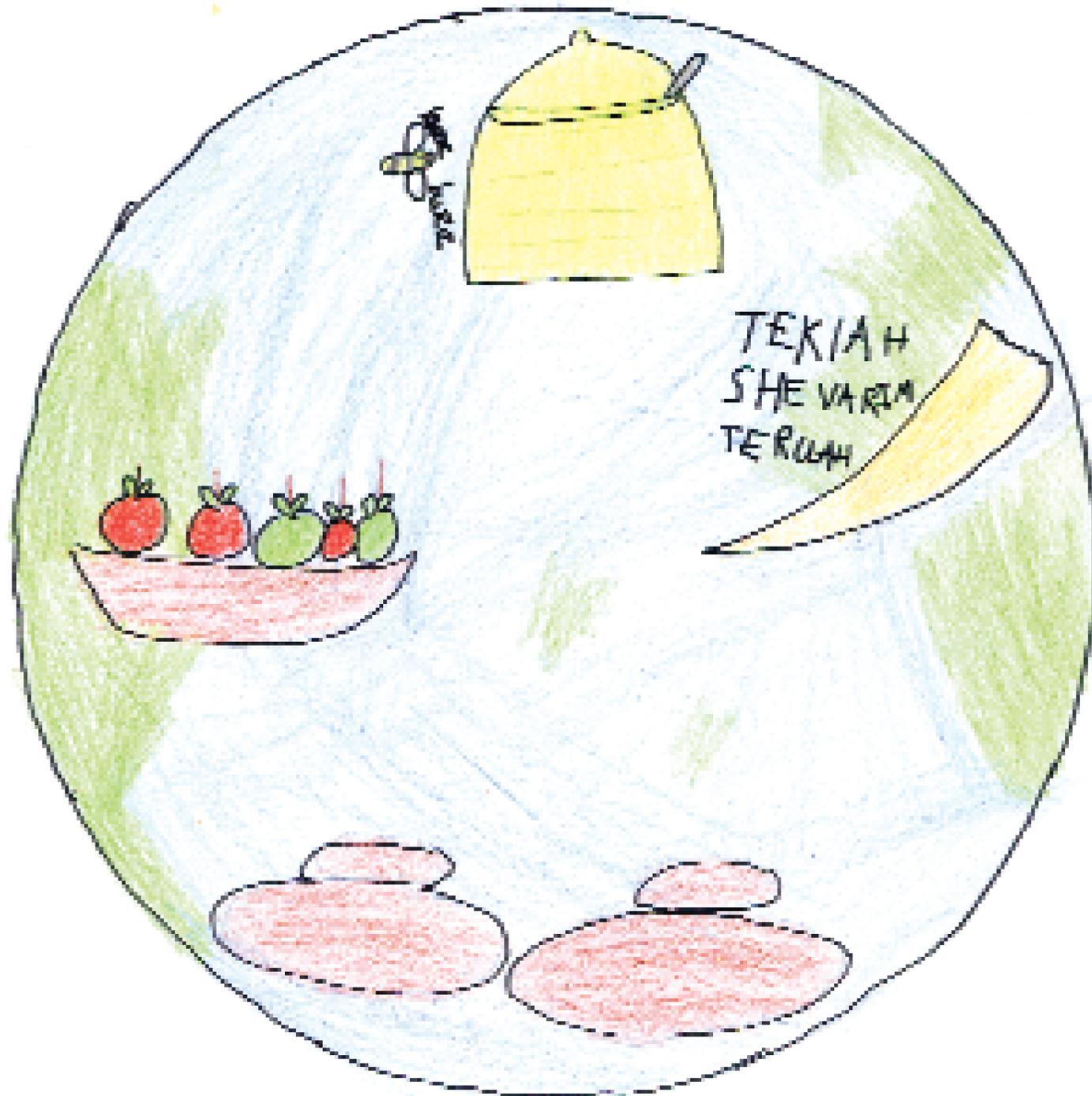


THE EDINBURGH

STAR

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

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From the Editor

As I write, the Edinburgh Festival moves to its final week. The world's largest arts festival with its vast organisation barely able to contain the chaos and excitement. As a life long resident of Edinburgh, this is the time when Shirley and I regularly host a stream of guests who want to visit our city, either as their place of upbringing or just to see the shows, concerts and exhibitions. It's fun for us, as the excitement is infectious. This year Edinburgh is home to many shows and events of Jewish interest and Julian Goodman and others report in this issue.

The issue of 'Jewish interest' bears some examination as does the fact that so many visitors make the journey to our Synagogue and Community Centre during this busy time. Why are we drawn to the environment of other Jews, Jewish events, groups, clubs and the like? Many such events have no religious content and those involved with both organising and attending might have little place for religion in their lives so what is the attraction? I have often asked this of friends and the answers vary. A sense of belonging, a body language that is instantly understood, a way of looking at life and above all comfort. Indeed within our own community, our numbers may be small and our collective attendance at synagogue might frustrate our Rabbi but we still manage to sustain a wide range of thriving activities. We instinctively strive to support our own minority

group. Such activities thrive where Jews, or indeed any minority, congregate and Edinburgh has more than its fair share. With the approach of Rosh Hashanah, we can look back with pride at our achievements but as we look ahead to the future, we could perhaps ask if we are meeting the needs of all Edinburgh Jews or could we be just a little more inclusive?

This issue of the Star has some exceptional contributions. Professor Aubrey Newman, a past contributor to the Star and well known to many in the community, has written an excellent piece on the Office of the Chief Rabbi. It is so interesting to read how this majestic institution came into being without being specifically created but instead, evolved to fill a need. A fine reason for any organisation to exist. We are grateful to Aubrey for his support of our magazine.

I am also grateful to a very talented young lady, Amanda Hyams, who submitted a drawing which we have used for our front cover. Amanda's winning entry earns her our prize of a £25 gift token.

Another new contributor is Hugo Rifkind. Hugo is well known to us for his fine writings in many national newspapers and magazines. He is also a member of Edinburgh's well respected Rifkind family. It is a pleasure to read his recollections of an important period in his life. His fond

memories of Edinburgh are matched by our fond memories of him as a child. We even managed to unearth a photo which I am sure he would rather forget!

With the approach of Rosh Hashanah, this is also a good time for me to mention our Rabbi, David Rose, who has become involved with many of Edinburgh's Jewish organisations and has also joined the board of the Star. That role is far from passive. His opinions are valuable and enthusiastically given. He is more than willing to assist in all aspects of our production process and for this issue, has not only written the traditional New Year message, but has also contributed a most informative piece on the current rather trendy subject of Kabbalah. For some time I have been curious as to its background and objectives. This article gives a concise and clear history of its origins and place in Jewish History.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all our readers throughout the world. I know the importance of the Star for those far away as a link to the city in which they grew up or simply had happy memories. It is a great stimulus to all of us who produce the Star to know you are there, supporting us and awaiting the next issue. From myself and all on the Board of the Star, I wish you all a happy and healthy New Year. L'Shana Tova

Peter Bennett

Rosh Hashanah Message

Rabbi David Rose

As we again approach the High Holiday Season, we can look back on a year that has been filled with activity for our community. Many successful events and general growth have made the last year one we can be proud of. This time of year is one of reflection and self-evaluation and it behoves us all to reflect on our own lives as well as that of both our immediate surroundings and larger society. In doing so, we can contemplate one of the major themes of both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur: that of unity. Rosh Hashanah celebrates the sovereignty of G-d and on this day we acclaim the fact that the universe has one Source and one Master and is bound together with one eternal Will. An important corollary of this is that all of humanity is also one. We were all created on this day by one Creator



and are all equally called to account on this day by one Judge. This theme is given substance on Yom Kippur when, for example, we make our confession in the plural. We confess to our sins as a community; thus emphasising the shared responsibility we all owe each other and G-d. This connection between Divine and human unity, especially with regards to the mission of Israel, is succinctly stated in a line we say every Shabbat afternoon. 'You are one and Your Name is one; who is like your people Israel – one people on earth'. It is part of our task as Jews to reflect the

divine unity of the universe in the unity of our own people. Yet if we are truly honest, as we are called to be at this period, Jewish communities are sometimes the least united of societies. Part of this is beneficial: Jews believe in open debate and discussion, believing that this strengthens us rather than weakens us. The trouble begins when these debates lead to splits within the fabric of the society. It is interesting that the Torah prohibition against disunity is learnt from the biblical command of '*lo titgodadu*'. While this literally is a prohibition of cutting of strips of our flesh in mourning (a Canaanite practice), the Rabbis interpreted it as prohibiting us from splitting up into little groups according to ideological or ritual preferences. There is nothing wrong with people having differing opinions within a community over a wide range of issues; that is healthy and strengthens everyone. What the Rabbis so strongly objected to were individuals or groups deciding that, because they disagree with aspects of community life, they will go and do their own thing; splitting off from the whole and thus weakening everybody. No community can practically accommodate every opinion. All societies need compromise to survive. Groups and individuals who break away in order to fulfil their personal ideological or ritual needs are in fact putting their own desires over the good of the whole of society. This is the prohibition of '*lo titgodadu*', and it is this behaviour, which carried to its logical conclusion, was a major contributor to the fall of the Jewish State: society simply fell apart. This phenomenon is all too prevalent in the Jewish world today. Ideological groups from both the left and right split off to form their own groups, not caring what effects their actions have on the community as a whole. This is the antithesis of the ethos of Judaism we celebrate at this period. At this time of reflection and repentance, we must seriously consider our actions and repent of our wrongdoing. Maybe the greatest sin of our generation is our disunity. We must return to the ideal of 'one nation in the earth' eschewing policies that will lead to our disintegration and threaten our survival. We must take on the message of these Days of Awe and strive for unity so that G-d will judge us all equally for good, and grant us as individuals and communities the wishes of our heart.

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The Office of the Chief Rabbi

Aubrey Newman

The Chief Rabbinate is a very British institution. Its development and growth would have been unlikely in any other country or in other circumstances.



Chief Rabbi Jakobovitz attending the official opening of the restructured Edinburgh Synagogue in 1980.

The Chief Rabbinate has been for nearly two hundred years one of the fundamental features of British Jewry. And what is very marked has been the way in which that institution has developed and gradually come to exert an influence over the whole community, in the Provinces as well as in London. It was never specifically created, either by the community itself or by forces outside the community. Rather it has evolved out of the changing nature of the various Jewish communities inside the British Isles. Perhaps the first crucial steps came when the religious head of the Great Synagogue in London began to assume a superior role over the other synagogues in London; thereafter, gradually, communities outside London turned to the Rabbi of the Great Synagogue inviting him to suggest possible officiants or adjudicate on local difficulties. But it was not until Rabbi Solomon Hirshell served as Rabbi of the Great Synagogue (1802–42) that there came to be any general recognition of any such pre-eminence. It was probably less due to the force of his own personality as to the lack of any other equivalent minister in London, but he showed continual willingness to take great pains. His letter-books show him in correspondence with individuals and congregations throughout the British Isles, while there is evidence of his being involved with communities in the Antipodes. It could well be claimed that he was regarded as the

spiritual head of Ashkenazi Jews over the British Empire, and when he died there was a memorial sermon by a non-Jewish clergyman in Portsmouth in which he was specifically referred to as 'The Chief Rabbi of the German and Polish Jews in the British Dominions'.

The eminence of the office was strengthened, almost inadvertently, by the introduction of registration of marriages under the 1836 Marriages Act, which regulated the licensing of places of worship for the purposes of conduct and registration of weddings and which recognised the special privileges afforded to Jews to conduct their own wedding ceremonies. By the terms of that Act the (lay) president of the Board of Deputies was given authority to certify individual congregations as being Jewish and thus having permission to hold their own Wedding Registers and obviating the need for the attendance of lay registrars. The president was unwilling to exercise that authority on his own account and chose instead to turn to the 'relevant religious authorities' (i.e. The Chief Rabbi and the Haham) for their recommendations. All that the Chief Rabbi demanded in return was that such congregations acknowledged his spiritual authority. That this was no empty formula was shown with the controversies over the formation of the 'Reform' community in London during the 1840s; the president of the Board

refused to certify this congregation as being Jewish within the meaning of the Registration Act, and it was not until 1856 that the congregation secured an Act of Parliament specifically permitting it to conduct marriages, thus solving the problem but without seeking the permission of the Chief Rabbi.

When Rabbi Hirshell died in 1842 there was strong pressure to invite leading provincial communities to participate in the selection of a successor. Twenty communities in the British Isles were recorded and invited to participate, the basic qualification being the payment of a minimum annual fee to the Chief Rabbinate fund, fixed on this occasion at five guineas. Among those participating were the communities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and they were all in agreement that the Chief Rabbi should have 'the general religious direction and superintendence of each of the uniting congregations'. The choice of the majority fell on Nathan Marcus Adler, the senior Rabbi of Hanover. It is perhaps of interest to recall that the other leading candidate was Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch and one might consider, had he been elected, whether the customs of Anglo-Jewry might have had a greater influence on his thought, or whether Anglo-Jewry might have been greatly changed by him.

