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STAR

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**Celebrating 60 years
of independence in Israel**



THE MAGAZINE FOR THE EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY



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The Edinburgh Star

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From the Editor

I feel proud to have been born in the same year as the re-birth of brave and indomitable Israel. Against all odds she has continued to flourish after her first faltering steps. Despite severe and often unjustified criticism, she has literally soldiered on and notably continued to maintain her democratic status in the face of so much destructive adversity. Many will recognise, as I do, that not all actions of defence are desirable, far from it, but if we think of Israel as a parent defending its children, which parent would stand meekly by to watch their future melt into oblivion? What is more remarkable, and a fact rarely acknowledged by the media, is the ‘disproportionate’ restraint, which Israel has continued to show despite unremitting confrontation.

Anti-Semitic abuse appears frequently in the media and unless challenged, would be silently condoned if it were not for organizations such as SCoJec. While there are still many people who equate Judaism with Israeli politics or Zionism, anti-Semitic abuse should never be permitted to masquerade as legitimate criticism of Israel. Jewish people in the Diaspora should never be complacent, even if they are accused of paranoia. Leah Granat and Ephraim Borowski show very explicit,

recent examples of such abuse in their article, some of which have shocked MSPs and are now subject to police investigation. Israel gives unconditional support to all Jews and it is still in our own interest to support Israel as best we can, even if we feel it necessary to temper it with our own doubts and convictions.

‘Windows for Peace’ is one way to attempt to address the difficulties experienced by young people in the Middle East in a highly imaginative way. Although only a short introduction to this organization can be read in this edition, its coming innovative programme will be reported at greater length in the next.

We have marked this special 60th anniversary in our own 60th edition of the Star by devoting a significant portion of writing space to the celebration of Israeli Independence. Articles range from the reminiscences of ex-pats who made aliyah many years ago, to a scholarly, but individual, analysis of the interim years, written by David Capitanchik. Furthermore Danny Sinclair updates us on developments towards defining ‘The rights of return’ in a learned but accessible report.

Still focussing on Israel, Sylvia Donne reports on behalf of our intrepid party of ‘WIZO wanderers’, following their recent trip to Israel, to see some of the wonderful works carried out for the less fortunate in Israeli society, no matter whom.

Films with a Jewish theme have abounded in the last few months and were screened as a part of the Literary Society programme in the Edinburgh Film House during their Yiddish film season, and also in the Community Centre itself, organised by the Community Centre Committee. Short reports will feature in the appropriate sections.

As ever, the Star attempts to provide a bittersweet mixture, and Eric Milligan has supplied the sweet and light with his article on the influence that Jews have had in the world of music. I hope that this, together with the ubiquitous Community news and Reviews, will maintain the balance.

The Board wish all our readers Shavuot Tov.

Judy Gilbert

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Israel

What are the next 60 years likely to bring?

David Capitanchik

Israel has undergone remarkable progress in the last 60 years. For one thing, the Jewish population has increased from some 800,000 to approximately 7.2 million. Its cities, towns and villages have grown enormously in size as some 92 per cent of Israelis live in urban communities. Jerusalem is the largest city with a population of about 720,000. Most of the rest of Israel's population is concentrated in the centre of the country around Tel Aviv, which alone has a population of 380,000.

Ultra-orthodox families have on average 10 children and more people are becoming religious. However, the ultra-orthodox have remained at 8 per cent of the population, which is exactly what they were in 1948.

Israel's Arab population has also grown over the past 60 years and now amounts to some 20 per cent of the country's citizens, or some 1.5 million. It is also important to note that some 4.4 per cent of the population (320,000) are neither Jews nor Muslims but others, immigrants not registered as Jews, non-Arab Christians and residents without any religious affiliation.

“Israel has made some of the most noted global inventions”

If we are to consider what the next 60 years are likely to bring the country, we must understand what is happening as Israel embarks on its seventh decade. First it must be noted that the country has a very successful high-tech sector. Israel has made some of the most noted global inventions – mobile phone text messaging

As the State of Israel reaches its 60th Anniversary, the eyes of the world are focussed upon the country's treatment of the Palestinians and the possibilities, if any, for peace between Israel, the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab world. Israel is constantly in the news, but very little is known about the country, its domestic and foreign policies, its economy and above all the attitudes of its people towards the possibility of peace.

for one. It also has the highest number of scientific publications per capita in the entire world.

Public interest in what is happening in the country generally is remarkably high compared with most other countries in the world. Massive demonstrations by protestors occur in Rabin Square in Tel Aviv at least five times a year; evening news broadcasts are the most watched TV programmes and there are continuous arguments among the public about politics. As in the UK, the USA and the European Union, Israelis are concerned about corruption in government and whether at the highest level, the law is ignored. On the other hand, however, the son of a former prime minister is in jail, a former Labour minister was recently convicted over a bribe, a former President has been charged with assaulting young women and the country's present prime minister is under constant investigation.

Today Israel has a diversified, technologically advanced economy with increasing private ownership of major companies. The major industrial sectors include high-technology electronic and biomedical equipment, metal products, processed food, chemicals and transport equipment. It is one of the world's centres for diamond cutting and polishing and is also a world leader in software development. In the decades to come, the high-tech sector is likely to be the major driver of the Israeli economy. Already some 50 percent of the country's exports are high-tech and major companies like Intel, IBM and Cisco have a presence in Israel.

A major contribution to Israel's remarkable economic growth rates in recent years has been made by the million or so

immigrants who began to arrive in 1989 from the countries of the former Soviet Union. These new immigrants, many of them highly educated, now form some 13 per cent of the country's population. Their integration into Israeli society and labour force represents a remarkable chapter in the country's history and its future development. Despite continuing to speak and read Russian, they have learned Hebrew, their children have joined the Israeli armed forces en masse and about 80 per cent of them have bought their own homes, which is a higher percentage than the rest of the population. Moreover, they show no signs of wanting to return to Moscow.

The Ministry of Agriculture is bringing large numbers of Thai workers into the country, virtually every elderly Israeli has a Filipino nurse and, despite the immense security problems, thousands of Palestinians come to work in Israel every day. Interestingly enough, during the first quarter of 2008, unemployment in Israel has fallen to 6.5 per cent, a 15-year low.

“no Israeli has died of hunger throughout the history of the State”

The number of poor Israelis has been on the decline for the past couple of years and no Israeli has died of hunger throughout the history of the State. Israel's per capita expenditure on health care is only 7.8 per cent of the country's GDP, approximately half of that in the United States and only two-thirds of what it is in Germany and France. However, it is important to point out that life expectancy in Israel is higher than in all the aforementioned countries.

Culturally, Israel remains remarkable. Currently, it has the highest number of museums per capita in the entire world; it is second in the world for reading books; 41 per cent of Israelis go to the theatre, that is double the number who attend soccer matches; and one in four Israelis go to classical music concerts.

The past 60 years then form a strong and powerful base for the decades to come. Domestically, Israel is economically and socially strong. This despite the fact that the country has been at war throughout its history and for many years prior to the foundation of the State.

Having been at war continuously for the best part of a century, defence and security have been at the top of the country's agenda and are likely to remain so for decades to come. Because of this, Israel spends some 9.5 per cent of its GDP on defence, one of the highest percentages in today's world. Despite a number of efforts currently being made to establish a peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians, the prospects for achieving one in the near future are not very promising.

Why then is it proving to be so difficult to arrive at some peace agreement with the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular? Why is the current situation likely to continue for some years to come despite the efforts of major world powers and others to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, in U.S. President Bush's case, before he leaves office next January?

In 1993, the then Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for negotiating the Oslo Accords with the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. The Accords showed that Israel was prepared to make significant concessions in the interests of arriving at a peaceful coexistence with neighbouring Arabs. However, a right wing fanatic, who along with a powerful minority of Israelis opposed making any concessions to the Palestinians, assassinated Rabin two years later.

While the majority of Israelis were, and remain to this day, in favour of making concessions in order to achieve peace, it is entirely unclear to what extent even

the most moderate government will be able to make the kind of concessions necessary in order to satisfy even the minimum aspirations of the Palestinians. This is largely because the Israeli electoral system of proportional representation, in which the whole country is one constituency, has meant that any political party achieving more than 1.5 per cent of the votes in a general election is likely to be represented in the Knesset. Because of this highly democratic electoral system, no single party has ever won enough seats in the Knesset to form a single party government. Instead coalition governments, often including religious and right wing parties, have always ruled Israel.

Israel's right wing, the leading party of which is the Likud led by Binyamin Netanyahu, has always favoured the establishment of a Greater Israel extending from the Mediterranean to the River Jordan and including the Gaza Strip. Ariel Sharon, a former leader and Prime Minister, however, became one of the most unlikely advocates of the peace process when he withdrew all Israeli troops and settlers from Gaza and was even considering doing much the same from most of the West Bank before he suffered a stroke in 2006.

The present Israeli Government led by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert would probably be prepared to make the same concessions, were it not for the objections of some minor right-wing coalition partners whom, were they to resign, could bring about a general election as a result of which the government might lose power. They would also be concerned about the existence of hostile extremist elements among the Palestinians and others whom it is believed would seriously threaten the country's security.

Today there is a single serious source of the threat to Israel's security and even its continued existence. This is the current regime in Iran that not only threatens Israel, but which is seeking to exert its dominance over the entire Middle East. For most of the world, the Iranian threat principally consists of the continuing development of its nuclear capability that might well lead to the production of nuclear weapons.

While this might equally threaten Israel, currently Iran presents a serious security threat by virtue of its control of radical Palestinian groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah. Indeed, it is clearly the case that Iran is exploiting the Palestinian cause in order to further its own interests. Through its influence over the Syrian regime the Hamas leader Khaled Meshal is given a safe haven in Damascus from which he issues Iranian approved orders to the regime in Gaza. Hamas militants there receive training and equipment from the regime in Teheran.

Similarly, the Hezbollah organisation in southern Lebanon is fully equipped by Iran, especially with missiles, through Syria.

While both Hamas and Hezbollah are likely to be prepared to agree to ceasefires and truces, they are unlikely ever to agree to a permanent peace because they, along with their masters in Iran, believe that Israel has no right to exist. Among the Palestinians in general, on the other hand, the desire to bring about a peace accord with Israel is very strong because of the suffering they endure under Israel's extensive security measures such as road blocks, the wall constructed in order to keep terrorists out of Israel proper and the continuous and intolerable checks on their movements. Other issues, such as the desire to have Jerusalem as their capital and a solution to the question of the Palestinian refugees, are probably negotiable and a compromise could be reached as much of it was under the Oslo Accords. Moreover, an improved relationship with Israel would do much to alleviate their lack of jobs and their completely devastated economy.

The question of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories remains an immense problem for any Israeli government. Some of the settlements are large towns, although it might be possible to adjust the 1967 borders so as to bring them within Israel proper while offering to exchange alternative territory with the Palestinians.

However, whether a peace treaty based upon the universally accepted idea of a two-state solution to the conflict has any real prospect of success in the near future is virtually impossible to envisage. Control

over the Palestinian territories is bitterly divided between Fatah and Hamas, but even if this conflict did not exist, there would still be a problem of establishing a territorially divided Palestinian state, given the distance between the West Bank and Gaza, and creating some kind of bridge over a large section of Israeli territory.

There are then immense difficulties on both sides in achieving a satisfactory peace settlement and certainly it is going

to take many years to do so. As in the past 60 years, Israel has every prospect of continuing to develop economically and militarily. The success of her high-tech industries and research have made her very attractive to many countries around the world and nowadays even some Arab countries are beginning to take advantage of her technological know-how. While Israel does not have diplomatic relations with them, some of the Gulf States have established economic relations with Israel

to their mutual advantage.

The economic advantages to the Palestinians of having a state side-by-side with Israel are potentially enormous. It is a tragedy that countries like Iran are exploiting the Palestinians for their own purposes to such an extent that a rewarding peace process with Israel is unlikely for many years to come.

Jewish Identity in Israel Law

Rabbi Professor Daniel Sinclair

1. Jewish Identities, the Law of Return and the Early Supreme Court Decisions

The Jewish character of the State of Israel is an issue with which Israeli courts have been struggling ever since the establishment of the State in 1948. No single matter, however, has received as much attention as the definition of the word "Jew" in the Law of Return, 1950 and in the regulations governing the registration of the nationality of Israeli citizens. The reason for this is undoubtedly the fact that a significant proportion of Israeli society defines its Jewishness in secular rather than halakhic terms. Since the Law of Return deals with Jewishness as an essential ingredient of Israeli citizenship and nationality, it is natural that secular Israelis should seek a legal definition, which is inclusive of their non-halakhic ideology. It is, therefore, not surprising that the definition of "Jew" in this law has engendered a serious debate amongst the judiciary regarding the correct balance to be struck between secular and religious definitions of Jewish identity.

According to the Declaration of Independence, the State of Israel "will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles". In order to foster such immigration, the Knesset passed the Law of Return, according to which "every Jew has the right to come into this country as an oleh. (immigrant)" This Law confers an automatic right to Israeli citizenship upon all Jews. The word "Jew" was left undefined in the 1950 Law, and the usual explanation for this is that the legislator did not wish to close the doors of aliyah (immigration) to those who were not halakhically Jewish, but who nevertheless regarded themselves as Jews and wished to throw in their lot with the State of Israel. In the early years of the State, the definition of Jewishness under the Law of Return was made on the basis of purely subjective criteria laid down by the secular Minister of the Interior. In 1958, the religious parties objected to the fact that Jewish identity was being defined in non-halakhic terms, and they threatened to leave the governing coalition. A Committee was then set up, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion and a survey was conducted of fifty eminent Jewish thinkers throughout the world from all strands of Judaism and of varying degrees of Jewish affiliation. Interestingly, the overwhelming majority were in favour of defining "Jew" in the Law of Return halakhically. As a result, the Ministry of the Interior was given to a religious member of the Government, and halakhic criteria were applied, as a matter of policy, to all applicants for citizenship under the Law of Return.

