONAL SHALOM FESTIVAL 17 AUGUST 2016

## Peace scores over protests

Micheline Brannan

Those supporting bridge-building for peace scored a resounding win – not at Celtic versus HaPoel Beer Sheva which happened in Glasgow the same night – but at the Central Hall, Tollcross, Edinburgh.



Yamma rehearse in my living room

Arriving at the venue, one could be forgiven for dreading to go in, because the corner of West Tollcross and Lothian Road was completely blocked by protesters waving Palestinian flags and shouting 'Your tickets are covered in Palestinian blood' at an intimidating volume. They kept this up relentlessly throughout the day. What seemed a clear breach of the peace, given the volume, and the menacing nature of the chant, was termed an authorised protest and allowed to continue until everyone had arrived at the evening concert.

The band Yamma, my house guests, found it very difficult. Their sound engineer, Yevgeny, told me, "We should respect that they also want a good thing, although they are going about it the wrong

way," which I thought was being distinctly too kind. Other band members said that there was nothing the protesters could say in criticism of Israel that was not being said inside Israel itself – a fair point. But more importantly, in my opinion, these tactics have not brought peace one day closer or won one square metre of land for the Palestinians they claim to represent. The protesters failed on 17 August to achieve what they clearly wanted, which was a repeat of the disruption that stopped Israeli shows going ahead at the Fringe in 2014 and made Israel invisible in 2015.

But the day was not intended to be about politics – it was about celebrating Israeli art and culture, including food, technology, healthcare and martial arts. Very few people were put off attending by the demonstrators – on the contrary, it made quite a lot of us all the more determined to have a great time and make the most of the opportunities. It was reassuring, when I finally delivered my performers to the venue for their rehearsal, to find that the numbers inside the Hall were considerably greater than



Angela Kerr of British Red Cross with her resuscitation dummies

those demonstrating on the corner. Everyone seemed to be chatting away and networking, meeting old friends and making new ones. This was almost more important than the formal programme, which was lavish. There were numerous stalls to visit, including a popular cookery demonstration, by the chef of the Carmel Forest Spa Resort, Rani Hadid (Druze) and a talk by Benjamin Tsedaka, an Israeli-Samaritan elder. Rockets to Roses held a stall displaying flower sculptures made out of the debris of rockets fired over Israel, some mounted on authentic certificated stones from the Temple Mount (somewhat eyebrow-raising for me).



Central Hall auditorium as the Gala Concert begins

Angela Kerr, of the British Red Cross, working alongside Magen David Adom UK, was giving First Aid demonstrations with her CPR dummies; there were stalls about Christian Zionism; Stand with Us was there. Luke Akehurst of We Believe in Israel was there. Richard Verber, Senior Vice President of the Board of Deputies, attended with Mrs Verber. Steven Jaffe, the delightful Grassroots Ambassador of the Board of Deputies, came with his son, on the latter's first visit to Edinburgh. Ruth Kennedy of the Scotland Israel Centre was energetically introducing people to each other and making connections. And there were many many other visitors some known and others unknown to me. Volunteers, in specially designed teeshirts with the Shalom Festival logo displayed on a black background, bustled about tirelessly. I recognised many of my friends from the Edinburgh Friends of Israel, especially the redoubtable Dorothe Kaufman, who has dedicated herself life and soul to FOI.





Yamma, along with sound engineer Yevgeny and his family, at breakfast in my kitchen

As the day's programme wound down, people took a rest, and soon the noise of the protesters was eclipsed by a wonderful pianist who struck up at an upright in the corner of the reception area and played a whole series of classical solos.

Soon it was time for the VIP Reception to start. Jackson Carlaw, MSP, Professor Adam Tomkins, MSP and John Mason, MSP were present. Police Scotland's new head of Community Policing, Chief Inspector Alastair Muir, introduced himself. Rony Yedidiah-Clein, Israeli UK Minister for Public Diplomacy, circulated amongst the guests. Several members of EHC's Board of Management attended, along with Rabbi Rose. There were office bearers from the Glasgow Jewish Community, and from SCoJeC, and visitors from all over the place. A little lady from Yorkshire, called Rosemary, had come all on her own and was staying with Sheena Anderson and her husband, who had kindly acted as sponsors of the Reception. Her reason, she simply loves Israel.



L to R: Ephraim Borowski, Rabbi Rose, your editor, Chief Inspector Alastair Muir

In no time, the organisers were herding us into the auditorium for the Gala Concert. To my amazement and delight, innumerable people were queuing up to show their tickets and pass security. The stalls had already filled up and latecomers were directed to the gallery where I chose my seat. I was glad I had done so because

there sat many of the Glasgow visitors who had booked onto the free coach. I sat down beside Harvey Kaplan and congratulated him on the £350K Heritage Lottery Grant which has just been awarded to the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre (see page 11). In front of us were a row of friends from Giffnock Shul.

At long last the concert began. The compere was Hadar Galron, a famous Israeli entertainer, who provided the introductions and continuity. She had prepared some rap numbers suitable to the occasion. During the concert we also heard from Patricia Teitelbaum, who has organised Shalom Festivals in Brussels and Antwerp for five years.



Hilary and Arnold Rifkind with Chief Inspector Muir at VIP reception

The band, Yamma, was first up, with their eclectic range of Levantine and Turkish inspired music, including their own compositions. Particularly moving was a ballad composed in Salonika in 1935 by two Jewish musicians who wished they could escape their fate by emigrating to Palestine but who got caught up in the Holocaust and never managed to do so. Another beautiful number is their own setting of Psalm 104. I had the privilege of hearing Yamma rehearse in my flat the previous three days: Adi on the double bass, Yonnie on a range of exotic wind instruments, Aviv on an equally intriguing range of strings, including a Turkish Kopuz and a Middle Eastern Oud, and Nur on percussion. Vocalist Talya Solan completes the ensemble and her voice is



Rabbi Rose with Debby and Mark Taylor of Aberdeen. Debby is supporting HaPoel Beer Sheva

a musical instrument in itself. Even to hear her sing a few bars in my kitchen is an uplifting experience but to hear the whole ensemble together is simply transporting.

Several people had asked me before what kind of a band I had staying – they assumed it was Klezmer. But Klezmer is not Israeli culture – it is a European import. Yamma's music was truly of the Middle East and reflected Israel's rich Diaspora heritage, with Oriental, Sephardi, Arab and Ottoman influences.

Yamma was followed by Tally Koren, a famous singer and entertainer who started with 'Yerushalaim Shel Zahav'. Her message of peace through sharing of music was reinforced with 'What a Wonderful World' (Louis Armstrong's signature number) and a song about everyone having the freewill to choose how they deal with things.

After an intermission, there was a surprise. A man in Bedouin robes mounted the stage, but it was not a singer with the next band – it was Ishmael Khaldi, Israel's first Bedouin diplomat, who spoke about his delight in the occasion, his support for Israel, and how he felt that his appearance that evening vindicated the episode five and a half years earlier when he had been prevented by protesters from addressing a meeting at Edinburgh University. It was Ishmael who finally dragged into the spotlight Nigel Goodrich, the founder of the Confederation of Friends of Israel, Scotland, and the CEO of the International Shalom Festival, who dreamed up and executed this visionary event. Nigel never pushes himself forward but everyone that night had nothing but praise for his determination and for the success of the event.

There followed a step change in the tempo as Anna RF took the stage. The whole band was supercharged but their lead singer, Ophir, was as agile as a monkey as he leapt about the podium. He even hauled himself up to the balcony and walked along the parapet, to everyone's dread. (He used to be Israel's champion in acrobatics – seriously.) Soon Ishmael Khaldi was up dancing along with many of the younger audience members and a few older ones too, and I was only sorry that I had retained my balcony seat and could not get nearer the action.





