



Something Rather Special...

ASHLEY MEDICKS

Something rather special is beginning to happen across Scotland! We Jews are getting together! As a result of the sterling efforts of Fiona Frank and SCoJeC, and stimulated by the survey currently underway into "what it's like being Jewish in Scotland", Jewish people, some living in remote areas, unaware of any other 'brethren' in their vicinity, are being given the wonderful opportunity of meeting up.

Such an event took place at our cottage, on a farm in Kirkgunzeon near Dumfries, on a glorious sunny day recently. To say that everyone who attended enjoyed themselves would be an understatement. Prior to this event, if I had been asked what I miss most about not having any contact with other Jewish people, I would have said that our common identity and history, the food, the festivals, the sense of humour, would spring to mind. Many of these things, including wonderful music, were present at our event.

Some people we knew, and others we had never met, turned up, not knowing quite what to expect. Fiona then arrived, laden with kosher delectables and her concertina, along with the other members of her klezmer band. We wandered about outside and in, getting to know each other in a very relaxed fashion, while the band set up in our conservatory, and got ready to play. What then transpired was something quite special. Good old-fashioned Yiddisher fun! The band played, the singer sang, and some couldn't help but dance. Wow! Little did we know that this was their first gig ever! Somehow, Fiona had gathered them together, and produced a little piece of magic for us to enjoy wholeheartedly. By this time, as you can imagine, we had all built up some impressive appetites, so we tucked into the food while the conversations grew more and more relaxed as we got to know each other better.



Later, I asked Fiona if she thought it would be good to hear from our dear friend Gordon Cockburn, whom we had met at an exhibition of his truly remarkable Auschwitz paintings at his gallery in Maybole. He spoke about how, as a non-Jewish artist, he had visited the camp in the 90s, and been so moved by the experience that he has, ever since, had a compulsion to paint the nightmare images that are in his head. I urge any reader to go to www.cockburngallery.net and click on "The Auschwitz series". After Gordon sat down to well-deserved applause, the day, which had been so much enjoyed by all of us, was rounded off by Fiona conducting a focus group discussion on "what it's like being Jewish in Scotland". Our sincere thanks to all who attended, especially SCoJec and Fiona, for making this event so remarkable, and so much fun.

Reaching Out for Three More Years

SCoJeC has been awarded continued funding for the next three years from the Scottish Government's new Equality Fund. This will enable us to continue to produce MEMO, a weekly bulletin for ethnic minority communities, published jointly with the umbrella organisation BEMIS. This is e-mailed to more than 2500 people, and around 3000 people access it on our website each month. A reader recently described it as "the very best thing to give an overview of the area and keep up-to-date with what's going on".

ISSUE 34 · MAY 2012 · SHAVUOT 5772


**The
 Scottish Council
 of Jewish
 Communities**
www.scojec.org

THE UMBRELLA REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION
 OF ALL THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN SCOTLAND

The grant also supports our outreach work with small communities and isolated individuals, and public information about Judaism and the Jewish Community. Major successes have been hosting the *Jewish Way of Life* teaching resource on our website, and the "Kosher Ceilidh" tour of Scotland, as well as supporting events in the smaller communities and for Jewish students. As one respondent to our current Government funded *Being Jewish in Scotland* project said, "these activities are important in sustaining identity and maintaining communal involvement".

We are delighted the Scottish Government has again shown its regard for our work within and on behalf of the Jewish Community, by maintaining our grant at a time of financial constraint. We look forward to repaying their confidence by developing our work to the benefit of the entire community.

Cycling Clerics

In June, the "Rabbi Relay Ride" will cycle from Land's End to John O'Groats to raise funds for charity as part of the "Big Green Jewish Year of the Bike". In Scotland, their route will take them through Edinburgh, Glasgow, Fort William, and Inverness, so do go along to cheer them on! Here the team are pictured with the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace. See www.rabbirelayride.org for details.



PURIM IN EDINBURGH

GILLIAN RAAB

For the third successive year, the two Edinburgh Communities shared their Purim celebrations.