In 1962, however, the Supreme Court, in the landmark decision of *Rufeisen v. Minister of the Interior*, applied a secular definition of Jewishness to the Law of Return. The dramatic facts of this case are as follows. The petitioner, who was born to a Jewish mother, thereby fulfilling the primary halakhic criterion for Jewish identity, converted to Catholicism during the Second World War, became a Carmelite monk and wished to become an oleh under the Law of Return. His application was refused by the Minister of the Interior. The majority of the Supreme Court held that Brother Daniel, as he was now known, could not come into the country as an oleh, his Jewish mother notwithstanding. The Court held that the Law of Return was a secular law, and the word "Jew" was to be defined in terms of the affinity between the applicant and the history and culture of the Jewish people. Also relevant was the popular view of the meaning of "Jew" in Israeli society. Under both these tests, Brother Daniel was not a Jew. By converting to "another religion", he had, perforce, severed his ties with Jewish history and culture, and would not be regarded as a Jew by the average Israeli.

This result was a satisfactory one both for champions of a secular approach to Jewish identity in Israeli law, and halakhic Jews who were not very keen to recognize a Jewish apostate turned Catholic priest as an oleh, especially within two decades of the Holocaust. The price paid for the decision, however, was the establishment of a legal precedent to the effect that the definition of the term "Jew" in the Law of Return was a secular one.

In the next major case – *Shalit v. Minister of the Interior* (1968) – the Supreme Court applied the *Rufeisen* precedent, and ruled that the non-Jewish wife of an Israeli naval officer qualified as a Jew under the Law of Return on the basis of her declaration that she was fully committed to the history and culture of the Jewish people. This decision was unacceptable to the religious



parties, and in his minority opinion, Justice Silberg argued that "any attempt to drive a wedge between Jewish nationality and its religious foundations would be fatal to our political claim to the Land of Israel ... The search for a new (secular) test of our national identity is, in effect, a total negation of the continued existence of the Jewish people."

The inevitable governmental crisis in the wake of the *Shalit* case was not long in coming, and in response to the strong protests against the decision by the religious parties, the Law of Return was amended. The first part of the new Law provided a fundamentally halakhic definition i.e. a Jew is someone who is "born of a Jewish mother or has become converted to Judaism and who is not a member of another religion." (sec. 4B). Under sec. 4A of the new Law, however, the rights of an *oleh* are vested in "a child and a grandchild of a Jew, the spouse of a Jew, the spouse of a child of a Jew and the spouse of a grandchild of a Jew, except for a person who has voluntarily changed his religion." There is no legal requirement that any of these spouses, children or grandchildren must be halakhically Jewish. All that is required is that they are related to a halakhically defined Jew and did not voluntarily convert to another faith.

It must be emphasized that the Law of Return deals solely with citizenship. It has no bearing on a person's right to marry a Jew. The marriage and divorce of Jewish citizens of the State of Israel are governed exclusively by halakhah and are administered solely by Rabbinical courts (*Rabbinical Courts (Marriage and Divorce) Jurisdiction Law, 1953*). These courts define Jewish identity in purely halakhic terms and only solemnize marriages between halakhic Jews.

2. Conversion to Judaism and the Law of Return

The 1970 Amendment left the nature of the conversion undefined, and the question which arose was whether or not conversion for purposes of acquiring citizenship under the Law of Return must be an Orthodox one.

In *Shas v. Ministry of the Interior* (1987), the Court dealt with the issue of overseas conversions. The majority of the Supreme Court held that a declaration of conversion to Judaism, accompanied by a document attesting to that conversion issued by a Diaspora Jewish community, is sufficient for the purposes of citizenship under the Law of Return, even if it was not issued by an Orthodox institution. The basis for this decision is the secular tradition of *Rufeisen* and *Shalit* together with the legal principle that registering officers at ports of entry must accept all certificates offered by immigrants at face value unless they are patently false.

In his minority opinion, Elon J. disagreed and held that the conversion clause ought to be read together with the preceding one, which defines Jewish identity in terms of the matrilineal principle. In the same way that the matrilineal principle is halakhically defined, so the conversion clause should also be defined by the halakhah. Elon J. also pointed out that the legislator's manifest desire in amending the Law of Return was to introduce clarity and certainty into the definition of Jewish identity, hence the adoption of the matrilineal principle. It was not consistent with this desire to leave conversion to be defined subjectively. Finally, Elon J. argued that the issue was not

merely one of registration alone but also of material legal rights. In practice, registration as a citizen was relied upon in many legally significant areas, including marriage and divorce. The registration of a non-Orthodox convert as a Jew on the basis of secular criteria would mislead Israeli marriage celebrants who do tend to rely upon registration details in order to determine the Jewishness of the prospective spouses.

In a later case – *Pessaro v Minister of the Interior* (1995) – the Supreme Court dealt with Reform conversions inside the State of Israel. The accepted distinction between conversions performed outside of Israel and those carried out inside the country was based, in part, upon the fact that during the British Mandate over Palestine, an Ordinance was passed requiring authorization of any religious conversion by the head of the religious community which the convert sought to join. In the case of Jews, this was the Chief Rabbinate. Since the Chief Rabbinate is Orthodox, it follows that Reform conversions inside Israel would not be recognized under the law. In terms of the *Change Law*, therefore, *Pessaro's* conversion ought not to be a valid one for the purposes of registration as a citizen.

The majority, however, held that the *Change Law* applied only to the area of marriage and divorce. It did not apply to citizenship. Their decision was based on the ambiguous wording of the law, and the fact that the preamble seemed to indicate that the Law was meant to apply to personal status only. The majority also argued that the democratic rights of non-Orthodox Jews would be adversely affected by any other interpretation of the *Change Law*.

Tal J wrote a lengthy minority opinion in which he argued that the language of the law was clear and extended to defining conversion for all purposes and not merely personal status matters. The use of religious criteria in immigration and registration legislation does not constitute an infringement of human rights, since these areas are generally subject to state limitations, and if a State can choose a limitation based upon income or education, it can also choose one based upon religion. He also argued that the law ought not to recognize a conversion which would be regarded as a nullity by the Rabbinical courts and would result in the convert finding him or herself unable to marry a Jew under the law of the land.

In the aftermath of this decision and the subsequent political crisis, the Government appointed a committee (*Ne'eman Committee*) which recommended setting up a joint education institute for the training of conversion candidates from all the streams in contemporary Judaism, and a special Rabbinical court, staffed by Orthodox rabbis, to carry out halakhic conversion ceremonies for their conversion. This proposal, however, was rejected by the Israel Chief Rabbinate, and the issue of non-Orthodox conversion continues to preoccupy the Supreme Court to the present day.

Daniel Sinclair, more affectionately known as Danny, was Minister of the Edinburgh Hebrew congregation from 1984 – 87. He is a Rabbi and a Professor of Jewish and Biomedical Law. Formerly Principal of Jews' College, London, he teaches law at Fordham University, New York, and at the College of Management Law School, Rishon Lezion, Israel.

Israel at 60

Edwin Hoffenberg



It is with great pride and joy that we record this year the State of Israel's sixtieth year as a sovereign state. However, to appreciate its real significance it must be placed in the context of Jewish history over the last few hundred years and beyond. Since the destruction of the Second Temple Jewish aspiration to re-establish a Jewish presence in Zion has never abated and was mainly expressed in prayer and in poetry but that hope was mainly messianic, without the intent of human political intervention. The main connection of Jews with their Land throughout those generations was through the festivals which were celebrated as if in Eretz Israel, Rabbinic injunction to pray towards Jerusalem and compilation of the Talmud which promulgated Jewish law mainly as it applied to behaviour in a quasi Jewish state, although it did give cognisance to the Jews' presence in the diaspora and promoted laws appropriate to them being there. Be that as it may, the attitude of most Rabbinic authorities was to discourage resettlement in Eretz Israel until the Messiah arrives and gives his stamp of approval before they would give theirs.

“We were witness to the German bombing, rationing and the terrible depression”

Meanwhile persecution of the Jews persisted throughout the centuries and at different times resulted in their migration to different havens throughout the world, but miraculously contact was maintained between the different communities. It took until the 19th and 20th centuries for the Jews to say, enough of persecution, enough of exile and statelessness. Those who rebelled against the messianism of the rabbis to lead the way to a Jewish state came from the socialist wings with a left-wing philosophy, such as Ben Gurion and Weitzman, and also right-wingers like Jabotinsky and Begin. Each of these men were determined, ardent state builders, but of them all Ben Gurion was the most inspiring and inspirational, and more than anyone else helped form the kibbutzim and Histadrut and maintained the role of the Jewish Agency.

Only Moses had a more difficult task in bringing the Jews to Eretz Israel. He was leading an ignorant people from 400 years of slavery who were ready to throw in the towel in the face of

each obstacle, and were quite happy to go back to Egypt if the going got tough. Not so Ben Gurion and the other leaders in establishing a state. They had to contend with different factions who thought they could do the job better and even among the leaders themselves there were different ideologies, but they all had the uncompromising, common goal of establishing the state in the face of incredible odds. And they succeeded beyond their own belief.

Which brings us to the present day with the Jewish State established for 60 years, successful economically and militarily and growing from strength to strength. Even at this early stage, despite persistent anti-Semitism and unabating Arab hatred, we have become a light unto the nations, bringing in and settling destitute refugees, giving aid to others, be it medical, scientific or agricultural, and in which research we are among the world's leaders. Even in these troubled times when we have no faith

“I personally remember the lorry loads of Italian prisoners, cheering to be out of the war”

in our leadership, diminished confidence in our judiciary and financial inequality in our society, there is great strength and resolve in the people to contend with and overcome any threats to the state from without and injustices within.

It is with humility and gratitude that my generation has been privileged to live through and experience these wondrous historical events; from the destruction of our people in Europe to the resurrection of our people in our own land. We were witness to the German bombing, rationing and the terrible depression even we children felt on hearing of the concentration camps. I personally remember the lorry loads of Italian prisoners, cheering to be out of the war. And I remember going out to Polton House to greet the young Jewish refugees from Germany who were on their way to Palestine. Their optimism and Chalutzit was an inspiration to me even at that young age. Perhaps it was then that the notion of a Jewish state first entered my mind.

I was about six when my mother forced my protesting sister Joyce to take me with her to Habonim on Sundays just to get me out of the house. It was there that I learned all the Habonim songs and later went to camp and wore the blue uniform. The seeds of Aliyah were sown deep already at that age. I was not alone. Most of my friends in Edinburgh at that time were equally smitten and today we keep close contact as one family in our own Land. We are indeed well blessed.



My Aliyah

Sonia Cohen

How do you begin to write about 60 years of a country so complex, so colourful, so ever-changing? A thousand books would not cover it all. Every day is eventful. Every place breathes history. Every person is a walking piece of history.

“Every place breathes history”

Many people here in Israel have lived lives more dramatic and exciting, and often more tragic, than anything you read in a work of fiction. Compared with many others, our early lives in Edinburgh were not dramatic, but that does not make them less significant. We all contribute something of the values and attitudes instilled in us in our youth. In our early

lives in Edinburgh in the 40's and 50's, we absorbed values of Jewish tradition, of tolerance, of the importance of objective judgement and that wonderful Scottish attitude to life's trials - whatever the day brings, you just get up and get on with it. This last has stood us in good stead in a country where life is never easy.

In a tiny country, everyone is touched personally by the tragic outcome of wars and terror. We are no exception. Financially, life in Israel can be tough. Living in a multicultural society with people whose standards and beliefs are often very different from your own can be frustrating. Yet I, for my part, would never want to live anywhere else, and I believe the same is true of my close friends. Life here is vital and stimulating. We live it to the full.

I leave it to others to write more about the changes that have taken place in 60 years of the State. Suffice it to say that I feel incredibly privileged to be living here in Israel. With all the faults of the country, and there are many, it is home - and I love it. You don't turn your back on a child who makes mistakes, and you don't turn your back on a country only 60 years old and struggling to make its way. You thank the Almighty that He let you be part of it, and you pray that there will be Peace and a return to some of the Jewish values and traditions lost on the way. And you never forget that the main reason you are here is because of what you learned long ago in a beautiful city far away, but ever near in your heart.

Reminiscing

Carmel Cohen née Caplan

We settled in Israel in 1954. The state was in its infancy — just six years old and now we are approaching its 60th Anniversary. Against all odds, the country has seen amazing achievements. I'd like to share with you a few personal reminiscences that remain firmly in my mind.

My husband started to work as a senior paediatrician in Tel Hashomer Hospital, previously known as Tel Lituinsky. It was a British military hospital during the Mandate. After the War of Independence, the hospital remained a military hospital but was soon also a general hospital. There were no proper buildings and the long army barrack huts were used as wards. In those days, there was no air-conditioning, and it was not easy to work in the hot humid climate of the summer months.

The hospital was run by Dr. Chaim Sheba (it's now known as Sheba Hospital). He was a very fine physician and was chief of one of the medical wards in addition to his administrative duties as chief of the

hospital. He was a very special person and was blessed with the human touch. He decided to build a block of flats in the hospital grounds to house some of his doctors. We were privileged to be one of the first occupants of these flats and we were very happy to set up house in a one-roomed flat with a tiny kitchen, toilet and shower.