'The eminence of the office was strengthened, almost inadvertently, by the introduction of registration of marriages'

The new Chief Rabbi was clearly anxious to demonstrate the extent of his jurisdiction. In August 1845 he sent a circular to all congregations in the United Kingdom and the overseas colonies calling for information about their synagogal, charitable and educational activities. Some congregations overseas declined to

answer, in effect refusing to recognise his authority. The majority however replied very fully, and their responses give a revealing picture of British Jewry as a whole. Two years later he published his Laws and Regulations for all the Synagogues in the United Kingdom in which appear such statements as: 'The duty of superintending the Synagogue, as far as religious observances are concerned, devolves upon the Chief Rabbi, when present' or 'The erection of a new Synagogue must have the sanction of the Chief Rabbi; and the formation of a new Congregation must have the sanction of the Chief Rabbi besides that of the Board of Deputies.' While not strictly true, such bodies certainly could not operate freely and fully without the authorisations which only these two could grant.

With Rabbi Adler there came also a series of 'pastoral visitations' which became a regular feature of community life. Provincial congregations could normally expect to receive visits and examinations by him, and after his death the opinion was expressed by provincial congregations, 'that means should be adopted for frequent pastoral visits to Provincial congregations, either by the Chief Rabbi himself or by ministers delegated by him.' One of his successors carried such a 'visitation' to even further limits, by indulging in a pastoral tour of the British Empire. Such visits were intended to give the Chief Rabbi some acquaintance with the wants and defects of individual congregations as well as indicating that his interest was not confined to the 'grand and rich synagogues of the metropolis'. A committee set up in 1891 on the death of Rabbi Nathan Adler, drawing up a 'job specification' for his successor, even went so far as to specify: 'the visitation of Provincial Synagogues and Schools is exclusively the function and duty of the Chief Rabbi, as is the visitation of a diocese by its Bishop.' Such a process of equating the status of the Chief Rabbinate to a Bishopric was not entirely lost on Rabbi Hermann Adler, who went so far as to adopt 'clerical gaiters' and is reputed to have worn an ecclesiastical hat with appropriate Episcopal rosettes.

One of the perennial problems facing the Chief Rabbinate has been its financial basis. Part of its funding has been based upon the various fees which have been paid for its services,

such as the Marriage Authorisation Fee. But this has never been adequate, and so long as the bulk of the work of the Rabbinate had been in connection with the various synagogues in London, it was not at all unreasonable to expect the United Synagogue to fill the gap. But within a generation, and with a great expansion in the numbers of individuals and congregations, the demands on his services had correspondingly increased. Unsurprisingly, there developed a growing resentment among the members of the United Synagogue at the increasing burden placed upon them. As far back as 1871 a report drawn up for the newly created United Synagogue complained bitterly of provincial failings: 'there are no fewer

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than twenty-one Provincial and fifteen Colonial Congregations participating in the benefits of the Chief Rabbi's supervision who have never contributed to the Fund.' In 1886 the provincial congregations were asked to recognise 'that they exist not for themselves only but are members of the great body-corporate of the Jews of the Empire who are amenable to the spiritual guidance of the Chief Rabbinate'. Again, in 1891, there was a further complaint. 'The Executive Committee [of the United Synagogue] cannot refrain from drawing attention to the utter inadequacy of the contributions to the maintenance of the office of the Chief Rabbi which are made by Synagogues outside the United Synagogue. These synagogues are constantly calling upon the Chief Rabbi to use his influence in the collection of funds towards the building of new synagogues inviting him to consecrate their edifices and to examine their

schools; they write to him continually concerning their local affairs; they invoke his decision on religious questions; they rely on him to find and examine suitable officials as Preachers, readers, teachers and shochem, and they appeal for his advice on every conceivable occasion. Although repeatedly solicited to contribute to the Chief Rabbi's fund, the majority of synagogues referred to, though some of them are well able to afford a payment, have hitherto ignored the applications made to them, while the subscriptions of contributing synagogues are in many cases inadequate to the services rendered.'

Over one hundred years later the same sentiments were still being expressed. At the election of Dr Jonathan Sacks as Chief Rabbi there were attempts made to regularise a system of communal contributions which would be enough to cover the costs of the office. It is no secret that there has been as yet no satisfactory solution to this problem, and that this failure has materially affected the extent to which the Chief Rabbi's office can properly respond to all the requests made for his services. The community at the middle of the nineteenth century was very different from the community which had to make crucial decisions over the Chief Rabbinate. The earlier community was London dominated and religiously coherent. Even the emergence of the Reform congregations in London and elsewhere in the Provinces did not greatly disturb the pattern of 'Anglo-Jewry'. But one of the effects of the 'Great Migration' out of Eastern Europe after the 1870s was the creation of new communities with little or no connection with the historic congregations of the south of England and, moreover, with a deep suspicion of a hierarchy of Rabbis imposed from above. In Russia the local 'chief' rabbis had been functionaries appointed by the state and with specific state functions to perform. When they came to Britain they brought their own officiants with them and many of these had gained semicha before their arrival. They came to stand on an equal footing with any ministers of Anglo-Jewry; indeed, since the Adlers had largely refused to award semicha within the community, these 'foreign' rabbis claimed at the very least to be equal with the Chief himself. On some religious issues, such as the standards

of kashrut they even objected to the alleged laxity of supervision in Great Britain, so that they were responsible for continuing threats of law suits being brought in the civil law courts against the British religious authorities, and there were attempts by both sides to secure support for their own positions from various religious authorities in Lithuania. In Manchester there had been an attempt to establish a local Chief Rabbi, and there was quite widely a failure to realise that unless they conformed not only to religious law but also to secular law in such issues as marriage, and divorce, their marriages were not marriages and their divorces were not divorces.

‘the Chief Rabbinate has been accused of being more interested in conveying messages to the non-Jewish world than to the members of his own community.’

The death of Hermann Adler in 1911 opened an opportunity for two specific groups to make their views felt. A deputation of ‘foreign’ rabbis made presentations to the Chief Rabbinate Conference: ‘Provincial Rabbis should have absolute authority and autonomy in the management of local, ecclesiastical affairs ... The Chief Rabbi should not be allowed to interfere with the provincial Rabbi in questions appertaining to Shulchan Aruch especially with regard to affairs of Shechita.’ There was a demand that the next Chief Rabbi should have none of his predecessor’s authority but should be merely ‘a first among rabbinic equals’. Even some of the leading ‘English’ provincial ministers, such as Rabbi Samuel Daiches, voiced elements of discontent: ‘The Chief Rabbinate in its present form has outlived itself ... The Chief Rabbinate has crippled the community, has destroyed the sense of responsibility in congregation and minister alike. If Judaism in this country is to be vitalised, every congregation must have its own absolutely independent spiritual head.’

There were other objections evinced in 1891, as they were to be in 1912 and on all subsequent occasions. The Federation of Synagogues, largely

based in the East End of London and claiming to speak for the Eastern Europeans who had only recently arrived there, had no objection to there being a Chief Rabbi, but only if the Federation had the leading voice in choosing the successful candidate. On all occasions the discussions concerned the balance between contributions paid and the number of votes, and without exception when the decision went against them the representatives of the Federation withdrew from the discussions. Of recent years spokesmen for the Federation have lost no opportunity of denigrating both the institution and the holder of the office.

Those arguments were not accepted; the Anglo-Jewish establishment felt at home with a Chief Rabbi, and indeed the whole pattern of the previous generations had shown the value of such an office. The choice of the Establishment fell on a man who was to find himself in conflict with the very establishment which had been responsible for his election. Joseph Herman Hertz was well known as pugnacious – ‘always prepared to follow a peaceful path when all others had failed’ – but his opponents were led by Sir Robert Waley-Cohen, a man who made it clear that while all spiritual matters were under the absolute control of the Chief Rabbi, all secular matters were under his own equally absolute discretion – and that he himself decided what was spiritual and what was secular. When Chief Rabbi Hertz died the major aim of the lay leadership was to find a candidate who could be at once spiritually acceptable and at the same time more accommodating. The irony was that the candidate who was chosen as fulfilling these criteria, ended at the centre of bitterness even deeper than there had been with his predecessor.

The appointments which have covered the period after 1914 have left problems. The issues which have emerged involve to a considerable extent the movement of large numbers to either the religious right or the religious left, both of which refuse to recognise any specific authority in the office of the Chief Rabbi. Indeed the extent to which the non-Jewish, ‘host’ society has welcomed the intervention of successive Chief Rabbis in its politics – even to the extent of awarding one of them a seat in the House of Lords – might well in itself have weakened the status of the Chief

Rabbinate within the Jewish community itself. And the extent to which the state has turned to the Chief Rabbinate and regarded it as the ‘official’ spokesman of the community has further alienated those groups within the community who are unhappy about many of its aspects.

The Chief Rabbinate is a very British institution. Its development and growth would have been unlikely in any other country or in other circumstances. The links between spiritual and secular authorities within the community were paralleled by links between the community and the non-Jewish host society. There have been times when it has been argued that the Jewish ecclesiastical leaders were the tools of the secular leadership, that the Chief Rabbi and his associates were merely representing the wishes of the secular establishment. At the same time the Chief Rabbinate has been accused of being more interested in conveying messages to the non-Jewish world than to the members of his own community. In practice the Chief Rabbinate has never been the tool of any of the secular groups, but it is interesting to see how often the wishes of secular and religious leaders have paralleled each other. The twentieth century has illustrated clearly the occasions when they worked together, as well as those when they were at odds. It remains to be seen how far these are likely to be repeated in the course of the twenty-first.

Aubrey N Newman is well-known to audiences in Edinburgh, having lectured here on several occasions and having written earlier for the Edinburgh Star. He was educated in Glasgow and then in Oxford before being appointed to the Department of History at the University of Leicester where he is currently Professor Emeritus.

He has become known as an historian of modern Anglo-Jewry and of the period of the ‘Great Migration’ from Russia at the end of the nineteenth century. His writings include studies of the Chief Rabbinate, the Board of Deputies, and of the United Synagogue. He is currently working on a study of the patterns of migration into and through the United Kingdom between 1880 and 1914 and of the London-based Poor Jews’ Temporary Shelter.



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Can you find the ball? Cut out and send your answer to the editor. Best answer will be announced in the next edition!



What it means to be a member of the AJR

Judy Gilbert



AJR meeting with 1st, 2nd and even 3rd generation AJR members.

Soon after the dust of WW2 had settled, The Association for Jewish Refugees was set up to help victims of the Holocaust who had finally settled in Britain.

In 1941 the Aliens Department of the Home Office sent a proposal to the Foreign Office with the objective 'To be responsible for the Jewish refugee Community in London and the country'. (Dr Anthony Grenville: AJR ...60 Years On: October 2001)

In practice this meant that Jewish refugees, regardless of their religious or political affiliations, should have the opportunity to acquire British Citizenship and thereby be eligible to immediate assistance against the inevitable hardships they had so far suffered. In order to attempt to be of any real practical help to the scattered and disorientated community, it was necessary to initiate some means of overall communication which, while providing general information, would also draw people together.

A major consideration of the Association was how to address cases of hardship by ensuring that refugees were aware of how they would be able to survive in a strange country where everything would be unfamiliar to them. Leaflets would provide information about how to obtain social and welfare benefits for immediate relief, and knowing how to proceed with claims, restitution and compensation from their country of origin; mainly Austria and Germany.

By 1950 the programme of

naturalisation had been completed and the next pressing issue would be to set up an employment agency and a social services department. Nearly 64 years on from its inception, the issues have changed as the status of former refugees has changed. The Association has expanded in a

surprising way. The average age of the members has dropped because of the energetic work done by local branch administrators encouraging second-generation 'victims' to identify themselves. These new members take part in the numerous social gatherings and activities for a group of people who share common experiences and have common roots.

Occasionally there are still some who even now, after so many years, discover that something can be done on their behalf through the welfare service within AJR, which is run by Marcia Goodman. Recently a Viennese born woman, the sole survivor of her family who had lost touch with the Jewish community, having recently found out about her background, was now receiving much needed financial and welfare support.

There are many too, who after all this

time, are still being helped to fight for restitution and compensation, and in this pursuit, even government has been persuaded to change legislation in favour of alleviating some of the problems previously affecting claims.

For example AJR has been instrumental in changing legislation that previously disqualified claimants from receiving state benefits if they had received a lump sum in compensation. The waiving of inheritance tax on such awards has also been allowed for the beneficiaries of wills.

Now that so much time has elapsed it is not surprising that local branches of AJR, set up all over Britain, are concentrating less on material issues and more on social and psychological aspects.

