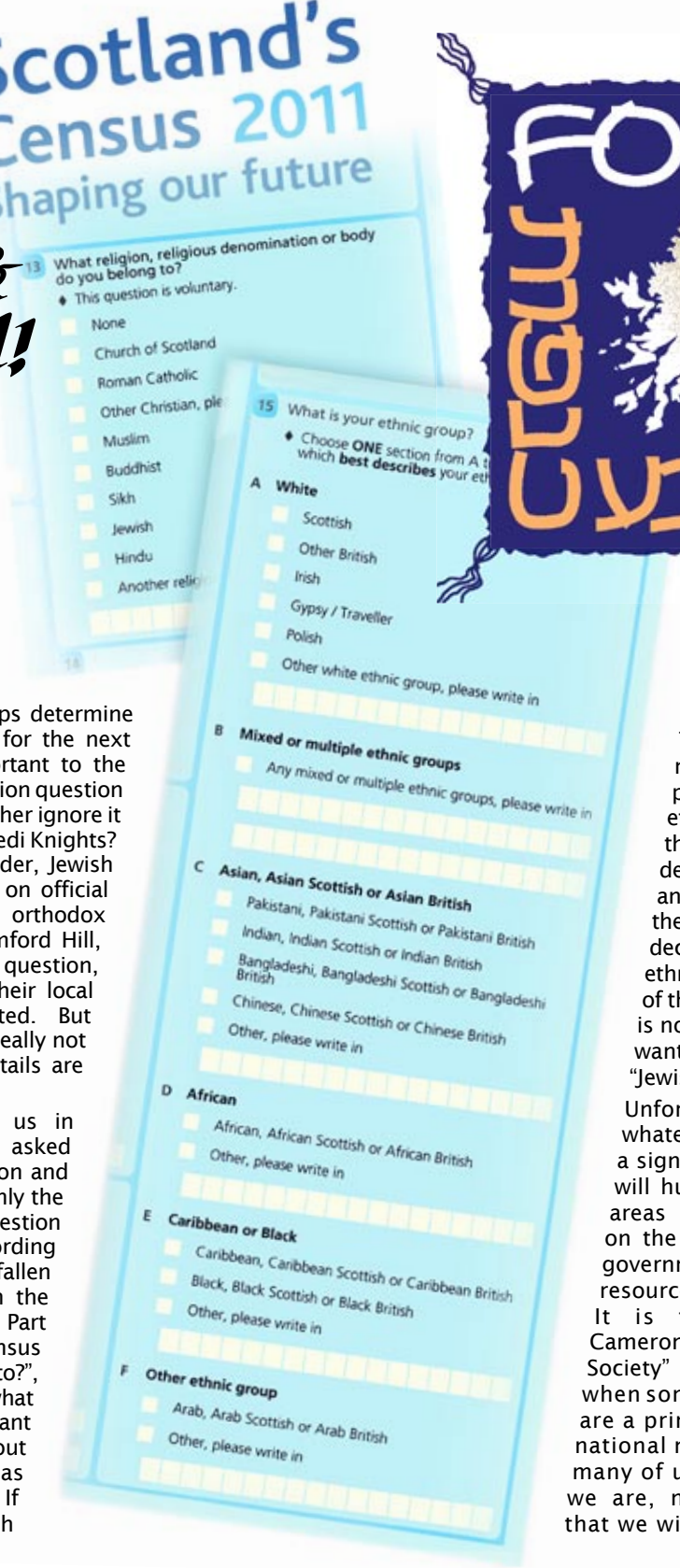
Stand Up & Be Counted!



This issue of Four Corners will probably reach your doormat around the same time as your 2011 census form. I hope I'm right about which is more interesting, but nonetheless, without doing ourselves down, I do urge you to treat the other with more seriousness!