“he was the first baby born in these flats”

Our firstborn, a son, was born while we were living there. Dr. Sheba immediately suggested to my husband that, as he was the first baby born in these flats, the hospital would organize the 'Brith' for us. It was a very welcome offer and we gratefully acquiesced. My husband, like all his colleagues then, was earning the princely some of 200 Liras a month and with the most careful budgeting it was almost impossible to make ends meet. The hospital kitchen did the catering for

the 'Brith'. It was probably a very modest affair but as it was the time of austerity and rationing, it seemed like a sumptuous feast. In the middle of the table was a large cake beautifully decorated and nobody wanted to touch it until Dr. Sheba came and asked why it hadn't been cut. Then he told the story of a patient who had been admitted to the hospital. She couldn't hear, she was very disturbed and her family thought that she was a psychiatric case. Examination by the E.N.T. doctors found she was suffering from otosclerosis. She was operated on and became completely normal again. Her friend was so grateful that she asked Dr. Sheba what she could do for the hospital. She told him that she baked cakes and so he immediately suggested that she bake a cake for the 'Brith'.

In Safad, Hadassah ran a hospital for T.B. patients but there was no general hospital and adults and children requiring hospitalisation had to travel as far as Tiberius or Afula. The government saw that there was a great need for a general

hospital in Safad for the people of the city and the surrounding areas. Dr. Sheba suggested to my husband that he should apply for the position as chief of the Paediatric Department. He did so and was accepted and that's how we've remained in Safad since 1958.

Safad is a beautiful city surrounded by mountains with a view of Lake Kinneret below. The cool mountain air was very refreshing, after the humidity of the centre of the country. The old city with its winding alleys, old synagogues and tales of the famous Rabbis who had lived there in the 15th and 16th centuries made it a most idyllic place.

“more well-baby clinics were set up”

The health and social conditions of the general public were far from good. A large

number of North Africans immigrants were brought to settle in Safad. Building projects were just starting and these people were housed in wooden huts which were far from adequate in the cold Safad winters. Our first winter there was particularly severe with temperatures falling below zero. The paediatric ward was full of babies and young children with pneumonia and gastroenteritis and older children with rheumatic fever. It was quite a challenge to deal with the situation. Slowly things improved. Permanent housing became available, social conditions got better and more well-baby clinics were set up. It was a hard struggle but today we have a fine hospital, which luckily was completed shortly before the Yom Kippur War when it became a front-line hospital.

Coming, back to the year 1967, during the Six Day War, not many flats had air-raid shelters. We have a big cellar underneath our house and with the approval of the

Home Guard we opened it up for the general public and neighbours from round about would come whenever there was an air-raid warning. On one of the last days of the war, the siren went off early in the morning just before my husband was going to a minyan. At that time he was in mourning for his mother. It was very noisy and the shells that the Syrians were firing from the Golan Heights were falling nearby. As there was more than a minyan of men in the shelter, my husband decided to hold the morning prayers there. Never before had our prayers had such meaning. People were nervous and anxious but the prayers had a calming effect on everyone. It's something we'll never forget. We have been blessed with four children all living in Israel, each one working in his or her own profession and they've presented us with a new generation of wonderful grandchildren. We thank Hashem that we are so fortunate to be living here in our very own country.

When I wander through the various shopping centers throughout Israel, with the beautiful shops and food in abundance which can compete with any place in the world, I feel very proud and happy. One of my favourite programs on television, held once a year on independence day, is the distribution of the Israel Prize in all different fields of science, medicine, art, sports, literature, music, etc – “I kleibe nachus” (I am proud). This shows the talent of our Jewish nation.

I keep myself occupied attending art classes, doing voluntary work with young people suffering from Cerebral Palsy and other muscular diseases and they paint by foot and mouth, selling their paintings as an income for themselves. I also attend Yiddish classes and Pilates classes.

“my husband was called twice a year to do reserve army duty”

After settling in Israel, it was 26 years before we were able to travel abroad, because my husband was called twice a year to do reserve army duty and we were looking after our parents.

I am very fortunate that our three children and their families are all living in Israel. My eldest daughter and family are in Caesaria, my second daughter and family in Netanya, and my son and family are in Binyamina.

My husband was a wonderful and proud Israeli, and as for many years I was the only member of the family living in Israel, we

entertained many members of the family and friends abroad and received them in our home, and Mordchai would instill in them the love and pride of our country. He succeeded in turning them into keen Zionists.

In the cemetery of Netanya, lying in the same plot of land, are my in laws, Mr. and Mrs. Zeev Amitai, my parents Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Dorfman, Mr. and Mrs. Pesach Caplin, my husband, my brother in law, and cousins.

Unfortunately, I have had to live through all the wars of Israel, except the war of independence, my husband, children and grandchildren taking part, with all the sadness involved. Today, as we are soon celebrating the 60th anniversary of the State, the situation is very complicated, with all the hatred of the Muslim world. But we are optimistic that with our fine army and great leaders the future will eventually bring peace to our homeland, that Israel so much deserves.

“there is no place in the world that I would rather be”

With all our problems, and there are many, there is no place in the world that I would rather be. This is the home of the Jewish people, and all peoples in the world deserve a home. Please, come and join us.

I must admit that I have very fond memories of growing up in the beautiful city of Edinburgh (surrounded by my family) where my husband and I visited on every opportunity throughout the years.

Pride and Optimism

Ena Amitai (née Dorfman)

I have been living in Netanya for 56 years, 4 years after the State of Israel was established. In 1950 I met my Israeli husband, Mordchai Amitai, in Edinburgh. He was a Sabra, born in Israel in 1926. When in 1950 Mr. and Mrs. Pesach Caplin, his aunt and uncle, made a party for their nephew Mordchai, in their home, on his first visit to Britain and it was there that I met him.

After the war of independence, in which Mordchai took part, he decided to visit his family in Britain (where he had many aunts and uncles) and also to do a course of studies in engineering.

My father, Mr. Joseph Dorfman, was born in Edinburgh before the turn of the 19th century, and my mother arrived in Britain from Lithuania in the early 1920s. I was born in Edinburgh in 1929. Having belonged to “Habonim” and “Bnei Akivah” and having grown up in a very Zionist home, my brother, Bertie Dorfman, and I did everything to prepare ourselves to settle in Israel. My brother studied medicine at “Edinburgh University” and I studied agriculture at the “Agriculture College”.

In 1951 I was invited to take part in the first “Bachad” group that was going to Israel. In May 1952, Mordchai and I were married by Rabbi Isaac Cohen (Zt “L”) in the Edinburgh shul in Salisbury Road. In June 1952 we settled in Netanya, where I'm still living. My husband passed away 9 years ago. My brother Bertie (and his wife Elizabeth) are also living in Netanya, and he still practises medicine here and is well-known locally.

In 1955 my parents left Edinburgh and came on Alyah (my father's dream) and also settled in Netanya. In 1955 my husband started his own garage in the old industrial zone of Netanya, repairing and selling cars. During the years, he had the agency of the Israel car the Sussita, the Triumph, the Fiat and many others. 15 years ago, when the Toyota was introduced to Israel, my husband got the agency of the Toyota in Netanya. About 2 years ago, our old garage was replaced by an ultra-modern Toyota garage and our company of “Rechev Netanya” are the sole agents in Netanya. We have a very successful family business, run by my son-in-law, Moshe Olivero, his wife, my daughter Dahlia, my son Ran Amitai, my daughter Varda, and grandsons Boaz and Uri. Many of the British that have settled in Netanya love and enjoy the services of our Toyota garage. As you can imagine, many changes have taken place over the years in Israel and also in Netanya. With the absorption of immigrants from Russia, Ethiopia, France, The States and Britain, Netanya has become a much larger, busy and bustling city.

Netanya is one of the finest holiday resorts in Israel, with lovely beaches, hotels and restaurants all around. A few years ago, an elevator was built going down to the beach. Our mayoress has developed the beach front with beautiful gardens and promenades. In recent years, a second industrial zone has emerged in Netanya with hi-tech industrial firms and shopping centres. Also, Netanya has its own university college. When I arrived in Israel, it was bang into the life of austerity. Everything was heavily rationed and there wasn't a potato or an apple to be seen, as a result of the war of independence.

Edinburgh and Jerusalem: a personal story

Asher Selig Kaufman

The key for understanding my 'aliyah' and subsequent events was provided by Rabbi Daiches zt 'L' I in one of his weekly Shabbat sermons. He chose Exodus 33, 21-23, the answer to Moses' request to know the ways of God in dealing with humanity.

‘And the Lord said,....“See, there is a place near Me. Station yourself on the rock [of Sinai] and, as My Presence passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock and shield you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you will see My back; but My face must not be seen.” Rabbi Daiches interpreted this difficult passage in philosophic- midrashic form. We mortals are limited in perspective; we can only view events in retrospect (my words).

It had always been my ambition to live in Erets Yisrael. I could not realize how this was to come about as my wife Jospa (Josephine), our daughter Rachel and I left

Edinburgh in 1954.

“British press was full of reports on the “little sun”

From Edinburgh to Jerusalem.

Our first station was Reading where we were welcomed with open arms by the small Jewish community. We spent five delightful years in Reading. My appointment as a researcher on the peaceful uses of nuclear fusion at the nearby laboratory of Associated Electrical Industries (AEI) in the beautiful grounds of Aldermaston Court did not seem to further my desire for 'aliyah'. In January 1958 there was an apparent breakthrough in the research and the British press was full of reports on the “little sun”. Excitement reached Israel too. By November of that year Jospa and I found ourselves journeying from Lod to Jerusalem in a jeep

of the Physics Department of The Hebrew University and listening to a personal commentary on the battles fought on the way. Lectures on the fusion research and visits to Tel Aviv, Haifa, Rehovot and the Dead Sea made our visit of two and a half weeks unforgettable. And shortly before Rosh Hashanah of 5720/1959 we were in Jerusalem for me to take up a senior academic position in The Hebrew University. This part of the story would not be complete without mentioning the fate of the laboratory at Aldermaston Court. In 1963 the axe fell to close the laboratory; AEI could no longer afford to finance a laboratory designed for fundamental research without immediate returns.

Integration. British 'olim', comparatively few in number, have made significant contributions to the welfare of Israel. For example, the late Prof. Isaac Michaelson, born in Edinburgh in 1903, was recognized as the leading ophthalmologist in his

time. The late Abba Eban, with Edinburgh family connections, distinguished himself as Israel's Foreign Minister. How as a family have we fared in integrating in Israel society? On arrival in the country, our knowledge of Hebrew was good, although not fluent. Jospa's upbringing at home, in the Grove Lane Talmud Torah in London and later in the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and mine at home and in the Edinburgh Heder, placed us in good stead. Our daily newspaper is the Hebrew Ha'arets; already in 1957 we were receiving its Friday edition. And I was expected to teach in Hebrew from the very start.

Jospa is a person of many parts and has been described as the "everlasting student". She has taught school mathematics and English, and translated documents Hebrew/English. Eventually she became a civil servant and retired as co-ordinator in the Dental Department of the Ministry of Health. In 2004 she was the oldest Ph.D. graduate at Bar Ilan University. Our sabra son Shmuel Baruch is married to Rina from a Bukhara family. She is a kindergarten teacher with a second degree in education. Shmuel, after military service as a distinguished soldier, college studies and high-tec initiation, formed his own company with international connections in electro-optics and specialized optical equipment.

Some of our British upbringing has remained unchanged. Our lounge, simply furnished, could be typical of how it was in Edinburgh or in Reading. I still wear a hat or cap out of doors, necessarily so in the

summer time. A tie adorns my shirt during the short winter and also on Shabbat/Yom Tov unless the temperature exceeds about 30°C. We converse at home in English and with former British 'olim', much to the advantage of Shmuel for his international connections. Yet we have not gone out of our way to participate in a shi'ur in English. On the contrary, for many years we enjoyed listening to the famous Amos Hakham, the winner of the first Israel Bible quiz, expounding Biblical texts. In Edinburgh we only knew the Ashkenazi rite of prayer. Today I am member in five local synagogues, three Ashkenaz and two Sephardic/Oriental. A Yemenite siddur and Haggadah are also on the bookshelves.

"the Temple was as far away as journeying to the Moon"

From Plasma Physics to the Temple of Jerusalem. Harnessing nuclear fusion for a reactor to produce useful energy is part of plasma physics. Apart from my teaching and administrative duties, I began to build a small team to engage in plasma physics. Nowadays plasma physics in Israel is a well-established branch of physics research. Although I was a pioneer, I am not sure that I was successful in advancing the research in Israel. A dramatic change in research came with the Six Day War and the reunification of Jerusalem. Until that time the Temple was as far away as journeying to the Moon. In June 1967 the scene was transformed overnight.

We as a family were among the first to visit the Western Wall of the Temple area. I was filled with an insatiable curiosity as to the location of the Temple. Am I to accept the consensus that the Dome of the Rock marks the holy site? A reading of tractate Middot of the Mishnah that describes the Second Temple led me to the idea that perhaps I, as a physicist, could help in solving the Temple puzzle. A period of sabbatical leave was due in 1974-75. My parents at the age of 84 left Edinburgh in 1970 to settle near us. Normally academic staff spend sabbatical leave abroad. However, I felt that I could not leave my parents to themselves, so why not spend a year probing the Temple problem with the Temple site nearby? After a short time during that eventful year I felt sure that the problem was solved. The Holy of Holies of both the Second Temple and, later after further research, the First (Solomonic) Temple is located at the Dome of the Spirits (or of the Tablets) about 100 metres north-west of the Dome of the Rock. For a time, research in plasma physics and Temple ran in parallel until the latter gained the upper hand. The Temple research has resulted in the publication of three books and many articles. The book "The Temple Mount: Where Is The Holy of Holies?" was reviewed in The Edinburgh Star (no. 48, June 2004) by one of my school and Habonim haverim Berl Osborne.

A final note: Did Divine Providence guide me all that tortuous way to the Temple site? I leave it to you to decide. Whether your answer is yes or no, come and join us in Yerushalayim.