In Edinburgh a completely new circle of friendships and acquaintances has emerged. Susanne Green (Northern Co-ordinator) started to make enquiries, at the behest of Vicki Gruneberg, as to the feasibility of starting an Edinburgh branch of AJR. There were a few instantly identifiable first and second-generation refugees eligible for the group; people who already had some connection with a Jewish organisation, whether it was religious or purely social.

"They thought that they had lost an identity but discover that they really do still belong."

The grapevine was set in motion and somehow 15 new faces were to be seen at the first meeting that was held towards the end of 2002. It was to be informal and conducive to the unburdening of stories relating to the circumstances in which they came to be here. It was the most poignant of all meetings. For some, this was the first time that traumatic events leading up to finally settling in Edinburgh had ever been uttered. The floodgates of memories were unleashed. It was also the first time for some that the long lost connection with other Jewish people had been made. New members now recognised that the meetings were a completely unconditional forum where common experience, not religion, was the decisive factor. Meetings are usually planned with a theme, to discuss for example, music, art or literature in individual homes. An annual meeting

with members from other Northern climes last year incorporated an outing to the theatre. This year's large gathering heard Michael Newman, (Director of Claims AJR) give updates on financial issues, which were followed by a series of workshops. One of the most successful get-togethers relied on everybody bringing their favourite dish with a possible explanation or story to go with it. Another meeting turned up a little book entitled 'Emigranton Adressbuch: Branchen Rejister 1939' brought from Shanghai and filled with the names of former refugees from Europe who resided there during the war. How heartening to discover that on a visit to the Dresden Bank where her father had once been manager, one second generation member discovered that the Bank was just in the process of filling a database with names and past histories of the Jewish families who once lived there.

What could be more cathartic than reminiscing and tasting some of the cultural delights left behind so many years before?

A recent census revealed that in

Edinburgh more than 700 souls regarded themselves as Jewish. This was an amazing revelation to many people. Who were all these people? Where did they all live? Of the 400 or so mysteries, maybe AJR has managed to turn up a small but very significant group, which is growing as I write.

They thought that they had lost an identity but discover that they really do still belong.

For more information about Edinburgh AJR contact Françoise Robertson (chairman) on 0131 337 3406

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The Alliance in Morningside has a lot to answer for!

David Kaplan

It was a fine summer afternoon in August 1977 when I was taken to the Alliance Building Society with my first personal cheque to start my financial career and investment portfolio.

I was given a red pass book and a pencil case and I thought I had finally gained my place at the high-society table. Every year I received newsletters and competitions from the Alliance which kept me within their fold throughout my teenage years.

On moving into the university world I opened many different accounts in order to claim the freebies on offer but on graduation I closed most of them down in order to avoid future costs and junk mail shots. The one which I kept open was not the one which had the best financial terms or even the best free draw prizes but the one which had been with me throughout my life, the Alliance which had the Leicester addition to its name by now.

It is this experience which has given birth to the new and exciting initiative, Tribe, the Young United Synagogue. Its mission is to, **“encourage young Jews from all over Britain to become proud and involved members of the United Synagogue Family”**.

Since last Rosh Hashanah, Tribe has flourished. In the 18 months since we were established, almost 2,000 young Jews have become members. We have supported the work of individual communities and we have organised a range of innovative events.

Although the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation is not formally part of the United Synagogue we are delighted to be able to offer a strong and viable partnership with Edinburgh, as the Community is under the auspices of the Office of the Chief Rabbi.

I hope that Edinburgh will seek to harness the funds and resources that Tribe has at its disposal so we can bring added value for being young and Jewish in my home community.

It is this strategic approach to our young people that we hope will lead to them feeling proud and committed Jews in Scotland, but will also travel with them on their future journeys in life wherever that may take them.

As we enter the year 5765, the whole Tribe team is looking forward to building on all this work for the benefit of all young Jews in Edinburgh and throughout Scotland.

Indeed the Alliance in Morningside has a lot to answer for!

David V Kaplan
Managing Director of Tribe

Star Trek into the Past

Answers on page 27



Up for it?

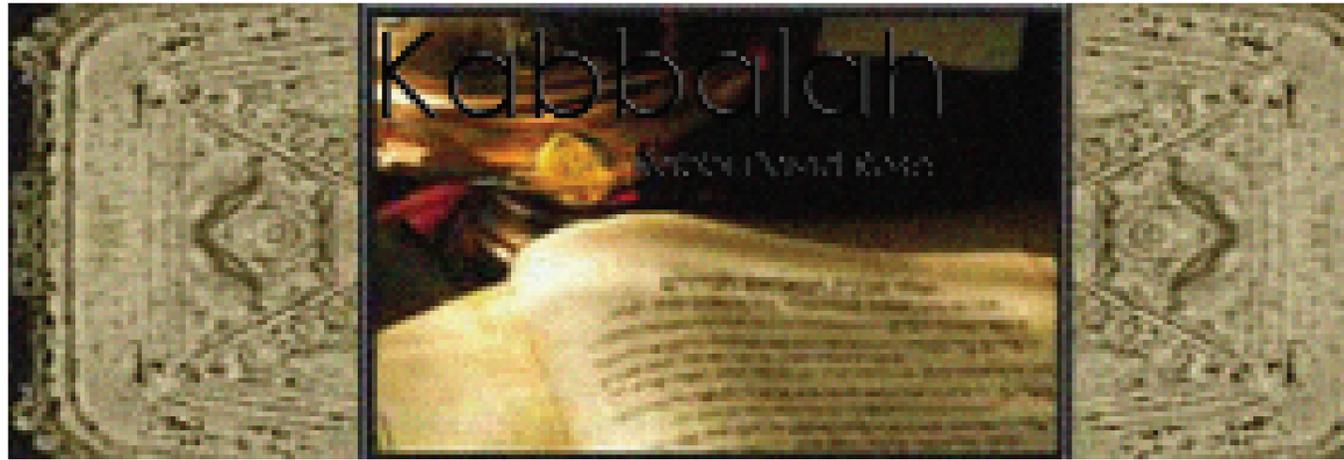
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- **Tribe Website - access all areas**
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Oh yeah, it's FREE to join.

Join online today.



**What is Kabbalah?
Celebrities are into it,
charlatans make money
out of it, and most Jews
are ignorant of it.**

What are we to make of all this mystery and mayhem and as thinking Jews interested in our heritage, how should we approach this area of our religion and culture? Put simply, Kabbalah is Jewish mysticism. One may well ask what is mysticism; a more difficult question to answer definitely. We can define mysticism as the human quest for the understanding of the mystery of the universe. Religion may seek to explain that mystery, but at its heart all authentic religion keeps a sense of awe and mystery. Mysticism seeks to enable the believer to experience that mystery head on, normally seeking a direct experience of the Divine. It also, paradoxically, often seeks to explain or rationalise the particular mystery that lies at the heart of each religion. Much Christian mysticism, for example, is concerned with the divine incarnation which lies at the heart of Christian belief.

Kabbalah, as Jewish mysticism has, of course, a peculiarly Jewish tint. Just as a primary facet of Jewish life is study, so too, Jewish mysticism saw study of the Torah as the primary means of experiencing the Divine. As far back as the Talmud and earlier, the Torah was thought able to be understood on various levels, including *sod*, the secret or mystical level. Later Kabbalah, especially, sought to categorise mystic concepts in an almost Halakhik sense and this came to full flowering in the Hassidic movement; the first Jewish mass

movement based on mystical ideas.

The first mystics, of course, were the prophets and throughout the Biblical period we find 'the sons of the prophets'; early mystic brotherhoods. The Torah itself has records of mystic experiences by Moses and others and indeed the Revelation at Sinai is still regarded by religious Jews as the ultimate mystical experience. We find several references in the Talmud to mystic occurrences. The great Rabbi Akiva was the only survivor of one of these excursions which left his colleagues either dead or insane. As we will discover later, mysticism in Judaism has always been a somewhat dangerous affair. In Talmudic times mystic speculation was centred round two books; the works of Creation and the Divine Chariot, based on Ezekiel's vision. The Middle Ages saw great luminaries of Jewish life such as Nachmanidies engage in mystic pursuits. Indeed they often incorporated them in their commentaries on the Torah. Nachmanidies, for example, explains Jacob's dream of an angelic ladder in terms of angelic control over the various nations of the world. The Middle Ages also saw the emergence into the public domain of the basic text of Kabbalah: the Zohar.

The Zohar was surrounded by dispute

'Kabbalah, especially, sought to categorise mystic concepts in an almost Halakhik sense and this came to full flowering in the Hassidic movement'

from its publication in the 13th century onward. Moshe de'Leon claimed to have discovered an original text composed by the great Talmudic mystic Shimon bar Yochai. Though others, at the time and since, were extremely sceptical of his claim, the authenticity of the Zohar was generally accepted in the Orthodox world. The Zohar is patterned on the weekly Parshah or Torah Reading and is thus a mystical commentary on the Torah. All subsequent Kabbalistic works have the source in the concepts contained in the Zohar though they may greatly expand and even modify its teachings.

The greatest expansion of Jewish mystical thought came after the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492 and centred on the holy city of Safed in Israel. This Kabbalah, heavily messianic in tone following recent Jewish tragedies, had as its greatest exponent Isaac Luria popularly known as the *Ari*. Indeed he is considered second only to Shimon bar Yochai in his influence on Jewish mysticism. This Kabbalah, which had at its heart an effort to bring the Redemption, was a major factor behind the false messianic careers of Shabbatei Zvi and Ya'acov Frank, which created such upheaval in the Jewish world and gave Kabbalah a bad name. Various Rabbis even cast aspersions on the validity of kabbalistic ideas. This led, especially in the Ashkenazic world, to restrictions on its study. From this upheaval also came a mass movement based on mysticism; the Hassidic movement. Hassidism sought to both de-messianise Kabbalah and translate its teachings into concepts and actions readily understood by the common man. In doing this it fulfilled a void in a Jewish community bereft after the pogroms of

1648 and the failure of Shabbatien messianism. Kabbalistic ideas also have had an influence on Jewish law and custom and this is especially true in the Hassidic movement. The Kabbalat Shabbat service, for example, is a kabbalistic innovation. What then are some of the ideas that constitute the core of Kabbalah? Judaism believes in a Deity that is both incorporeal and omnipresent and at the same time transcendent. In other words, while G-d is everywhere in the world he is also beyond the universe and not, as in Hinduism, identical with it. The basic problem Jewish mysticism seeks to solve is how an infinite G-d can relate to a finite world and how, if G-d is both omnipresent and omnipotent, a reality other than Him can exist. Kabbalah begins to solve this dilemma by postulating the doctrine of *tzimzum* or contraction. This states that, in order to make room for a reality other than Himself, G-d contracted Himself and left a void into which the universe could be formed. G-d's relationship with this reality outside Himself is another main preoccupation of Kabbalah.

'To study Kabbalah while not being a committed Jew, is similar to only eating deserts while abjuring meat and vegetables: hardly a healthy lifestyle'

An important concept in both Jewish philosophy and mysticism is that the universe would cease to exist without G-d actively willing it to continue. The method by which G-d relates and sustains the universe, both physical and spiritual, is by way of the *sephirot*

or spheres. These can best be described as descending spheres of Divine influence from the most spiritual and closest to the essence of G-d, to the furthest and most material: our physical world. Just as the sun gives life to the earth by means of its rays, even though it is millions of miles away, so too does G-d give life to the universe by means of the *sephirot*, even though His essence is totally beyond our comprehension. Similarly, just as it is our very distance from the sun that both sustains and protects us from annihilation, so do the *sephirot* both convey to us G-d's influence, while protecting us from His proximity which no creature could withstand and still exist. The notion of the *sephirot* is far more complicated and subtle than I have been able to convey but this is the basic idea.

As mentioned earlier, a major period of kabbalistic development was in the 16th century in Safed. The ideas that emerged out of this period are normally called Lurianic Kabbalah after their greatest exponent, Isaac Luria. One of the major concepts in Lurianic Kabbalah is that of the 'Breaking of the Vessels'. This is a complicated notion but basically postulates that the receptacles meant to receive the Divine light at creation and thus form the universe, broke under an excess of Divine power. This shattering led to the Divine light being scattered amongst the gross matter of the physical world or Divine 'sparks' being trapped amongst the 'husks'. It is the task of Israel by observing the Torah to 'rescue' these sparks from their entrapment, and when this process is completed the universe will be redeemed. These ideas, as mentioned earlier, easily fed into and encouraged messianic speculations which led to the Shabbatien movement.

A common notion concerning Kabbalah consists of its practical

applications. This has its roots both in the miracles of the Prophets and the power attributed to certain Rabbis in the Talmud. Rabbis are mentioned both turning people who annoyed them into heaps of bones (a trick modern Rabbis wouldn't mind having), and creating humans and other creatures by means of harnessing the power G-d used in creating the world. From these antecedents came of course, the story of the Golem, supposedly created by the great kabbalist the Maharal of Prague; a story that is unfortunately almost certainly an historical fiction. While the belief that certain Rabbis could practically use mystic arts is within the realm of normative Judaism, in the words of one great contemporary authority, 'no one today can use practical Kabbalah; if you know of someone who can, please send him to see me as we can really use him'.

