

# Rabbi Burns

## THE WORLD OE'R

FOUR CORNERS  
ארבע פינות

Scottish Jews, wherever they are to be found, have been donning their kilts in honour of the ploughman poet and Rabbe.

Right: The toast to the Immortal Memory at Giffnock Synagogue was proposed by Ruth Davidson MSP, leader of the Scottish Conservatives.

Left: The recently-formed Auld Acquaintances group of London-based ex-pats raised more than £20 000 for Scottish communal welfare charities at their inaugural event in Cecil Sharp House in Primrose Hill.

Below: the Jewish Student Burns Ball in Edinburgh.

Bottom centre: Glaswegian-Israeli ex-pats at a Burns Supper in Mevo Hama on the Golan Heights.

Bottom right: The Immortal Memory was toasted at the Scots Hotel in Tiberias by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (centre).



ISSUE 57 • MAR 2018 • PESACH 5778

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities  
[www.scojec.org](http://www.scojec.org)

THE UMBRELLA REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION OF ALL THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN SCOTLAND

SCOTTISH CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION NO SC029438

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## In the Pink!

CAROL LEVSTEIN AND SARA LURIE TOOK THE PLUNGE IN AID OF EDINBURGH HEBREW CONGREGATION REFURBISHMENT FUNDS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY. THE SEA WAS 4°C WARM!

# We're dreaming of a White Purim

## We have overcome today!

Despite the horrendous weather on Purim, the hardy folk of Inverness went ahead with a Megillah reading! Four local residents were joined by American couple, Michael and Meredith Weinberger, who were in Inverness on business. Michael led the Megillah reading, recounting the story of Purim in both English and Hebrew. The two youngest participants, Eiora (5) and Moriah (3), came dressed up as Queen Esther and had great fun whirling their groggers around and making a noise at every mention of the wicked Haman.

Unfortunately the weather prevented the Hamantaschen making it to Inverness in time for the event, but celebrating the heroics and bravery of Mordechai and Queen Esther as well as the miraculous redemption and deliverance of the Jewish people provided food for the soul! We were all very grateful to be reminded of a significant time in

Jewish history, a time of dramatic turn-around events when the attempted annihilation of the Jewish people was thwarted, and the Jews were saved through God's miraculous arranging of events. At Purim there are great lessons to be learnt and internalised.

Although few in number a fun and meaningful evening was enjoyed by all. May we all endeavour to exhibit the noble and courageous qualities so deservedly attributed to our Purim heroes, Mordechai and Queen Esther!

GALYA GREIG



### PURIM MIRACLES

ABOVE AND LEFT: ALTHOUGH CALDERWOOD LODGE WAS CLOSED BECAUSE OF THE WEATHER, PUPILS STILL ENJOYED A PURIM PARTY AT GIFFNOCK SHUL. RIGHT: PURIM PARTIES IN INVERNESS, EDINBURGH, AND GIFFNOCK SHUL (R TO L), ALSO WENT AHEAD DESPITE THE SNOW.



## Family and Friends

MATAT JABLON

As Pesach approaches I find myself looking back on the last year and remembering my first Pesach in Scotland. We felt sad when we reflected on familiar traditions that we would miss out on because we weren't able to travel to see our loved ones. It would be the first time in our lives that we could not be with our extended family for the seder meals. However, weeks before the holiday we were invited by members of the Glasgow community to participate in their own family seder nights. We were humbled by these offers to welcome us, a new family in the city, into people's homes for a family-focused holiday.

*Pesach* in Hebrew is generally interpreted to mean "He passed over", which refers to God passing over the houses of the enslaved Jewish people during the tenth plague. The name *Pesach* also refers to the *Korban Pesach*, the sacrificial lamb or goat that they were instructed to set aside, and then gather in groups to eat in haste on the night before the Exodus from Egypt. The next verse in the Torah instructs us to mark the occasion of this family meal as a memorial, which we would celebrate as a feast for generations to come.