The Four Questions that get you to Israel:



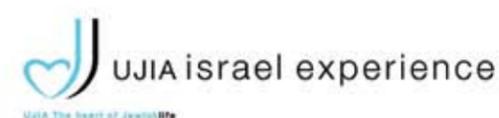
- 1) Never been on an organised tour of Israel?
- 2) Aged between 21 and 26?
- 3) Nothing planned between June 23rd and July 3rd?
- 4) Fancy a FREE trip to Israel?

If the answer's yes to these four questions then pack your bags!

Tribe have teamed up with Birthright to create a trip with a Traditional / Modern Orthodox Jewish outlook especially for Tribe members aged 21 to 26.

To find out more about the programme and trip details contact David Collins at 020 8343 5656 or davidcollins@tribeuk.com

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S-CoJeC reports anti-Semitism to Press Complaints Commission

Leah Granat & Ephraim Borowski

Like many people, you have probably been appalled by the quantity and level of personal, racist, and other abuse that regularly appears on mainstream websites hosted by newspapers and government. In particular we have been horrified by the significant increase in antisemitic contributions to the online discussion forums on the Scotsman and Herald websites, and have complained to both the Press Complaints Commission and the police. The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities also wrote to MSPs inviting them to condemn this trend and use their influence to reverse it.

The following are a few of the very many examples of comments that appeared on the newspaper websites, ostensibly commenting on reports of the Israeli response to the bombardment of Sderot and Askelon:

Jews are not fit to breathe our air. They must be attacked wherever you see them; throw rocks at their ugly, hooked-nosed women and mentally ill children, and light up the REAL ovens. (“Binny” in Scotsman, 1 Mar)

The Zionist nose print is on every atrocity that happens worldwide. (“ex-labour” in Scotsman, 1 March)

People around the world will one day unite to declare that Hitler may have been right all along... Mark my words. (“Binny” in Scotsman, 29 Feb)

“The Jews have exposed their fangs. Nothing will deter them, except the color of their filthy people’s blood;” (“Lobeydoser” quoting Sheikh Ibrahim Madhi of Gaza, in Herald, 5 March)

“... H A R O L D S H I P M A N being Jewish . he was these islands W O R S T serial killer his attitude to non Jews must have been ... we seem to be the “unchosen “ fit only to be cyphers , expendable chips in some evil game (“britfree” in Scotsman, 3 March)

“Thousands dead in New York! If you want to see the bif stuff just think Russia, WW1, WW2, Africa, Iraq, Armenia...them, Zionists, all of it, every single bit of it. Add it up, it’s about 250 plus million dead through war, revolution and famine. ... “ it’s hard to tell what their most sickening terror attack has been. I suppose since it’s The Scotsman forum i would have to say The Lockerbie Bombing. (“thewitness” in Scotsman, 1 March)

It is absolutely clear that these comments bear no relation to the story they purport to discuss, and can have no purpose other than to foment hatred of Jewish people in general. The hosting of such unacceptable views by respectable newspapers gives them legitimacy, and undermines efforts to make the rhetoric of hatred unacceptable in the public forum.

We are extremely concerned that the public expression of such virulent abuse, as now frequently appears in the Scotsman and Herald forums may incite more, and more violent, attacks.

We are certain that none of these comments would have been allowed to reach the letters page of the print editions, but they seem to be routinely accepted on what is, in effect, the letters page of the online editions. While it is true that they can be removed from the website, this normally only happens if the newspaper receives a complaint from a reader – that is, after someone has already taken offence.

Responses to our letters have been mixed.

The editors of both newspapers have simply ignored them, and, more than two months later, we are still waiting for a reply – though some of the offensive comments have been removed from their websites.

The Press Complaints Commission has responded that the comments do not breach their Code, since that states that “the press must avoid prejudicial or pejorative reference to [amongst other things] an **individual’s** religion’. In other words, provided they make prejudicial or pejorative reference to the religion of a large enough number of individuals, newspapers are in the clear! And “material only comes under the jurisdiction of the PCC if an editor has exercised control”, so the way to avoid being criticised for not exercising proper control is not to exercise any control at all! Kafka could not have made this up!!

However, the PCC did confirm that this is a matter for the police. We had already made a formal complaint, and the police are currently investigating the possibility of prosecuting both the newspapers and the authors of the offensive comments.

Most encouragingly, the response from MSPs expressing outrage that reputable newspapers did not prevent the publication of blatantly antisemitic comments has been overwhelming. Many have written to the editors to express their abhorrence at the comments. Stewart Maxwell, West of Scotland MSP, and Minister for Communities and Sport, wrote to the Herald pointing out that some antisemitic comments have remained online since 31 July 2007:

Clearly these comments are strongly anti-Semitic and insulting to the Jewish community and offensive to all right-minded people in Scotland. It seems to me unacceptable that ‘The Herald’ has allowed comments such as these to appear on their website for eight months without taking any action to remove them.

He also wrote to Justice Minister, Kenny MacAskill:

I am concerned that our two national newspapers are allowing such comments to be published and to remain on their websites for, in some cases, many months. Is it possible for us to force the website owners to be more vigilant in what they publish? I was wondering if we could use the incitement to religious hatred legislation to make ‘The Herald’ and The Scotsman’ take more responsibility for the stuff which they allow on their websites.”

Former First Minister Jack McConnell wrote to us:

“I agree with you that bigoted and racist views have no place on the websites of our national press, and I fully support your efforts to persuade editors to take their editorial responsibilities seriously.”

Kenneth Gibson MSP told us:

“It was with great unease and anger that I reviewed your letter detailing the atrocious commentary found in the Scotsman and Herald internet blogs.....I condemn anti-Semitic rhetoric and recognise that its only purpose is to persecute and exacerbate negative feelings toward the Jewish community.... My concerns and sympathies are with the Jewish community at this time.”

His view was echoed by Derek Brownlee MSP, who wrote

“I was appalled to read of the detail of some of the comments which have been posted, and can well understand your extreme concern.”

Bill Kidd MSP tabled a motion in the Scottish Parliament:

That the Parliament abhors the publication in both The Scotsman and The Herald newspapers’ online blogs of blatantly anti-Semitic rhetoric by individuals who hide their identities behind screen names; believes that any such racist statements have no place in national newspapers, in print or online, and calls on the editors of these two major newspapers to ensure that such foul-mouthed attacks on any section of society are removed from their blogs before publication.

It is very reassuring that the police are taking the matter seriously, and that both the Minister for Communities and the Convener of the Equal Opportunities Committee of the Parliament are keen to pursue the matter. It has become obvious that we have identified a matter of much more general concern than the interests of our own Community, and we do not think it unreasonable, as we said in our letter to MSPs, to look forward to legislation that will make Scotland truly a country in which many cultures can flourish without intimidation and abuse.

But this episode has also highlighted another more general concern about the way in which criticism of Israel can sometimes shade into naked anti-Semitism

– and naked and unashamed it is, as one of the bloggers proudly asks:

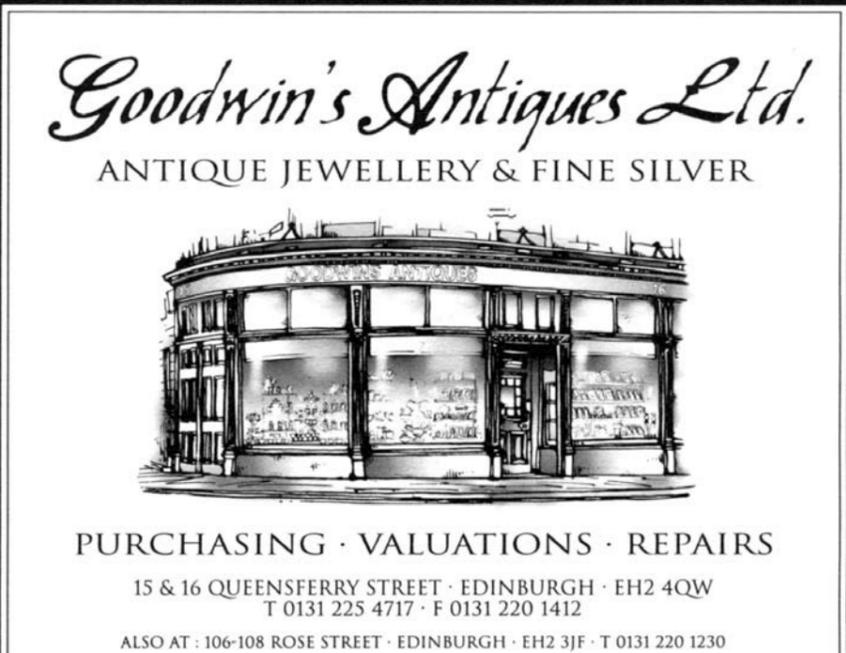
“Now call me old fashioned, but please tell me what is wrong with being a racist anti semite?” (“Neanderthal” in Scotsman, 29 February).

It is not just the personal abuse (which, pace the PCC is still personal even if directed at large numbers of persons!), or the unrefined craziness of the paranoia of the Protocols.

There seems to be a Law of Lunatic Logic that the enemy of my enemy is my friend, and of course the friend of my enemy must be my enemy. The first of these creates the coalition of the monomaniac left with the raving right – and the latter makes us all targets. Why else would anyone paint “Hizbollah” in letters 2 foot high outside a shul? Why would they shout “Arafat” at a Jewish person in the street? Why would someone campaigning for Vanunu to become Rector of Glasgow University chant “Israelis are evil; Jews are evil”?

We are surrounded by Scots of Irish, Italian, or Polish origin celebrating their roots, but if we do the same we are at risk. We have recently seen celebrations in Scotland of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of India and Pakistan by a partition that led to millions of deaths; but some who claim to be “friends of Palestine” tried to ban similar celebrations of Israel’s 60th anniversary. By all means let’s hold Israel up to criticism – but to the same standards as others, not to different standards! Forget Tibet, Zimbabwe, and Darfur; why are “peace walls” acceptable in Belfast and Cyprus, but not in Jerusalem? If anti-Semitism is treating Jews differently from others, then that is anti-Semitism – and what the bloggers have demonstrated is that there is a short and slippery slope from that kind of collective anti-Semitism to the old-fashioned personal variety.

In the 30 years since the Race Relations Act, language that was once tolerated has become intolerable. The first line of the attack on sectarianism in Scotland has been on the songs of hatred. The “One Scotland, Many Cultures” campaign began with adverts encouraging us not to be complicit in racist banter. So why should anti-Semitism in the media be tolerated?



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The Jewish influence and what it has offered to the world

Eric Milligan

Earlier this year, I was asked by the Literary Society to address them on the rather grand title of “The Jewish influence and what it has offered to the world”. They were impressed by some of what I said because they have now asked me to recall my views and reminiscences for readers of The Star.

Jewish people have, of course, made an enormous contribution to the world and many people are far better qualified than me to comment on the various ways they have done this. But the area where they have influenced me most, on a personal level, is in their contribution to music and it is that influence that I have chosen to comment on here.

I thought it appropriate to start by drawing the very real contrast between what took place exactly 75 years ago in the United States of America and in Europe.

In 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt called upon the people of the United States to work together: Black and White, Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Catholic, to form a new political coalition, which would embrace hope over fear. He committed himself and all the progressive forces in America to a New Deal. He told the American people that they had nothing to fear but fear itself. He did it to the song, his battle hymn of Happy Days are Here Again, composed by Milton Ager.

“Happy Days are Here Again” - remember those wonderful words:

“All Together Shout it Now, There is No One Who Can Doubt it Now,
So Let’s Tell the World About it Now, Happy Days Are Here Again,
Your Cares and Your Troubles are Gone, There Will Be No More From Now On ...”.

FDR, in the same year, also abolished prohibition and made it lawful for Americans to enjoy a glass of Scotch without concealing it from any passing policemen.

“uplifting American music, practically all composed by great Jewish composers of the time,”

Alas, in Europe in 1933, it was not the rainbow of hope that rose in the sky, it was the cloud of darkness that descended when Hindenburg appointed Hitler Chancellor of Germany and triggered off the burning of the Reichstag, the night of the long knives, the systematic persecution of Jewish and other progressive people who had the temerity to stand in opposition to him. While the popularly elected Roosevelt was opening up

the United States, Hitler was turning Europe inward with all the horrors that were to follow.

That uplifting American music, practically all composed by great Jewish composers of the time, was in stark contrast with what was happening in Europe. Just think of the wonderful music that gave us what we now bracket together as the Great American Songbook:

Harold Arlen (real name Hyman Arluck):

The Wizard of Oz, Get Happy, Got the World on a String, Let’s fall in Love, It’s only a Paper Moon, Let’s Accentuate the Positive, Come Rain or Come Shine, Old Black Magic.

Irving Berlin (real name Israel Isidore Baline):

White Christmas, Easter Parade, Alexander’s Rag Time Band, There’s no Business Like Show Business, Cheek to Cheek, Puttin’ on the Ritz.

George Gershwin (real name Jacob Gershowitz):

Porgy and Bess, I’ve Got Rhythm, It Aint Necessarily So, Summertime.

Some years later, Leonard Bernstein’s music and Stephen Sondheim’s lyrics gave us the glorious West Side Story - Everything’s Bright in America, Somewhere. Ponder the words:

“There’s a place for Us, Somewhere, a place for us,
Peace and quiet and open air,
We’ll find a new way of living,
We’ll find a way of forgiving.”

I hear the cry from the Jewish people down the ages for their promised land expressed in that popular song.

All those great Jewish composers have themselves not just touched my life but touched the lives of so many millions of people throughout the world with their upbeat, positive attitude. Notwithstanding the troubles and strife of today, tomorrow always offers the prospect of being better than yesterday.

I never had the good fortune to meet any of those writers but every day of my life I listen to their music and the sentiments expressed in their lyrics.

Here in Edinburgh, we have much cause to remember the Jewish influence in our own culture and in our own festivals. We remember that the founder of the Edinburgh Festival was Rudolph Bing, who had the vision to see the potential of Edinburgh as a festival city. Having established the Edinburgh Festival, he went on to take responsibility for the Metropolitan

Opera Company in New York and built it up to become the great opera company of the world.