We have seen, then, that Kabbalah is basically just Jewish mysticism, and outlined some of its basic concepts. As seen from that outline, Kabbalah is a complicated and detailed mystical system based on many other Jewish concepts and intrinsically linked with Jewish thought and practice. It is an addendum to the basic Jewish spirituality that comes out of leading a Jewish life and not a substitute for it. To study Kabbalah while not being a committed Jew, is similar to only eating deserts while abjuring meat and vegetables: hardly a healthy lifestyle. It is a great shame that various unscrupulous Rabbis have exploited people's spiritual yearnings by selling them a distorted version of Kabbalah while ignoring the basics of Jewish life. If one eventually wishes to study Kabbalah well and good; first, however, study and practice being a good Jew.

Rabbi David Rose

The Edinburgh Progressive Torah Scroll

Gordon J Barclay



On 5 September, over 18 months of hard work will culminate in the arrival of the first Torah scroll of the Edinburgh Progressive Jewish community ('progressive' because at the time of writing we have yet to decide whether to affiliate to Reform or Liberal movements).

There has been a Reform community of some kind in Edinburgh, off and on, for almost 30 years. From 1997, with generous assistance from Rabbi Pete Tobias and Glasgow New Synagogue (GNS), the community took more formal shape and began to grow. By early 2003 the community was holding regular monthly *erev shabbat* services and occasional Torah services, with a scroll lent by GNS, but the logistical problems of transporting the scroll were considerable. By this stage the community, while still very much attached to GNS, felt that it needed some of the things locally that a Jewish community should have - a *cheder*, for example, had been started in 2002.

'did you know you can buy a Torah on e-bay?'

The feeling began to grow that the community needed its own Torah scroll, both for practical reasons, for services, and to act as a focus. Could we afford one? So it was that we began to explore some strange byways....did you know you can buy a Torah on e-bay? There was much discussion about what we wanted - we couldn't afford a new scroll - writing a new one can cost well over £20,000, and we knew we'd have to brave the 'pre-owned' market. We knew we wanted an Ashkenazi text,

and that we also needed a light scroll that could be lifted by any member of our community - old or young, male or female. Of course, the lighter scrolls cost more!

The Czech Torah Scroll Trust was our first stop; the Trust, as many readers will know, has repaired and sent out on permanent loan many hundreds of scrolls rescued from Czechoslovakia in 1964. Unfortunately nothing usable or repairable was left in their collection. We began to look further afield. Rabbi Tobias made contact with a rabbi at a conference in the United States - a man who could apparently source scrolls from all over the world, at low prices.

We came and went with this rabbi for a while, but we didn't want to buy sight unseen, and the problems of bringing the scroll to Britain were considerable. I'll never forget my Kafkaesque telephone conversations with Customs and Excise about the basis for charging duty on a scroll imported from the USA - it's "a work of religious art", should you need it for a shul quiz!

Finally we made contact with a *sofer* in Britain, Marc Michaels, whose working name is Mordechai Pinchas. At first we sought only advice, which he generously provided, as to what a small community might be able to buy. And then we asked him to act for us. At first the scrolls he could find available for sale were either too large or too expensive, or both. At last, however, in late November 2003 he sent us photos of what seemed the perfect scroll: 85cm long, with the parchment 42cm wide, and weighing 3.6kg (8lbs).

It needed repairs of course to make it *kosher* but the scroll and the repairs together would still cost a figure most of us felt we could raise from within the community. Rabbi Tobias (now based in Elstree) went to inspect the scroll, and he pronounced it fit for use, subject to the repairs being completed.

The history of our new scroll is as yet obscure. The script is German, *Bet Yosef* style. Before work had started Marc had thought that it was made up

of two pre-existing scrolls, a not uncommon practice. However, his close scrutiny has shown that the hand is the same throughout, but that the size and flow of the script changes in D'varim, although it soon changes back. Marc writes that for the most part the stitching of the *yeriot* is the 'loop' stitching in use up to the first half of the 19th century. Some *yeriot* are 'blind' stitched (post-1850), suggesting later repairs. In support of an early date, the scroll does not follow the standard 42 line *ktav tikkun*. As soon as the Edinburgh Community formally became independent, we resoundingly confirmed the decision to

'I'll never forget my Kafkaesque telephone conversations with Customs and Excise about the basis for charging duty on a scroll imported from the USA'

buy the scroll and we asked Marc to act on our behalf to buy the scroll and undertake the repairs, and started to raise funds. In the end, the generosity of members of the community and other Jews associated with the community ensured that the sum for the purchase of the scroll, its repair, and its dressings was collected by the beginning of August.

At the *siyyum* ('completion') service on 5 September the oldest and youngest members of our congregation will complete the last two letters and the scroll will be ready for use, in the first instance at the community's first High Holy Day services.

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Childhood Recollections

Hugo Rifkind



Hugo (right) pictured with his sister and cousins.

It must be a decade and a half since I stumbled across the tiny cemetery on Sciennes House Place. I was idling on a Tuesday afternoon, killing time before a barmitzvah lesson with Rabbi Shapira. I must have glanced to my left, and the Hebrew fonts on those crumbling gravestones roared out at me from between the railings. They stopped me in my tracks. Up until that point, in Edinburgh, I had seen Hebrew writing in only two public places; in the windy emptiness of Piershill, where we had recently buried my grandfather, and above the small door of the vast hallway of the Salisbury Road *shul*. Yet here was more, tucked away as though it belonged there. As though there was nothing odd about being Jewish in Edinburgh at all.

For the next few months, I probably went there once a week. Every Tuesday, I'd stare at the stones and eat crisps, until exactly three minutes before four o'clock. Three minutes - that was how long it took to walk from Sciennes House Place to Rabbi Shapira's Minto Street flat. There was no point in arriving early, because I'd be leaving at five, regardless. If I arrived late, I knew, Rabbi Shapira would be loudly and expansively disappointed, as only an Israeli rabbi can be. True, Rabbi Shapira was bound to be loudly and expansively disappointed anyway, but I preferred it not to happen on the doorstep. Arriving on time meant a period of tea-drinking and encouragement, which was an opportunity for me to ask questions. I liked asking questions. Asking questions put off the moment when I would have to begin reciting my *haftorah*. Which, in turn, put off the loud and expansive disappointment. Although not for very long.

As a child, it always seemed to me that there were two Rabbi Shapiras - the on-duty Rabbi Shapira of *shul*, with his luxurious robes and octagonal hat, and the off-duty Rabbi Shapira of my *barmitzvah* lessons, with his V-necked sweaters and shirts, and his brown, plastic portable telephone clamped to the side of his head.

This, by the way, is no mere euphemism. Rabbi Shapira actually did have a clamp. It was a thick metal thing, like a ruler bent into a U. Inside his home, I never once saw his head out of it. Such was the Rabbi's devotion to his flock, I decided, he was unwilling to keep a needy member of his congregation waiting for even the few seconds it took to raise a telephone to an ear. And it did ring a good deal. Initially, I would halt my tortuous, tuneless declamations when it did so. Eventually, Rabbi Shapira made it clear that I should not. "You will face the same distractions, and worse, on the *bima*," he told me. This was good advice, even if not, strictly speaking, even slightly true.

My Hebrew was as woeful in my childhood as it is today, and, unusual as these lessons may have seemed, it is a great testament to Rabbi Shapira's teaching, that I managed a perfectly competent performance when the day came. Looking back, I'm not sure we give young boys enough credit for quite how terrifying a process a barmitzvah can be. To sing in a language you don't understand, in front of a sizeable proportion of all the people you have ever met, all the while reading backwards and inwardly expecting a nearby telephone to explode in a barrage of tinny Hebrew; this is no small challenge for an adolescent to master. I'm sure it says a lot about the psyche of the Jewish male, all that - the ritualised terror of our early teens. On many levels, it must be an intensely character-building experience. Personally, I don't actually remember a second of mine. I only remember being in the community hall downstairs afterwards, exuberantly relieved.

Thanks to *Cheder*, various cousins, and my flickering attention span, I must have spent a good deal more time down there than I have ever

spent in my pew upstairs. I gather I'm just old enough to remember when everything happened downstairs, but I don't. Although I know it wasn't my first time there, my earliest memory of a *shul* service is of arriving at the top of the left-hand steps with my father, and being bewildered at the sight of all the men draped in white *tallisim* down below. To this day, I maintain that I had never seen such things before.

I stated this at the time, loudly and repeatedly enough for my father to grow quite annoyed. For a long time afterwards, part of me was dimly convinced that the entire Edinburgh community had played some kind of elaborate hoax on me. No matter that this would have required the collusion of all other Jews across the globe, and the doctoring of a few thousand years of religious texts - I was positive that there had never been *tallisim* in my *shul* before. It was only quite recently that I quite suddenly realised the source of my confusion. It must have been my first time in the new, upstairs *shul*. I had never seen the congregation from above before and, as a toddler, I must have never looked up.

I liked asking questions. Asking questions put off the moment when I would have to begin reciting my *haftorah*. Which, in turn, put off the loud and expansive disappointment.

More than anything else, the *shul* was a playground to me, or a youth club. *Cheder* playtimes were spent rampaging around with Benji Bowman and the Goldberg twins. We tussled, built forts out of those brown, canvas chairs and once, to our abject astonishment, discovered the light-switch for the Everlasting Light. As a ten-year-old, it's hard to comprehend of such a thing. In recalling that moment, I can't help but think of Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, spotting the old man behind the machine. If that sounds disrespectful, then I

Around and About

The Shein Scene

On 11 June 2004, 30 members of the CCJ joined an equal number of the community at a Shabbat evening dinner. Rev. McLellan, former Moderator of the Church of Scotland, spoke after the meal of the significance of such an occasion and stated that there never will be peace in the world unless there is peace between religions, and there will never be peace between religions, unless there is understanding between religions. He believed an event such as tonight's excellent function had helped bring a realisation of this. Rabbi Rose thanked the ladies of the shul events committee under the convenship of Hilary Rifkind, for the outstanding evening meal and hoped that, as Joshua had said, "go forward" and let us repeat this special occasion.



Guests at the WIZO lunch

In a depressingly wet June, the weather happily took a turn for the better on the 13th when the annual WIZO lunch took place in the garden of Katie and Ron Goodwin's home. About 70 attended the intimate and most pleasant afternoon, during which the hot soup served before the sandwiches proved to be most welcome in the not exactly mid summer day. The raffle realised £500

which brought the grand total raised for WIZO funds to £1,000.

On 20 June the gardens at Merchiston Cottage, the home of Esther and Harold Mendelssohn, were open for charity under the Gardens of Scotland "Yellow Book" Scheme. The mid summer day was carefully selected so that it would coincide with the longest day. The shul calendar was consulted in order to prevent a clash with any other events. Despite a sustained amount of prayer on my part, the weather throughout June was the wettest I can recall. Also my choice of date did in fact conflict with the cheder picnic and much of our support from the community vanished. Things were not looking good. However in true sports day tradition, that Sunday afternoon the weather was wonderful, the sun shone and the plants looked their best.

With around 250 people through the door, items included a successful plant stall manned by David Mendelssohn (who had kindly taken the time to grow much of the stock himself), and a home baking stall supervised by Anita Mendelssohn and Avril Berger (both of whom remained at their post until the last cake was sold!) . Almost everyone sat down to tea and pastries and many of those unable to attend sent donations by way of apology. A total of £900 was raised, this amount being divided between the Scotland's Gardens Scheme Charity, the Queen's Nursing Institute, Scotland, and the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregational Communal Hall.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those from the community who were kind enough to support this event and hope they found it enjoyable and to express my gratitude to all my helpers for their sterling efforts which were much appreciated. Esther Hanna Mendelssohn

The AGM of the Congregation and the Community Centre Committee took place on 23 June. The President Dr. Philip Mason welcomed the 60 members who attended and commented on the future of the

community in face of a declining membership. The Hon. Treasurer, Mr. John Danzig, reported that the balance sheet, although showing a deficit, was not entirely discouraging, and spoke of the exciting renovations which had taken place recently within the synagogue precincts with the help of Lottery money and legacies. There had in fact been a net increase in assets including the purchase of a house for the Rabbi. Dr. Mason thanked the Vice Presidents, his Executive and members of Council for the excellent support they had given him and to all concerned for work undertaken during a very busy year. Mr. Danzig, on demitting office, also expressed his gratitude for all the support he had received.

