


THE EDINBURGH

# STAR



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Shevat 5764

**Sam Latter's Century**

**The Cosgroves  
Return to Israel**

**The Grunebergs  
Return to Wuppertal**

**A noble dream**

**come true**

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY





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Synagogue Chambers  
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A detail of the refurbished  
Synagogue.

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# From the Editor

It seems like a long time ago, but US President George W Bush visited the UK in November. While there was a lot of controversy about his visit with topics such as the Iraq war and his over-the-top security, there was however, one small item that caught my eye and it did not involve George W but his trusty sidekick, Colin Powell.

It seems that the British Government had honoured past US Secretary of State George Marshall the originator of Marshall Plan, which was so vital for our recovery after the second World War. This was done by the creation of Marshall Scholarships for Americans to attend British universities. During Bush's visit, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of these scholarships was held at the University of London. Colin Powell was one of five Americans being presented with Marshall medals and the event was presided over by Prince Charles. There were a few protest banners around the campus but nothing extraordinary. Prince Charles attended with what appeared to be one security guard, but there was no Colin Powell. It transpired that a few hours earlier, the organisers were told Powell was cancelling because of "serious security concerns".

I read of this with sadness that an event intended to affirm Atlantic solidarity in the finest way had been turned into another victory for terrorism. I could imagine the embarrassment of all these young Marshall scholars that some nameless security officer decided their Secretary of State could not brave a few

protesters, but Prince Charles could.

It is always hard to know where the line should be. I do however fear that we are starting to cross it in ways that could actually be dangerous for us all. Whether we are talking about public officials or our family taking a holiday in Israel, we have learned to live with more insecurity. Because terrorists are in the fear business, every time we visibly imprison ourselves, they win another small victory and become more emboldened. Indeed the IRA murdered the Queen's cousin, and tried to blow up Margaret Thatcher, but life in Britain just goes on and the police still don't generally carry guns. I fear that the security guards who pulled the plug on Powell are the new priesthood of our age. If the 1990's were the age of "Davos Man," where the issue was globalisation, the 2000's are becoming the age of "Security Man" and like a priesthood, these "Security Experts" have unchallenged authority to curb our freedom in the name of freedom. Some of them deserve our respect, but I suspect that others would not know Osama if he walked past with a tennis racquet under his arm.

Yet it is Osama who is supposed to be on the run and not us. What good is driving him into a cave if our leaders have to be in a bubble?

I read not long ago about the reopening of the Café Hillel in Jerusalem, which a suicide bomber had just blown up a few weeks earlier. "It was so crowded you could not find a seat" the reporter said. "Freedom is the only guardian of freedom." Israelis

insist that a bus stop blown up by bombers should be rebuilt the next day. Message to suicide bombers: you're dead and we are not afraid. That is the best deterrent. The events of 9/11 were a new and dangerous form of terrorism. We had to react, but now we must stop overreacting. As we go to press, I read that the US government now want visitors to have passports with 'Biometric Data', and we are to have 'Sky Marshals' on our flights. Terrorists win when they prevent us from enjoying and spreading our values. We defeat them by not just how we react, but how we don't react.

In this issue we hear from John Cosgrove, how he and his wife Hazel found that a visit to Israel is not the journey of terror that some of us imagine. They found new shopping malls and exciting tourist developments. I for one feel that we have a duty to return Israel to our destination choices. We must show the terrorists that freedom is not under their control.

I could not conclude my ramblings without a mention of a major event in our small community. January 2004 saw the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Sam Latter. A worthy tribute was paid to him by the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation at a tea held on January 11<sup>th</sup> and reported in this issue. I send him congratulations on behalf of our Board, all our readers and myself. With the demographics of our congregation showing others closing behind Sammy, I hope that we shall see many more such celebrations.