The census matters because it helps determine how public resources are applied for the next decade. This is particularly important to the Jewish Community because the religion question is voluntary, so that many people either ignore it or treat it as a joke – remember the Jedi Knights? – and because many, especially older, Jewish people resist stating their religion on official documents. In the last census, orthodox communities in, for example, Stamford Hill, decided not to answer the religion question, and discovered that funding for their local welfare services suddenly evaporated. But concerns about confidentiality are really not an issue – by law, all personal details are sealed for 100 years.

It's all the more important for us in Scotland because the last census asked two questions, about current religion and upbringing, whereas this will ask only the first. Had there only been one question last time, the number of people recording any Jewish affiliation would have fallen from 8365 to 6448 (though even the higher figure is an underestimate). Part of the reason is that the Scottish census asks "What religion do you belong to?", (unlike the English, which asks "what is your religion?"), so it is important to realise that it is not asking about formal membership, such as paying a synagogue subscription. If you feel yourself part of the Jewish community, even in the broadest sense, please do tick "Jewish".

There is also an issue about the "ethnicity" question. The tick boxes offer a mix of terminology — pigmentation, geography, ethnicity, nationality – that the Registrar General himself described as "irrational", and despite the fact that the Supreme Court has just declared the Jews to be an ethnic group for the purposes of the Race Relations Act, there is no box for us. So you might want to consider writing in "Jewish" under "Other".

Unfortunately we know that whatever happens there will be a significant undercount, which will hurt the community in the areas where we are thinnest on the ground, at a time when government is looking to devolve resources to local authorities. It is troubling that David Cameron has identified his "Big Society" with "neighbourhoods", when some communities – and we are a prime example – consist of national networks. That's why as many of us as possible, wherever we are, need to be counted so that we will count.

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DESIGN & LAYOUT: JQS@JQSDESIGN.NET

Mitzvah Day

- Rabbi Rubin led a team of volunteers from Giffnock Synagogue who visited the charity "Mary's Meals" to help pack school bags for children in Malawi. Mary's Meals focuses on supporting education for children in poor countries by donating meals, school buildings and other resources.

- Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community teamed up with the local Hindu Community for Mitzvah Day and National Sewa Day which coincided this year. The Hindu concept of "sewa" has much in common with mitzvot. They helped clear vegetation and rubbish from Holyrood Park. Gillian Raab, Chair of ELJC said: "Despite terrible weather, it was a very interesting and fun experience. Over lunch we had a good time discussing the mutual problems of running small communities."

- Young people from many of the youth movements, came together to help out with cleaning up Glendufill and Sandymount cemeteries.

- Glasgow teenagers collected donations of food for the Cyrenian Project, a charity in Edinburgh that helps homeless people.

- Children at Edinburgh Synagogue Cheder baked challot and recorded Jewish songs for a local charity, Teens Plus, that provides one-to-one education for young adults with learning disabilities, including two young Jewish people. The challot will be eaten at the group's weekly Kiddush. Cheder teacher Merav Gardi said: "The children enjoyed the baking and singing and were really interested in how this would help other young people."

faith factor

RABBI DANNY BERGSON,
NEWTON MEARNS SYNAGOGUE, GLASGOW

When I first opened a letter from a national TV and radio promoter suggesting a music project I thought it was a practical joke. As a rabbi and musician I have always dreamed of combining my rabbanut with my music, but had no idea exactly how. So you can understand my utter disbelief. Could this be for real?! But soon I realised that I had been given a unique opportunity to join 'All Faiths', the world's first Multi-Faith group, which is signed to Warner Music!

The Times religion correspondent Ruth Gledhill is in the group as a Christian singer. There is a Buddhist Nun all the way from Nepal, a Hindu singer originally from India, a Sufi, a Catholic priest, and Protestant priest (a.k.a. the singing vicar) who is also the Chaplain to Derby County FC. And then me, the Orthodox Rabbi!

When we first met at the famous Angel studios (yes that's on the Angel of Islington, blue on the monopoly board), we were overflowing with excitement and enthusiasm. It soon became clear just how much time and effort had been put into bringing us together. We are a group of such diverse religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds. To find religious leaders who are also accomplished musicians and get them into the same room to work on the same project is nothing short of a miracle!