Appointed were; President, Dr. Philip Mason; Hon. Treasurer, Mr Laurence Bowman; Council, Mrs Anita Mendelssohn, Mrs Hilary Rifkind, Mrs Jackie Taylor, Messrs. Anthony Gilbert, Steven Hyams, Howard Kahn, Gershon Mendick, David Neville, Arnold Rifkind, Raymond Taylor. Mr. David Goldberg and Mr. Sas Judah were re-elected respectively Senior and Junior Wardens. Hon. Vice Presidents re-elected were Messrs. John Cosgrove, Malcolm Cowan and Alec Rubenstein.

Mr. Bowman gave a resume of the activities of the Community Centre Committee and thanked all who had made his task of co-chairman much more amenable. He was demitting office due to his appointment as Hon. Treasurer of the Congregation. He was thanked by the President for the sterling work undertaken by himself and the whole committee.

After the meeting and a break for refreshments, Mr. Barry Shaw, who had made Aliyah 25 years ago, addressed the community on present day life in Israel. He talked of the tragic events which had taken place in that country over the past years. His subject was wide ranging, but centred particularly on Israel's feeling of isolation and frustration due to the bias of the Western media on reporting of the Middle East. "Israel was at war not with terrorism but with militant

Islam". He agreed that there was little hope for the Palestinians under their present leadership and deplored the fact that the United Nations had abrogated their responsibilities towards them. Mr. Shaw stated that Israel's economy was showing improvement and implored all to support the country. Mr John Cosgrove tendered a vote of thanks.

The Congregation at the Shabbat service on 14 August was greatly augmented by a large crowd of visitors to the Edinburgh Festival who had taken time off from their busy secular schedule. After the service, lunch was served to those who remained behind to listen to a talk given by Professor Zvi Zochar on "Alternative Orthodox Attitudes to Conversion and Inter marriage". A vote of thanks was given by Rabbi Rose.



Community Walk

Tony Gilbert

A few miles south of Edinburgh between the A 701 and the A6094 lies the easily-missed world of the valley of the River North Esk. The region between these two A roads is trisected by two minor roads which plunge steeply down the sides of the valley, cross the river on narrow bridges before rearing up on the far side. This area has a rich historical legacy, and on the first day of August, a select band of Community members explored some of its treasures.

Unquestionably, the focal point of the valley is Rosslyn Chapel, hardly a beautiful building, but its interior contains a whole host of remarkable carvings to which has been attributed a near mystical significance and which have virtually formed the basis of a whole literary genre. Here our walk, a figure of eight, centred on the Chapel, started in a gentle drizzle.

The annual Sabbath service celebrating the International Festival took place on 21 August. A large congregation witnessed the arrival of Councillor Rev. Ewan Aitken, deputising for the Lord Provost, and several councillors enter the Synagogue preceded by the High Constables and officials carrying the mace and sword of the city. Rabbi David Rose in his sermon welcomed all to the Synagogue and commented on the excellent relationship which existed between the city and the Jewish community and the necessity of an ongoing responsibility to maintain this.

After the service, Kiddush was served during which the president, Dr. Philip Mason, presented Councillor Aitken with an illustrated book on Jerusalem. Dr. Mason expressed the great honour

Embarking on the southerly loop of the walk, we soon picked up a well-trodden path by the river through wooded terrain. The path is edged by the remnants of old buildings and moderately soon brought us to a fine ruin of a mill close by a weir, where a plaque explained that we had been walking through the site of the old Roslin explosives factory, once Scotland's largest. Here in 1916, a worker, Archibald Young, rescued two young girls from a building, packed with explosives, that had caught fire and which subsequently blew up. All were saved and Mr Young received the George Cross for his heroism. Now, 50 years since its closure, all is quiet, and nature has largely reclaimed the buildings. From here, with generous permission from the owner, we took to fields of the Eskhill Estate, scrambling under a fence, described as electrified, and which we treated with suitable respect; that is, until the new Community Treasurer showed us his acumen by grasping it firmly with no obvious ill-effects; there we were greeted by a handsome stallion who, realising we had no goodies, galloped off spectacularly.

Leaving Eskhill Estate we walked to Auchendinny Community Centre and then picked up a path leading under a fine stone viaduct of the disused Edinburgh, Loanhead and Roslin railway. This is now a good track, paralleling the route of the river, and to which we now transferred. It still retains substantial evidence of the

felt by the community at the attendance of the dignitaries and mentioned an early relationship when the Lord Provost at the time, Sir Thomas Whitson, had been present at the opening of the Synagogue in 1932. In reply, Councillor Aitken spoke of the pleasure experienced by himself and his officials at their visit and of the strong understanding and friendship which this brought about.

Dr. Mason also gave a warm welcome to Rabbi Shalom Shapira and his wife Yehudith who were visiting the city from their home in Israel. Rabbi Shapira spoke of his long association with the Jewish community of which he had been Rabbi from 1988 to 1995. He and his wife were delighted to be in Edinburgh to celebrate their grandson's Barmitzvah and to meet many old friends.

industry once served by the railway. In its day, Auchendinny was a major papermaking centre, and one mill, complete with its fine buildings was recently closed. Our southward orbit terminated by the disused brick-works, forbidden terrain following an accident a few years ago; then an about-turn and northward march to Beeslack Woods, where in a wide sunlit field we had a lunchstop and a rest.

After lunch, we continued northward along the railway over the viaduct and beyond, which, gliding through wooded avenues offers fine views over the river valley and occasional glimpses across to Roslin and the Pentlands. Eventually reaching Roslin Castle Halt, with its platform still extant, we quit the railway and wandered back to the river, across a footbridge, then steeply up to emerge right beside Roslin Castle, where we enjoyed the magnificent view down to the river below; soon we were back at the chapel and the first loop was done.

The second loop led north from Roslin village, past Dolly the sheep's former home, then along the disused railway which served Bilston Glen Colliery, the scene of so much bitterness during the pit closures in the 1980's. This route passes the site of the battle of Roslin where a small Scottish force, exploiting their knowledge of the local terrain, defeated a much larger English army; then across Bilston Glen on a

magnificent steel truss viaduct, built by Bouch, designer of the ill-fated Tay Bridge; remembered for the latter, his pioneering work developing railways during the mid-Victorian years is largely forgotten. Leaving the railway, we dropped steeply through woods to Bilston Burn, then up equally steeply on the other side to emerge onto a narrow ridge revealing a fine view over an oxbow of the North Esk. Another steep drop to the river, then along the undulating wooded river path southward back towards the Chapel, passing Horthenden Castle and Wallace's Cave, where once a whole army was concealed, emerging finally right underneath Roslin Castle, which brooded dramatically, silhouetted against the bright afternoon sky.

Thus was our foray into local history completed and £120 raised for the Community Centre.

Cheder Report

Out of School for Cheder

This year Cheder ended most satisfactorily for 21 'students' and staff. Susan Hyams handed out the beautiful books with great dignity, and graciously received a bouquet of flowers from Sonya Rosen in response. Rabbi Rose delivered the end of term report, which was followed by an unprecedented and most generous gesture made by Morris Caplan who presented children and parents, who had attended the family service regularly, each with a lovely kiddish cup.

In view of the hitherto wet weather, picnic fare was consumed in the Shul garden in order to forestall possible disaster by definite access to shelter if necessary. Following lunch, the company repaired to the Royal Park armed with football, play parachute, blankets and raincoats. Shortly after

the Rabbi demonstrated his goalie skills, Jackie arrived with the ubiquitous orange segments. The sun peeped coyly out of the rain clouds and finally shone down with great deliberation, on a very satisfactory end to the year.



interior, accessories and other things;

Both my parents are Jews and most of their friends are Jews as well, so I always knew that I am Jewish by birth. When I was a child I was perfectly sure that being a Jew means to be a good person. I was a rather active and communicative child and I used to convince my Russian kindergarten mates that they were Jews as well. Now I can imagine what a shock it should have been for their parents to hear one day, that their absolutely Russian child considered him or herself to be a Jew. When I studied at school I found out that the teacher wrote in the journal the nationality of each pupil and to avoid troubles she wrote everyone Russian. I was very much displeased with that and tried to make her change my nationality into the "right" one, she asked my parents to come to school immediately after that.

When I was twelve my mother sent me to the Jewish Sunday Art School where I was taught to dance and to sing in Hebrew and Yiddish. It's funny to say that neither we nor our teachers (young girls, boys and women) could speak either of these languages but we learnt the songs by heart and tried to remember some words. It was very interesting and exciting to be close to your native culture.

Then the Jewish Agency *Sochnut* began to arrange entertaining Jewish camps. We studied Hebrew, learnt Israel history and geography and got acquainted with Jewish philosophy, traditions and holidays. In the evenings we had great self-prepared shows full of irrepressible humour. Once we were taken on an excursion by train. We were waiting for the train at the platform all in white caps with the sign in Russian "Jewish Agency". A middle-aged Russian woman was passing by, looked at our caps and asked in disgust: "And are all of you Jews?" There were about hundred young Jews there who just burst out laughing. She blushed and ran away. It was probably the first time when I realised that I'm really proud of being a Jew.

I'm involved in Jewish life for already more than 12 years. There were some sad moments but mostly it has been an exciting and interesting experience. I especially like last two years when I was a director of Hillel-Yekaterinburg. Hillel started in the USA and now it is the largest Jewish campus

organisation in the world. Hillel is The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, which provides opportunities for Jewish students to explore and celebrate their Jewish identity through its global network of over 500 regional centres, campus foundations and Hillel student organisations. Hillel is working to provoke a renaissance of Jewish life.

Hillel's mission is to maximise the number of Jews doing Jewish things with other Jews. Hillel actively seeks to engage uninvolved Jewish students on their own terms: to provide them with opportunities to do Jewish things that are meaningful and appealing to them. Students are empowered to take responsibility for their Jewish identity, whether they wish to participate in a community service project, express themselves artistically, participate in a social event, engage in informal Jewish learning or attend religious services. Any student may participate in Hillel - no membership is required. Hillel is committed to a pluralistic vision of Judaism that embraces all movements.

Our parents, and sometimes even grandparents, know nothing about Jewish culture and traditions, let alone Hebrew. Some knew at least a little about Jewish history and holidays, but not many. The students, who decided to organise Hillel in our city wanted Jews to get acquainted with their own culture. Because so many people were unable to understand such concepts re-acquaintance had to be interesting, easy-to-remember and entertaining:

You don't read Hebrew? It's not a problem! Just few of us do. Hillel students made Siddurs writing Hebrew words with Russian letters. It was not innovative but still it was very comfortable. While conducting Shabbat service every prayer was explained by midrash (a story) or from traditional point of view. I should say that we have almost no religious people with the full sense of this word. But to light candles for Shabbat, read Shma Israel and dance Hava Nagila – that is something that unites Jews all over the world. The same day, for the same reason we unite in the same action.

We deal a lot with different age groups: children, teenagers, students, our parents, old people... And that is one of the most interesting things about Hillel – when a student tells his parent or even grandparent about

Shabbat or Rosh-ha-Shana. JCC Menora used to organise Jewish family camps. And it is always so exciting and touching when little children explain to their parents why we should cover our eyes with a hand for reading Shma or how to say correctly Lekha Dodi, Yeddid Nefesh or other words.

Hillel staff educate students at special seminars showing how to organise and to lead the ceremony of any holiday. The students then return to their home cities to teach other students, arrange several services for different age groups and then they go to smaller communities all over the region to help them organise the holiday.

One of the major Hillel projects is devoted to Pesach. In order to reinforce every-holiday activity, students visit Jews who can't leave their homes but want to conduct a Pesach Seder. Once two girls went to a very old lady. They brought her food and all necessary Seder equipment. They cooked Charoset (apple, nut, spice and wine mixture) together, read Hagada, sang songs and suddenly she burst into tears and she cried so much that she could hardly explain what had happened. When she finally calmed down she told the girls that she hadn't sung *Ma ni shtana* (the Pesach question-song of the youngest child) for 75 years! When she was a child they used to have Seder at home and she was the youngest in the family but then her father was sent to prison by communists and World War II began. She never recollected those celebrations and especially songs in Hebrew. But when she heard the girls singing she herself suddenly began to sing as she remembered a particular song. These things I found most amazing.

I am sure that our Jewish Community Centre Menora will be glad to keep in touch with the Edinburgh Jewish Community. And I'm really glad to feel myself at home here. I know that there's a house where I can go on a certain day, at a certain time, light candles and sing a song in the same language. Hava Nagila!

Irina Fridman whilst studying literature at the University of Yekaterinburg works as the Rector's Assistant for Foreign Affairs at the Liberal Arts University in Russia.

Being Jewish in Ekaterinberg

Irina Fridman

I came to Edinburgh to study at the SUISS International Summer School. I was lucky enough to receive a Sloan Street Trust scholarship, which supports Jewish students from Russia. As I have the opportunity I would like to thank all involved people for giving me a chance to get acquainted with Scottish literature, and the highly-skilled professor staff of the SUISS and it goes without saying to experience the kindness and the hospitality of the Edinburgh Jewish community.