Peter A Bennett

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# A noble dream come true

## Restoration of the Synagogue of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

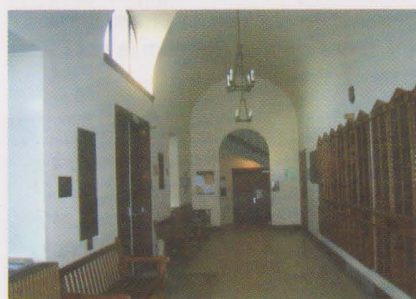
Dr Philip Mason



In the 1890's, a large immigration of Jews into Scotland led to considerable local discussions concerning the growth and development of the Edinburgh Jewish Community, including the need for a new Synagogue. Following protracted negotiations and the eventual purchase of 4 Salisbury Road, at a cost of £1500, plans were drawn up to build a structure that 'shall be of an imposing nature, and fit to be ranked among the beautiful houses of worship of the city'. That the founders of our Community achieved their goal is plain for all to see. All who approach and enter the Synagogue, whether local or visitors, never fail to remark how beautiful a building it is. The now B-listed building designed in the late 1920's by James Miller in the Byzantine style of architecture clearly possesses many highly inspiring features.



Nevertheless, after 70 years, it was felt that major refurbishment was required in order to restore the Synagogue buildings to their former glory. Some parts of the complex had been refurbished when significant changes were made to the Synagogue in 1980. However, many aspects now requiring attention were identified including the Synagogue roof, the Mikveh, the Caretaker's House, the Succah roof, the Heating System, the Boundary wall, Paths and Landscaping. When the sums were done following an in-depth report from the architects, Burnett Pollock Associates it was revealed that the total cost would be close to £450,000. Following a campaign of seeking funds from a wide range of Charities and Trusts, most of which were unsuccessful, the positive reply we had all been hoping for arrived from the Heritage Lottery Fund – we had been granted £83,000 - but only to restore the Synagogue roof and Mikveh..



The remaining aspects of the building project were all deemed ineligible. Although further support was received from other trusts, especially the Scottish Churches Architectural Heritage Trust, it was largely for the Mikveh. This raised the question - How were we to fund any of those aspects deemed ineligible by the Heritage Lottery Fund? Above all, restoration of the Caretaker's House was deemed an important priority. But it was estimated that funding of around £40,000 would need to be found before this project could be undertaken. However, the very kind, generous legacy received from the will of the late Betty Franklin enabled the entire 'wish list' of restoration of the Synagogue roof, Mikveh and Caretaker's House to be considered. Plans were drawn up, quotes obtained and considered by the Synagogue Council and the Community at a Special General Meetings. Eventually, a Contractor, D Moffatt & Sons, was chosen and the programme of building works commenced in April 2003.



### **Restoration of Synagogue buildings**

Of the 3 building projects undertaken, the Synagogue roof and Mikveh were completed over the summer months (April – June) while the Caretaker's house was restored and refurbished in the July - September period.

### **Synagogue roof**

The deteriorating and poor state of the Synagogue roof had long made it a priority to be completely repaired. The Heritage Lottery grant provided the opportunity to remove the asphalt layer from the 10 flat sections that together form the Synagogue's roof – many at different heights - and replace it with a 'state of the art' roof.



The new roof covering, a Sarnafil roof, was installed by a Sarnafil approved contractor from Fife, Aim Developments Ltd. It involved laying a high performance single layer polymeric roof covering over a layer of rigid polyurethane insulation in order to provide a secure, free draining and completely weathertight roof possessing, as a result of the insulation layer, increased energy efficiency. This type of roof also possesses the added advantage that the single ply membrane is laid up and over the parapet walls completely sealing them from water ingress. Furthermore, it is a simple



covering to repair. The roof possess a 25 year guarantee, and our hope is that it will be many, many years before any repairs ever need to be considered.



At the same time as the roof was being repaired, many areas of defective external walls around the outside of the Synagogue were re-pointed.