We live in a world where there is increasing tension and polarisation between religions. There are also a lot of misconceptions about religion in general that are increasingly portrayed by the media. I believe that projects like this send a strong message that we can be different and yet work together.

My favourite quotation is: "if the tongue is the pen of the mind then music is the quill of the soul". Music is a spiritual tool that the group believes will help break down barriers and provide a universal message of peace and hope.

Our first single was released before the New Year – *Faith Unites Us All* – and our full album will be released later this year.

You can follow our journey on:

http://ruthgledhill.blogspot.com/2011/01/faith-factor.html

L TO R: FATHER JOHN GLYNN, RABBI DANNY BERGSON, USTAD ALI HAFEEZ KHAN, RUTH GLEDHILL, ANNI CHOYING DROLMA, REV TONY LUKE, CHIRANJIB CHAKRABORTY

PHOTOS COURTESY CAMBRIDGE JONES

Burns Night

130 members of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community welcomed Nat Edwards, Director of the recently opened Robert Burns Birthplace and Museum in Ayrshire, to their joint Burns Supper, which included songs by Robert Burns sung both in Scots and Yiddish by Rabbi Mark Solomon.

BELOW: L TO R: HILARY RIFKIND (CHAIR, EHC), RABBI DAVID ROSE – IN KILT! (EHC), ROBERT BURNS (PHOTO), NAT EDWARDS, RABBI MARK SOLOMON (ELJC), AND GILLIAN RAAB (CHAIR, ELJC)

50 students from all over Scotland and Northern England enjoyed a fantastic J-Soc Burns Supper and ceilidh complete with kosher haggis, and raised over £400 for Chai Cancer Care by sponsoring student chaplain Rabbi Garry Wayland to wear a "skirt" for the evening.

ABOVE: RABBI ROSE (2ND FROM LEFT) AND RABBI GARRY WAYLAND (3RD FROM RIGHT) IN KILT AND TAM'O'SHANTER

... Meanwhile in Jerusalem ...

RIGHT, AN ANIMATED SCENE FROM THE 10TH ANNUAL JUDAEO-CALEDONIAN, POLITICALLY CORRECT, FIRST-DEGREE BURNS SUPPER, HOSTED BY THE WOLFE FAMILY IN JERUSALEM

The End of Debate?

ANTHONY SILKOFF

Debate is vital for society, which is why I was so disturbed to be kicked out of Glasgow Central Mosque in January. Three colleagues and I had been invited to a public event where George Galloway and others were speaking about the Israeli attack on Gaza. I'm no fan of Galloway. In fact, I'd prepared a sentence or two for the Q&A session; I was going to ask how he could justify handing cash to Hamas while they continue to violate the human rights of Israelis and Palestinians alike.

However the four of us never heard the speeches, let alone the Q&A. Within minutes of entering this huge public event run by Friends of al-Aqsa, we were approached and told that without a 'printed invitation' (such a thing did not exist) we would have to leave the premises.

ISRAELI ARAB DIPLOMAT ISHMAEL KHALDI MOBBED BY PROTESTERS AT EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY

We left without a fight, passing dozens of other members of the public entering the mosque, and feeling rather bewildered at what had just happened. It's possible that we were recognised and targeted as volunteers with the Palestinian-Israeli OneVoice Movement, whose biggest crime would be listening to the narrative of both sides. I suppose the person who kicked us out must have known we might come armed with dangerous facts and alternative opinions. End of debate.

When we previously hosted Israeli and Palestinian speakers at Glasgow University in 2008, supposedly pro-Palestinian activists staged a protest outside, urging people not to attend. The most recent occurrence of this phenomenon was at Edinburgh University, where J-Soc had invited Ishmael Khaldi, billed as 'Israel's First Bedouin Diplomat', to speak on 2 February. I couldn't get to Edinburgh that evening, but from the event's description ('Ishmael Khaldi will describe the many advantages minorities in Israel enjoy compared to the surrounding countries') and his bio (he's an advisor to Israel's ridiculous foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman), I could tell this wasn't a speaker I would've warmed to.