Rabbi Mark Solomon came up on a special mid-week visit to Sukkat Shalom to read his animated version of the Megillah, combining readings from the scroll with dramatised sections, with community members playing the characters. The sound of greggers and stamping shook the Marchmont St Giles Church Hall whenever the evil name of Haman was mentioned, and cheers resounded to the name of Mordechai. The Community excelled itself in fancy dress costumes this year, with several lovely Esthers and a couple of nasty-faced Hamans. A collection of mishloach manot for a local charity, the Rock Trust, which supports homeless young people, raised more than £100.

Meanwhile, another Megillah reading took place at the Synagogue in Salisbury Road, where Rabbi David Rose entertained all with his different voices. Sukkat Shalom members and friends joined the orthodox congregation after the Megillah readings for a joint Kiddush and Purimspiel. The latter was written by Nancy Lynner, who this year included Olympic and Jubilee themes, with a cast drawn from both congregations. Vashti was too busy training to bother to perform for King Achashverosh for his Diamond Jubilee!

The director was Prof Phil Wadler, who was also splendid in his costume as an entrant to the Shushan beauty competition. The evening concluded with an excellent Seudah with food provided by the orthodox congregation, and, of course, drink for all who wished. It was wonderful to have such a big crowd all together, with people from both communities and visitors, and we look forward to more enjoyable joint social events in the coming year.



PURIM IN DUNDEE

Dundee is famous for Jute, Jam, and Journalism, rather than Jewish Jubilation, but when the Sukkat Shalom community came from Edinburgh to celebrate the Shabbat after Purim, that was the focus of the interaction.

The service was a remarkable demonstration of unity between two small communities, and was very moving and incredibly meaningful, but above all extremely joyous. The insightful discussion after lunch, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon, on the tradition of getting drunk during Purim, fitted the bill perfectly.

The void left by Sukkat Shalom was filled next morning with children's laughter. Our Purim baking party was well attended, and we all got dressed up and well-floured whilst making what were by all accounts the best Hamentachen ever to be baked in Dundee shul! The secret recipe was then shared with a select group of people who will continue the baking tradition next year - and you are invited too!

Many thanks for the generous support from SCoJeC that enabled us to celebrate Purim this year in a true Shushan style.

SHARON LEVY



When Yoni Jesner was killed in a terrorist attack in Tel Aviv in 2002, his family gave one of his kidneys to save the life of a young Palestinian girl.

In March, his mother, Marsha Gladstone, spoke at Glasgow and Edinburgh universities, in events jointly organised by Chaplaincy and the Yoni Jesner Foundation. We screened the documentary, *A Mother's Journey*, which followed Marsha on her journey back to Israel on the Yahrzeit of her son, going to Allenby Street, where Yoni was killed, to the hospital to meet the team involved in caring for him and in transferring his organs, and finally to an Arab village, to meet the young girl whose life was saved through the death of her son.

Marsha said that she wanted to "inspire us to take a more human view of the complex strife suffered in Israel today, to see that it is the ordinary people who suffer and matter."

Her speech and video were incredibly moving and inspiring. Many students had not heard Yoni's story, and moreover, many of those at university will not remember the horrific early years of the Second Intifada, and are more familiar of the relative stability of the past few years. The documentary was balanced, showing the day-to-day suffering on both sides. Hearing a real voice from the conflict deepens one's understanding.

One can only truly get perspective on the Israel-Palestine conflict with a proper understanding of both sides: of both the suffering of those immediately affected, and the fear and insecurities of the wider society; the complex history of the region, and the role played by others in shaping the conflict; and the relationships between all of the parties and neighbours involved – Fatah and Hamas, Hezbollah, Lebanon, Iran, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, as well as the US and the EU, all have a stake in the conflict. This event helped to give some perspective, as well as inspiring a fascinating discussion, in which we dealt with difficult questions and issues frankly and honestly.

