



# The New Calderwood

*"the dialogue is in the bricks"*

The only Jewish school in Scotland, Calderwood Lodge Primary School, has moved from the converted house it occupied for more than fifty years on the south side of Glasgow to a magnificent new purpose-built building in Newton Mearns. In a world first, the new school is part of a joint campus with a Roman Catholic primary, St Clare's, with which it shares some facilities – as Head Teacher Marion Carlton joked, the new school is only semi-detached – although each school retains its own identity and ethos.

The East Renfrewshire Council development, which cost £17 million, was formally opened on 9th November by Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis and Bishop John Keenan of Paisley, along with the Provost and Education Convenor of the Council, and the invited guests were entertained by a joint choir of pupils of the two schools.

The Chief Rabbi congratulated the local authority on creating "this outstanding model of coexistence. We hope the pupils of the two schools will express their two identities with pride." Bishop Keenan said he would echo the message of the Chief Rabbi "as Christians have been doing for two thousand years", that the new building demonstrates that different faiths can live and work together, because "the dialogue is in the bricks".



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The  
Scottish Council  
of Jewish  
Communities

[www.scojec.org](http://www.scojec.org)

THE UMBRELLA REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION  
OF ALL THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN SCOTLAND

The Chief Rabbi's day in Glasgow began with a special Shacharit (morning service) that brought together Giffnock and Newton Mearns shuls and some Calderwood staff, as the sun rose over the fields around the new school, followed by a whole-school assembly. He also addressed a packed public meeting, met local rabbis, visited Jewish Care Scotland, and met members of local youth organisations.

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# Shabbat AROUND Scotland

Shabbat UK was celebrated by (left, top to bottom) challah baking at Calderwood; student challah-bake; Edinburgh havdalah and challah-baking; (right) challah-baking and havdalah in Glasgow.

## HAND IN HAND Paper Party

To mark Interfaith Week, SCoJeC joined with Al Masaar, a Muslim organisation in Falkirk that promotes positive community relations, to put on *Hand in Hand*, a unique event that explored paper-cutting in Jewish and Muslim traditions.

The activities were led by Abi Pirani, a Jewish artist living in Scotland, and Maryam Golubeva, a Russian Muslim artist who lives in England, who both take inspiration from their faith traditions. Abi and Maryam described their own work and explained how it relates to the ancient tradition of paper-cutting, after which they helped participants create their own unique designs, which included an arabesque with Chinese letters, and a Scottish thistle containing various religious symbols.

The event was both fun and educational – as one of the participants said, “This was such an amazing idea for an interfaith event. I rarely have the opportunity to learn about all the different cultures that are around me. This really proves that there is so much beauty in all these ancient traditions, and the love of art is shared across the continents.”

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE INTER-FAITH YOUTH TRUST FOR SUPPORTING THIS EVENT.





# Edinburgh CULTURAL CENTRE

ADRIAN HARRIS, CHAIR OF  
EDINBURGH JEWISH DIALOGUE

On the last Sunday of October, over 250 people came together at the Summerhall arts complex in Edinburgh to participate in an event to celebrate 200 years of Jewish life in Scotland. A noisy and effervescent afternoon of Yiddish song, klezmer, food, and storytelling was enhanced by displays from our friends at the Scottish Jewish Archive Centre and the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society, as well as a fascinating joint presentation by Sukkat Shalom and the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation of Jewish paraphernalia that triggered enquiries and debate about Jewish observance and beliefs. The afternoon activity was followed in the evening by a sell-out performance of a show put together by Phil Alexander and Ellen Galford with additional material by David Neville, reflecting on 200 years of Jewish life in Edinburgh.

The sense of unity, camaraderie, and pride generated by our day at Summerhall illustrates how culture can provide a space, both physical and spiritual, where Jews can come together from a variety of observant traditions or from none, to express and celebrate their Jewishness and share it with others. That is why three years of consultation led by Edinburgh Jewish Dialogue on options for the future of the community has resulted in a commitment to establishing a Jewish Cultural Centre in our capital city. With support from both the Scottish Government and the City of Edinburgh Council we are now in the process of identifying a site to accommodate our vision, a vision not just for the people of Edinburgh but for Jews across Scotland, as we seek to create a facility that will enhance and nurture Jewish life for generations yet to come.

For more information, contact Adrian, [adrianhharris@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:adrianhharris@hotmail.co.uk)



# Aberdeen AFTER THE FLOOD

DEBBY TAYLOR



In August, Aberdeen Synagogue was severely damaged when a washing machine broke during its fill cycle and proceeded to fill the building with water for about an hour before being turned off. The damage was heart-breaking, especially after all our hard work over the last two years. This was then compounded by our insurance company not covering the full cost of the repairs, currently estimated to be £32,000.