I suspected that the showcasing of Ishmael Khaldi ("An Arab!") by the Israeli government bears unfortunate similarities to the parading of Naturei Karta ("Jews!") by Iranian President Ahmedinejad. Indeed, I was hoping that Mr Khaldi might be questioned by opponents on how he feels about his boss, Mr Lieberman, advocating the forced signing of an anti-democratic loyalty pledge. I also wondered if Mr Khaldi agrees with his boss that Arab Knesset members who commemorate the Nakba should face execution. But no-one could witness this debate; as he started speaking, Mr Khaldi was surrounded by protesters chanting 'Israel is a racist state!', forcing the event to be abandoned. End of debate.

Just as Avigdor Lieberman wants to suppress discussion of Israel's history, those crushing debate in Scotland hope to suppress dissent from their narrative of the conflict. If Khaldi was going to defend the indefensible, make a fool of him with tough questions, not inane chants. As for the continued targeting of OneVoice, I take comfort knowing that we peace activists are seen as such a threat to the polarised hegemony.

TO READ THE COMPLETE ARTICLE SEE HTTP://WWW.SCOTTISHREVIEW.NET/ANTHONYSILKOFF83.SHTML

JEWISH WOMEN'S AID

NAOMI DICKSON,
JWA COMMUNITY AWARENESS CO-ORDINATOR

'My husband and I married each other because we shared an outlook on life and family, and we had 6 happy years together. But he changed after his mother died. He became very self-obsessed, and controlling of me and our children. I was a strong, confident woman, but he broke me, and it's taken two and a half years to put myself back together. I think what got me through was the belief that I would survive. Jewish Women's Aid helped me to believe that.'

This is the beginning of Sarah's story – a story with a beginning that many women will relate to, and an ending which we at Jewish Women's Aid are very familiar with.

A Jewish home is traditionally seen as a safe and loving place. We see this in the idea of shalom bayit, peace in the home. For some women, however, the reality is very different and their homes and lives are poisoned by domestic violence.

Although the police report a lower call out rate from the Jewish community, domestic violence can and does happen in our community. On average, 1 in 4 women in the UK suffer some form of abuse during their lifetime, and there is no reason to suppose that the experience of Jewish women is any different.

In 90% of cases, children witness the violence against their mothers. Sometimes they are also abused. For 30% of victims, domestic violence starts or escalates in pregnancy.

Jewish Women's Aid has:

- **130 active volunteers**
- **9 trained volunteer counsellors**
- **a refuge in London that can accommodate 8 women and their children.**

During 2010 we:

- **helped and supported 126 women and 193 children**
- **provided 356 counselling sessions to 49 clients**
- **ran educational programmes for 2500 children in 6 Jewish secondary schools**
- **ran community awareness sessions with a wide range of organisations including the police and synagogue groups.**

… The end of Sarah's story

A friend put me in touch with Jewish Women's Aid. The first time I met my keyworker in the office, I felt so safe that I didn't want to leave. She was so reassuring and helped me to feel that I was going to get through. She offered me counselling support and loads of practical help. She contacted people on my behalf. She took me and my children on days out. She arranged for extra locks to be put on my house so we'd feel more secure. She was amazing – it would have been so much harder without her.