The volunteers include Jack Gold (L)

I could barely say what instruments were being played but there was a strange little fiddle supported by a long stick, called a Kamanche, which I am told is Persian, but which was played by a musician in Bedouin costume, and plenty of percussion. The volume and the beat were turned up and the audience seemed ready to dance the night away.



Compere Hadar Galron



Yamma on stage

No doubt it was difficult to call time on all the fun but the concert had to end and it did so in rousing manner. A young lady called Catriona sang HaTikvah – she is immensely tall and beautiful, and I thought that she must at least be a famous model when I saw her earlier. A lone piper played ‘Scotland the Brave’ and a brother and sister from Wales, called Sioned Haf and Elis Llyr, blew eerie, harmonising blasts on long, spiral shofarot.



Singer Tally Koren

This was undeniably a resounding success, a triumph and an event that will be remembered by everyone for many years to come. Praise and thanks are due to Police Scotland and the security staff, including the Community Security Trust, for keeping everyone safe, to all the performers, to the many volunteers who worked tirelessly beforehand and on the day, and to Nigel Goodrich for having the vision, the faith and the courage to see this through. Nigel is already working on next year's International Shalom Festival.



Ishmael Khaldi dragged Nigel Goodrich onto the stage



Anna RF's Kamanche player

Several of the photographs illustrating this article were provided by kind courtesy of Peter Stanford. No reproduction is permitted without Peter Stanford's permission [www.pstanford.co.uk](http://www.pstanford.co.uk)

# Welcoming New 'Scotland Director'

Micheline Brannan

The Star welcomes the appointment of Peter Speirs to the post of Scotland Director of the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC).

Peter was selected by a panel representing the JLC, the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities and the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council. He has a background in politics and has spent his first few weeks in post getting to know key figures in the Jewish community, at Holyrood and at Westminster. SCoJeC and the Rep Council have asked him to help with co-ordinating the many events that will be taking place on the theme of the Bicentenary. Peter says he has been passionate about the Jewish Community for as long as he's been involved in politics, adding, "It is an exciting and demanding task to assist with advocacy on behalf of Jewish people in Scotland, and I am delighted to have been appointed. My first three months have been enjoyable and challenging. I have met many people doing great work within the community, from rabbis and people organising youth groups to those involved in the Shalom Festival, and I have been able to discuss their work with many politicians. I look forward to engaging with other stakeholders to further the interests of the Jewish Community in Scotland."



Peter Speirs (L) with John Mason MSP and Ruth Kennedy, Director of the Centre for Scotland and Israel Relations, at the International Shalom Festival



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# Edinburgh to Toronto... A journey

Edna Levitt

**On January 14 1983, as Michael and I stepped on to the tarmac to board the flight to Toronto, little did I think what lay ahead.**

In 1979, after 18 years of marriage, my husband Manny Levitt died suddenly. Michael was only nine years old when his dad died. Although from Edinburgh, we were living in Glasgow at the time, and it soon became apparent that I needed to make a new life for us. That meant leaving Scotland...I was at a loss where to actually go...when in 1982 I serendipitously met Peter Graben, an old acquaintance who had immigrated to Toronto. He invited me to bring Michael to Toronto that summer, to go to summer camp with his son.

After a successful trip, my mind was made up: We would emigrate to Toronto!

His interest in politics has grown exponentially since the late 1990's. For years he pounded the pavements, campaigning with Liberal politicians at all levels, Federal, Provincial and Municipal. In the meantime he had married Barbi, and my two grandchildren, Casey and Jessica, arrived on the scene.

Over the past fifteen years he has been politically active on many levels, and it was only a matter of time before he would decide to take the plunge and throw his hat into the ring of federal politics.

That opportunity came two years ago. He had attended McGill with Justin Trudeau and had worked closely with him since Trudeau was first elected as a Member of Parliament in 2008. When the call came asking if Michael was interested in running for the nomination in York Centre in Toronto, the answer was immediate; he would be honoured.



As a young child, Michael was always interested in news programs and current affairs, and this interest expanded when he reached his teenage years. In 1988 he started at McGill University, where he quickly became active in student politics, being elected as the undergraduate representative on the McGill Students' Society. After graduating from McGill, he returned to Edinburgh and completed a Masters of Social Science in Science and Technology Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

On returning to Toronto in 1993, he became heavily involved in the Jewish community, and began to take an active interest in the Canadian political system. By the early 2000's he was thoroughly entrenched in the political scene, and was working tirelessly to become a strong voice in the Liberal Party for the Jewish community.

The General Election was set for October 19, 2015. The Conservative Government had been in power for 10 years and it looked like the country was ready for change. The campaign was launched 78 days before Election Day – the longest campaign in Canadian history. Michael hit the ground running – he pounded the pavements, morning, noon and night, canvassing the entire riding of over 100,000 voters.

I volunteered for the final eight weeks of the campaign (why should he be the only Levitt to pound the pavements?), and I saw how persistently he worked, surrounded by an incredibly talented team of political heavyweights and volunteers. It turned out to be an unbelievably close race, but Michael won!

Now he is Michael Levitt, Member of Parliament for York Centre – an immigrant in a country of immigrants, and I am tremendously proud of his achievement. I always told him that if you want something, you have to 'go for it'...and he did!



# EHC Pulls Together

Micheline Brannan



L to R: Arnold Rifkind, Micheline Brannan, John Laszlo, Susie Kelpie, John Danzig, Lesley Danzig, Sigal Finlay, Jane Rickman, Aiddie Finlay, Elaine Samuel, Jonathan Danzig, Marianne Lehmann, Shimon Goodman, Alice Goodman, Steven Hyams, Dan Kelpie

The call went out from Arnold Rifkind, asking members to come and tidy up the courtyard and garden behind our venerable pile at Salisbury Road.

The clarion was answered by no less than 18 doughty folk. Even out-of-towners who happened to be around for Shacharit that Sunday morning in August joined in, wielding spades, rakes, hoes, trowels and cutters. The accumulated ivy, the overgrown shrubbery, the weeds and the moss all came under relentless attack. Bricks and stones were removed as in Isaiah's vineyard. In 90 minutes the area was cleared up, apart from the mountain of garden debris under white plastic sheeting that would be disposed of in brown bins over the weeks to come.

Susie Kelpie thoughtfully provided chocolate and drinks for everyone in the Sukkah. I thought to myself, 'Look at all my friends pulling together at this ivy. Let this be a model for the years to come.' We all know what happened to Isaiah's vineyard, but if we continue to work together as we did that Sunday in the garden, we can hope to avoid a similar fate.