When I was first elected a councillor in Edinburgh back in the seventies, it was Peter Diamond who was the Director. He himself was a Jewish escapee from the Nazis. This year, in Edinburgh, we remember that it was exactly 50 years ago, in the 1958 Festival, that Yehudi Menuhin took himself and the Edinburgh Festival from the concert halls to the people of the city. He proclaimed:

“We are so happy in Edinburgh, we thought it would be nice to get acquainted with the people who really belong to Edinburgh and have no opportunity to get to the concerts.”

He hired the then Embassy Cinema in the Council housing district of Pilton and only charged Edinburgh people a shilling each to cover the hire costs. He played the Beethoven Trio in B Flat and the Mendelssohn Trio in D Minor. The Lord Provost of the day in expressing his appreciation to Yehudi Menuhin, said:

“The people of Edinburgh now know that great artists are not the detached and unapproachable people which has been for so long the popular belief. By taking your gifts of music into a great housing area, you have demonstrated in the most possible practical manner that a musical experience is available for everyone.”

As a consequence of his initiative Yehudi Menuhin became the Honorary President of the Edinburgh Festival till the end of his life. He also became a Freeman of our City. And in the years that followed, many thousands of youngsters have had their young lives enriched by the various outreach programmes performed by Festival artistes.

I have my own fond memories of occasions such as when Stephane Grappelli thrilled us in the Usher Hall to launch a cultural programme to mark the European Summit in 1992. I recall that when we opened The Hub, the home of the Edinburgh Festival on Castlehill, the first Festival performance was given by Larry Adler, that genius with a mouth organ.

“as a jazz loving, harmonica playing, Jewish, Marxist minstrel”

He holds the unique distinction of being the only performer I know of who accepted an invitation to perform in Edinburgh for the Festival Fringe and was so successful that he was immediately elevated into the official Festival programme. He was then also asked to perform at The Hub for the Jazz Festival to show that it is the home of all the Festivals, not just the official Festival of Music and Drama. I recall vividly asking him if he would mind if I could introduce him to the audience by describing him “as a jazz loving, harmonica playing, Jewish, Marxist minstrel”. He looked up at me with a very quizzical look and in that so very Jewish way, lifted his hands and said, “I don’t really care what you say or how you introduce me as long as you do not suggest that I am a Gentile”.

Another memory I cherish and am happy to share with you is that some years ago, out of the blue, an Edinburgh lawyer informed me that one of his clients wished to gift me, the Lord Provost, a piano. I confess I was somewhat surprised, but he confirmed it was true and asked that a meeting be organised between his client and me.

I was introduced to a delightful, very Edinburgh lady who told me that she liked to attend as many concerts and recitals as take place in our city. She remembered on one occasion in the Usher Hall when to her surprise before the music began, I appeared on the stage to speak. She said:

“You were fair pleased with yourself, Eric. You were boasting about how you raised the money to refurbish the organ in the Usher Hall, which had not been played for 20 years. I like organ recitals, Eric, but I like piano recitals better on a really good piano played by a really good pianist. I thought, now that you have an organ you will need a new piano and you told us that the Council doesn’t have much money so I thought I would help you out.”

“It doesn’t matter what it costs. We want the best for the Usher Hall.”

I explained that a new piano is very, very expensive but that didn’t appear to put her out. “It doesn’t matter what it costs. We want the best for the Usher Hall.”

The great pianist, Alfred Brendel, was invited to seek and purchase a new piano for the Usher Hall. Some months later, I remember a Saturday morning when the wind and the rain were such that only Edinburgh people could endure it. I, as Lord Provost, went along with Edinburgh comedian, Ronnie Corbett, to open a sale of work outside St Giles Cathedral, which alas, due to the extreme weather, was cancelled. I told Ronnie that I was going on to the Usher Hall to a private engagement but he might wish to accompany me to see the changes recently made to the auditorium.

I arrived to greet this so generous Edinburgh lady and to introduce her to Alfred Brendel who had selected the piano for our city. We opened, as appropriate, a bottle of champagne and the great Alfred Brendel played the piano just for this lady and for me. Afterwards I offered the lady a lift home in the Provost’s car. It would have been ungallant to leave her at the bus stop in the pouring rain after her display of generosity, even though she informed me that she did have her bus pass. In travelling down to her home, I thanked her and she said: “Eric, you didn’t have to go to all this trouble for me”. I said: “Trouble... after your generosity!” “Eric” she said, “it was worth every penny. I never thought that in my life I would get to meet Ronnie Corbett.”

I write this piece today on the very morning that I have received an unexpected package from Venice, Florida, USA, from the Honorary President of the Edinburgh Jazz Festival, Dick Hyman. Having just celebrated his 81st birthday, he has now retired as the Director of the Jazz Festivals in New York and in Oregon. He is devoting more time now to composition, particularly Chamber music.

“Dick Hyman has performed in the White House for no fewer than three USA Presidents: Jimmy Carter, George Bush Snr. and Bill Clinton.”

Dick Hyman has performed in the White House for no fewer than three USA Presidents: Jimmy Carter, George Bush Snr. and Bill Clinton. For 50 years he has functioned and fascinated as a pianist, organist, arranger, music director and now classical composer. He has recorded over 100 albums under his own name and so many more with so many others.

If there are any Jazz loving readers of the Star who have not heard of Dick Hyman they should order some of his CDs now. Whether your taste is the piano music of Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll Morton or Fats Waller, Dick Hyman is the finest living exponent of all their styles. I remember as if it was yesterday, his concert on the then newly installed organ in St Giles Cathedral for our Jazz Festival here being introduced by no less a person than President Jimmy Carter himself.

In drawing my thoughts to some conclusion on the Jewish influence and what it has offered to the world, I can do no more than remind readers of the words of that maestro on the violin who exactly 50 years ago enthralled the ordinary people of Pilton.

I quote:

“Each human being has the eternal duty of transforming what is hard and brutal into a subtle and tender offering, what is crude into refinement, what is ugly into beauty, ignorance into knowledge, confrontation into collaboration, thereby rediscovering the child’s dream of a creative reality incessantly renewed by death, the servant of life and by life the servant of love.”

Those of us who strive to live in a more civilised city within a more civilised world, who claim the right to dream dreams and to hold dear in our hearts a positive, optimistic view that the problems of today can be confronted and can be overcome, owe so much, so very, very much, to so many talented, artistic people who themselves have shared with us their artistic gifts. But more than that, they have also given us something of their indomitable spirit and their special pride in being so very, very Jewish.

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Around and About

The Shein Scene

TU'B'SHEVAT

On 20th January, Rabbi Rose guided the Toddler group and parents, Pre-Cheder, Cheder and Post Cheder children and their teachers, for Tu'B'Shevav in the traditional way. Following every blessing, the assembled company indulged in a huge variety of fruits with an explanation about the special symbolism of each. Rabbi Rose linked the festival to current environmental issues and posing questions through the meal. This is the 'Shmitah' (Sabbatical) year, which imposes the Mizvah of allowing the resting of planting every seventh year.



WIZO QUIZ

On 26 January a group of stout hearts braved the wintry weather to take part in a national WIZO quiz at the home of Sylvia and John Donne. 141 groups participated in this fundraiser from all over the country. Sealed quiz papers were opened precisely at 7.30pm with answers to be submitted on the Internet by 10pm to organisers in England. Deep concentration interspersed by gales of laughter emanated from the Donne household as Sylvia and John, Sandra and Sydney Caplan, Avril and Norman Berger, Kate and Ron Goodwin, Pearl and Ian Shein and the younger Donne set, Deborah, Ian, Carol and James tackled the sometimes confusing but cleverly contrived questions. Wide-ranging subjects included those on word connections, musical excerpts and film titles. The young were expert on music, knowing the answers before the elders even understood the questions (where

were those on Vera Lynn and Geraldo). A superb buffet helped relieve the tension as the 10pm deadline approached. An hour later it was announced that the Edinburgh team had come a commendable 49th out of 141. £150 was added to the grand total for WIZO's intriguing and innovative quiz resulting in a hilarious and informative evening.

HOLOCAUST DAY

On 27th January a Holocaust Memorial Day was held in the Lothian Chambers jointly hosted by Edinburgh City Council and Edinburgh Inter Faith Association. Professor Frank Whaling, Inter Faith President, opened the proceedings followed by a short address by Lord Provost George Grubb. El Malei Rachameim was recited by Rabbi David Rose, preceded by the lighting of a Memorial candle by David Goldberg, a former member of Kinder Transport. Musical contributions and readings performed by pupils from Forrester High School and Holyrood High School including a survivor testimony from Rawanda, were followed by comments from Marianne Laszlo, a Holocaust survivor. Councillor Jenny Dawes, Leader of the Council, gave a short address and the moving ceremony concluded with a Civic Reception hosted by the City Council.

COFFEE MORNING

A coffee morning took place in the community centre on 3 February when the 50 who attended generated more gossip than an evening in Rovers Return even if the youngest participant, 15 months old, was somewhat limited in imparting local news. Popular book, DVD and plant stall was efficiently supervised by Amanda Hyams helped by dad. Steven. The cake stall saw a determined stand by Irene Hyams to outbid all punters in an all out effort to achieve her prize, a chocolate cake baked by daughter in law Susan. Irene desired this delicacy for son Gary to satisfy his passion for such sweet offerings, and Irene, well known for achieving the object of her



desire, departed in triumph. As did those in charge of the successful cake bonanza Betsy Dorfman and Janet Mundy. A warm homely atmosphere and the raising of £200 for community centre funds delighted the organisers headed by Joyce Sperber and Doreen Bowman.

YOUTH SERVICE

Cheder children relieved Rabbi Rose and the Wardens of some of their duties on Sabbath 9 February when they conducted the morning Service in the Synagogue. Senior Warden Michael Taylor and Junior Warden Benjamin Griffin led the enthusiastic team which included excellent leining from Isaac Ansell and readings from Emilie, Erica and Sarah in the Ladies Section. The sermon was given by the daughter of the French consul, Following the service, the congregation went downstairs to Kiddush where they were welcomed by Hilary Rifkind who commented on the expertise of the youth and the pleasure they obviously received from their duties as well as that given the community.

Thereafter the congregation sat down to a first class lunch organised by Hilary, Jackie Taylor and Doreen Bowman. Rabbi



Rose complimented the youngsters and praised their teachers and parents for their involvement. After lunch a most interesting and humorous address was given by Clive Lawton, Executive Director of Limmud. He compared living in Biblical days with being Jewish in the non-Jewish world of today. Special emphasis was made on youth and the influence of the Synagogue and the home.

LODGE SOLOMON

The monthly meeting of Lodge Solomon on 18 February coincided with the 91st birthday of Alec Rubenstein and the Master, Douglas Thomson, paid tribute to Alec's tremendous service to Freemasonry over many years. Having been Master of the Lodge on an unprecedented five times, Alec recently vacated the office of Secretary that he held for a considerable period and is now Treasurer. He was given a presentation by the Master and a bouquet for his wife Pearl before the meeting tunefully regaled him with the strains of 'Happy Birthday'.

WIZO FILM

The Edward and Myrella Green home was the setting for a WIZO social on 24 February when "Watermarks" a film depicting the Hakoah Vienna Swimming Club was shown. This organisation was set up in the early 1930s in Vienna by the Jewish community after they were denied participation in sporting activities by the Nazi regime. Special guest, Anne Marie Pisker, one of the originators of the scheme answered questions from the small but interested audience. Sylvia Donne introduced the event. Thank you Edward and helpers for the sumptuous tea £320 was raised for WIZO.

COMMUNITY CENTRE FILM

An audience of 50 saw the film "Left Luggage" starring Topol and Miriam Margolyes in the Community Centre on 16 March. (An analysis and synopsis by Judy Sischy can be seen in the Review section) The audience enjoyed a buffet of baked potatoes, ice cream, coffee and inevitably for a film show, pop corn. Thanks goes to hard working Community Centre members Joyce Sperber, Lesley Danzig and Doreen Bowman for a most successful and interesting evening, which raised almost £400. Such evenings deserve to be repeated.

PURIM: Dinner, Misholach Meont, fancy dress

A gratifying number turned up for the Purim Dinner on 21 March when Hilary Rifkind welcomed over 90 people, including a number of visitors, to the event. After the Service in the Synagogue, the congregation went downstairs for dinner where Hilary commented on Rabbi Rose's return from holiday in New Zealand and the fact that today was his birthday. Rabbi Rose thanked everyone for their good wishes and stated that Purim was an occasion for 'being together' which he said was certainly the situation in the Edinburgh community.



LUNCHEON CLUB REVUE

A larger than usual group attended the Luncheon Club on 27 March, not only drawn to the gastronomic feast on offer but by the entertainment served by Jonathan Kish and his "Vintage Follies". A dedicated cast of over 50 enthusiasts (age not number) presented sketches and musical items that included a sexy make believe Marlene Dietrich, triplets and a couple of swells who nostalgically contributed well-known numbers. Our own Jonathan featured in sketches and the Follies gave the members a pleasant half hour to digest their lunch and to ponder why a West End booking had been denied them. David Goldberg thanked everyone for all their efforts.