With the help of SCoJeC, we launched our SOS ("Save Our Shul") appeal, and over eight weeks received fantastic support from all over the UK, Israel, Canada, and the USA from many organisations and individuals.

The builders are now stripping out the damaged parts of building, and drying is expected to take three to four weeks. The repair work will then start after a "drying certificate" is issued. The last phase of the work will be to re-lay the flooring, with the expectation the Synagogue will reopen for services in February or March 2018. Meantime we are grateful to have been donated, temporary accommodation in the Bon Accord shopping centre which has an excellent central location.

On top of the flood, those who want to break us through the worst kind of hate, a centuries old hate, decided to demonstrate against a Jewish-owned business on the day of Yom Kippur. By coincidence or by chance? Please make up your own mind.

And, when the rest of the Jewish world was quietly preparing for Yom Kippur, our Chazan went missing on his way from London! British Airways would not confirm whether he had boarded his flight, but with the help of the police, he was found, and the taxi driver was told to run every red light between the airport and the (temporary) Shul so that he would arrive before the fast started!

If it was soap opera you wouldn't believe our story!

# CROSSING THE SILVERY Tay

PAUL SPICKER, CHAIR,  
TAYSIDE AND FIFE JEWISH COMMUNITY



For several years, the community in Dundee has kept the synagogue going despite the odds. Ours is the only shul between Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and there is a constant trickle of visitors and short-term residents passing through the area. This year, we have also had events at Chanukah, Purim, and Shavuot, as well as outreach activities. However, there are too few people to make the shul viable, and we have hardly any income. In our meetings in 2016 and 2017, members expressed a wish to see the synagogue closed and sold.

Closing the shul is a risky business. The building has played a major role in keeping the community going. Some members have argued for 'pop up' services in different locations, including Dundee, Perth, and St Andrews, but that all involves work, and the small numbers mean there are not always the people we need to do it.

Our best hope of keeping things going is to develop a new relationship with the very active Jewish Society in St Andrews University. Unfortunately, the low value of the land and building in Dundee will not pay for premises in St Andrews, where property is very much more expensive. We are in discussions with the university, and hope we will be able to come to a formal arrangement where services take place in the university chaplaincy. In the course of the next year, we plan to move two of our four sifrei torah to St Andrews, offering a programme of services and activities both in St Andrews and Dundee. After that, it is difficult to know what comes next.

# Scottish-Israeli Cultural Group

A new group to support Israelis living in Scotland, celebrate Israeli culture, foster active citizenship in Scotland, and promote community cohesion, has been formed with support from BEMIS, the minority ethnic umbrella organisation in Scotland, which has now formally recognised Israelis as a minority group. Our first event will be in January - for details contact [sicaedinburgh@gmail.com](mailto:sicaedinburgh@gmail.com)



# The Wheel of History

EPHRAIM BOROWSKI

As we look forward to Chanukah with its health-giving diet of latkes and doughnuts, we tend to overlook something unique about this time of year. There's more than two full months between last month's exhausting series of holy days and holidays and the winter Festival of Lights, the longest gap in the Jewish calendar without any feasts or fasts, or indeed any other particular observances. This is so unusual that the name of the intervening month *Marcheshvan* is often interpreted as "the bitter (*mar*) month of Cheshvan".

Perhaps that's why I seem to be more aware of a whole string of significant anniversaries around this time. I don't know whether that's a genuine statistical anomaly or whether the Jewish bit of my brain just has more room for historical echoes because it is less occupied with religious observances, but it is certainly another way of connecting with our heritage. Perhaps *Marcheshvan* is the month that reminds us that Judaism is not just a religion but also a culture, with its own language, literature, land, and history.

Of course, not all the dates that are significant for Jewish history are dates *in* Jewish history – much of Europe has just commemorated half a millennium since Luther launched the Reformation with his "Ninety-five theses", and many of us recently gathered to honour those who fell in what was called, with such horrific irony, "the war to end all wars". Clearly, neither of these was in any sense a Jewish event, but Luther's fervid antisemitism and Germany's perceived humiliation in the First World War can both be said to have fuelled the most cataclysmic event in Jewish history, the Holocaust. The first organised country-wide Nazi pogrom – *Kristallnacht*, the night of broken glass – took place in *Marcheshvan*.

There are parallels between these events and the Chanukah story – the collapse of Alexander the Great's empire, factionalism leading to a "world war", religious intolerance as a tool of state repression, forced conversions on pain of genocide. When we light our menorah and eat our doughnuts, we are celebrating the fact that, nearly 2200 years ago, the Maccabees overcame these challenges, and restored Judaism to Judea.