HELPLINE: 0808-801 0500 (MON – THU, 9.30AM – 9.30PM)

Yom Tov Calendar

Fast of Esther: Thurs 17 March
Purim: evening of Sat 19 March, and Sun 20 March

Pesach: *Bedikat chametz* (searching for *chametz*): evening Sun 17 April
Biur chametz (burning the *chametz*): morning Mon 18 April
First Seder night: evening Mon 18 April
Yom Tov: evening Mon 18 April till night Wed 20 April
Chol HaMoed (middle days) continue till
Yom Tov: evening Sun 24 April till night Tues 26 April

PURIM *Holiday of Unity?*

"There is a particular nation, scattered and separated amongst the nations of your kingdom. Their laws are different from every other country, and they do not keep the king's law. It is not in the king's interest to leave them be..." Megillat Esther, 3.8

This was the venomous accusation of Haman, the villain of the Purim story. The Persian king, Achashverosh, after executing his wife, plunges into both a personal crisis and a political quandary – he was only king by virtue of marrying Vashti, the heiress to the throne of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzer. Haman seizes the opportunity to galvanise his own power on the back of the king's antisemitic sentiment, and sells the destruction of the Jews on the basis of their disunity, dissimilarity and disloyalty to the king.

Unfortunately, Haman's claim of disunity had basis: most of the book of *Bereishit* chronicles the argument of Joseph and his brothers, and their eventual reconciliation. The Books of Kings record the tragic story of how the nascent Jewish kingdom, after the courageous battles of King David and the glory of King Solomon, fractured under the reign of Solomon's son Rechavam. During the Second Temple period, arguments between various sects led to divisions that arguably enabled the Destruction, and we do not have to speak about the divisions we have today.

Haman's plan, however, never came into fruition. We read in the *Megillah* the remarkable string of events that brought down his downfall. Esther, the Jewish queen, realises that only she might have the influence to persuade the king to rescind Haman's decrees. As she is goes to reveal her identity and beseech the king, she asks the Jews to gather together and fast on her behalf, an act of camaraderie and care that helps to bring about the salvation.

At the time, the Sages celebrated by instituting several *Mitzvot*, one of which is *Mishloach Manot* – sending gifts of two ready-to-eat foods on the day of Purim. Haman was able to accuse the Jews of not being one nation, and we only acted as one with the threat of the sword hanging over us. Sending gifts to another brings about this sense of unity – that we are one family, and that we should always act as such. It is unfortunate that sometimes we need an enemy to remind us, but Purim is a time to strengthen the bonds that make us one.

CAPTION COMPETITION!

The Great and Good of Glasgow & Giffnock
AT A
Kashruth Commission event in the 1960s.

We are pleased to offer a prize, kindly donated by **Hello Deli** kosher delicatessen, to the best caption – whether correct or not!

ENTRIES SHOULD BE SENT TO SCOJEC@SCOJEC.ORG BY 1 MAY 2011

PHOTO: SCOTTISH JEWISH ARCHIVE CENTRE — JEWISH ECHO COLLECTION

Remembering Henny King

SEPTEMBER 29 1935 — JANUARY 12 2011

MARY BALLANTYNE

Henny was one of the first people I met at Dundee Synagogue when I came to live in the area some 10 years or so ago, and she quickly became a friend and mentor. She would encourage me and guide me where I had any uncertainties, and was a constant source of fun and laughter as we guddled our way through each and every service and high holiday.

Sometimes only a few of us, sometimes a dozen, sometimes even two dozen – no matter how many, she was one of that number, and always asking, "do you know this tune?" She drove all of us crazy at times as we tried to sing (often tunelessly!) to what I am sure were wonderful melodies in her memory.

Her enthusiasm coaxed a few of us to visit Rabbi Rose for dinner after a service at Edinburgh Shul. It was memorable for me in many ways, but mostly because Henny had us singing all the way to Edinburgh, and dozed on the way home! Already I miss her songs.

She would always help me and others with Hebrew, and she shared her knowledge and enthusiasm for our faith and belief with all of us.

We would compete cooking kugel, and she would win! And we would have so much laughter at Purim when she would tease us and encourage Rabbi Rose to tell us stories.

That crazy wee car of hers would break down and she would call for rescue and then arrive like a king in a flamboyant hat. Even when I visited with her in hospital she had hats in her little wardrobe. This made me laugh – but then I realised I was also crying as I recognised she was becoming more frail and fragile. It was hard to believe when you think of how strong she had been for her whole life. This was a precious time, rejoicing her recovery, while realising time was now short.