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

Jonathan and Susie Adler  
Samuel and Ruth

Michael Adler and Sue Fyvel

Ena Amitai  
8b Nitza Boulevard  
Netanya, Israel

Joe and Margaret Aronson  
15 Arden Street  
Edinburgh

James and Sally Barker  
(nee Cowen)  
Samuel and Sadie, London

Clarice Been  
80 Willifield Way  
London

Shirley and Peter Bennett

Barbara and Leslie Bennie

Lennie and Marcia Berger  
Flat 25, Southview Gardens  
Schools Hill, Cheadle

Avril and Norman Berger  
3 Kirk Park  
Edinburgh

Doreen and Laurence Bowman,  
16 Dunsmore Way  
Bushey

Micheline, Duncan, David, Shrutee,  
Ananya and Ayan Brannan  
31/3 Rattray Grove, Edinburgh

Douglas and Rosalind Brodie  
25 Park Crescent  
Elstree, Herts

Norma Brodie and family  
Flat 3, 4c Mayfield Gardens  
Edinburgh

Christine and Dave Burns

Jo and Joyce Capek (nee Stoller)  
and family

Helen Capitanchik  
Flat A 46 Norway Gardens  
Dunfermline

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Benjamin, James and Zoe

Ian and Rachel Caplan,  
Olivia and Daniel

Sandra and Sidney Caplan

Shari, Martin and Hannah  
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Kenneth and Irene Collins  
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Stanley and Annette Curry  
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Benjamin and Jonathan Danzig

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Gerald Gordon

Maryla and Edward Green  
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Ein Kerem, Jerusalem

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Saul, Joshua and Eliora Korn  
Ra'anana, Israel

Liesel Krastner (nee Adler)  
and family



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

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and family

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Ramat Gan, Israel

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Benjamin

Elaine Levy, Eddy Maher,  
Sarah and Clare

Brian and Esther Levy  
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Litman, Flat 2, Heron's Court,  
Shenley Hill, Radlett

T.R. Lowrie  
11 Greenhill Place  
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Sharon and Mike Lurie  
Kate and Debra  
10 Torr Lane Plymouth

Sheva and Ann Lurie  
26 South Lauder Road  
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Irene and Philip Mason  
and family

Rosa and Clara Massie

David and Anita Mendelssohn  
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Harold and Esther Mendelssohn

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Mendelssohn  
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Gershon Mendick

Janet, Rowan,  
Grant and Martin

Michele, David, Sarah-Beth and  
Katie Neville

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North Connel, by Oban

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10 Ravelston Dykes  
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Flat 2, Harris Court  
38 Forty Ave. Wembley

Clarice Osborne  
56/2 Spylaw Road  
Edinburgh

Charles and Gillian Raab  
and family

Stanley, Elaine, Aaron, Joel, Elsa  
and Louis Raffel

Hilary, Arnold and Richard Rifkind

Michael and Sharon Rifkind  
Eli, Natan, Avigayil and Maytal  
Teaneck NJ, USA

Malcolm and Edith Rifkind and  
family

Francoise Robertson

Rabbi David Rose

Phyllis Rosenberg (nee Stoller)  
27 Hillside Gardens  
Edgware, Middlesex

Alec and Pearl Rubenstein  
16 Hillpark Crescent  
Edinburgh

## לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו

Brenda Rubin  
Netanya  
Israel

Jonathan, Molly, Ben and Joanna  
Seckl

Hilda and Colin Seftor  
Arlington, Virginia USA

Rabbi Shalom Shapira  
Ra'anana, Israel

Leonna and Alan Shenkin

Vivienne Shreir (nee Goldberg)

Valerie and Bill Simpson  
3 Hallhead Road  
Edinburgh

Rabbi Professor Danny and Debbie  
Sinclair, Noam, Yonatan and Orit  
and the Bermans, Jerusalem, Israel

Judy Sischy and family

Rachael Skop

Carolyn and Mervyn Smith  
43 Shirley Avenue  
Cheam, Surrey

Joyce and Jonny  
Avigal, Mikael, Adina and Carmela

Harold Sterne  
19/3 Pierre Koenig Street  
Netanya, Israel

Jackie, Raymond, Lawrence  
and Michael Taylor

Carole Weinberg  
6 Lyntonvale Avenue  
Gatley, Cheadle, Manchester

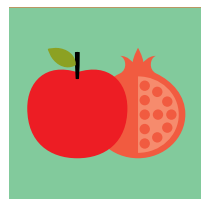
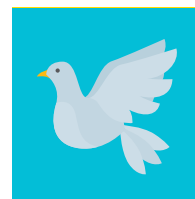
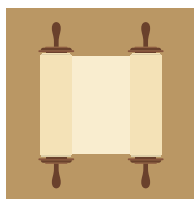
Hilary, Graham and Laura West  
Martin and Jolene,  
Pinner, Harrow

Madeleine Whiteson  
28 Mayfields  
Wembley Park, London

Sheila and Alfred Yarrow  
9/4 Nof Harim  
Jerusalem, Israel

Syd and Paula Zoltie

## לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו



### Edinburgh Hebrew Burial Friendly Society

Of particular interest to former Edinburghers or visitors to the city there is now a website- Scottish Jewish Cemeteries- which includes Piershill. By clicking on one can access in alphabetical order a photo and details of the deceased. We are grateful to Derek Tobias of Glasgow who has been our "web master" and will continue to update the site.

### Edinburgh WIZO

Despite a search here and in London Head Office we have not been able to establish when the first Group was started but a very active Aviv Group for young marrieds was functioning some 60 years. Currently we have 50 or so members and are most appreciative of their continuing support. Anyone wishing to join should contact Sylvia Donne at 0131 447 294.



# The Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2016

Lord Julian Goodman

As I look back on this year's Fringe, I am still recovering from the heady atmosphere that once again enveloped the city. They say that sleeping is for wimps, so I shall look forward to being decidedly wimpy for the foreseeable future, now that all the fun is over for another year!

Last year, I veered off ever so slightly from my usual choice of shows and was greatly rewarded, so this year I thought I would once again investigate a slightly different approach. It seems as easy as ever to go and find Jewish performers in the Fringe, but I decided to go in search of some of the unsung heroes. It has always fascinated me how many Jewish people are involved in the less well known areas of the entertainment industry. Over the years I have met so many who seem to be firmly established in Burlesque, Circus, Music, and all sorts of Bohemian aspects, that they form the backbone of support for the Fringe experience, and this year I have included the efforts of these people, including musicians and directors along with my usual choices. I even met a lovely lady from North London called Lindsay, who gave up acting, and for 17 years has been coming up to Edinburgh as a massage therapist, providing much needed advice and treatment for the performers during their month of madness. Here is the best of what I experienced.



Ari Shaffir

My first offering was in the Free Fringe. At *Heroes @ The Hive* I went to see **Ari Shaffir**. A former Chassid from New York, Ari eschewed his *frumme* upbringing, and turned to comedy instead. It seems to have been a wise move, because his stand-up was a raw exploration of sex, drugs and inappropriate behaviour as well as his Jewish upbringing, and his performance was flawless. He held the audience captivated as he described a friend's pregnancy via Tinder (a dating app), his drunken trek across Europe with his brother, and his aversion to parenthood. He had devoted fans in the audience, who follow his podcasts on the internet, and I suspect, judging from the peals of laughter, he'll have a bigger following after a month in Edinburgh.



David Paisley as Saki



Tom Lambert (left) and David Paisley as Saki (right)

Pictures by kind courtesy of photographer, Alex Brenner. No reproduction without the photographer's permission.

I went to see an old friend perform in **Life According to Saki** at the C Venue. **David Paisley** was playing Saki, the pen name of political satirist, Hector Hugh Munro, a British writer of Scottish descent, whose charm and wit satirised Edwardian society. I was familiar with quite a few of Saki's stories, but was totally charmed by this production set in the trenches of The Great War, where Saki was killed by a sniper in 1916. Using a clever set made up of artefacts found in the trenches, and a charming use of puppetry, this play by **Katherine Rundell**, the children's author, was inspired by Saki's animal stories, performed by a young and talented ensemble cast with Saki holding it all together from the trenches, thanks to David Paisley's gentle and nuanced portrayal of him. One of my favourite lines was "I used to be kind, innocent and naïve. Now I'm just kind - one has to specialise these days!"

The play had a prophetic and powerful lesson to share from Saki, namely how important it is to make the most of your time on this earth. This production went on to win the Carol Tambor Best of Edinburgh Award, the valuable prize being an off-Broadway run in a New York theatre in the winter, for this "outstanding theatre production". It was extremely well deserved.