Many people also hear those echoes in more recent anniversaries – the Balfour Declaration, whose centenary has just passed, supporting the establishment of "a national home for the Jewish people", and the UN vote, just a week before Chanukah in 1947, that, six months later, led to the creation of the State of Israel, and, in a different sense, the return of ancient Judea to the centre of modern Jewish life.

So perhaps Chanukah has a more complex meaning than the old witticism that, "They tried to destroy us; we survived; let's eat". Perhaps it is that the wheel of history turns and turns again, so that, unlike the Grand old Duke of York, when we're up we're at risk of going down, and when we're down we must aspire to go up.

Happy Chanukah!

## WINTER CALENDAR

### CHANUKAH

from evening

**Tue 12 Dec**

*1st candle after dark*

**to Wed 20 Dec**

*8 candles after dark*

*on Tue 19 Dec*

### FAST OF TEVET

**Thu 28 Dec**

### TU B'SHEVAT

**Wed 31 Jan**

### FAST OF ESTHER

**Wed 28 Feb**

### PURIM

**Thu 1 March**

*Megillah Readings*

*Wed night and*

*Thu morning*

### SHUSHAN

### PURIM

**Fri 2 March**



## Students' Candyfloss and Hotdogs

More than 130 students from Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Glasgow, joined the local Jewish Student Society for the St Andrews Jewish Student Ball (above).

Jewish student Chaplains Rabbi Yossi and Sara Bodenheim welcomed more than 150 young people from the Glasgow Jewish Community to their home for fireworks, hot dogs, and candyfloss on Bonfire night (top).



Rabbi Mark Solomon of Sukkat Shalom, Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community led 'Time for Reflection' in the Scottish Parliament on 5th September.

## Balfour Centenary

On 2 November 1917, as the First World War reached a climax in the Middle East, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Arthur James Balfour, wrote to Lord Walter Rothschild to express the British Government's support for the establishment of "a national home for the Jewish people", thereby setting in train events that would lead, after the Holocaust and another World War, to the creation of the State of Israel.

The centenary of the Balfour Declaration was marked in the Scottish Parliament by a recital by the internationally acclaimed Israeli pianist Ishay Shaer, and a reception attended, amongst others, by descendants of Lord Balfour.

The following evening, Glasgow joined other Jewish communities to watch a live relay of the Balfour Centenary Lecture by the renowned historian Simon Schama.





# Seven Small Communities

Following talks by genealogist Michael Tobias in Dunfermline, Falkirk, and Ayr (reported in Four Corners 54), SCJeC's celebration of the bicentenary of the Scottish Jewish community continued with talks by Prof Nathan Abrams in Inverness, Aberdeen, and Dundee, and by Fiona and Howard Brodie in Greenock.

Nathan was living in the flat above Aberdeen Synagogue and teaching at the University of Aberdeen when he started the research for the book *Caledonian Jews: a study of seven small communities in Scotland*. Unfortunately he wasn't able to return there because of the catastrophic flood in the shul building, but more than 50 people found their way to the substitute venue, including the Lord Provost, who expressed great interest in the talk and later gave his support to the campaign to "Save Our Shul".

Nathan spoke about the earliest references to Jewish people in each of the cities where he was speaking. Sometimes these featured as either the victims or the perpetrators of crimes reported in the local newspapers. In Inverness, the earliest reported a baptism being watched by a great crowd "anxious to witness a scene so novel in this part of the country". Once the communities became established, records were easier to come by, and Nathan was able to recount fascinating stories about the members of the Jewish communities in each city – some of whom were the parents or grandparents of people who had come to hear the talk. In Dundee for example, he spoke about the journey that had led Dr Albert Jacob (whose son-in-law is now president of the Aberdeen community) to the city. In Inverness he spoke about the jeweller Isaac Finkelstein and showed a photograph of his shop, "Finkelstein's Victorian Market". The current owner of the shop, who is very proud to maintain the distinctive frontage of the shop unchanged from Finkelstein's day, was in the audience, and was able to add new information about the Finkelstein family and the history of the shop itself.

The final event in Greenock marked the 111th birthday of the internationally renowned violinist and conductor Henri Temianka, who was born there while his father was the rabbi of the local community. Howard and Fiona Brodie of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre spoke about the history of the Scottish Community, and local historian Viki McDonnell contributed to the discussion. She even introduced cousins who didn't know they were related, and revealed that Howard's grandmother had won a prize for being the heaviest baby in Greenock!

FROM TOP: NATHAN ABRAMS ILLUSTRATES HIS TALK IN DUNDEE; VIKI MCDONNELL SPEAKING IN GREENOCK, WATCHED BY HOWARD AND FIONA BRODIE; PAUL SPICKER ADDRESSES VISITORS IN DUNDEE SHUL, NATHAN WITH ABERDEEN LORD PROVOST.