I live in Yekaterinburg, which is situated close to the Ural Mountains, right in the middle of Russia – on the border between Europe and Asia. The city is famous for various historical reasons: it is the place where the last royal family was killed and Boris Yeltsin, the first Russian president, was born. There are about 1.3m people, and it's often called the third capital of Russia. There are about seven thousands Jews who live here.

The Jewish community was organised in our city in 1842 just after the first Jews settled here. But it received official status only in 1920. At that period it owned several synagogues but by 1937 all of them had been destroyed and the community stopped its activity.

Only in the beginning of the 90's some innovative Jews began to get together to study national culture, traditions and customs. Then the first Jewish charity organisation appeared.

In 1993 a group of Jewish women arranged *Menorah Community Centre* to help elderly Jews in different aspects, to celebrate Jewish holidays and to involve youth in Jewish life.

The Hillel Youth Club receives many requests for projects which would cover a variety of interests and age groups:

Literary and Music Hall introduces Jewish music in connection with literature about

Jews; *New Names* programme sponsored by American Distributed Community JOINT supports young talented musicians and singers;

Intellect club invites guest writers to read and discuss new books and movies;

Family club arranges activities for Jewish families: concerts, parties, lectures, intellectual games on Jewish history and traditions;

Old People Club organises Kabbalat Shabbat services and discussions on various topics;

Jewish kindergarten provides primary kids education with elements of Jewish traditions, culture and Hebrew learning;

At Sunday Art School kids from 8 to 16 learn Jewish songs, dances, poems, prepare concerts for Jewish Holidays celebrated by the Community, take part in festivals and competitions all over Russia;

Jewish Exhibition Centre arranges photo and art exhibitions of Jewish

Dear Editor

On behalf of the Committee of the Scottish Friends of Alyn, I should like to thank all those who so generously responded to our recent appeal. As a result of this generosity, we have been able to fund the purchase of two state of the art specialist computers for use by the doctors to facilitate the hospital's wonderful work for children.

I should also like to thank all those who have marked the celebration of birthdays, anniversaries and other happy events by making a donation to Alyn, This is much appreciated.

We wish all our friends and donors a happy and healthy New Year.

Clarice Osbourne
Chairman – Scottish Friends of Alyn.

Dear Editor

Readers may be interested to know that there are some excellent Jewish books for babies and toddlers. While in New York visiting family, we came across "My First Jewish Holidays Library" which comprises three books, "My First Passover Book", "My First Hanukkah Book" and "My First Shabbat Book". My daughter Hannah is three and a half and loves them. It makes teaching about the holidays fun. If people are interested in ordering all three books they are available from the U.S. website of Dorling Kindersley - <http://us.dk.com> for \$19.99.

"My First Hanukkah Book" and "My First Shabbat Book" can be ordered individually for £4.99 each from the U.K. website - <http://uk.dk.com>

Another book, "Jewish Holiday Songs - A Musical Sound Book" is a fun way to learn the holiday songs. We actually found one copy at Costco in Edinburgh! When trying to locate another copy for a friend, I found that it can be ordered from a US website called "Totally Tots" at \$18.95 plus shipping costs.

I do hope that readers may find the website information for these books interesting for their children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends!

Shari Cohn-Simmen

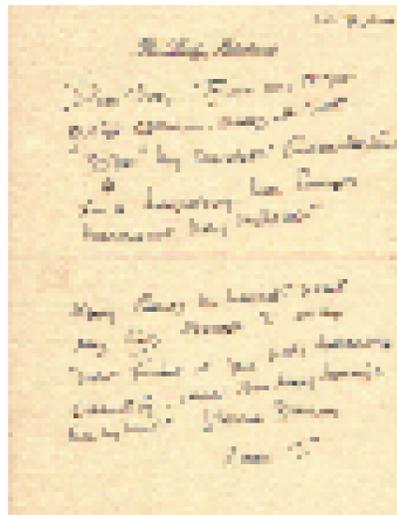
Letter from Berl Osborne in response to the letter by Maurice Naftalin

Dear Editor

I was appalled at the letter signed by Maurice Naftalin and others that appeared in your last edition. I am not one of those who give uncritical support to Israel. For example I believe that Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount was an act of provocative folly.

But to assert, as Professor Ellis apparently did, that Jews 'witnessing the treatment of the Palestinians today should see parallels to the treatment we ourselves received in the past from our oppressors' - this takes my breath away.

I would beseech Professor Ellis and also the signatories to the letter to pause for a moment and think; have they forgotten Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition? Have they forgotten Kishinev and the Chmelnitzki pogroms in the Ukraine going on to Kristallnacht and Belsen, Buchenwald and Treblinka? I am sure they have not; and most realise that nothing, but nothing in the history of Israel begins to compare with the cruel sadistic



horrors which, let it be remembered were completely unprovoked.

The Jews of the time offered no threat whatsoever to their oppressors.

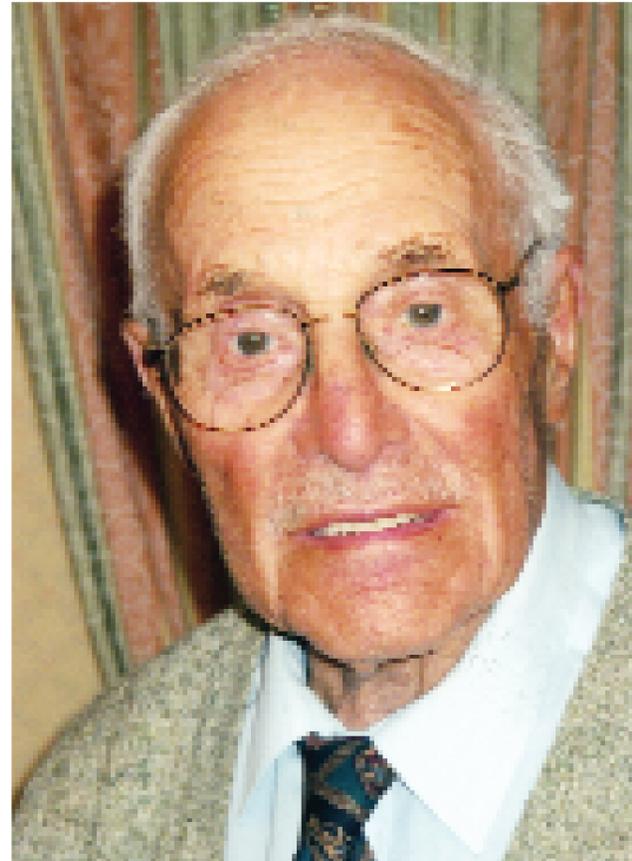
To attempt to equate the two situations is perverse and misleading and does nothing to help the resolution of a very difficult problem.

Suicide bombers and other militant Palestinian terrorists pose an ongoing and completely indiscriminate threat to Israeli men, women and children. Surely Israel is entitled to take what steps she reasonably can to counter these threats; this is the raison d'être of the precise position of the fence. Also, there may be discussion on the inconvenience (sometimes amounting to hardship) caused by delays and searches at checkpoints. These are operational matters where a balance has to be struck between the safety of innocent Israeli citizens and the legitimate interests of Palestinians.

In the end the problems will have to be solved by discussions and negotiation between people of good will.

Berl Osborne
(Past Chairman, Edinburgh University Jewish Society 1944-45)

Obituary



Monty Braverman 1909-2004

A TRIBUTE TO MY DAD...
MONTAGUE (to everyone Monty)
BRAVERMAN

What can I say about my Dad?

- THANK YOU for giving Aviva, Jackie and me life.
- THANK YOU for being so much fun when we were children . . . and adults.

I recall Dad "schlepping" us to soccer games... now was it Hibs or Hearts??? We also spent many pleasurable and tense moments at Craiglockart Tennis Centre and even attended the occasional boxing match. Sport was important to Dad and it showed in his lifestyle. He always emphasised sportsmanship . . . the wins and the losses . . . and how it was integral in our school life and later in our workplace.

I recall practising my forehand and backhand volley for several hours with Dad in our Worcester Road garden, Johannesburg, South Africa, in

preparation for a junior tennis tournament.

In our Esslemont Road garden, Dad was up there on the step ladder gathering Braeburn apples from his favourite apple tree, even reaching high up to the very last apple so that the local boys would not be tempted to "raid" the tree at dusk.

On a broader spectrum, Dad enjoyed vacationing in the sun (and I don't mean just zeroing in on a Thomson or Thomas Cook package.) He loved being with his children and grandchildren in Cape Town and California. He so enjoyed the "freeshalooof" -- breathing the fresh sea air -- on Muizenberg Beach, Cape Town. I can just see him now

taking those deep breaths. Of course, he enjoyed riding the cable cars in San Francisco with my family but, he wasn't smitten with driving on the "wrong" side of the road (US style)

Closer to home . . . when travelling overseas was no longer an option . . . we spent many holidays in Peebles, strolling along the River Tweed and then tucking into delicious egg and cress sandwiches, courtesy of Rachele Braverman. We also motored north to St. Andrews and spent several holidays there checking out golfers on the Old Course, 18th hole . . . Dad would give me a commentary on how to avoid the Valley of Sin, the undulating natural hazard, and then an in depth history of Swilcan Bridge.

Two years ago, we decided to head home from St. Andrews and take the A917, the Fife Coast road with a stop off in Leven. Why Leven? Leven is the birthplace of my Dad. At the young age of 92, Dad showed Mom, Jackie and me the place where his family lived . . . his original home had, regrettably, been replaced with a

modern bungalow. But, he did show us his Mom's (Jeannie) flower/general store and Auntie Annie's dress shop, both on Durie Street, the high street. That was a special day for Jackie and me!

More recently, June of this year, Dad enjoyed strolling with his zimmer at Cramond and enjoying the fresh sea air. Only one day before he was admitted to the E.R. room, while at Dobbies he navigated his way to our patio table at Dobbies with amazing speed and zest, thanks to his zimmer. That was impressive. "What a trooper you are." I told him!

The five weeks in the New Royal Infirmary had its good and bad days. The best day was, of course, June 11, 2004 when Mom and Dad celebrated their 69th Wedding Anniversary. Dad never once criticised his hospital care, and was regarded by many nursing staff as a gentleman. . . . I think that had to do with his righteous name, Montague! As time passed Dad grew weak, but all along the way he was always concerned about Mom . . . "How was she coping? Did she manage to go to the Luncheon Club, and did she get her take-out food?" You may not know this, but all through their sixty-nine years together, Dad always looked out for Mom . . . he was a devoted husband even down to the wire in his hospital bed.

I know that Mom will be OK because she has an amazing support group from within the Edinburgh Jewish community, particularly her friends from the Luncheon Club. Then there are also her neighbours who check out if she needs milk or the newspaper; her carers who take her for a walk or set the trolley for visitors arriving for a cup-of-tea. And then she has all her "meshpocha" - Jackie, Clifford, Russell, Danah, Chloe, Craig and Ricci; Shirley, Michael, Lee, Howard, Janine, Simon and Bryan; and Rhonda in Manchester who comes regularly to visit Granny and assist with making delicious vegetable soup!

Dad . . . Mom will be OK. Please don't worry. I love you and THANK YOU!

Shirley Kurnoff

Author, Lecturer, California State University @ Monterey Bay, Stanford University, School of Education 1995, Board Member, AT&T Pebble Beach Junior Golf Association Mother of three!

Festival Review



Ashes to Ashes

Rabbi David Rose

Holocaust theatre often falls into either the trap of superficiality or of a physical brutality that leaves no room for reflection. 'Ashes to Ashes' does neither. Produced, directed and acted by students from the London School of Economics, the play enables the audience to experience the brutality of Auschwitz with their senses, without numbing the mind to the questions raised by the situation. Questions such as the whereabouts of G-d, free choice under coercion and who is a true hero, are raised both directly and subtly by the characters without diminishing the audience's experience of the raw emotion engendered by life inside a concentration camp. The producer's change of the original leading characters from male to female, serves to both highlight the brutality experienced by the inmates while not allowing it to overwhelm the moral dilemmas faced by them. A superb performance by the actors, made more authentic by the East-European origin of two of them, will leave your senses numb and your mind searching for answers. Not a play for the weak-hearted, you will leave Ashes to Ashes in silence; not really wanting to talk but full of questions that only increase with time. That is the measure of both its power and effectiveness and makes it well worth seeing.

disappointment of their rejection was what ultimately led his mother to end her life, while his father felt that he had been robbed of his fulfilment as a scholar. He pointed out, however, that it was not only European Jews who were driven out of their homelands; Jews from Arab lands suffered the same fate. Half of the present population of Israel have come from Arab countries.