My next visit was to see **Jess Robinson: Impressive** at the *Pleasance Courtyard*. There is a comfort of familiarity in seeing some of the same performers for some people. However, the reason I revisit performers is how they manage to present a completely new show every year. When I first saw Jess she was just married. Sadly this year, her show was about her divorce, but I was truly amazed at how she writes such personal material, including favourite impressions and many new ones, in a heart-warming and funny way that continues to endear her to her audience. Her opening song included 99 female impressions, plus her own voice which is simply incredible, and this year it was beautifully accompanied by a live band. Her story of course included her crazy Jewish family, the Jewish stages of grieving which naturally included plenty of *fressing*, fascinating insights into her running away to join a circus, and plenty of hilarity. It is a true measure of her talent that she can take such a serious subject, and share it with such joy and humour, in much the same way that many of us deal with these things in real life!



Now we come to one of my surprise offerings. A friend in New Zealand pointed me in the direction of a Jewish friend of his who was one of the three musicians in **Daffodils (A Play with Songs)** at *The Traverse*. A love story with a difference, Rose was 16. Eric, 18. He was a teddy boy, she was a farm girl. They met at the lake by the daffodils. The same place Eric's parents met 20 years earlier. This was a bittersweet, even heart breaking, tale of two people's lives set to a mix of some of New Zealand's most iconic songs played live on stage, and inspired by true events and small-town family secrets. It was beautifully performed, and totally captivating. I was so impressed by its simplicity and its emotional power, that I left the theatre feeling thoroughly moved.



*Daffodils (A Play with Songs)* by Rochelle Bright. Credit: Sally Jubb



My next offering was to be found at the *Assembly Hall* on The Mound. **Briefs** I have to admit was a guilty pleasure. I am a big fan of Burlesque, and the Briefs performers are in a league of their own. Bearded drag queens, high campy and circus skills may not be everyone's cup of tea, but boy do they know how to entertain! **Fez Faanana** has brought his Australian troupe here before, and they are always spectacular. Entering to Richard Burton's narration of *The War of the Worlds*, a huge array of feathers and fans fill the stage. **Louis Biggs'** skills with a yo-yo and Rubik's cube makes one feel like a child at school again, mesmerised by his dexterity. **Thomas Worrall's** aerial acrobatics are breath-taking and awe-inspiring. However, the *lansman* in the ensemble, **Evil Hate Monkey**, was the funniest act on show, with his grotesque monkey tutu outfit, and antics with a banana. Who says *Yiddishe* entertainers aren't cerebral? My accompanying friend certainly roared the loudest during his performance, and the whole show left the packed audience clamouring for more!

Another connexion from my dim and distant past was **Wendy Wason: Tiny Me** at the *Gilded Balloon*. I had seen Wendy's acting performances in previous years and on television, but this was the first time I had seen her stand-up show. I have to admit she is one of the best stand-ups I have seen in many a year. Her show was an exploration of her different parts, Wendy the mother, the wife, the daughter, the sister etc., with her own self, the "tiny me", likened to the smallest doll to come out of a set of Russian dolls. Her life experiences were shared with hilarious twists on seemingly every day topics. It was a joy to listen to her antics as a child in Edinburgh, her two marriages, her very funny young children, and her relationships with her mother, sister and husbands. Her outlooks on ageing, making the world a simply better place and her own trials were filled with a *joie-de-vivre*, and even her husband's call to inform her that after only one day of her absence, her son had ended up in hospital after being electrocuted turned out to be funny. He assuaged her fears by correctly predicting that it would end up in the show by the end of the run. Her performance was full of warmth, wit, and brilliant observations. I can't wait for her next show.





Old favourite Daniel Cainer, Gefillte Fish and Chips

I attended **The Festival Open Day** at the *Shul Community Centre*. Once again David Neville hosted a showcase of Jewish offerings at the Fringe. There was a really good *ruach* as usual; and that was before the lovely bagels and refreshments came out. Some well-kent faces were warmly welcomed back including **Naomi Paul**, **Jack Klaff**, and of course **Daniel Cainer**, all giving lovely excerpts of their shows.



Naomi Paul



Jack Klaff



Nick Cassenbaum – Bubble Schmeissis

Some of the newer shows on offer were: **Bubble Schmeissis** with **Nick Cassenbaum** at *Summerhall*. Along with his Klezmer musicians Nick invited you into the Canning Town Schvitz, East London's last remaining authentic bathhouse. The *schmeiss* bit is when one gets walloped by the old men there as an authentic part of the "treatment". He recounted his first experience there with his grandfather, and various aspects of his growing up.

**Woody Allen(ish)** – a show I'll tell you a bit more about later.

**Penelope Solomon** last visited us as part of the Solomon Sisters – A Yiddish Cabaret, I still have the CD! This time she was performing a one-woman show at *The Stand* about her transition from acting and cabaret, to stand-up comedy.



Penelope Solomon

**Melanie Gall** returned with a new show **Piaf and Brel: The Impossible Concert** at *The Space @Surgeon's Hall*. She has a lovely voice, which is always a pleasure to hear.



David Neville interviews Melanie Gall, about her performance as Edith Piaf

**Steve Richards** Presents **Rock 'n' Roll Politics** – the journalist and political commentator was performing at the *Gilded Balloon at the Museum*. It was a fascinating talk about his interest in politics and how interesting politics can be. He gave a pretty good impersonation of Harold Wilson along with his anecdote, but his Hilary Benn was even better! He had a brief Q&A session with the audience, as he did in the proper show, and may even have converted some people to the joys of politics.



Steve Richards



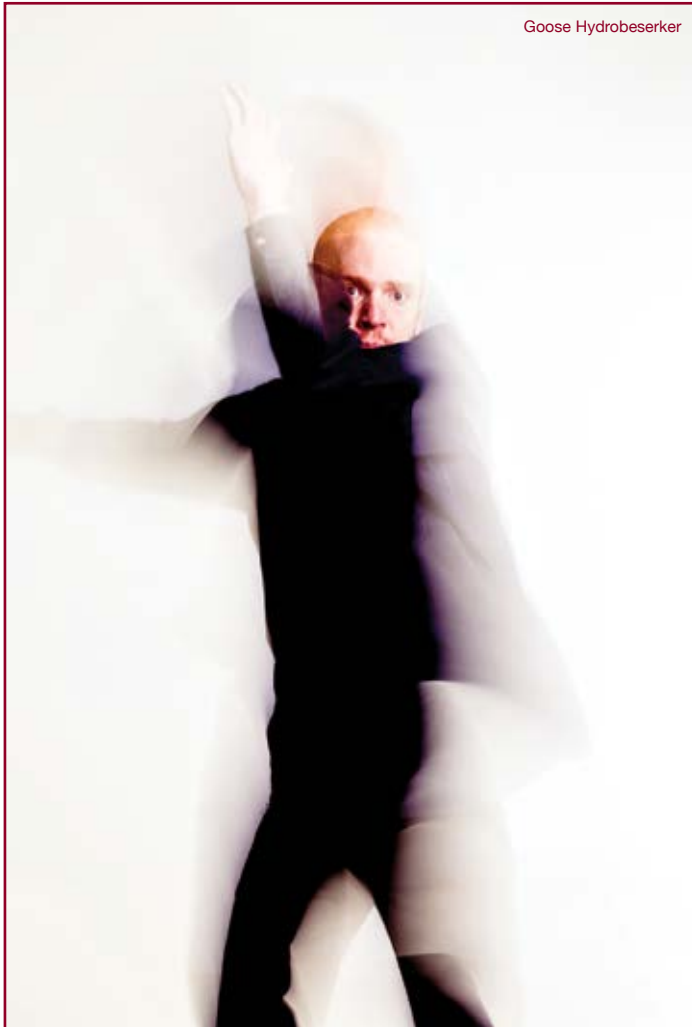
All Aboard the Marriage Hearse (c) J. Coldize

**All Aboard the Marriage Hearse** was an American production about the trials and tribulations of a mixed-faith couple, Amy, the Jewish girl wanting to get married after four years together, but Sean, the Catholic boyfriend not believing in the institution of marriage, wants to talk her out of it. One way or another in this romantic comedy, the question is going to be settled that night.