YOM HA SHOAH

A large gathering commemorated the annual service in Princes Street Peace Garden on 1 May. They were honoured by the presence of representatives of Edinburgh City Council, Lord Provost George Grubb, Councillor Eric Milligan, Councillor Iain Whyte and Councillor Alison Johnstone. Raymond Taylor, Vice-Chairman of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, welcomed everyone and commented on the twelve years whist had passed since the late Dr. Nate Oppenheim, former President, and the City Council co-operated at Nate's instigation to dedicate a Memorial Stone in the Garden. He expressed delight at the City, representation this evening. Lord Provost, George Grubb replied that he and his colleagues were very pleased to join the community at the service. He recalled that, as a young boy at the end of the war, he had seen cinema newsreels of the liberation of concentration camps such as Belsen and the evils of the Nazi regime. They had left strong impressions which had remained with him. He added that one must never forget these terrible events. A Memorial Candle was lit by Sarah-Beth Neville after which a minute's silence was observed. Rabbi David Rose and Mr. David Goldberg conducted the service in Hebrew and English reciting Yizkor, El Malei Rachamim and ending with Kaddish.

YOM HAZIKARON AND YOM HA'ATZMAUT

On the evening of Wednesday 7th May Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation held their annual services in the Synagogue for Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut.

A celebration of Israel's 60th birthday followed in the Community Centre, members enjoying an Israeli-style buffet supper, provided by the Shul Events Committee.

This was followed by entertainment from Suzanne Kay who had travelled from Manchester to perform a selection of songs, ending with everyone joining her in the singing of Hatikvah.



Society Reports

WIZO

Diary Report of the WIZO trip to Israel

Sylvia Donne



D-Day, 23rd March! After numerous emails between London, Tel Aviv and Edinburgh, an intrepid band of twelve set off on a WIZO mission with a difference – and the difference? Well for a start four gentlemen accompanied eight ladies, just five of whom were members of Edinburgh WIZO. Four of the group were visiting Israel for the first time. Worries of snow falling at London airport melted away and, after the normal El Al security checks, fast tracking and a bit of retail therapy, we were up and away! A recent article in the Jewish Telegraph by Selwyn Dorfman was so accurate! So many hatboxes and all belonging to men! Of the planned five-night stay three days were allotted to WIZO visits and one to retail therapy, family and friends.

MONDAY

8.30am.....we boarded the coach and collected WIZO UK Chairman, Lorraine Warren, other executive members and Tel Aviv staff at WIZO House. Nose to tail and alongside the renowned Kamikaze Israeli drivers, we headed North to the Nahalal Village. One of the local staff, Siddur in hand, solemnly began to read a prayer for travel on the road. Freak weather conditions producing high temperatures were reinforced when we moved from freezing to 35°C in the shade in just 24 hours.

WIZO Hanna Maisel Shelat Youth Village was built and sponsored by Canadian Hadassa WIZO in 1923 as the first Agricultural College for women. While animals still feature in the complex a large modern School has been built for local children, bussed in daily. Our visit coincided with the dedication ceremony of the Susie Bradfield Dormitory. The neglected building Kate and I visited two years ago had undergone complete refurbishment and we (rent-a-mob) were invited guests for its reopening by the Bradfield family. Following a delicious lunch, we heard guest speakers including General Dayan. Our first day ended with an evening meal at 'Mantaray' by the beach.

TUESDAY

.....north to The Rainbow House Project in Haifa, accompanied by Lili Peyser, Chairperson of the Tourist department of World WIZO. Here, women of all backgrounds, including Arabs and Russians, gain confidence while training to be self-sufficient and to help within their own communities. During an enjoyable visit to the Bahai Gardens which so dominate the city landscape, a member of the faith gave us a conducted tour down the 600 steps, past lush green lawns and overwhelmingly colourful flowerbeds; not a weed in sight. Before lunch we met the Director of Ahuzat Yeladim School which sprawls over 4 acres and currently has 85 boarders. Court order or Community Welfare Services refers teenagers of both sexes. 24-hour a day commitment is given. Youngsters from all over the country aged 12 – 18, most of who have behavioural, emotional and psychiatric problems, receive therapeutic and post-hospitalisation, residential care. The committed staff of 110 provides life-enriching activities daily.

Back in Tel Aviv we headed off in taxis to dine in town. Later, comparing the cost of our trips was most entertaining!

WEDNESDAY

.....Jerusalem day. Due to heavy traffic, our visit to the Rebecca Sief Family Centre (The Jerusalem baby Home) was shortened. The tour, given by our guide, Miriam Friedel, and manager Koby Hillel included the upgraded kitchens (donated by the Leek and Salmon families!) for training young chefs. The school provides vocational courses (hairdressing and art) for less academic students.

Following a visit to Yad Vashem, Miriam walked us through the Jewish quarter while we nibbled delicious bread dipped in a mixture of salt and rosemary. Lastly we could not leave Jerusalem without a visit to the Kotel, a fitting end to a very successful mission.

Hilary West writes the following postscript...

I am writing this as an "expat" who with my mum, Joyce, joined the Edinburgh WIZO group on their recent trip to Israel. As a "younger" member of the group, and a previous employee of WIZO in London, this trip exceeded all my expectations.

There was plenty of camaraderie amongst the group and what I enjoyed was spending time with people I have known all my life in Edinburgh and making new friends.

We had three very hectic days in Nahalal, Haifa and Jerusalem, visiting different WIZO projects. Each project was awe-inspiring in its own way.

But what I wish to emphasise is that WIZO is not just for the "older" woman – it is for all ages! The ladies in Edinburgh work

hard to keep the group going but without new faces and fresh blood, all their hard work from the last 50+ years will go by the wayside.

WIZO is a worthwhile cause – through fundraising in the UK, the projects in Israel thrive. What we, as a group found on our trip, was that the WIZO volunteers and workers in Israel are truly dedicated to their causes and projects.

Hilary West

Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

Sunday 13th January, 'The Jewish influence: what it has offered to the World'

Anthony Gilbert

Eric Milligan, Former Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and presently a City Councillor has been a long-standing friend of the Edinburgh Jewish Community, so it was a particular pleasure to have him come and talk to the Lit.



His talk was a celebration of the contribution of Jewish people to the feeling of well-being throughout the world. He said that he thought that when his talk was over, we should leave the synagogue with a spring in our step, with a good feeling about ourselves. He focussed in particular on the extraordinary prevalence of Jewish personae in the world of popular entertainment, in the film industry and in music, and he said that he thought that their efforts brought a ray of sunshine into all our lives. The talk, however, was not merely about personalities, but perhaps unsurprisingly in view of Eric's long career in politics, he also placed their contributions in a historical and social context. He remarked particularly on the efforts in the 1930's of American song-writers and word-smiths, many of them Jewish, to lift their country out of the gloom of depression through a whole sequence of fine musicals; also of the contribution of Jewish artists to the Edinburgh Festival in a very conscious attempt to create an international coming-together in the lean years following immediately after the end of the Second World War.

As President of the Edinburgh Jazz Festival, he was well placed to mention examples of Jewish musicians, including such distinguished people as Larry Adler, many of whom he had met through this capacity. Indeed his position as Lord Provost had enabled him, as a representative for the City of Edinburgh, to meet many celebrities and he recounted a number of anecdotes about such encounters, some of which he recounts in his own article elsewhere in this issue, as well as circulating some photos of these events, and even illustrating some of his points in song, occasionally aided and abetted by his audience.

Eric's talk encompassed both amusing nuggets and larger themes, and he unquestionably succeeded in putting a certain spring into our step that evening.

Sunday 24th February "Is it too late for justice? The strange history of prosecuting Nazi war criminals,"

Avery Meiksin

Prior to becoming Scotland's first woman rabbi, Rabbi Nancy Morris of the Glasgow Reform Synagogue studied law, working at a Canadian law firm and then in legal research after her graduation. In her talk "Is it too late for justice? The strange history of prosecuting Nazi war criminals," Rabbi Nancy



combined her passion for social justice with her legal acumen in a discussion of the speckled history of prosecuting war criminals. The Nuremberg Trials had set a precedent by not exempting government officials from the laws of crimes against humanity, but aside from some famous cases like Rudolf Hess, for whom Spandau Prison was kept open for 20 years just to keep him, successful prosecutions have been rare. The 1950s to the 1960s saw virtually no prosecutions of Nazi war criminals. Not until the US opened its Office of Special Investigations in the 1970s were prosecutions resumed. But even then, because of the lack of jurisdiction outside the countries in which the crimes were committed, the most severe punishment possible was deportation for the crime of lying on the immigration application.

A shift occurred in the late 1980s, when the US and Canada created the legal notion of "universal jurisdiction" for the special case of crimes against humanity. While an important legal advance in bringing war criminals to justice, successful prosecutions have been rare. In Canada, only three cases had been brought to trial. Two cases were dropped due to lack of evidence, and the other suspect was acquitted. Altogether, only 9 cases were even considered in Canada since the 1990s. Even Israel has not fared much better. Adolf Eichmann was Israel's sole successful conviction. Ivan Demjanjuk, who was suspected of being the notorious Ivan the Terrible Treblinka death camp guard, while first convicted in the 1980s, was later acquitted due to doubtful identity.

Successful prosecution and punishment of the culprits appears futile. When Simon Wiesenthal was once asked why he invested so much energy into hunting down Nazi war criminals, knowing how near hopeless a successful prosecution is, he said that after he's dead and confronted by one of the millions of anonymous and virtually forgotten victims of the Shoah, he could say he tried to do something to keep their memory alive. Does prosecuting war criminals achieve this aim? It hasn't been easy. But Rabbi Nancy suggested perhaps there's another way that should be pursued as well, the telling and retelling of their stories by responsible media.

Thursday 23rd March
“Yiddish Film: Between East and West”
– Barry Davis

Ellen Galford



Barry Davis—Yiddish teacher, actor, translator and Yiddish language consultant on Steven Spielberg’s film Schindler’s List—gave the final talk of the season at the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society on 23 March. In “Yiddish Film: Between East and West” he painted a richly detailed and wide-ranging picture of the Yiddish film industry, in Europe and in America, from the earliest silent films of the 1920s to those made up until the very brink of World War II.

Drawing on his own encyclopaedic knowledge and a fascinating collection of film clips, Davis discussed many of the influential directors and writers who produced these films, and explored the ways their subjects and styles reflected the preoccupations of their audiences. Soul-searing dramas, kitschy romantic comedies, affectionate and/or horrified backward looks to life in real or imaginary shtetls are far more than mere slices of celluloid nostalgia. They open a window into the minds, hearts, homes and, indeed, bedrooms, of European and recently-arrived American Jews in the first half of the 20th century. They reveal conflicts between tradition and modernity, struggles between individual aspirations and communal pressures, the lures and perils of immigration and assimilation, the debates—sometimes anguished, sometimes satirical—about what it means to be a Jew. Above all, they challenge and question many persistent stereotypes about the “lost world” of Ashkenazi Jewry before World War II. As well as looking at these broader cultural issues, Barry Davis also provided a rich supply of Yiddish showbiz gossip —without which no trip to movieland is ever complete.

Yiddish Film Festival

Lang ist der Weg

Heather Valencia

(Long is the Road) is a powerful film which deals with the theme of the Holocaust from a Jewish perspective. Made in the American Zone of Germany in 1947, it follows the fate of a Warsaw Jewish family: the father and mother are taken to Auschwitz, where the father perishes, while the son escapes from

the transport, manages, with the help of a Polish farmer, to join a partisan group, and survives the war. The second part of the film deals with the ultimately successful efforts of mother and son to find each other, searching throughout Poland and Germany. The film ends with a message of hope as the inhabitants of the Displaced Persons' Camp Landsberg, in Bavaria, plan to build a new life in the Land of Israel (preparing for it by working the land in kibbutzim which were in fact created on farms around Landsberg which had belonged to former Nazis)

The scriptwriter and main actor, Israel Becker, was himself a displaced person, and the film was made in studios in Munich and on location in the DP camp Landsberg; many roles were taken by refugees who were still actually living and waiting in the DP camp. So the story is indeed told, as we read in the film credits, by those who were themselves involved in the events it depicts, and the film vividly conveys this sense of immediacy.

The technique adopted is part documentary, part fictional drama. Scenes shot in the studios with the actors portraying the fictional Warsaw Jewish Yellin family are interspersed with narrative sections using documentary film footage – and this is done most convincingly, so that often actual footage of events is seamlessly fused with the scenes shot in the film studios. Realism is also achieved by the languages used in the film: all the characters speak their own language - German, Polish or Yiddish. In the fictional scenes, symbolism and dramatic lighting are used to powerful effect.

This was a most impressive and moving film, one of the last to use Yiddish as its main vehicle. It was thus a fitting film with which to end the Filmhouse season on the short, but extremely creative era of Yiddish cinema.

Yidl mitn Fidl

Ellen Galford

Yidl Mitn Fidl, directed by Polish-born American film-maker Joseph Green, starred the much-loved American-born Yiddish theatre and variety actress Molly Picon. It became a smash hit with audiences on both sides of the Atlantic—the biggest commercial success in the entire history of the Yiddish cinema. Filmed in Poland in 1936, it defied the gloom and gathering storm clouds of the era to create a ground-breaking, optimistic and unexpectedly sophisticated musical comedy about a hard-scrabbling band of wandering Jewish musicians performing in the streets of Polish shtetls and at a village wedding before arriving in Warsaw and hitting the big time. The lyrics to the songs - which instantly became part of the repertoire of actual klezmer musicians in Eastern Europe - were written by the celebrated Yiddish poet Itzik Manger. The filming, which brought together American and Polish technicians, included many scenes shot on location in actual Polish shtetls, as well as in Warsaw, using their Jewish inhabitants as extras and providing a unique record of places and faces about to disappear forever.

Tevey (1939)

Elaine Samuel

Tevey was directed by Maurice Schwartz, who also plays the title role and wrote the screen play. Schwartz had previously portrayed Tevey on stage and to much critical acclaim throughout USA and Europe in the 1920s and 30s. So he knew he was onto a winner when he acquired the film rights to Tevey from the estate of Sholem Aleychem.

Together with a group of friends, Schwartz set up the Maymon Film Company in 1939 – hoping that it would be first of many Yiddish films produced by the company. It was the first and also the last. The reviews were good and the film did well commercially. The timing (1939) was less good.