On campus, Israel and Palestine are not often discussed. The student societies that purport to have an interest in the conflict or world politics often ignore, or worse, suppress any debate. Jewish students are apprehensive about organising any kind of Israel-related event or debate, sometimes for fear of reprisals, sometimes because of the hassle involved with security arrangements, protests etc. Universities should be a place of honest, intellectual discussion, driven by a thirst for truth, and I hope that these events act as the catalyst they should be.

GARRY WAYLAND, JEWISH STUDENT CHAPLAIN

WALKING on Fire

On April Fools' Day – perhaps appropriately! – a number of (fool)hardy people walked barefoot through embers with a temperature of around 1000°F to raise funds for the Targu Mures Trust, which supports frail and isolated Holocaust survivors in Romania, and a WIZO project in Israel. Shown left to right are Jim Murphy MP, Rabbi Moshe Rubin, Ken Macintosh MSP, and Ethne Woldman, former Chief Executive of Jewish Care. Rabbi Rubin commented, "I must be meshuggah – what a way to get out of doing Pesach cleaning!"



Being Jewish IN THE Highlands

Lochside Primary in Fort William recently welcomed local resident Linda Martin to speak to them about Jewish customs and traditions. The children then travelled to Glasgow to visit Calderwood Lodge Jewish Primary School where they met Jewish children their own age.



LISTEN TO THE message, NOT THE speaker

Cruel to ask maybe, but can you imagine a lisping Martin Luther King? Would he have been able to sway the hearts of a generation? Would his oration have gone down in history as the most effective speech of the century?

"I have a dweam! I have a dweam that one day thith nation will rithe up and live out the twue meaning of itth cweed: "We hold thith truth to be thelf-evident, that all men are cweated equal."

Harsh questions, and the answers shame us.

Hitler's Nuremberg rallies showed that thousands can be swayed by the charisma of the speaker as much as by the content of his speech. In court, attorneys for the defence and prosecution don't simply list the evidence to the jury, arguing their cases on cold logic; all the eloquence they possess is marshalled to persuade people for or against.

Moses, whose words set in motion the escape of an entire slave nation from the mighty Egyptian super-power, whose message inspired three monotheistic religions spanning billions of adherents across the globe, had a speech defect. And in true Jewish tradition he argued with G-d when the Almighty chose him as leader. "My lips are blocked," he complained. "How can I speak to Pharaoh? Send the one You normally send."

But G-d insisted on sending him. Because His message stood alone. It didn't need the support of a trained orator, the devices of personality and figures of speech. From "let my people go" through "I am your G-d" to "don't bear false witness", G-d wanted His words to be accepted on their merits. Standing in front of a low, unremarkable hill in the desert, we accepted the Torah solely because it was the word of G-d.

Centuries later, Eliyahu fled to Mount Sinai after a miraculous godly demonstration that failed to influence the people long-term. He had visions: of a powerful wind, an earthquake, and a fire. But G-d was in the "still small voice". The truth may be unimpressive, with no flashes and bangs. But it echoes quietly through the world every day.

And we try to live up to it.

TALYA SILVER (BASED ON AN IDEA IN DRASHOT HARAN, BY A 14TH CENTURY CATALONIAN COMMENTATOR)

Summer Calendar

Shavuot: also called "Pentecost" or the "Feast of Weeks", falls seven weeks after Pesach. It commemorates the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai.

Evening of 26 to nightfall 28 May

The "Three Weeks" between the Fasts of 17 Tammuz and 9 Av are a time of mourning for the destruction of both Jerusalem Temples - by the Babylonians in 586 BCE, and by the Romans in 70 CE.

Fast of 17 Tammuz:
dawn till nightfall 8 July

Fast of 9 Av:
evening of 28 to nightfall 29 July

"RACIST ATTACKER" LOSES APPEAL

The Appeal Court has upheld a Sheriff's ruling that an attack on a Jewish student because he had an Israeli flag on his wall was "racially motivated" and could not be justified by his political beliefs.