The Open Day was a great success thanks to David and Michele's great efforts, along with their army of volunteers.



Exhibition on the history of the Edinburgh Jewish Community is a backdrop to Festival Open Day



I next went to investigate another supporting role at the Piccolo Tent in the Assembly George Square Gardens. A friend's son was fronting the seven piece band that was supporting **Goose: Hydrobeserker**, a comedian's story of how he found the girl of his dreams, and how he found her again with the help of Liam Neeson. **Adam Drake** wrote and performed this manic masterpiece, with the help of a friend playing the role of Belle the missing girl, the aforementioned band led by **Gabriel Chernick**, members of the audience playing various roles, some technical wizardry from **Ben Rowse**, the co-writer and director, a cameo from **Wagner** of *Britain's Got Talent* fame, and some *DaVinci Code* style riddles based around the number Belle had given him the last time they met. I am reluctant to go into any detail about the sketches, because it would spoil the experience of anyone lucky enough to catch this show in the future. I was totally *tzemisch* for the first 10 minutes of the show, but suddenly it all clicked into place, and not only did I realise why I had been confused, but also how brilliantly clever this show was. It was no wonder the audience had so much fun when they saw how much fun members of the band seemed to be having, despite being a part of mayhem. The permutations must have been different every performance, with all its complexities and layers, and the energy with which Adam told his story bounced off everyone in the audience, culminating in a brilliant twist at the end of the show. If it hadn't been for my desire to see Jewish performers in supporting roles, I might have missed this absolute gem!



Another old favourite I revisited was **Lynn Ruth Miller – I Love Men!** at C Nova. Once again, this was because Lynn Ruth, now 82, presented a totally new show about her relationships with men throughout her life. Although familiar with her two failed marriages, and her adoration of her father when she was a child, I was captivated as she told even more stories from her Jewish childhood, her childhood sweethearts, her ever present *bobbe* and parents, with plenty of *fressing* in a supporting role, plus the relationships of her later life. She highlighted them all with her unique singing of original songs, and I realised that I love her wobbly singing purely because she unashamedly sounds like a Muppet character when she sings. She may not have a wonderful voice, or great musical timing, but just like a Muppet, she is her own character and that shines through and sells the song for all its worth! She was doing several other shows each day as per usual, but much as I love Burlesque, and Lynn Ruth performing it, I will always choose her storytelling because she is a born storyteller, and she exudes the warmth and charm one gets from listening to one's own *bobbe* or *zayde* sharing family histories. She may be 82, but shows no sign of slowing down, and PG, she should be telling her stories *biz a hundert un tzvanzig yor!*

I went along to *Frankenstein's Bier Keller* to see **Woody Allen(ish)**. I have long been a fan of Woody Allen, and whether he was performing, directing or writing, I would happily lap up any offering of his. **Simon Schatzberger's** portrayal of Woody in his guise as 1960's stand-up comedian was absolutely spot on. The



Bier Keller itself did a good impression of a nightclub, and sitting there, listening to these wonderfully crafted comedy routines, was an absolute joy. The audience loved Woody's nervous energy and self-deprecating Jewish humour, and Simon had picked some wonderful routines which he performed expertly. The 60s jazz music before and after the show enhanced the atmosphere brilliantly, and I could have happily sat there and watched another hour!

While I was at the *Bier Keller*, I treated myself to another blast from the past. Eighteen or so years ago, **Oliver Darley** appeared in Lenny Beige's Regency Rooms in *The Famous Spiegeltent*, as did I, and it was there that I first heard this amazing singer. It had been fifteen years since I last saw him perform with accompanist **Chad Lelong**. For ten days only, Oliver and Chad presented **Simply Bowie**. Stripping back David Bowie's songs to a beautifully simplistic jazz piano accompaniment, they gave a unique interpretation of some of Bowie's most recognisable hits, with some fascinating insights into lesser known facts about the songs and how they were created. Oliver truly has a beautiful voice, and as they performed the first song, *Life on Mars*, a lady forced to stand because of the packed capacity, turned to her husband and whispered "HE can sing!", and her husband wholeheartedly agreed. By the end of the show, the whole audience

were joining in and begging for more. This really brought back some very happy memories.

All in all, this was a truly great Festival Fringe. I had more friends and old colleagues than ever up here doing shows, and I simply couldn't get round them all to see their shows, which is always a good sign of a successful Fringe. A lot of the Jewish offerings were all on at the same time, making it difficult to see them all

too, but of those I did see, I've picked the best ones above. In the rest of the Fringe, I have to mention some of the finest offerings there. **Margaret Thatcher – Queen of Game Shows** at the *Assembly Piccolo Tent*, was slick, funny, cleverly written, and beautifully silly, so I naturally loved it. I passionately adore radio comedy, so like last year's nostalgic indulgence; I went along to see **Radio Active** at the *Pleasance Courtyard*. **Angus Deayton, Michael Fenton Stevens, Helen Atkinson-Wood** and

**Philip Pope** recreated the madcap radio show that filled the airwaves in the 1980's. The radio show itself grew out of a Fringe show presented by the Oxford Review in 1979, so it was nice to see it come round in a full circle. There was a tribute to Geoffrey Perkins who was in the original series, but sadly died in 2008. The performers were as funny as ever with brilliant comic timing, and I roared laughing from start to finish. Philip Pope's wonderful musical parodies of Leonard Cohen and the Bee Gees were simply sublime. The original recordings of *Radio Active* can currently be heard on BBC Radio 4 Extra on Thursdays, for those that like a dollop of silliness! My Fringe ended with a kind invitation once again to see the last night of **La Clique Encore!** at *The Famous Spiegeltent*. It competed for some time with the Festival Fireworks Concert, but I think in the end, *La Clique* won! It really is my favourite venue, and the circus acts were as spectacular as ever, plenty of comedy and magic from Paul Zenon,



who hosted the show, and wonderful live music. Much as I love fireworks, I wouldn't have missed this for the world!

My *Five Mogen Dovids* this year goes to **Goose: Hydrobeserker** for its combination of sheer brilliance, comedy and total originality. I can't wait for next year!