And so this is my memory of Henny: laughing, joking, singing, and supporting – what more could anyone ask of a friend and mentor? She was a special lady, and for such a small woman she has left an enormous chasm that we may never fill, but I am sure we will gaze into it regularly, and fondly remember Henny King.

Henny, a past Chair of Dundee Synagogue, was a journalist, event organiser, and campaigner. She was born in Austria, but fled with her family to Portugal in 1938 to escape the Nazis. At the age of seven, she and her brother were sent to the United States and were not reunited with their parents for two years. She married the pop star Solomon King, and later the artist Edmund Caswell, and is survived by a daughter, three sons, and six grandchildren.

Sweets & Siddurim

Hosting School Visits to Dundee Synagogue

ELLEN McCANCE

We open the heavy wrought iron doors with the Star of David on the front, and forty noisy children and several nervous teachers stream in to the Dundee synagogue.

The boys are usually wearing baseball caps, or other head coverings, as I have requested. Sometimes, when the class has visited a mosque before coming to us, the girls have scarves on their heads too. Though I explain that girls don't have to wear scarves, some will not be parted from them. I am always touched by how much they want not to offend, and to do The Right Thing.

Paul and I split them into two groups. Half go into the *Beit HaMidrash* with Paul, and half come with me into the community hall. We then switch them round half way through. Paul talks to them about what goes on in the *Beit HaMidrash*. He shows them our unusual *bimah*, and the Sefer Torah, the beautiful silver *yad*, and the Hebrew *siddurim*. They learn that Hebrew is written from right to left, and the importance of Torah in Jewish life.

In my group, we discuss Jewish traditions and practices and whichever holiday is next. I always talk about Shabbat, and we look at the candles, the wine glass, a *Havdalah* candle, etc

I swot up for every visit as though I am back in *cheder*, facing my formidable old Israeli teacher, who used to put me forward for every inter-synagogue quiz going. It's amazing how much angst can be generated for one fifty-year-old woman by a room full of little children!

I agonize over so many things: Is it ok to refer to G-d as a "He" or is that sexist? Is it alright to discuss gendered roles on Shabbat when many of the children will not be living in traditional families? Is it fair to them? Ninety percent of the children will not have ever heard of the Bible, nor learned any Bible stories. How do I make it clear what I am talking about? Will I make us sound like crazy people if I talk about the rules of *kashrut*? I am aware that I am revealing some of my most intimate preoccupations and memories, and I feel very exposed and vulnerable.

Most difficult of all is when the children ask questions I cannot answer. I would give anything, in those moments, for an Emergency Rabbi Service (is there an iPhone app for that?) to help me: "Why do you use candles so much?" "If you can't say G-d's name, how does he know you're talking to Him?" "Why is the Sabbath day different in each religion?"

The sessions that go best are those where the teachers have done some preparation with their classes in advance. Recently I have been referring them to the SCoJeC "Jewish Way of Life" materials, and they rave about how good they are. So thank you, SCoJeC, for making my life a whole lot easier!

At the end I try to have some food for the children. At Chanukah time we have doughnuts and chocolate coins, and we play with dreidels. At Pesach I show them a *seder* plate and I let them try *matzoh*, *maror*, and *charoset*. This never fails to delight – indeed, to my dismay, it often seems to be the part of the visit that leaves the most lasting impression!

Despite all the angst and nerves, I am always a bit sorry when the children leave, because it fills me with joy to talk about the things that matter most in my life.

Time for Reflection at the Scottish Parliament

© SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY CORPORATE BODY - 2011

Time for Reflection opens the weekly session of the Scottish Parliament each Wednesday. On 19 January this year it was presented by two pupils from Hyndland Secondary School.

James Clements: … In September 2009, we were given the opportunity to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau as part of the Holocaust Educational Trust's lessons from Auschwitz project. For both of us, what began as an historical trip turned into a quite incredible emotional journey that forced us to explore what it means to be a human being and a member of society.