Last September, Paul Donnachie, a St Andrews University student, was sentenced by Sheriff Charles Macnair to 150 hours community service and ordered to pay £300 compensation for "acting in a racially aggravated manner that caused distress or alarm" to a Jewish fellow-student. His victim, Chanan Reitblat, on an exchange programme from Yeshiva University in New York, was asleep in bed when his attacker jumped on him, called him a "terrorist", wiped his hand on his genitals and then onto the Israeli flag, and urinated around the room causing what was described in court as "collateral damage" to Chanan's toothbrush.

The Sheriff said the issue was neither antisemitism nor the Israel-Palestine conflict. Because it "evinced malice and ill will towards the complainer because of his association with Israel", it was a racist attack, as defined in law.

Donnachie appealed, and his case was heard by a High Court bench presided over by Scotland's second most senior judge, the Lord Justice Clerk. At the hearing on 4th April, John Scott QC on behalf of Donnachie made a number of important concessions. He said that what had taken place in Chanan's room "went beyond the bounds of legitimate protest", and conceded that, although Donnachie denied calling Chanan a "terrorist", he "agreed with the sheriff's right to make that finding". He added that Donnachie's purported written apology the next morning "was certainly clumsy", and "did not help matters".

Consequently he said he would not pursue these points on appeal, but only what he called one "narrow



CHANAN IN SCOTLAND

point of law" relating to whether the Sheriff should have permitted the defence at the original trial to have called three witnesses about the relationship between Judaism and Israel. Replying to the Lord Justice Clerk, he conceded that this would probably have made no difference to the verdict. "It is accepted the relevance of the evidence is not altogether apparent," but "this Appeal is in essence on the appearance of justice not being done rather than on justice actually not being done."

Principal Advocate Depute, Alex Prentice QC, responded that the Sheriff had properly sought to ascertain how the evidence of the proposed witnesses would add to the matters under consideration, but the defence had been unable to articulate any notion of what they would attest to.

The court reserved judgment, and on 1st May it dismissed the appeal, agreeing with the Sheriff that "the views of the proposed witnesses on the political situation in Israel could have no bearing on the question". They concluded that "there was therefore no substantive miscarriage of justice; nor was there an appearance of injustice".

Welcoming the verdict, Nicola Livingston, Chair of the Scottish University Jewish Chaplaincy Board said, "This is a landmark judgment. We welcome the court's decision to uphold the rights of Jewish students to express their identification with Israel and interest in its legitimate welfare, if they wish, without harassment, intimidation, or racist attack."

Archives Anniversary

HARVEY L KAPLAN, DIRECTOR

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, which was opened in April 1987 in Garnethill Synagogue, Scotland's oldest, dating back to 1879. The centre has grown to become a popular and valued institution in the Jewish community and further afield.

Our remit is to document the Jewish experience in Scotland, including religious, organisational, social, economic, political, cultural, and family life from Shetland down to Dumfries. This includes the formal communities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee, and the former small communities of Ayr, Dunfermline, Falkirk, Greenock, and Inverness.

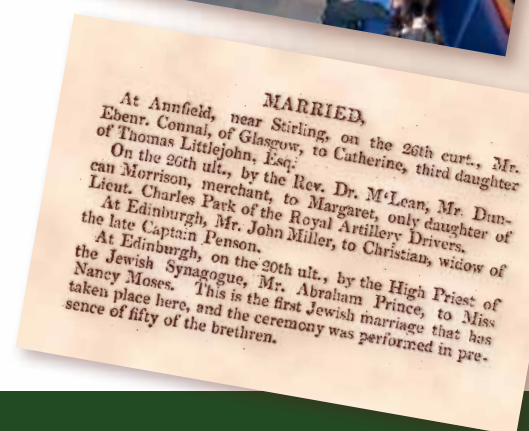
Our collections include the records of Jewish organisations in Scotland, including correspondence, annual reports, membership lists, and brochures from charity organisations, friendly societies, cultural groups, youth groups, political groups, educational institutions, and Jewish businesses. We have personal papers, naturalisation documents, immigrant passports, family trees, family histories, press cuttings, thousands of photographs, and around 380 books and dissertations relating to Jews in Scotland. For the first time, we have gathered together the records of all 17 Jewish burial grounds in Scotland, indexed on our computer database of almost 38,000 Scottish Jews.