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# Review of Jonathan Safran Foer at the Edinburgh Book Festival

28 AUGUST 2016

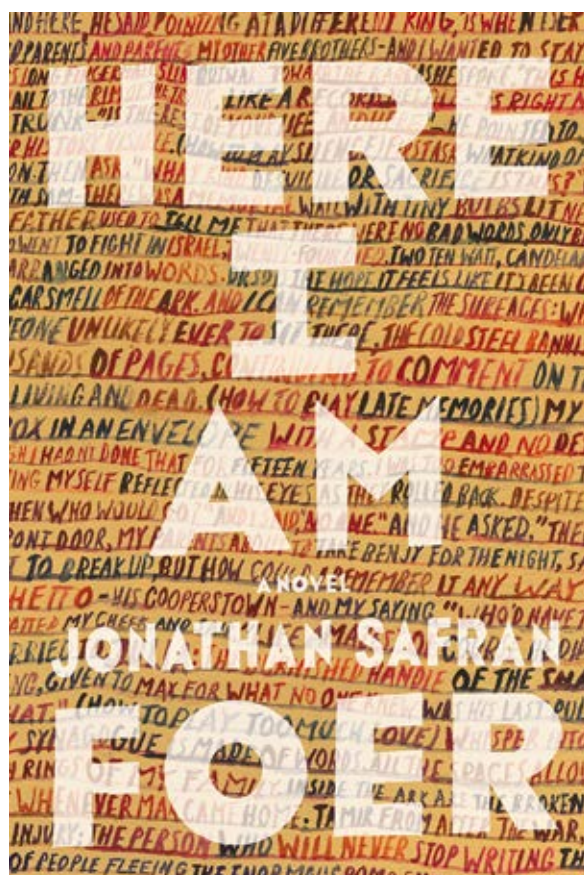
Janet Mundy

The appearance of Jonathan Safran Foer at this year's Book Festival was a much anticipated event. As the author admitted himself, this was his first book reading for 11 years, during which time much has happened in his life and the world. He published his first two novels, "Everything is Illuminated" and "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close" in quick succession in his 20s, then turned his attention to other interests – family life but also non-fiction – "Eating Animals", advocating vegetarianism, a cutout artwork "Tree of Codes", based on Bruno Schulz's "Street of Crocodiles", and a new translation of the Haggadah with fellow novelist and Brooklyn resident Nathan Englander.

He therefore denied that it had taken him over a decade to write his third novel, claiming, rather, that it took him a long time to find a subject for a novel. His last project before finding inspiration for his new book was a TV show that he was writing and which was about to go live, when he suddenly realised he didn't want to become involved in the TV business, but that he really did want to be a novelist.

TV's loss is almost certainly literature's gain. The tight deadline on this review meant that I have not had an opportunity to read "Here I Am", which was available to the public for the first time at the Book Festival event. However, the interviewer, Stuart Kelly, was also the author of an enthusiastic review in that day's "Scotland on Sunday" and his excitement is matched by many of the other reviews I have skimmed through since.

The evidence suggests that this is an intensely "Jewish" novel. Most of the Star's readership will instantly recognise the title "Here I Am" as a translation of "Hineini" – Abraham's response to G-d before being commanded to sacrifice Isaac. Safran Foer recognises the paradox in Abraham's obedience to G-d leading him towards betraying his son, and this conflict between duty and family is one of the major themes of the novel. The main protagonists are Julia and Jacob Bloch and their family, including grandfather Isaac who doesn't want to go to a care home, Zionist 'shock



jock' father, three children, and visiting Israeli relatives. This leads to one of the other themes, brought into sharp relief by a seismic catastrophe which threatens the existence of the State of Israel, of what do we mean by "home" and "homeland" – Israel versus Diaspora, personal versus political. However Safran Foer denied that his novels are only relevant to a Jewish audience. He revealed that, when he was promoting "Everything is Illuminated" on a radio show, the first caller to say that he really related to the themes turned out to be a 65-year-old African American.

Other themes echo those of earlier works, bringing in the Haggadah, and our relationship with animals. Safran Foer also referred to Shechechiyanu when talking about the feeling of satisfaction of arriving at a moment when he completed the novel, which, for him, was the definition of its success, however it is subsequently received by critics and readers.

This was a fascinating insight into the mind of a major author, and possibly an opportunity to experience the birth, after a long labour, of a landmark novel. Stuart Kelly's review draws a parallel with George Eliot's "Middlemarch" as a book by a novelist who has "grown up". I can't wait to get my teeth into this novel, and I recommend that you get your hands on it as soon as you can.



## Scottish Friends of Alyn

Clarice Osborne – Chair, Scottish Friends of Alyn

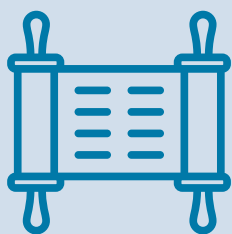
On behalf of the Scottish Friends of Alyn, I should like to thank all those who responded so generously to our recent Appeal to help the children in this hospital. In addition I should also like to thank everyone who marked the celebration of birthdays, anniversaries and other happy events by making a donation to Alyn. It is much appreciated.

With best wishes for a Happy and Peaceful New Year to our friends in Israel and to us all.

# Thank you

Pearl Rubenstein would like to thank everyone who visited, telephoned and wrote to her wishing her well and a speedy recovery after her recent fall.

# 2016 – 17 Festivals

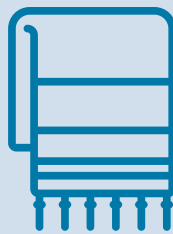


**Rosh Hashanah:**



**Yom Kippur:**

**Monday 3rd – Tuesday 4th October 2016**



**Succot:**

**Wednesday 12th October 2016**



**Shemini Atzeret:**

**Monday 17th – Sunday 23rd October 2016**



**Simchat Torah:**

**Monday 24th October 2016**

**Chanukah:**

**Tuesday 25th October 2016**

**Tu B'Shvat:**

**Sunday 25th December 2016 – Sunday 1st January 2017**

**Purim:**

**Saturday 11th February 2017**

**Pesach (Passover):**

**Sunday 12th March 2017**

**Yom HaAtzmaut:**

**Tuesday 11th – Tuesday 18th April 2017**

**Lag B'Omer:**

**Tuesday 2nd May 2017**

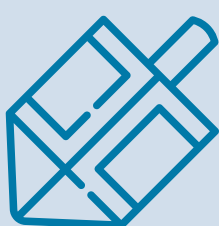
**Shavu'ot:**

**Sunday 14th May 2017**

**Tisha B'Av:**

**Wednesday 31st May – Thursday 1st June 2017**

**Tuesday 1st August 2017**

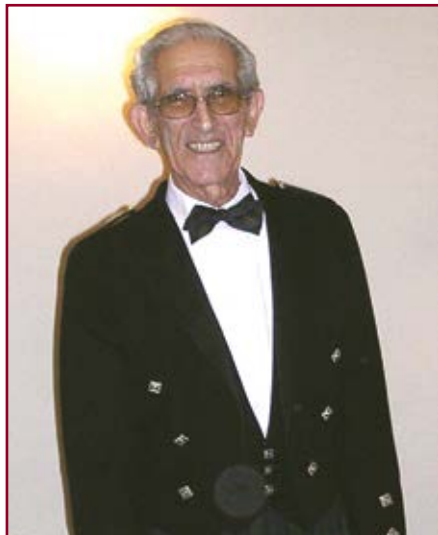




# Obituaries

## Ian Shein

Martin Levinson



Ian at 2006 Burns Supper at the Edinburgh Jewish Community Centre

The family of Ian Shein are very sad to report his passing on 19th June, 2016. We would all prefer to dwell on his life, but it might be noted that he faced his final illness with quite remarkable courage and fortitude. It may seem incongruous to feel so bereft about the loss of a ninety-one year man, but Ian leaves a huge void in our lives.

Born in Edinburgh, Ian retained an intense and passionate love throughout his life for the city in which he grew up. Apart from brief periods in Dundee and Manchester, he remained an Edinburgh citizen throughout his life. Ian was an avid traveller, both during the war and afterwards, but part of him always pined for the city when he was away. He returned from each period of absence as if revisiting a lost love, enjoying nothing more than to wander idly round the old streets, with no purpose other than to renew his relationship with the city.

Ian had a rare gift of wanting to please others, even to the extent of enjoying Cheder for the sake of his formidable

‘Bubbe’. He had been born into a very poor South Side Edinburgh family, but was endowed with a nature that made him rich. He grew up to be tall and suave, with hair that was described as ‘blue-black’. Not surprisingly, he was a target for a number of interested young women from his community. Hating to disappoint anyone, Ian might well have ended up being attached to all of his suitors, had not the Second World War intervened.