The film was shot at Underhill Farm, just east of Jericho, (Jericho, Long Island, that is). Schwartz felt that the topography of the area was similar to that area of West Ukraine depicted by Sholem Aleychem in much of his work – a region in which Schwartz himself was born just 50 years beforehand. So Schwartz doesn't have to mimic the dialect of Yiddish spoken there...he is a natural. After six weeks of stage rehearsal, the filming itself took just 21 days.

Most of the cast were members of Schwartz’s Yiddish Art Theatre. Schwartz’s Yiddish Art Theatre played the classics and abhorred ‘shund’. It was always a ‘class’ act – though never as radical in style or substance as some of the other Yiddish ‘art’ theatres of the day. And Schwartz is a fine actor. Parenthetically, my grandfather’s brother ran away from his yeshiva to join Schwartz’s Yiddish Art Theatre, changing his name to Michael Gibson in the meantime. He was re-united with the family during

the war, when Schwartz brought his Yiddish Art Theatre to play Yoshe Kalb in London.

Tevey was adapted from Sholem Aleichem’s own dramatisation of one of his Tevey stories, written over a period of 20 years from 1895 until his death in 1916. They have been collected and translated into English and can be easily obtained. Just google! Sholem Aleichem is the pseudonym and persona adopted in 1883 by Rabinowitz. The stories are written from the perspective of Tevey – and as if he, Tevey the Milkman, is telling Sholem Aleichem a story or writing him a letter. Sometimes there appears to have been seven daughters, sometimes six.

As the years between 1895 and 1916 roll on, Sholem Aleichem’s Tevey stories become progressively darker. Tseitl marries Motl the tailor – her own choice. Hodl runs off with a revolutionary, but he’s a Jew! Chava marries out. It’s no wonder that Shprintse (who commits suicide) and Beilke (who sells her father down the river) don’t get to feature in Fiddler on the Roof.

All of the movies that have been made around the Tevey stories put their own gloss on them, according to the times. In the Israeli production of the 1960s, Chava realises that she is hated by her husband’s people and makes aliya. In Fiddler on the Roof, Tevey is distraught over Chava’s desertion but mumbles to Chava “Go in peace” as he is packing up to leave Anatevka forever. It’s a fitting Hollywood ending. In the original story, Tevey ask Sholem Aleichem what he would do if his daughter had married out, but we never hear the answer. So what happens in Maurice Schwartz’s Tevey? What happens to Chava? I won’t tell you now except to say that it is 1939. Watch the film and you will find out.

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Observer Food Awards 2007 Best Producer

Reviews

Days Bygone by Rachel Shihor (The Cahiers Series)
Janet Mundy



“Days Bygone” is one of a series of “cahiers” (Hutchinson’s Encyclopaedia defines a cahier as “an artist’s working notes or drawings”) published by Sylph Editions and the American University of Paris. It is made up of four excerpts from Rachel Shihor’s second novel “Yankinton”, narrated by a woman reminiscing on her youth in Tel Aviv in the 1940s and 50s. In keeping with the definition above, “Days Bygone” is a beautifully designed volume, illustrated by David Hendler. The title of each excerpt is given in Hebrew, in a large calligraphic typeface, as a reminder that each story has been translated.

There is an immediate poetic quality to the first excerpt, “My aunt, my father’s sister, chose a monkey”. The phrase “my aunt, my father’s sister” is repeated several times in the story and while it may seem to indicate a closeness between the aunt and the father, here it emphasises subversiveness, as the aunt undermines the father’s authority to take his children to the zoo to fulfil their desire to be close to animals, banned in the home. However, the phrase also suggests affection between the girl and her paternal aunt, as well as forgiveness for the aunt’s irresponsible behaviour that leads towards a disaster for the chosen monkey.

The second excerpt, “From time to time, my parents would go to the cinema”, starts by relating the usual routine of the parents’ evening out, and the left-at-home daughters’ quiet rituals. However, on the evening in question, the parents had misled the daughters, and had in fact gone out in futile pursuit of a bogus plumber, and return home sad and unfulfilled. The narrator remembers the incident as a metaphor for their lives.

The third, very short, excerpt shows that the narrator is writing about an observant Jewish home, one where “the only thing left for us to do was to wait for three

stars to appear in the sky before the electric bulbs began to glow”. Like all the excerpts, it is poetic and evocative, in this case of the boredom experienced by children waiting for Shabbat, and therefore the inactivity, to pass.

The last excerpt views old age through the eyes of a child, and a parent’s hiding of illness and death to protect “childhood as a child’s period of life”.

After reading these quiet, exquisite excerpts, it was no surprise to me to discover that the author is a philosopher, as they all have a contemplative air – one can imagine the young girl looking on at the small adventures experienced by her elders and analysing them many years later from an adult viewpoint.

There is a fascinating essay by the translator, Ornan Rotem, on the technicalities of translating these texts. He describes Shihor’s as a “language of opposites” and alludes to the difficulty of maintaining the essence of her prose when translating into English, a language with such a different syntax and history from Hebrew. He illustrates this by describing the awkwardness of the phrase “my aunt, my father’s sister” in English, unlike the more elegant *dotati achot-avi* in Hebrew, and he takes his lead from a similar phrase translated in the King James Version of the Bible. Other equally awkward details of the translator’s processes are given. On this evidence, Rotem has done justice to Shihor’s original text, and it is to be hoped that more of her work will be translated for English language readers to enjoy.

Left Luggage (1998)

Judith Sischy

‘A beautiful, warm picture filled with compassion and humanity, making understandable even the behaviour of the pathetic anti-Semite superintendent.’

Set in Antwerp, 1972, the central character in the film is Chaya, played by Laura Fraser, the daughter of parents who had survived but lost most of their family in the Holocaust. The central story is how Chaya takes a job as a nanny to a strictly observant Hassidic family, how her relationship with the family develops, especially with one of the children,

and how this experience affects her relationship with her own parents.

While escaping from the Nazis during the war, Chaya’s father buried two suitcases containing precious possessions at a spot in Antwerp that he is determined to find on his return. He spends fruitless hours searching the map and endlessly turning over the soil of Antwerp to trace his left luggage, in the hope perhaps of rediscovering his past. His wife finds more comfort in weaving blankets, making chicken soup and baking cakes. We understand why Chaya pays only occasional visits to her parents and has adopted a modern, liberal, secular approach to life.

The main characters in the film are Chaya, an attractive young girl of 20, studying philosophy and needing a job to pay the rent; her parents; her parents’ neighbours including an elderly, wise religious Jew, played by Chaim Topol, who provides Chaya with Jewish knowledge and emotional support; the Hassidic mother with five children ever fearful of her husband’s reactions; the husband, the indisputable authority in the family with his own tragic memories; the anti-Semitic superintendent of the block where the Hassidic family lives and Simcha the silent four-year old who only starts to talk when his speech is unlocked by Chaya’s love.

The film sets out to explore the tensions between liberals and traditionalists, the secular and the religious, anti-Semitism and the legacy of the Holocaust. We watch Chaya mature as her prejudices towards the Hassidic community melt and her commitment to the new family grows. Despite the tragedy that befalls the four year old with whom Chaya develops a special bond, we are left with a message of love, tolerance, courage and understanding.

Too schmaltzy? It was probably too sentimental and predictable for some but it was a moving, story that made us laugh, cry and reflect. By a strange coincidence, Laura Fraser was featured in the Sunday Herald the very day we saw the film, but perhaps not surprisingly, Left Luggage was not mentioned as one of her major achievements. Never mind, preceded by supper, it was a very pleasant way to spend an evening. Thanks to all involved.

Obituaries

Joseph Been

1916 – 2007



It was Martin who said so eloquently at Suzi’s funeral that in this life, there are those who give and those who take. Joe was undoubtedly a giver. He gave of himself unstintingly and unselfishly to his family, his friends and to his patients. He only wished to get well in order to help Clarice with the many problems their lovely family still face. I remember him as a wise, gentle and compassionate man, who almost never got angry, but his disposition was such that you would not wish to behave in a way that would make him angry.

Joe was one of seven siblings. He had five brothers and a sister. He and Clarice were at the centre of the Been Mafioso in Rustenburg, where Joe had established himself as a highly respected and much loved doctor and member of the general community. Yet when Clarice’s political activities were such that she felt the family had to leave the evils of Apartheid, Joe willingly gave up the security of his large family and his established position in Rustenburg.

They came to Edinburgh where they knew no-one save my own parents who in turn did not remain there very long. Joe and Clarice were on their own with four young children to support and Joe had to retrain and re-qualify. Typically he never complained. He simply just got on with it. He did re-qualify and soon established himself as a valued member of the Edinburgh medical fraternity.

His patients, of whom I was one, adored him. I have an abiding memory of Joe (unlike today’s GPs) doing night calls and going out in the middle of winter, late at night, with clothes over his pyjamas.

Not only did his patients bear him goodwill, but so did his partners. I recall that on his retirement, when Joe asked me

to negotiate his exit from the partnership, the solicitor for the remaining partners saying to me at the initial meeting “the partners love Joe and want to see him right – tell me what Joe wants and subject to accountancy advice he can have it”. Within a day we had a deal – there was no second meeting. I had suggested to Joe that we might try to squeeze a little more, but he stopped me, saying that he wished to retain the friendship of the partners and only wanted what was fair. That was Joe always courteous, never self-seeking.

While today is a day of great sadness, we should also be grateful for the long life of Uncle Joe. Typically, he very quietly defeated the biblical three score and ten by slipping in an extra score. We should also be grateful for the way in which he enriched the lives of all who knew him.

Central to Joe’s life was the love of his family. I mentioned earlier his large family in South Africa and the pain he must have felt on being separated from them on being isolated in Edinburgh. However, in the fullness of time and with Clarice, their four children, ten grandchildren and now two great-grandchildren, he replicated the warm and loving cocoon that had been his family of origin. He accepted Suzi’s premature passing with great fortitude despite the pain, which I know – I too have lost a daughter – must have been excruciating.

His beloved Clarice, his darling wife of sixty years, was his centre of gravity. What a wonderful marriage! They complemented each other and simply adored each other throughout the entire span of their marriage. But it went beyond the immediate family. I as a nephew cannot express adequately my thanks for the support and love I received from both Joe and Clarice in Edinburgh some 40 years ago and in London these past 18 months or so.

Joe was a truly unique human being. A literate doctor who actually completed the Times crossword even until the very end. Always inquisitive, always humane. A wonderful husband, father, grandfather, friend and healer.

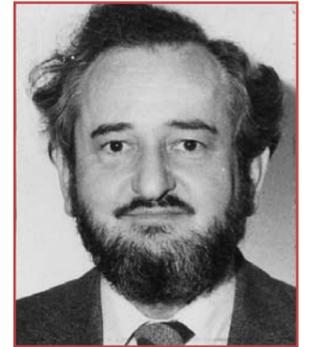
Shalom Chaver Sheli

Rest in peace.

Mark Sischy

Philip Nathan Cowen

BSc, PhD, MBBS, FRC Path



Philip aged 81 was the younger son of Louis and Mary Cowen, Tailors. He attended Gillespie’s and the Royal High School.

He attained a BSc in Edinburgh and later qualified as a doctor in Newcastle, researching into cancer. He received his PhD at London University.

In 1963, he was employed as a consultant pathologist and senior lecturer at Leeds University and was a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists. Even in his retirement he was well known in his profession, working locally at Bath and Harrogate hospitals. His book on his speciality was translated into both German and Swedish.

His hobbies included playing bridge at which he was particularly skilled and was known to play rubbers between giving lectures. Philip was a good musician and played a clarinet, flute and recorder and was a member of a chamber quartet and orchestra around Wetherby. His photographic interests led him to win a medal at Leeds Photographic Society for the best print in the show.

Philip will be sadly missed by his ever loving wife Diana.

Leonard Berger

Allan Gillies Foreman 1918 – 2008



Allan Gillies Foreman was born and bred in Edinburgh, the youngest child and adored only son of Alec and Fanny Foreman. Alec, a refugee from the Tsarist pogroms of the 1890's, was eternally grateful for that asylum and wholeheartedly embraced Scotland and 'Scottishness'. Though never a very convincing Scot himself, he was determined that his only son would be unmistakably, an Edinburgh gentleman. Accordingly, as a child Allan sat for a studio portrait duly arrayed in his kilt and beautifully tailored jacket, (hand made by Alec) studied the violin, retaining from this a life-long love and wide knowledge of music, was educated privately at George Heriot's and graduated from Edinburgh University Medical School towards the end of World War II.

The three constants in Allan's life were his work and identity as a physician, his life long companion, Ted Stone, and his family.

Despite his Edinburgh upbringing and training Allan spent his working life in the North of England, mainly the North East. He began his career in teaching units in Birmingham, Manchester and Middlesborough. He then moved to the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle for two years and, after gaining his consultancy, to the Tynemouth Victoria Jubilee Infirmary, where he remained for twenty one years until his retirement when he was sixty years old.

Allan's chosen field of medicine was surgery, a choice he never lived to regret. He was very proud when he became an FRCS in 1960 and throughout his life took great delight in being able to demonstrate the skill and precision which made him a successful surgeon and teacher. A strict disciplinarian, both with himself and others, Allan was something of a 'Sir Launcelot Spratt' figure (as played by James Robertson Justice in the films based on Richard Gordon's 'Doctor'

books). Though a tongue lashing from Allan was certainly something to be dreaded by an unpunctual junior or less than spotless nurse, no one was in any doubt that it was only ever unleashed on behalf of the patients' welfare. Unlike these parlous times, no patient under his care was in any danger of catching a hospital based infection. Despite his somewhat autocratic manner, Allan was good company. He had an earthy, at times startlingly scatological sense of humour that endeared him both to his team and his patients. That he cared wholeheartedly for his patients and was dedicated to restoring them to health was attested to by the many written tributes he received when he retired, from the patients themselves, from the members of his team, ambulance drivers, his secretary, even from the Chief Superintendent of North Tyneside Police Force, who wrote, ".....Your manner, your ability and your judgement give confidence to your patients and this is a view that is shared by numerous persons in the area....I am most sincerely sorry that you are leaving."