Today six million Jews have no place but Israel to call home. Similarly four

'When he was a small boy, Amos Oz wanted to be either a writer or a fireman. He chose to be the first'

million Palestinians have no place but the West Bank and Gaza. How is the conflict to be resolved? Oz is firmly in favour of the two-state solution and believes that it will come sooner rather than later. Sixty-five per cent of Israelis and fifty-eight per cent of Palestinians are also in favour of it. Both peoples are exhausted and sick of violence

and death. It is their leaders who are cowards and lag behind those they are supposed to lead.

Of course this "clenched teeth" solution will call for very difficult choices. Both sides will have to sacrifice much that they hold dear. This conflict is not one of good versus evil but rather of right against right. If Europe wishes to help in bringing about a peaceful and just solution to the problem, it must realise this. What is needed from Europe is understanding and reassurance for both sides, not blame or rebuke for one side or the other. The two-state solution would give both peoples time to "defuse the emotional mine-field" and establish neighbourly relations. In time such relations might evolve into a Common Market and even into a Union of Middle Eastern States, comparable to the European Union.

When he was a small boy, Amos Oz wanted to be either a writer or a fireman. He chose to be the first, but, in his role as a leader of the peace movement, damping down in his political writings the fires of hatred, ignorance and fanaticism, perhaps he should be seen as the second as well.

A Festival of Remembrance

Julian Goodman

This year, all the shows I went to see in The Festival Fringe had one theme in common, The Holocaust! They were presented by various companies, but all housed under the umbrella of the various "C Venues". I have reviewed three of them here, but there were more on offer, both at The "C" and other venues.

The reason I have reviewed these three is that towards the end of The Festival, the C Venue Press Office facilitated a forum where the different Theatre Companies, writers and performers came together, and invited members of the public to come along and join them to discuss their views on the plays, the Holocaust in general and all the feelings and emotions that were stirred. It was a fascinating insight into what had prompted the writing of these pieces, how they came into being and the effect that they'd had on participants and audiences alike. Two of the plays were borne of personal experience, and the third was inspired by the experience of a young teacher learning about The Holocaust for the first time and discovering just how little he knew and how even less was being taught in the WWII History curriculum in his schools. All the writers, performers and audience members spoke candidly about their experiences, views, beliefs and hopes, and thoroughly enriched the experience of seeing these plays.



These Four Walls

The first play I saw was "These Four Walls" by Ciaran McConville. It was the story of a young woman's life before and in Auschwitz. As

they prepare to evacuate the camp, Lena Mandelbaum visits the hiding place of her baby one last time. She gives him his birthright, the story of his family, told through the eyes of lost relatives. Kim Voisey-Youldon gave a wonderful performance as Lena in this one-woman play, telling how being a blonde haired, blue eyed Jewess, it became her responsibility to save the members of her family by exploiting her non-Jewish appearance. Her characterisations of her parents and

siblings were excellent providing both deeply moving and comical moments throughout the performance. We were taken through her childhood, the "unbelieving" realisation and terror of occupation and the brutality of the camps. Lena tells how the occupation starts, how the family gradually start being taken away. We learned how she and her sister, as teenagers, risked being shot to help other prisoners escape from the Ghetto. As a result of this, her lover and the father of her child escapes by the skin of his teeth, alas without Lena and her sister as the Nazis are waiting for the girls at the station. The story then took us to the camps and how her mother's final shoving of her to the group on the other side of the selection saves her life. It is her cello playing in the Orchestra under the instruction of Mahler's niece that saves her from the gas chambers. One of the most moving performances was as Lena discovers she is pregnant, and the Doctor secretly tries to perform an abortion to save both Lena and the baby from Mengele. The infant survived and is the lynchpin for the whole play. The play was filled with many stories, each showing a slightly different aspect of both survival and the horrendous deaths. The play beautifully taught us the importance of everyone's story, and how, in the telling, we keep our ancestry alive!

"For every person gone up the chimney there must be a hundred thousand stories. It is easier not to tell them than to tell them. It is easier for them to rain down in ashes"

This play had been written from a collection of various people's memories, but was seamlessly brought together as one family's disturbing experiences of the Nazi's crimes against humanity. The audience were visibly moved, and how all those experiences were portrayed in such a brief period of time was truly impressive.



Finding my Mothers Voice

known as the "Wunderkind of the Vilna Ghetto". Growing up in South Africa, Naava's mother does not discuss her experience of The Holocaust, it is a

The second play I saw was "Finding My Mother's Voice". It was written and performed by Naava Piatka, and tells the story of her mother Chayela Rosenthal,

family secret. It is only after her death that Naava discovers through newspaper cuttings and a journal, of her mother's amazing tale of survival. Chayela was famous after the war as an actress and comedienne, but it is through the cuttings and journals, that Naava discovers that her mother was equally famous as a performer in the ghetto. Chayela's brother Leyb, is equally famous as the writer of Yiddish songs and poetry in the ghetto. Her uncle Leyb is only known to Naava by a single tiny photograph under the glass of her mother's dressing table, where Chayela plays patience every day. He is seldom discussed. We discover that having survived in the camps for years, Leyb is shot dead by the Nazis the day before Liberation.

Navaa tells the remarkable story of her mother's survival by performing both as herself, and her mother Chayela. Her portrayal of her mother is amazing. She did not need to utter a word in her mother's European Yiddish accent. She wrinkled her eyes slightly, adopted her mother's gait, and you'd have sworn blind that her mother was on stage in front of you. Chayela tells us the story of the ghetto and how The Theatre, despite some people's misgivings about having a theatre in the Ghetto, actually helps them survive. She sings her brother Leyb's Yiddish songs, caricatures through puppetry a young boy's survival as a "procurer", and tells how her singing in the camps helped her to survive. Her singing is so important to other inmates to keep up their spirits, they give her extra rations to keep her voice in working order. We also learned about Chayela's parents, their demise with other members of the family, and how she herself survives the Nazis last ditch attempt to drown in the sea all the women from the camp as the Red Army tanks come rumbling towards them. After the war, Chayela and her husband are rescued from Eastern Communist Europe by the intervention of another famous Yiddish actress, Molly Picon, who on a visit from America meets Chayela and offers to help, and manages to secure performances in the West for Chayela.

By playing both herself and her mother, we saw what it was like from both sides to have this terrible secret in the family, why it was necessary, and why it was so hard. Naava gave a moving performance, and sang her uncle's songs in Yiddish and with her own translations. Throughout the play she was accompanied on the piano by Lucy Holstedt, whose performance of

the music was also very moving. Towards the end of the performance, we are told how performing her mother's songs in Lithuania, and America, she has met other survivors who remember Chayela's early performances in the Ghetto. Finally, we were treated to a recording of Chayela herself, bringing the story even more alive than her daughter's amazing performance had already done!

The last of these three plays was "I Can Cry" by Miri Ben-Shalom. It was



I can Cry

the true story of a young girl (Erna) Ester's harrowing six year journey through the Holocaust from the ages of 14 to 20. The story was cleverly told by simultaneous performances of her as a young girl Erna played by Emma Paterson, and as an elderly lady Ester played by Erene Kaptani. Old Ester recounts her memories, with vivid clarity and a certain bitterness in her voice, while young Erna actually experiences the horrors as they happen. Her telling of her early

childhood is rather brief, but the play becomes rather intense as her first day at High School in Krakow is cancelled as the Nazis occupy Poland on that day. The clever use of newreel and photo imagery as the play is performed helped to intensify the drama, but it was the actual performances that electrified the audience. Marcel Stoetzler performed the role of German Officer with a chilling and sinister accuracy. We again learned of the first move to the Ghetto where Erna's parents and siblings are gradually taken away until she is left alone in the Ghetto. The subsequent move to the Labour Camp is where we experience how the fate of all the inmates is decided on a whim, by the flick of a finger by the Kamp Kommendant. We saw Erna survive the brutality of countless experiences, how people had to put their own survival above others, yet how Erna earned the trust of other prisoners and traded their jewelry and trinkets for extra food. Her journey in and out of Auschwitz and the final portrayal of all the death marches was remarkable, yet again she survived and ends up in Bergen-Belsen. Through the death march and her horrific train journey her desire to survive became even more intense. After recounting the Liberation which took place on her 20th birthday, Erna starts to cry again for the first time in years.

She wants the whole world to know that having been unable to weep over all the atrocities she has encountered, she can cry again! The actors disappeared and on the screen we saw the real Ester Hershberg. She told how she felt she had to tell her story, so that people who hadn't experienced the Holocaust could

never deny its occurrence, so that people would know what happened in the hope that it could never happen again. Of the three different plays, "I Can Cry" was the most traumatic and emotionally draining. It was extremely well written and wonderfully portrayed! The actors came back on stage, and young Ester (Erna), Emma Paterson, looked visibly drained. All three performances were excellent, but as I said earlier, Erna actually performed the experiences on stage. Behind them on the screen, we saw pictures of the real Ester and her ever growing family!

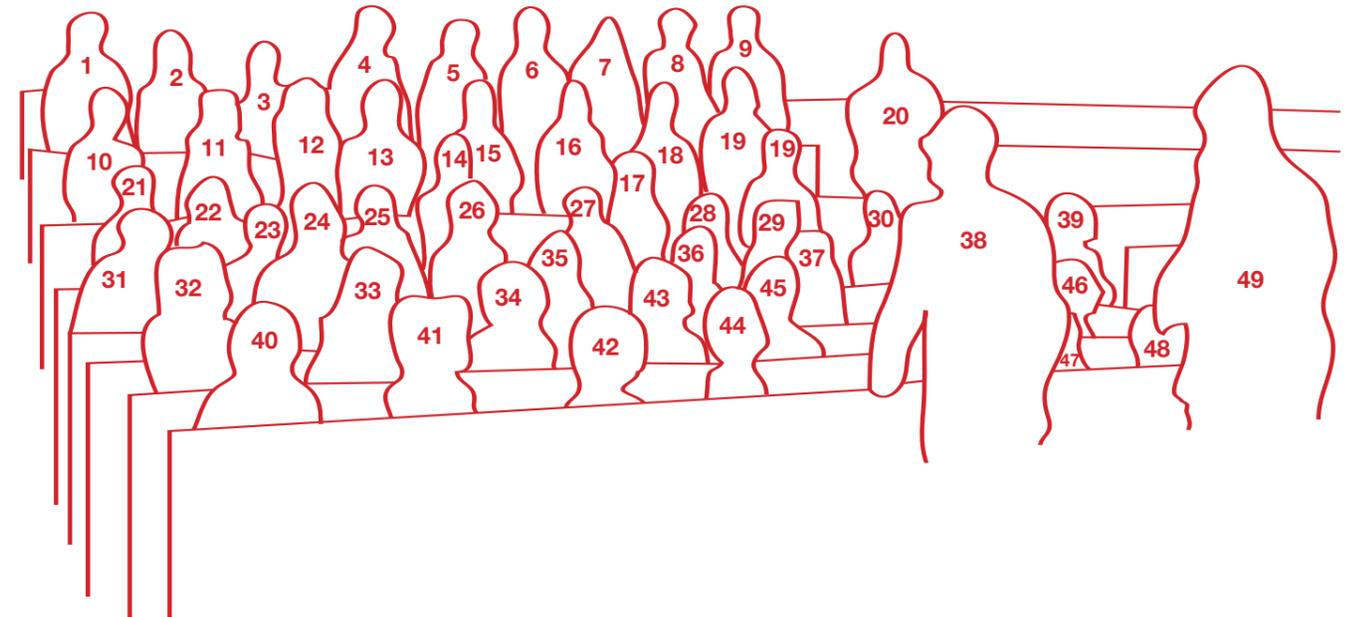
Miri had written this play because again her mother had kept her Holocaust experience a secret after settling in Israel. However, while suffering from cancer, she gave Miri her Aunt Ester's journals to read. She declared her intention to tell her daughter of her own experiences when she recovered, not aware her illness was terminal. Sadly she did not get to tell her story.

Over the next few years, Miri was determined to interview her Aunt and tell her story. During the forum I mentioned earlier, one of the most important issues for most people was the fact that youngsters today should continue to hear what happened in the Holocaust. So many people in the world today, whilst aware of the Holocaust, seem to be increasingly unaware of what actually happened. It was therefore very impressive to see so many writers and companies in The Festival Fringe committed to educating the world, but even more so, keeping alive the memories of all those who suffered at the hands of the Nazis.