Most young soldiers dread the wrath of the sergeant major; somehow Ian managed to melt the heart of his. Ian described a scene during which he had been ordered to reassemble a rifle, everyone else having long finished, while he found himself crouching on the ground, trying to put together the bits of his. “I’m sorry I can’t do this,” he finally, confessed, expecting a torrent of abuse. “Don’t worry son,” replied his sergeant major, “we’ll find something else that you can do.”

He became a radio operator, and according to Ian, though close to fierce fighting, he never heard a gun fired in anger. No-one is quite certain where he led his regiment, but we attribute his success in navigating his way round enemy lines to his great skill and not to his own (modest) comments about having been a prototype character for Dad’s Army. And the medals tell a different story – of gallant service in Italy and India. He worked for the SOE, though being Ian, he always underplayed this, too.

After the war, Ian spent some years struggling to keep his step-father’s tailoring business in Dundee afloat. His efforts reflect his strong sense of loyalty, and even in the most difficult times, he never lost the affection of his employees. Subsequently, Ian returned to his beloved Edinburgh, accompanied by his wife Joyce (née Gatoff), working as a senior probation officer, and playing a prominent role in the Jewish and wider community. For a number of years Ian reported for the Edinburgh Star. He and his wife, Joyce, possessed a wonderful ebullience, and both contributed in full measure to the social, political and cultural world around them.

They shared strong values based on fairness and morality, and in their different ways, Joyce and Ian strived for

the success of the Liberal party. They also found time to entertain those lucky enough to be in their circle, collaborating on plays and pantomimes. Though an innately shy and reserved character, Ian was a natural performer, and his wonderful comic timing in pantomimes will be recalled by all who had the fortune to attend. On a personal level, Ian remained devoted to those close to him, continuing unwavering friendships (that had begun in childhood) with Norman Dorfman, David Mendelssohn and others, who viewed him as a blood-brother.

Indeed, Ian and Joyce were ideally matched, their marriage filled with laughter. If something amusing happened in the streets, Ian would rush back to recount it to Joyce. It was hardly surprising that Ian was bereft after Joyce’s sudden death.

It took some years for Ian to get his life on an even keel. Only when he rekindled his friendship with Pearl did he regain his equanimity and appetite for life. It is rare for people to find one completely harmonious marriage, and almost miraculous to enjoy two. However, the fact is that each marriage was intensely happy, and Ian was treasured by both women. What made it still more unusual and special was that Joyce and Pearl had grown up as best friends in South Shields. Indeed, Joyce remembered having been ordered by a teacher to look after the new girl when Pearl was placed in the same class. Joyce was assiduous about taking care of Pearl. Many years later, she was to comment: “They told me to look after this new Jewish girl, and I’m still ruddy well looking after her today.” Almost as if she had a premonition about the future, and when she was still in good health, Joyce ordered Pearl to look after Ian when she was gone. And Pearl more than repaid that debt.

Having had no children in his first marriage, Ian expressed doubt about his ability to interact with the youngsters in his new family. He need not have worried: his own (almost childlike) love of fun, his natural kindness, generosity and consideration of others, his ability to put the desires of those around him first and foremost, meant that he was adored. We will never forget the way he embarked on new adventures: climbing Arthur’s Seat

with his grandchildren to celebrate his eightieth birthday (the first time he had done so since childhood); narrowly escaping drowning near Cramond in the Firth of Forth; going on the Big Wheel at Princes Street Gardens (he had a terrible fear of heights); rushing down water slides at Centre Parcs (Ian had never learned how to swim); stroking a tarantula at Dobbies (he loathed the smallest of spiders).

Even his foibles were utterly charming – who else would have so carefully smoothed and folded newspapers before disposing of them in the rubbish chute?

Despite his apprehension about inheriting a family, it is a reflection of his personality that no grandfather could pass on being more loved. We cannot emphasise too strongly the privilege we feel in having spent the past two decades in his company. He will be deeply missed – but never forgotten.

Written by Martin Levinson on behalf of Pearl's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren



Ian with his sister Cissy, mother Hetty and grandmother



Ian with his cousin, Tom Levey (Martin Levinson's mother's brother)



Ian with Norman Dorfman



Ian as the 'beautiful' bride with her groom (Philip Harris) in a Mock Wedding organised by the Community Centre Committee

## Fred Lowrie

We were all sorry to learn of the death of Fred Lowrie in August. He was well known to the Edinburgh Jewish Community as brother-in-law of the late Vicky Lowrie, much loved at EHC, and a staunch member of the Community Centre Committee, and brother of Tom, who continues his links with the Community through the many friendships he and Vicky formed as a couple.

### Tom writes about Fred:

His greatest talent must have been his ability to become at one with every section of his fellow Scots no matter what religion (or none), class, educational level or financial standing. Perhaps the most outstanding example was his

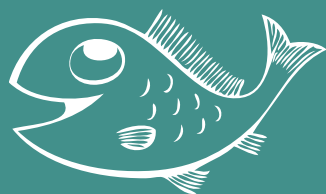
long association with the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, where not only was he the “appointed joiner” to the synagogue, but no Burns Supper was complete without Freddie at least saying the Selkirk Grace and the Address to the Haggis. Although for several decades he had a direct link with the congregation through his sister-in-law Vicky, his connection went back to his apprentice days when he did much work for Abe Lurie and his son Joshua (known as ‘Joe’), whose shop was eventually the last kosher butcher in Edinburgh. This led to much private work for many of the community and of course for the synagogue itself.

As a Freemason, eventually, Substitute Grand Master for Scotland, he attended Lodge Solomon on many occasions.

A very talented man  
– my brother Freddie.



(L to R) Fred, Vicky and Tom



# Clark Bros.

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# Samuel Robin Spark

Micheline Brannan

The Star is deeply saddened by the recent loss of Robin Spark, after a long illness, which he accepted bravely and with resignation, making the most of life even as his diagnosis followed its inevitable path.



Robin was greatly loved by everyone in the Jewish community and he will be sorely missed. Rabbi Rose gave a most apt eulogy at the funeral and this obituary is based on Rabbi Rose's remarks, with some further information from Jack Davidson's obituary in The Scotsman, as well as the editor's memories.

Robin was the son of the famous novelist Muriel Spark and her then husband, Oswald Spark. He was born in Bulawayo, in the country now called Zimbabwe, and named Samuel after his paternal grandfather. As a small boy, Robin spent the War in boarding school and holidays with a friend called Robin. He was very fond of Robin and his family, and he also liked the name so took it for himself. His Hebrew name remained Shmuel and he signed many of his pictures in Hebrew with the name "Shmuel Robin HaLevi Spark".



Robin relaxing in his studio

In 1945 Robin was brought back to Britain and started his association with the Edinburgh Jewish Community, living with his mother's parents, Sarah and Bernard Camberg, whose Bruntsfield flat became Robin's lifelong home. Robin embraced Judaism and celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in 1952, with a party in the Balmoral Restaurant, Princes Street. He attended James Gillespie's Primary School and Daniel Stewart's College until 16.

Starting his career in the jewellery trade, Robin was called up for National Service in the Medical Corps. He continued his education in night classes and was able to gain entry to the Civil Service where your editor first met him, when she was a raw recruit around 1976. It was easy to see that Robin good-naturedly tolerated the dusty filing cabinets of the Scottish Office and the Scottish Law Commission, while his first love was really



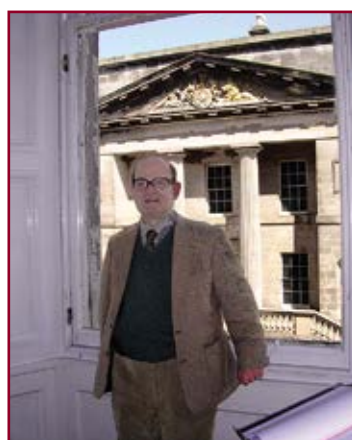
Nude

painting and drawing. Early retirement enabled him to study art full-time – at the suggestion of visiting Israeli artist Udi Merioz, whose family owned a gallery in the Old City of Jerusalem. Robin enrolled at the College of Art at age 40 and graduated in 1987.