Those who worked most closely with him such as his secretary echoed these sentiments, "I shall remember you with pride, your principles, your very high standards, your wonderful surgical artistry and your teaching and shall sorely miss the fun we've had over the years ... though our purpose was serious."

Even in the last year of his life, suffering with advanced Alzheimer's, Allan never lost that sense of himself as a doctor, carrying out his daily round in the care home, enquiring into the progress of his fellow residents.

For over fifty years Allan enjoyed a happy and fulfilled life with his devoted companion, Ted Stone. He met Ted at the R.V.I. in the mid 1950's and Ted became the beloved brother he never had, even giving up his job to look after Allan's parents when they were unable to look after themselves. When Allan retired in 1979, he and Ted moved to Harrogate where they enjoyed a life of relative leisure. He did some locum work in Stevenage during the first two years but when they asked him to stay on permanently, he realised that this was not how he had planned to spend his retirement. In 1981 Allan and Ted went to live in Florida, USA.

They remained for twelve years, returning only for brief trips home. Though he loved his life in Florida, family ties were too strong for Allan to stay away permanently. He deeply missed his surviving sisters, Nancy and Ruby, and their various offspring. When he and Ted returned they settled for good, in Newcastle and North Shields, near Nancy.

Despite being in their seventies, Allan and Ted were still sufficiently vigorous to enjoy an active, cultural existence for the next fourteen years. Always keen theatregoers, they became 'Friends of the Theatre Royal' in Newcastle, went to the ballet at the Sunderland Empire, attended Shakespeare seasons at Harrogate and came to London for openings of West End productions. They went regularly to the cinema and walked everywhere, eschewing the car whenever possible.

The last two years of Allan's life were blighted by Alzheimer's but at no time, even at the height of his dementia, did he ever forget what he owed to Ted, whom he habitually addressed as his dear brother, or to his parents, whom he repeatedly declared were 'the best parents in the world'. They were both a constant theme throughout his last illness.

It is very fitting that Allan has finally come back 'home' to Edinburgh, to the city of his birth, the city which formed him, to be buried with his parents and two sisters (Dinah and Ruby).

Diane Bindman (Niece)

NB. With regard to the photograph, his niece Diane explains "for me the past has more resonance and is more moving and I like the image of Uncle Allan at the beginning of his life rather than at the end or in the middle."

Jessie Franklin 1921 – December 2007

Jessie had a noble character and a beautiful and honourable appearance.

She was linked emotionally and spiritually to Judaism and to the Jewish way of life.

She was married to Mr. Sonny Franklin who passed away in 1975. During these thirty-two years she was living on

her own, but she was never alone. She was surrounded by her many friends, maintaining a close relationship with them all, particularly with her late sister in law, Miss Betty Franklin, of blessed memory, and with the extended Glass family. She kept in regular touch with all of those in her circle of close friends in the Jewish Community. She was an active charming woman, and never gave the impression of being a widow. She was proud of her Jewish associations and at every possible opportunity would visit her husband's grave insisting on reciting the Jewish prayer for the dead, "El-Malei-Rachamim".

Her generosity shone from her face. Her presence represented kindness and love to any one who had the privilege of being in her company. It was in her nature to be caring and desirous to be of help to all, in particular to those who were in special need. She never missed making charitable donations in general, and additionally gave generously to religious institutions, especially to Jewish causes. One could surely say that Jessie Franklin was a woman of worth who was far beyond rubies.

She will be missed by us all and by everyone who knew her.

May her soul be bound up in the bond of life. May The Lord be her heritage. May she rest in peace.

Rabbi Shalom Shapira

Steve Engleman

10th October 1942
– 18th February 2008



Dr Steve Engleman has died aged 65. He was a distinguished health economist who lectured in the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh before working as an independent consultant for a wide range

of public organisations in Scotland and Europe.

Born in Brooklyn, New York on 10th October 1942 to Ashkenazi parents, as a child, Steve took religious study and academic achievement seriously. His natural promise in mathematical skills won him a place at the elite but public Brooklyn Technical High School, and from there he studied Economics at Cornell University and later took up post-graduate studies in this subject at the University of California, Berkley.

Steve had strong socialist commitments and in Berkeley he combined his post-graduate studies in Labour Economics with recruitment and representation for trade-union organisations, in particular with lumberjacks working in the Northwest of the USA and British Columbia. It was through trade-union activities that he met his wife, Kathie in 1967, with whom he enjoyed a devoted 41-year relationship until his death.

Steve completed his PhD at Berkeley in 1971, at a time when his radical politics were not acceptable to the establishment. To continue his academic career and fulfil his and Kathie's interest in travel and adventure, Steve took up a temporary 2-year lectureship in the Dept of Political Economy at the University of Glasgow in 1971. This temporary post would mark the start of the permanent immigration to Scotland for Steve and his family.

Steve and Kathie's first child, Daniel Seth, died as a young baby in 1975, but Hannah Margaret's birth in 1977 permitted Steve to become an adoring father who took great pride in Hannah's achievements as well as those of Heather, Kathie's elder daughter.

Steve's academic interests began to move from industrial relations to health service issues and in 1978 he moved to the Dept of Community Medicine (Usher Institute) in Edinburgh. The family settled in Morningside.

Steve's work at the Usher Institute included teaching economics to doctors on the Master of Public Health programme. Former students speak highly of his abilities as a teacher and his accessibility and willingness to engage

supportively with them. Former colleagues also found him stimulating and valued his collaborative and supportive style of working.

Steve's role at the Usher Institute also included management consultancy to Lothian Health Board. Health Economics was at that time a relatively new field and Steve soon established himself as someone who could offer useful insights into public health planning and management issues from the perspective of an economist. He acted at various times as a Specialist Adviser to the House of Commons Select Committees on Social Services, Health and Scottish Affairs and the European Office of the World Health Organisation and other health care agencies in Europe.

Steve's sabbatical term at the University of Padova's Institute of Public Hygiene in 1986 provided a warm introduction to Italian culture for his family and laid the basis for enduring friendships and many memorable holidays in Italy.

In 1988, Steve found his consultancy skills in increasing demand and took the decision to leave university teaching and become an independent consultant. His work was always focused on the objectives of public rather than private agencies and he acted as an adviser to the Scottish Blood Transfusion Service and consultant to Audit Scotland and the Social Work Services Inspectorate. More recently he was a member of The Health Technology Board for Scotland. Addressing complex issues of human resources and health care delivery, he was respected by colleagues for his ability to offer analysis and to provide effective help and support to the organisations and the people within them.

Steve also found time for a wide range of other activities. He had since his youth an abiding enjoyment of international folk dancing, particularly Balkan and Greek. He also enjoyed horse-racing, not only visiting race meetings around Scotland but also diligently studying form and employing his mathematical acumen to the extent that he turned a small profit. (As an economist, he would have to admit, however, that his hourly rate for this pursuit was not taken into account in his careful betting-record spreadsheet.)

Although Steve's later years were plagued by ill-health, his determination and positive outlook enabled him to continue his many activities. He was a haemodialysis patient for several years following the diagnosis of kidney cancer in 1997, receiving a successful kidney transplant in 2001. He served for some time on the committee of the South East Scotland Kidney Patients' Association.

Steve was an enthusiastic participant in the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society and had been serving as its Secretary at the time of his death. His ties to his Jewish roots were strengthened through this contact and reaffirmed by his decision to become part of the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community and to serve on its council.

Following surgery and radiotherapy for brain tumours in October 2007, Steve never fully regained his strength and was admitted to Marie Curie Fairmile Hospice two weeks before dying there on 18th February. His final days were free of pain and much enriched for his family and for him by visits from many friends from both within and outwith the Edinburgh Jewish community.

He was buried in the Dean Cemetery on 21st February 2008. His funeral was well attended from Sukkat Shalom, the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and beyond, and was conducted by Rabbi Mark Solomon. He is also survived by his grandson Joe (15) and granddaughter Catriona (11).

Kathie Engleman

Windows for Peace 'Edinburgh Summer School' July 2008

Judy Sischy

Thanks to donations from several Trusts and to the generosity of many individuals, sufficient funds have been raised to enable Windows to bring a group of young people, boys and girls aged 14 to 16, to Edinburgh for two weeks from 14 to 28 July.

I was fortunate to meet some of the girls when I was in Israel in April, pictured [below]. They are a delightful group of Jews, Christian and Moslems, mainly from Tel Aviv, Jaffa and Bethlehem and will be accompanied by the group leader, Rutie Atsmon, three adult facilitators and a translator to help with Hebrew, Arabic and English.

They have an intensive programme to follow for the summer school but will have some free time to explore Edinburgh, to meet some local young people and hopefully encounter some Harry Potter characters. There will be an exhibition and open day, details of which will be announced shortly.



Letters



Just minutes before the opening of the ceremony, the Convener of the Lunch Club approached me and loudly announced that my offer of sour cabbage would not be used in the Lunch Club because it could not be considered Kosher. I must have been visibly shocked because the Architect's wife kindly tried to comfort me. Thus I was obliged to explain to her what all that was about. She remarked, 'They should be grateful for your voluntary help'.

I would like to share the story of the sour cabbage with you too.

I was one of the volunteers at the Lunch Club in those days. There were often disputes about the menus. I suggested that we should make stuffed cabbage, since the members of the Lunch Club in those days were mostly of German and Lithuanian descent, and it would remind them of their past. For this dish one needed pickled sour cabbage, which was not available in those days. I suggested that I could prepare some, but it would take several days to ferment. It was agreed. I went to the Fruit Market and purchased 2 bags of white cabbage from the late Mr. Glass and then I went to the hardware shop to purchase a big plastic barrel and a large knife. From the corner shop I had to buy several bags of salt. I prepared and pickled the cabbage the way I had learnt it from my mother who was frum.

Before the opening ceremony of the New Community Centre, I mentioned to the convener that the cabbage was ready and that we would have to order the mince from Joe Lurie who was the Jewish butcher in Edinburgh. When I asked some members of the committee about the sudden change of heart they gave me two different reasons. The first was that I might have used the knife for something other than the slicing of the cabbage and the second reason was that all the food that was consumed had to be prepared in the new kitchen.

I certainly learned a few things about the changing rules and regulations of the Salisbury Road synagogue that day.

Marianne Laszlo

Thank you

"I should like to thank the many members of the Community for their kind visits, cards and phone-calls during my long spell in hospital and for which I am truly appreciative. I should also like to thank Rabbi Rose and the Cheder children for sending me 'Mishloach Menot' for Purim."

Rose Orgel

Thank you

We would like to express our appreciation for the wonderful support of the Edinburgh Congregation, both collective and individual during our recent bereavement.

Micheline, David and Duncan Brannan.

Sport

Benjamin Griffin – Rugby star

In front of 5500 spectators at Murrayfield Rugby Stadium, his school team from George Watson's College won the 2008 Under-15 Scottish Rugby Championship last weekend (weekend of Friday 25/1/08), beating George Heriot's School 7 – 5. Benjamin scored the winning try for his team, and was voted 'Man of the Match' by the Scottish Internationalist judge watching the game.

Dear Editor

I was reading Myer Cowen, Hon. Life President's article in the Edinburgh Star about the consecration of the Synagogue in March 1981. That was a day to be remembered. Indeed it was an exceptional day. The synagogue was absolutely packed. Not a vacant seat was to be had.

Rabbi Weinberg and all the Edinburgh city's dignitaries and representatives of other faith from the City were present. Late Cardinal Gray in his Red Robe represented the Roman Catholic Church, and the nuns, our neighbours from the Convent next-door, were there too. I was seated on the right side of the ladies gallery beside the wife of Architect who had been involved in the project.

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Congratulations

Hazel Cosgrove who was honoured with the Scott & Co Lifetime Achievement Award at the Cuthbert Scottish Legal Awards in Glasgow on Friday 29th February.

Lilia and Lyki, and big sister **Adamobi Zipporah** on the birth of their son **Ariel Kwochaka Anton Amobi**.



James Hyams for being picked for the GB Maccabi rugby team to play in Israel next summer.

Shirley and Peter Bennett on the birth of their twin granddaughters, **Farah and Jay**.

Sylvia and Bernard Dorfman on their 50th wedding anniversary.



Forthcoming Events

June

9 Monday
First Day of Shavuot

18 Wednesday
Synagogue AGM

July

20 Sunday
Fast of Tammuz

August

10 Sunday
Fast of Av

13 Wednesday
WIZO – traditional
afternoon tea

September

30 Tuesday
First Day Rosh Hashanah

There are no meetings of Lodge Solomon or the Literary Society during the summer months. These along with dates of future WIZO lunches to be confirmed in the next edition.

Senior Maccabi meets on Sunday evenings in members' homes. For further information contact James Hyams and Maurice Griffin.

The Luncheon Club meets every Tuesday and Thursday at 12.30pm.

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

Illustration on page 6. The Jewish Question: Gerard Silvain Collection, Paris.

Apologies for the following errata in issue 59.

The Tribe article written by Sarah Levy should have ended:

- 'The Shabbat atmosphere was great with lots of singing, dancing, davening and of course, eating. We also had many discussion groups about current affairs that were related to religion. Overall, Tribe was a great experience where we made some great friendships and learnt a lot about Judaism and Israel.'
- The picture of the gentleman in Lilian Heller's article was her father Eric Heller
- The daughter of Rabbi and Mrs Weinberg mentioned, was not Judith but Carol.
- The eulogy to Inge Margot Rose was written by her son Michael Rose

The Editor