Star Trek Answers

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. ?? | 19. David Donne (red tank top) | 38. Rev. Sam Knopp |
| 2. ?? | 20. Dr Ian Leifer | 39. Sally Cowan |
| 3. ? Dorfman | 21. Joanne Sofaer | 40. Elliot Cowan |
| 4. Abbie Bennett | 22. ?? | 41. Jonathan Mason |
| 5. Clara Massey ? | 23. Mark Gilbert | 42. Esther Sofaer |
| 6. Sarah Goodwin | 24. Howard Nicholsby | 43. Jenny Sischy |
| 7. Anna Merrick | 25. ?? | 44. ?? |
| 8. Garry Cowan | 26. Nikki Cosgrove | 45. ?? |
| 9. Andrew Caplan | 27. Benjamin Adler | 46. Daniel Gilbert |
| 10. Beatrice Merrick | 28. Carol Donne ? | 47. ?? |
| 11. Abby Cosgrove | 29. Debbie Sischy ? | 48. Paul Gilbert |
| 12. Samantha ? | 30. ? Freeman | 49. Chief Rabbi Jacobovits |
| 13. Rhonda Segal | 31. Daniel Brodie | |
| 14. ?? | 32. Jonathan Goldberg | |
| 15. Simon Brodie | 33. Joanne Miller | |
| 16. Paul Mann | 34. ?? | |
| 17. Jonathan Adler | 35. Gillian Berger | |
| 18. David Kaplan | 36. Michael Rifkind | |
| 19. Ian Caplan (black sweater) | 37. David Mason | |

The names have been identified in good faith. The Edinburgh Star apologises for any misidentifications and would appreciate it if readers would send in corrections, or could fill in any of the unknowns.



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

לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alex and Betty Abrahams 26 Terrars Croft Edinburgh | Martin and Janis Abrahams 24/5 Whitehouse Court Avon Road, Edinburgh | Sarah and Harold Abrahams 13 The Pottery Edinburgh | Elliot, Caroline and Danielle Cowan, 16 Hodgkins Mews, Stanmore, Middlesex | Evelyn and Jack Cowan | Carole and Mickey Cowen 58 Fountainhall Road Edinburgh |
| Jackie and Frank Abramson 3 Gloucester Mews West London | Jonathan, Susie and Samuel Adler | Michael Adler and Sue Fyvel 9 Warriston Crescent Edinburgh | Joyce and Norman Cram | Lesley, John, Samuel, Benjamin and Jonathan Danzig 7 East Castle Road, Edinburgh | Joyce Davidson and family London |
| Marcia and Matthew Allen Mountain View, California, USA | Ena Amitai (nĖe Dorfman) 8B/18 Nitza Boulevarde, Netanya, Israel | Joe and Margaret Aronson 15 Arden Street Edinburgh | Sylvia and John Donne | Betsy Dorfman Rockville, Maryland USA | Rachel and Bernard Dorfman and family |
| Clarice and Joe Been London | Shirley and Peter Bennett | Mary Berkengoff and family | Elizabeth and Dov (Bertie) Dorfman, 13 David Hamelech, Netanya, Israel | Fay, Max and Rodney Dorfman 72 Pentland View Edinburgh | Norman Dorfman |
| Avril and Norman Berger 3 Kirk Park Edinburgh | Marcia and Lennie Berger Yvonne, Gillian, Gary and Talia 19 Springwood Park, Edinburgh | Kalman and Cynthia (nee Reif) Bielak & family, 53 Danby Avenue, Downsview, Canada | David Ellison | Barry and Ruth Fluss 28 Freud Street Haifa, Israel | Ruth and David Fluss and family 49 Parkside Drive Edgware |
| Allen and Anna (nĖe Brown) Bloom, 450 Hounslow Avenue, North York, Ontario, Canada | Fabien Borocin | Doreen & Laurence Bowman, Benjamin, Jacqueline & Michelle 24 Cammo Grove, Edinburgh | Caroline and Lennie Freedman | Adam and Marla Gamoran 317 Cheyenne Trail Madison, Wisconsin, USA | Judy and Anthony Gilbert and family |
| Micheline, Michael, David and Duncan Brannan, 22 West Preston Street, Edinburgh | Rachelle Braverman and family and Rhonda Segal 29/1 Cameron March, Edinburgh | Norma Brodie, Simon, Sarah, Caitlin, Eilidh, Maia, Daniel and Michael | Mrs Bessie Glass 17/1 Wyvern Park Dick Place, Edinburgh | Sylvia, Gerald and David Glass 1/14 Kinellan Road Edinburgh | David and Philip Goldberg 22 Mid Liberton Edinburgh |
| Christine and Dave Burns | Andrew and Kathy Caplan, Benjamin, James and Zoe 73 Loom Lane, Radlett | Ian and Rachel Caplan 6 The Crossway Radlett | David Gonshaw | Jule D. Goodman Foot o' the Walk Edinburgh | Kate and Ronny Goodwin 2 Mayfield Gardens Edinburgh |
| Sandra and Sidney Caplan 30 Duddingston Road West Edinburgh | Danny and Anne-Lee, Sheri and Amanda Ciprut 6 Harvey Street, Ottawa, Canada | Flora, Moris and Fiona Ciprut Edinburgh | Gillian and Edward Gordon 55 Rodney Road West Bridgford, Nottingham | Frances Gordon, Deborah, Eli, Maya, Avi, Alan, Ari and Mark 14 Woodcock Dell Avenue, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex | Nat and Arlene Gordon David, Moshe and Sharon 8 Yahalom, Petach Tikva, Israel |
| Dr Dov and Carmel (nee Caplan) Cohen 4 Anilevitch Street, Safad, Israel | Shari, Martin and Hannah Cohn- Simmen | Kenneth and Irene Collins | Maryla and Edward Green and Freddie | Vicky Gruneberg and family 2 Orchard Brae Gardens Edinburgh | Millie and David Harris and family 20 Buckstone Drive Edinburgh |
| John and Hazel Cosgrove | Nick, Caroline, Juliette and James Cosgrove, 3 Hollyview Close, London | Andrea and Malcolm Cowan 49/5 Mortonhall Road Edinburgh | Sheelagh and Phillip Harris | Doreen and Edwin Hoffenberg 6a Downes Hill, Haifa, Israel | Ron and Rose Ann Hoffenberg 13 Glendenning Drive Nepean, Ontario, Canada |

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

לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Irene, David and Gary Hyams | Susan and Steven Hyams, James and Amanda | Howard, Valerie and Jacqueline Kahn 27 Blinkbonny Road, Edinburgh | Eve Oppenheim and family 10 Ravelston Dykes Edinburgh | Mrs Rose Orgel 89 Polwarth Terrace Edinburgh | Clarice and Berl Osborne 56/2 Spylaw Road Edinburgh |
| Sheryl and David Kaplan Stanmore, Middlesex | Myrna and Morris Kaplan 20 Bantongate Terrace Edinburgh | Cassie, Jonty and Lily Karro Melbourne, Australia | Maurice, Dinah and Samantha Penn 47 Fountainhall Road, Edinburgh | Stanley, Elaine, Aaron and Joel Raffel, 31 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh | Freda Riffkin 40/7 Littlejohn Road Edinburgh |
| Dr Moshe and Rose (nee Levinson) Kelman, 10/3 Arlozorov Street, Jerusalem, Israel | Lillian and Philip Kessly and family, 27 Plantation Street Menora, Western Australia | Arthur and Alex Kleinberg 1 Lussielaw Road Edinburgh | Hilary and Arnold Rifkind | Richard Rifkind 114 Downham Crescent Prestwich, Manchester | Sharon, Michael, Eli, Natan and Avigayil Rifkind, 348 Forest Avenue, Teaneck, New Jersey, USA |
| Abby, Joel, Deborah, Saul and Joshua Korn 13 Glover Road, Pinner, Harrow | Sam Latter | Ian and Joan Leifer and family | Malcolm, Edith, Caroline and Hugo Rifkind | Rabbi David Rose | Dave, Layne, Melia and Sonya Rosen 9 Ormidale Terrace, Edinburgh |
| Moshe and Kleile (nee Fluss) Lerner, 21 Massada Street Ramat Gan, Israel | Anita Levinson and family 3 Ross Road, Edinburgh | Carol, Tom, Maurice and Benjamin Penicuik | Martin and Phyllis (nee Stoller) Rosenberg, 27 Hillside Gardens, Edgware, Middlesex | Alec and Pearl Rubenstein 16 Hillpark Crescent Edinburgh | Brenda and Julius Rubin 16a/27 Nitza Boulevard Netanya, Israel |
| Hilda Levy and family | Elaine, Eddy, Sarah and Clare | Ron Lewis and Esti Sheinberg 3418 Deer Run Road Blacksburg, Virginia, USA | Jonathan, Molly, Ben and Joanna Seckl | Hilda and Colin Seftor 4914 Van Masdag Court Annandale, Virginia, USA | Yehudith and Rabbi Shalom Shapira Raana, Israel |
| Mrs Miriam Lichtenstein (nee Pinkinsky) c/o Esplanade, Apt 1115, 95 South Broadway, White Plains, USA | David and Elaine Litman Daniel and Michael, 23 Beeston Fields Drive, Beeston, Nottingham | Vicky and Tom Lowrie 11 Greenhill Place Edinburgh | Pearl and Ian Shein 37/4 Orchard Brae Avenue Edinburgh | Vivienne Shrier | Vivienne, Charlie, Ruth and Naomi Simenoff 50 Bury Old Road, Manchester |
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| Joe, Rosa and Clara Massie 22 Silverknowes Midway Edinburgh | David and Anita Mendelssohn | Harold, Esther and Roy Mendelssohn | Nobby and Shelagh Smith 3/7 Nitza Boulevard Netanya, Israel | Jonny, Joyce and Avigal Sperber | Stephen and Leila Steel Jonathan, Wendy, Paul and Anthony Goldberg |

Gershon Mendick

Dr Jack E Miller, OBE, JP

Rose and Hannah Newman
1 Bellevue Gardens
Edinburgh

Harold Sterne
12 Harduf St., Ramat Poleg
Netanya, Israel

Cis and Henryk Szpera
Kinghorn, Fife

Jackie, Raymond, Lawrence
and Michael Taylor

Hilary and Graham West
Martin and Laura, 14 Leighton
Avenue, Pinner, Harrow

Ruzena Wood
50 Spottiswoode Sreet
Edinburgh

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

Syd and Paula Zoltie

Sara and Maurice Dorfman
and family,
Jerusalem, Israel

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Edinburgh Star

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Announcements

Congratulations

To **Lady Hazel Cosgrove** on her CBE

To **David Caplan** on his recent marriage to **Sheryl White**



To **Doreen and Lawrence Bowman** on the engagement of their daughter **Michelle** to **Josh Shindler** and for their forthcoming marriage in December.



To **Sandra and Sidney Caplan** on the birth of a granddaughter **Zoe Renee** on 8th July 2004.

To **Irene and Philip Mason** on the birth of a grandson **Zachary Dov** on 16th June 2004

To **Vicky Gruneberg** on the occasion of her 90th Birthday

To **Pearl and Ian Shein** on granddaughter Rachel graduating BA (Hon) in philosophy from Nottingham University.



To **Judy and Tony Gilbert** on their son **Mark Gilbert** graduating in Sociology and Social Policy with Psychology

To **Anita and David Mendelssohn** on their grandson **Daniel Litman** graduating BSC Hons. Accountancy. (International) from Hull University.



Thanks

From **Vicky Gruneberg** to the many people who sent their kind good wishes on the occasion of her 90th Birthday and to all those who sent good wishes after her recent accident at home. She is making a good recovery.

Coming Events

September

15 & 16 Thursday and Friday

Rosh Hashannah

24 & 25 Friday and Saturday

Yom Kippur

29 & 30

Succot

October

7 Thursday

Shemini Atzeret

8 Friday

Simchat Torah

November

7 Sunday

Community Quiz 7.00pm

11 Thursday

Joint Bible Study & Sharing of faith

15 Monday

Lodge Solomon 7.00pm Lit.Soc.

21 Sunday

Jonathan Freedland

28 Sunday

Richard Calvocoressi 8.00pm

December

2 Thursday

Margaret Brearly -
Christian/Jewish Relations

8 Wednesday

First day of Chanukah

12 Sunday

David Neville 'The Audition'

18 Saturday

Community Social 7.30pm

19 Sunday

EJLS

Cecile Shea - American Consul
General (no title yet)

20 Monday

Lodge Solomon 7.00pm

January 2005

9 Sunday

Nancy Morris 8.00pm

17 Monday

Lodge Solomon 7.00pm

23 Sunday

Michael Berkovitz (Facts, Myths, and
Lies about Criminality and the Jewish
Question' 8.00pm

February 2005

3 February

Professor David Fergusson & Rabbi
Rose - The Theology of the Land,
followed by a debate.

March 2005

1 March

The Moderator of the General
Assembly of the Church of Scotland
- Joint meeting in Glasgow with
Glasgow CCJ.

13 March

EJLS Clare Singerman

April 2005

14 April

The Mysteries of the Passover Seder
- enactment of a Seder with
explanations.

Junior Maccabi meets on alternate Sundays from
1pm to 3pm. For further information, contact
Jonathan Danzig (229 3054).

Senior Maccabi meets on Sunday evenings in
members' homes. For further information,
contact Alice Kelpie (653 0570).

The Luncheon Club meets every Tuesday and
Thursday at 12.00pm.

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