We also collect artefacts such as ceremonial keys and trowels, memorial plaques and old charity collection boxes, Torah mantles, sashes from friendly societies, trophies, flags, and uniforms from youth groups, and also works of art including sculptures by Benno Schotz and Hannah Frank, and paintings by Joseph Ancill and Hilda Goldwag.

Our oral history collection contains interviews with around 60 members of the Jewish community who have played a leading role in communal life or were able to describe aspects of the history of the community.

We encourage the study of Jews in Scotland and welcome anyone interested in finding out about the community.

We look forward to a bright future for the Archives Centre, as we continue to build up the collections, develop new storage facilities, conserve fragile old documents, continue the ongoing digitisation of collections, and provide a service to researchers. To help us in these tasks, we have launched our 25th Anniversary Appeal, and will be holding open days and special events, such as a celebration of the Jewish Gorbals and our Glasgow Jewish Journey bus tour – see www.sjac.org.uk For more information please contact info@sjac.org.uk or 0141 332 4911



Glasgow Futures

PAUL H MORRON

In recent decades, the Glasgow Jewish community has been declining – in numbers, wealth, and resources, human and otherwise. But not in spirit, nor vitality, nor vision. The community is positive and looking forward: what opportunities present themselves and how can we take advantage of them?

Thus the Glasgow Jewish Futures Project was born with its primary focus on the future needs of the community and how these needs can best be met. The project plans to examine the future religious, care, educational, social, youth, and external needs of the community "in a manner that is inclusive and sustainable, and where members of the community feel part of, at ease with, and able to contribute to the community."

The Action Phase of the project began in March with the establishment of three working groups, involving around 40 people. They are looking at:

- the future spiritual and religious needs of the community. This will cover orthodox, reform, and other communities or persons.
- the future social care needs of the community. Already they have commissioned 20 focus groups with current and prospective service users and carers to obtain their views.
- opportunities for members of the community to gain, retain, and strengthen their Jewish identity, including Jewish education, Israel, cultural needs, and social opportunities.

We plan to produce an initial report in July, which will form the basis of a 12-15 week widespread community consultation where members of the community can give their own ideas, views, and suggestions, and the project, under the auspices of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, is scheduled to produce its final report around March 2013.

Members of the community wishing to participate, and contribute to the project can contact the Rep Council: 0141 577 8200 or office@glasgowjewishrepCouncil.org

Being Jewish in Scotland



One of the 'draws' to encourage participation in our *Being Jewish in Scotland* project was the chance to win one of four great prizes. The winning tickets were drawn at a focus group for young people living in the Edinburgh area.

"I am so happy about the prize – it's really amazing!" said Jose Barinotto, who came to Aberdeen from Spain. "As a Jew living in Scotland I wanted to say how we can be happy in Scotland, and get stronger and unite as a community."

Rachelle Moore told us, "My grandparents, Isaac and Mildred Behar, settled in Glasgow from Turkey and London and opened a carpet shop. My grandfather founded Pollokshields Shul, where I got married, but it's not there any more." She said, "I hope my contribution to the survey was useful,"

Appropriately, Leslie Mutch, who lives north of Inverness, won *Caledonian Jews*, a history of the smaller Jewish communities of Scotland. He said, "I was delighted to win the book. Being from the Highlands, it was fascinating to learn about the Jewish history of the Highlands and Islands in particular."

Thanks to Leslie, Jose, Linda (who won the deli sandwiches), and Rachelle – and almost 300 others who completed our survey or took part in discussions, we feel we now have a good picture of the range of issues that concern Jewish people in Scotland. We will share insights in *Four Corners* this summer, and hold events around Scotland with Jewish groups, and national and regional Scottish organisations and institutions, to help us consider what to do next.