While reflecting on these instructions from the Torah to remember *yetziyat Mizrayim*, leaving Egypt, with a family meal, I realised why the holiday is so meaningful to me. Every year we sit together around a festive table filled with tradition, just as generations of our ancestors have sat with their families. Last year we didn't sit with our parents, siblings, or grandparents, but through the generosity and embrace of our fellow Scots we were able to fulfill the same commandment that connects us to the generations that came before us.

## SPRING CALENDAR

**Pesach:**  
Search for chametz: Thurs 29 March after dark  
Burning the chametz: Fri morning 30 March  
First seder: Fri night 30 March  
Second seder: after Shabbat 31 March  
Yom tov: evening of Fri 30th March  
Chol hamoed (middle days) continue until...  
Yom tov: evening of Thurs 5th  
till after Shabbat 7th April  
Yom HaShoah: Thurs 12 April  
Yom HaAtzma'ut: Thurs 19th April  
Lag b'Omer: Thurs 3rd May  
Shavuot: after Shabbat 19th May  
till night of Mon 21st May



# Holocaust Memorial Day

There were more than 450 National Holocaust Memorial events this year throughout Scotland, and the national event in Glasgow Caledonian University was addressed by the First Minister (far right) and Lord Provost Eva Bolander (right).

For the first time, there was an event in Inverness (left), which was addressed by Kathy Hagler, who was smuggled out of the Munkács Ghetto in Hungary just before it was liquidated. In Irvine, SCoJeC Vice-Chair Fiona Brodie spoke about the refugees who found safety in Scotland, and Susan Hodgins gave a moving talk about her mother, Dorrieth Sim, who arrived on the Kindertransport in 1939, and settled in Prestwick.



## Jewish Dumfries

When thinking about the history of Jewish people in Scotland, Dumfries is not high on the list as a place with a substantial Jewish population. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, it was Scotland's third largest trading port, and used to people coming and going from different parts of the world. It is not surprising, therefore, that especially in the nineteenth century, some of those families were Jewish, mainly fleeing pogroms in other parts of Europe. In Catherine Street, a row of buildings is marked with the Magen David, built sometime around 1880 by local Jewish families. The cemetery in Troqueer and the High Cemetery contain Jewish graves with anglicised names. The Apfelsines became the Appletons, one of the prominent Jewish families in Dumfries; a member of the Mogerley family became Provost of the Royal Burgh of Dumfries. Around the First World War, Jewish businesses in Dumfries were attacked by local people because Yiddish sounded like German. By the time of the Second World War, the people of Dumfries blocked the road to protect the Jewish businesses during Moseley's visit. Many local people were hospitalised in the street battle that took place.

For personal family reasons I decided that it would be good to gather the Jews of Dumfries to celebrate the identity of our community, which is now made up of some of the descendants of those who arrived in the 19th century and several families that have moved here more recently. We met for the first time for Chanukah in 2016, a smaller group met to celebrate Purim, and over 60 people gathered on a fierce and stormy winter's night to celebrate Chanukah in 2017. One of the youngest members of the community, Ewan Franks, lit the public Chanukah over the main entrance to Rugman's Hall. We projected songs by the Maccabeats on the exterior wall of the Hall before lighting the Chanukah. The local women's drumming group, the Samba Sisters, played for us before we sang the blessings and *Maoz Tzur*. We then retreated into the Hall for a feast kindly provided by SCoJeC. There was Scottish country dancing, and paper cutting by artist Abi Pirani. We met in members' houses on two other nights, and the Chanukah was publicly lit for all eight nights.

The three events held to date for the Jewish Community of Dumfries and the region have been so successful that we are planning to observe Pesach this year with a bring-your-own Seder. We believe it is really important especially in these difficult times that the Jewish community is seen to be a positive group and that the contribution that they make to the life of the wider community is visible and appreciated.

ANDREW (NOAH) CROSSIE

ON THE FIRST NIGHT OF CHANUKAH, MORE THAN 50 PEOPLE BRAVED THE COLD TO LIGHT THE CHANUKIAH OUTSIDE RUGMAN'S HALL IN DUMFRIES (TOP). SCoJEC ALSO HELD A CHANUKAH PARTY IN THE SMITH ART GALLERY IN STIRLING (CENTRE). THE CHIEF RABBI LIT THE CHANUKIAH IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, AND THE FIRST MINISTER LIT SCOTLAND'S LARGEST CHANUKIAH IN ST ANDREWS SQUARE (BOTTOM).