## Klezmer Crossing Borders

SCJeC also celebrated the bicentenary of the Scottish Community with a series of very well-attended klezmer concerts in Lamlash, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. In Lamlash, 35 people, some of whom had come to Arran specially for the event, overflowed the seafront home of our hosts and took over the house behind!

In all the venues there was an interesting mix of klezmer and Scottish music – as well as SCJeC's trademark mix of Scottish and Jewish food! In Lamlash, fiddle player Gica Loening spoke about the similarities between Jewish and Scottish music before her solo performance, and in Edinburgh she played a specially composed version of the *Jewish Gay Gordons*, and a beautiful half-Scottish, half-klezmer melody called *Dora's tune*, which she had written for the one of the members of the audience about her grandmother, who had come to Britain as a refugee from the Nazis in 1939 and had married a Scottish traveller.

The Edinburgh concert also featured the six piece *a cappella* group, Davno, who sang their special brand of traditional unaccompanied close harmony songs from Russia, Poland, and the Ukraine. At each venue, musicians in the audience joined in with violins, a trumpet, a guitar, and even a piano! The final event was a moving presentation in Newton Mearns by the Danish musicians, Klezmerduo, that honoured those Danes who helped save almost 90% of their community from the Nazis. The singer-storytellers told many individual stories of personal bravery and self-sacrifice – one man was asked by a tram driver why he'd left work early, and when he said he didn't know where he could go, this stranger immediately offered to hide him and his family; a prize-winning kayaker took twelve people to Sweden hidden inside his kayak, one at a time. They said they fell in love with klezmer because "it cries with one eye and laughs with the other. For me, this is the music of hope."

PICTURES LEFT: TOP PAIR ARRAN; MIDDLE GROUP DANISH DUO; LOWER GROUP EDINBURGH





# Why Dialogue Matters

REV RICHARD FRAZER, CONVENER, CHURCH AND SOCIETY COUNCIL, CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

In one of our first conversations between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Jewish Community, we wondered if anyone would notice if we simply decided that there was too much that divides us and so we shouldn't bother continuing in dialogue. The response to that helps to remind us why this dialogue matters.

Multi-cultural Scotland today is a web of different faith communities and other interest groups. These all weave through our national life forming a tapestry that makes up the rich colour of the diverse Scotland we all love today. Some of these threads may be fragile and others stronger than we might think, but they help to hold civil society together. People look to the leaders of faith communities and other opinion formers and pay attention to what they say. So, those in positions of leadership and influence carry a responsibility that goes beyond simply being loyal to their own tradition.

At a time when politics and social media appear to be becoming more aggressive, and the values of civil society are at times being debased, even by influential figures, it is all too easy for those who hold prejudices to feel they have permission to behave badly when people in positions of leadership cannot get along. And so, if the leaders of the main faith communities in Scotland choose not to search for common ground, mutual understanding, the resolution of difficulties in a civil and respectful manner and a commitment to live peaceably together, then the web of our national life can begin to fray and break.

But in addition to that desire to act responsibly, many people of faith believe that there are things we can learn from others, that diversity is more enriching than threatening and that developing genuine friendship with people who have different perspectives can help us to know ourselves and even our faith a little better. There are golden threads that bind faith communities together and the prospects for peace and justice for all can only be enhanced when we learn to celebrate what we have in common rather than constantly dwelling on that which divides.



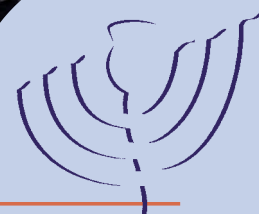
## Scots at No.10

EVVY YEDD (JOINT PRESIDENT, GLASGOW JEWISH REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL) CHATTING WITH PRIME MINISTER THERESA MAY, WATCHED BY NICOLA LIVINGSTON AND MICHELINE BRANNAN AT THE NO.10 DOWNING STREET ROSH HASHANAH RECEPTION.

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## Justice Secretary VISITS SHUL

Justice Secretary Michael Matheson MSP visited Giffnock Synagogue in November, where he met Rabbi Moshe Rubin, Micheline Brannan and Ephraim Borowski of SCoJeC, and Evvy Yedd of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council. He said: "The Scottish Government recognises and values the significant contribution made by SCoJeC to maintaining and supporting community cohesion and interfaith dialogue in Scotland."



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READ OUR REPORT: *What's changed about Being Jewish in Scotland*  
AT [www.scojec.org/bjis2.html](http://www.scojec.org/bjis2.html)