The camp is very difficult to describe to those who have not been there, and not just the physical attributes, but the feeling of the place. There were glass cases full of human hair, shaved from the victims and bought by German companies to make cheap clothes. Perhaps the most poignant of all were the children's barracks, where the gaudy murals on the walls contrasted dramatically with the utter bleakness of the surroundings. Those are things not easily forgotten, because they say so much about the capacity of humankind for hate.

The trust organised for us to hear Zigi Shipper, a Holocaust survivor, speak. He described how the course of his life was changed forever by the events of the Holocaust and how, aged just 14, he found himself in Auschwitz. Much more than figures and statistics, such stories show how catastrophic the Holocaust was, but they also illustrate how individuals can transcend tragedy and take something positive from it. Above all, they remind us of the infinite power of hope.

Mimi Evans-Agnew: … the theme of this year's Holocaust memorial day is untold stories. The vast majority of victims were Jews, but we must not forget the other groups who were persecuted by the Nazis, such as political opponents of the Nazi regime, homosexuals, Roma and Sinti, who also have stories that are too often left untold. There will of course come a point when there are no survivors left and therefore no one to tell their stories. For every one story that is recorded in literature or film or through families, many thousands remain, and will forever remain, untold-children whose voices were snatched away from them in the coldest, cruellest way imaginable.

At least 1.1 million people were systematically slaughtered at Auschwitz alone. The most poignant part of visiting the camp for us was that it made that rather abstract number into real flesh and blood. We saw photos of people and families laughing, smiling and loving one another. Imagine those were your family snapshots; now imagine that that is all that is left of them.

… We need to ensure that the Holocaust never becomes an untold story, no matter how uncomfortable it is to retell. The Holocaust exposes the worst of humanity, but only in remembering can we ensure that hate, intolerance and prejudice are never again allowed to thrive. I will end with some words that I remember from a rabbi whom I met on my trip, who said:"In order to face the challenges of the future, we must address the past".

LEAH GRANAT AND EPHRAIM BOROWSKI WITH FERGUS EWING, SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY, AT THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY EVENT

Maccabi GB™ Scotland

Actively Jewish

Glasgow Maccabi goes Scotland-wide

SUE FABER,
MACCABI OPERATIONS MANAGER

The aim of Glasgow Maccabi is to build a "Youth Culture" at our fantastic facility in the heart of Giffnock. We offer opportunities for residential weekends, events and parties, throughout the year, not only for the youth and students in Glasgow, but for all young Jewish people in Scotland.

We are keen to develop this facility, and build relations with our friends in Edinburgh and all over Scotland. We would especially like to invite interested members of the Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen communities to contribute to our planning, along with local Glasgow organisations.

Our next major event will be a "School's Out" BBQ and Summer Carnival on 26th June. This is aimed at S3 to S6 but it would be fantastic to have student help to organise and run the event.

If you would like to be involved, or would like more information about any of the Maccabi activities, please contact Sue on

0141- 638 6177 / info@maccabigbscotland.org

Telling the Untold Stories

The archives of Ernest Levy, a Hungarian holocaust survivor, who was the chazzan at Giffnock Synagogue and one of the best-known members of the Glasgow Community, for more than 40 years, have been donated to Edinburgh City Libraries by his daughter, Judy Russell, who also plans to donate some pieces to the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre in Glasgow.

The substantial collection, which will be digitized in order to make it more widely available, includes manuscripts, pictures, sheet music, recordings, and memoirs.

Liz McGettigan, Head of Edinburgh Council's Libraries and Information Services, was a personal friend of Cantor Levy. "It is a huge collection, and it's not only about his story, but also the whole issue of respect and equality," she said, welcoming the donation. "After what Ernest went through you would expect him to be bitter, but he didn't have a bit of bitterness. It's an absolute treasure to have this archive because he is the most wonderful man I've ever met."