# SCoJeC Representing the Community



We were pleased to arrange for the Chief Rabbi to meet the First Minister and leaders of the other political parties when he was in Edinburgh to light the Parliament's Chanukiah.

We have been encouraged by the increasingly warm relations that we have been developing with senior figures in the Church of Scotland. As well as the formal dialogue between our communities that the Church proposed in order to help repair the damage done by some of their recent actions, the Moderator recently invited a number of leading members of the Community to the first ever hot kosher lunch in his official residence. SCoJeC's Director Ephraim Borowski was also invited to the rededication of the Church of Scotland in Tiberias and the Burns Night in the Scots Hotel, at which the Moderator toasted the Immortal Memory.

SCoJeC also attracted some media attention when we were invited to give evidence to the Parliament's Justice Committee on the proposed repeal of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications Act. In line with our written submission, Director Ephraim Borowski joined other representative organisations in arguing that protections against hate crime should be strengthened, not repealed; football should not be singled out, but the legislation should be extended to all similar contexts. Ephraim also addressed the Cross Party Group on Freedom of Religion and Belief on the subject of antisemitism.

We also saw tangible results from many years of engagement with Government and the NHS about the new death registration system. Sadly there were twelve deaths in Glasgow during the winter holidays, but there were no delays to any of the funerals, and we are very grateful to the Registrar and others who made this possible by issuing documents even on Christmas Day. At a time when the unconscionable refusal of an English Coroner to take account of the needs of bereaved families is making headlines, Scotland can be proud of how it supports its minority communities.

FROM TOP: THE CHIEF RABBI AND SCoJeC CHAIR MICHELINE BRANNAN WITH THE FIRST MINISTER DURING HIS VISIT TO THE PARLIAMENT; RABBI RUBIN (CENTRE) ADDRESSING THE DIALOGUE MEETING AT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND HEADQUARTERS; THE MODERATOR'S LUNCH FOR JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERS; THE MODERATOR, SCoJeC DIRECTOR EPHRAIM BOROWSKI, AND MINISTER REV KATE McDONALD AT THE REDEDICATION OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND IN TIBERIAS; EPHRAIM SPEAKING AT THE CROSS PARTY GROUP ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION, AND GIVING EVIDENCE TO THE JUSTICE COMMITTEE.



## Welcome to SICA

Around 50 people braved appalling weather in Edinburgh to enjoy a mix of traditional Israeli and Scottish food at a Burns Night with an Israeli Twist, the first event held by the newly formed Scottish Israeli Cultural Association (SICA).

SICA is a cultural organisation that enables Israelis and anyone else who is interested to celebrate Israeli culture and give Israelis a taste of home in Scotland, and was formed with the active support of the Scottish ethnic minority umbrella body BEMIS, in line with its commitment to promoting active citizenship and the cultural heritage of Scotland's diverse communities. BEMIS also provided funding for the event as part of their Scottish Government funded "Scotland's Winter Festivals" programme.



## New Team Member

SCoJeC is delighted to welcome the appointment of Danielle Bett as the new Scottish Public Affairs Manager of the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC). The post is to support the work of SCoJeC and the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, and Danielle was the unanimous choice of the interview panel which comprised representatives of all three bodies. She grew

up near Tel Aviv and later went to school in Scotland before graduating in International Relations from St Andrews University. She has worked in financial services in a number of roles to deliver change. She is also the Chair of the new Scottish Israeli Cultural Association (SICA), and represents Israelis in Scotland on SCoJeC's Council.

Danielle, who took up her post in February, comments:

*"I'm excited to be part of the Jewish Community team in Scotland, and so pleased to be working to support the Scottish Community. I very much look forward to meeting as many people as possible in order to help strengthen our community by listening, understanding, and representing them."*



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