Although our main data collection period is over, please feel free to complete and return our survey form, which can be downloaded from SCoJeC's website at www.scojec.org/jewishinscotland.html – your views will still inform our work and we'd love to hear from you!

Our thanks to the prize donors: the Ben Uri Gallery for the Josef Herman catalogue; McFarland & Co for Nathan Abrams' book, *Caledonian Jews*; Moishe's Bagel for their CD, *Uncle Roland's Flying Machine*; and Mark's Deli for two hot salt beef sandwiches.

CLOCKWISE: LESLIE MUTCH WITH HIS COPY OF CALEDONIAN JEWS.
RACHELLE MOORE RECEIVING THE JOSEF HERMAN CATALOGUE FROM FIONA FRANK.
JESSICA SPENCER, CLARE LEVY, AND SARAH LEVY DRAWING THE WINNERS' NAMES.
REUBEN SAGAR, JOSE BARINOTTO, PESE AND MICHAEL FAINBERG – JOSE PROUDLY DISPLAYING HIS WINNING CD ALONG WITH A COPY OF SCoJeC'S PUBLICATION 'SCOTLAND'S JEWS'



Reuben's Story

As for many, SCoJeC's recent *Being Jewish in Scotland* project gave me a chance for reflection. For me this reflection spans my four years at Aberdeen University, so I suppose, if not a Jewish Scot, I am, at least, a transient Jewish Scot.

Being Jewish is the central tenet of my life; it is the main story line for which all else is a mere twist of the plot. In Aberdeen I live a wonderfully proud Jewish life. Apart from normal Jewish stuff, this also places me in the honourable position of a representative of the community. This position leads to a great deal of interfaith work, with a particular focus on Israel-Palestine. Actually, for all the talk in the Jewish press of rising antisemitism and anti-Israel behaviour, Scottish universities are, in my experience, a fantastic place not only to do interfaith activities, but also interfaith that focuses on the subject of Israel-Palestine.

At Aberdeen, in order to reaffirm links after Operation Cast Lead, we co-hosted a string of events with the Muslim Society, starting with a talk on peace, and culminating with a performance of *The Arab, the Jew, and the Chicken*. To my knowledge, Aberdeen J-Soc is the only Jewish Society in the UK to work with their Muslim counterparts on any Israel-Palestine related event, and the only drama was when the Christian Society brought a pepperoni pizza to the post-event buffet!



SCoJeC

SCOTTISH COUNCIL OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES
JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTRE,
222 FENWICK ROAD, GIFFNOCK, GLASGOW G46 6UE
TEL 0141 - 638 6411
E-MAIL SCOJEC@SCOJEC.ORG
CONTACT LEAH GRANAT 07887 - 488 100

Contacts in the Corners

GLASGOW	YIFAT	0141 - 577 8200
EDINBURGH	JACKIE	07734 - 291 836
DUNDEE	SHARON	0141 - 638 6411
ABERDEEN	EHUD	01224 - 485 601
ARGYLL & HIGHLANDS	FRANK	01445 - 712 151
STUDENTS	GARRY & SUZANNE	0141 - 638 9403 07791 - 292 790



AT THE TIP O' THE TONGUE FESTIVAL OF ORAL CULTURE ON JURA.

SCoJeC PROJECT WORKER FIONA FRANK SHARING MATZAH WITH (L-R) GILES PERRING, ORGANISER OF THE FESTIVAL; IVOR KALLIN FORMERLY OF GLASGOW, A PERFORMER AKA AMBROSIA RASPUTIN; AND FIONA MACDONALD, WHO PLAYS THE FLUTE IN JURA PARISH CHURCH WHERE FIONA FRANK TOLD THE PASSOVER STORY AT EASTER.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN FOUR CORNERS ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHOR, NOT NECESSARILY OF SCoJeC

© SCOTTISH COUNCIL OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES

SCOTTISH CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION NO. SC029438