At first Robin specialised in paintings of Jewish interest but ended up with a varied portfolio. He produced more than 1000 paintings and had numerous exhibitions, including a range of media, themes and sizes of works. His influences included Van Gogh, Cezanne, Chagall and the Pissarros. His exhibitions were also often fund-raisers for charities that he cared about deeply. One I remember was dedicated to the small animal clinic at the Dick Veterinary College, testifying to Robin's lifelong love for pets and animals of all sorts. His last retrospective exhibition (see Star 79 online) raised money for Alzheimer's Research.

After qualifying, Robin himself taught at Art College and was well known and respected in the city. He was often seen around Bruntsfield walking his dog and he had a kind and friendly word for everyone he met. He was a regular attendee at EHC while his health permitted, and often performed the Haftarah in an accurate and melodious way. He had many friends both at EHC and in the wider Jewish community. He had a genuine interest in other people and always remembered to ask about family members and how everyone was doing.

Latterly Robin became involved in a local group to care for Edinburgh's cemeteries. Through this he met Anthea, who became his close friend and companion and whom he married in 2014. Although having no close family left, Robin always defended his family, even when they made it difficult, and he said kaddish for his mother Muriel, after she passed away (as well as, of course, his father Oswald, at an earlier time).



2005 Robin – view from an exhibition at WASPS

Rabbi Rose talked about how he remembered visiting Robin at home, the thoughtful conversations, and sharing a wee dram. As the Rabbi said, "Robin will be sadly missed by all who knew him and his passing has left a gap in life of community and city."





Sukkot Tableau

As with many artists who paint in the more abstract form, Robin's paintings often showed the 'place' he was in in his life! The impressive number and content of the obituaries that appeared in our national newspapers well documented the 'ups and downs' that Robin suffered throughout his years and his work often betrayed that. Many of the most famous painters over the centuries produced some of their finest works during their bleakest times and I suspect Robin was no different. And the fact that Robin also produced differing styles and bodies of work over the years would also indicate the different cycles and traumas in his being that influenced his effort and indeed his output.



Sabbath Bride

True genius is often borne out of pain. Sadly, Robin suffered enormous rejection and subsequent sadness at times in his life that have undoubtedly induced certain patterns in his work. Fortunately for posterity, Robin's hardships, as difficult as they will have been for him, will have proved a positive and may well have 'helped' Robin to produce some of his finest work and for that we must be most grateful.

#### Edward Green



2011 exhibition

## In memory of my friend Robin

Judy Gilbert

I met Robin nearly forty years ago when his aspirations as an artist first developed. Though he enrolled for a formal arts degree, Robin was anything but traditional. Robin utilised his growing technical skills to develop a unique style of his own, evident in the legacy of art works he has left behind.

We are proud owners of his first attempt in acrylic, portraying a young behatted student at his college, and over the year have amassed a number of his evolving works.

Soon Robin painted my portrait, meticulously taking photographs to maintain continuity over the months of sitting. That fine 'likeness' came on and off our wall to promote his work in local cafes and even the National Art Gallery in Princes Street. Robin truly captured our son's personality over 18 months working on his Bar Mitzvah portrait. Mark looks back nostalgically on the hours of conversations that took place thirty years ago, between the artist and a thirteen year old boy.

Robin the man, though, is how I will remember him; gentle, softly spoken with a real twinkle in his eye. He was a generous host and I can't forget those first Seder nights we spent in the fascinating warmth of his home filled with hundreds of interesting objets d'art over which one's eyes would keep wandering.

Years ago Robin cared for his much-loved pets: four cats, two dogs (one immortalised in oils), and a large tank of fish. On one visit a feisty feline launched itself at my back. I screamed. A perplexed Robin wondered what all the fuss was about! His love of animals never diminished. When his beloved charges gradually passed away, he took care of an ailing neighbour's black Labrador despite his own failing health.

Robin eagerly discussed topical subjects exchanging points of view. He thirsted for knowledge but also enjoyed hearing local gossip, particularly when he was less able to maintain contact with his community with the onset of illness.

Despite painful, unjustifiable estrangement that his mother forced this caring, sensitive man to undergo, leaving undeniable marks, Robin certainly never vented any bitterness on anyone else.

Intellectually well matched, Robin found true kinship in his partner Anthea. Later Anthony and I enjoyed an all too brief social connection with them as a married couple.

Robin's strong opinions were always tempered with quiet humility. He was rightly proud of his achievements and should surely have gone on to further success.

Robin was well rounded and forgiving. Thankfully he appeared to fulfil himself as the artist he strove to be.

Our family will miss a loving friend.

**Arnold Glass** The Star extends sincere condolences to Mrs June Glass, and all the family of the late Arnold Glass, who passed away in August. Tributes will be included in the Star at the next available opportunity.

# Forthcoming Events



## Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

**Name:** Lord Jeremy Beecham  
**Date:** Oct 30 2016  
**Title:** Life in the Lords

**Name:** Daniel Lines  
**Date:** Nov 13 2016, 6pm  
**Title:** 'German' versus 'Jewish' Mathematics in Nazi Germany

**Name:** Rabbi Dr Michael Harris  
**Date:** Nov 27 2016, 3pm  
**Title:** On his book 'Faith without Fear'

**Name:** Ellen Galford  
**Date:** Nov 27 2016, 6pm  
**Title:** Yiddish lost and found: eavesdropping on the ancestors

**Name:** Philip Spencer  
**Date:** Dec 11 2016  
**Title:** Antisemitism and the left today: the return of the "Jewish Question"

**Name:** Patrick Elliott  
**Date:** Jan 22 2017  
**Title:** Jankel Adler 1895-1949: A Polish artist in Glasgow and London

**Name:** Imam Yahya Barry  
**Date:** Feb 26 2017  
**Title:** Title to be announced

**Name:** Owen Dudley Edwards  
**Date:** Mar 05 2017  
**Title:** Ireland and the Jews

**Name:** Judit Szekacs-Weisz  
**Date:** Mar 26 2017  
**Title:** On Ferenczi and cultural Budapest

**Name:** Rebecca Abrams  
**Date:** May 07 2017  
**Title:** The Elephant in the Museum

Please see [www.ejls.org](http://www.ejls.org) for more information

## Edinburgh Jewish Community Centre Forthcoming Events

Sun 30th October 2016	Walk around Whittinghame House and grounds
Sat 17th December 2016	Chanukah Dinner
Sun 29th January 2017	Quiz evening
Sun 12th February 2017	Film night
Sun 12th March 2017	Israeli dancing tbc
Sun 7th May 2017	Coffee morning

## Sukkat Shalom

### Services

**Erev Shabbat service** will be on the **SECOND** Friday (7 pm) of each calendar month. **Shabbat morning services** are on the Saturday (11am) after the **FOURTH** Friday. These services take place in: Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace.

**Kabbalat Shabbat Services** (6.15pm) will be on the **FIRST** and **THIRD** Fridays. These services take place at: Marchmont St Giles, 2a Kilgraston Road.

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](http://www.eljc.org)

## Edinburgh WIZO

**Tuesday 8th November 12.00**

Lunch followed by Bridge Contact Kate Goodwin

## Shabbat UK

**12th & 13th November 2016**

Watch this space for Shabbat UK, 12th to 13th November 2016