#### **Mikveh**

Although the ritual bath within the Mikveh had, through the generosity and input of Rabbi Sedley and Chesed L'Yisroel (Dayan Gukovitsky) in London been brought back into use, the Mikveh building, having been unused for a number of years previously was in a serious state of disrepair and required a complete overhaul. Of concern was the structural movement to one corner of the building. This required particular attention and necessitated internal brickwork to be rebuilt and all the walls replastered. In addition a new steel lintel was inserted over the door opening to the Mikveh. The roof structure also required, replacing – with a Sarnafil high performance roof over a layer of insulation – ie the same structure that was used for the Synagogue. Although a major refit of all the internal fittings was also required the overall aim internally was to retain where possible the same basic design that was adopted when the Mikveh was built in 1932. In fact, the existing timber screens around the ritual bath after being varnished with a redwood stain came to life. Once the new sanitaryware including bath and wash hand basin had been erected and the redecoration of the Mikveh completed, it looked very impressive – now ready for use by members and the increasing number of visitors who

come to Edinburgh each year. We can be highly proud of possessing such a beautiful Mikveh here within our Shul. A final elegant touch is the stained glass window created and given by Valerie Simpson.

#### **Caretaker's House**

Perhaps the one building most of our Community especially wished to see repaired and refurbished was the Caretaker's House. This too needed a complete upgrading. Water ingress over many years meant that the entire flat roof structure required replacing with a Sarnafil-type roof

over a layer of insulation. In addition, bedroom ceilings also needed to be repaired – fortunately, however, neither wet or dry rot was located anywhere. General dampness nevertheless had

“after 70 years, it was felt that major refurbishment was required in order to restore the Synagogue buildings to their former glory”

led to the original metal frame windows needing to be completely replaced – by the same style of windows manufactured by the same organization that had made the original 1932 windows, Critall Windows Ltd. Such were the planning regulations enforced on us as the Caretaker's House, like the Synagogue, is B-listed. The windows, are however of a much improved modern design and with the heating system having also been significantly improved the new windows should now last for many, many years. Following re-pointing of the entire external fabric of the house and further extensive refurbishments to the inside including rewiring, re-plumbing, redecoration and tiling and installation of new sanitary ware, kitchen fitments and floor coverings, a completely restored Caretaker's House was born. What a change - the outcome was amazing. This was clearly evident on the faces of both Christine and David Burns. They were so pleased with the end result and as a consequence so

pleased to return to their 'new' home. As one passes through the front door, a distinct array of colours hits one. The hall leading upstairs is a vivid orange while the downstairs lounge possesses one wall in purple. Passing through the lounge leads to Mrs Burns favourite room - the kitchen. The reason? It now possesses at one end a very attractive dining area which formerly was a couple of cupboards – but no storage space has been lost as the kitchen now possesses lots of wall cupboards. And the upstairs rooms are just as remarkable. I am sure the late Betty Franklin to whom we are so thankful for enabling the restoration of the Caretaker's House to proceed would have been very pleased with the outcome.

#### **Refurbishment and redecoration of Synagogue buildings**

Within the contract of work agreed with D Moffatt & Sons, it was envisaged that as water ingress through the Synagogue roof had led to plaster falling from the ceiling within the Shul this would have to be replaced and the entire ceiling redecorated. However, while the work was progressing, Edward and Maryla Green very kindly offered not only to refurbish and redecorate the remainder of the Shul but to refurbish and redecorate the Beth Hamedrash, the Vestibule, the Staircases, the Classrooms and the Kitchen as well. Incredible generosity. And furthermore, they kindly indicated that they would be happy to undertake and manage the entire project themselves.

Throughout last November and December decorators, electricians, lighting experts busied themselves in the Synagogue complex. We were all itching to see what was happening – but as Edward and Maryla correctly proclaimed 'it is best not to have a look until the project is finished'.

Well – they were absolutely correct – now we can see how magnificent it all is. The former uniform pale interior of the Shul has given way to a rich array of colours – different in each part of

“the overall aim internally was to retain where possible the same basic design that was adopted when the Mikveh was built in 1932”



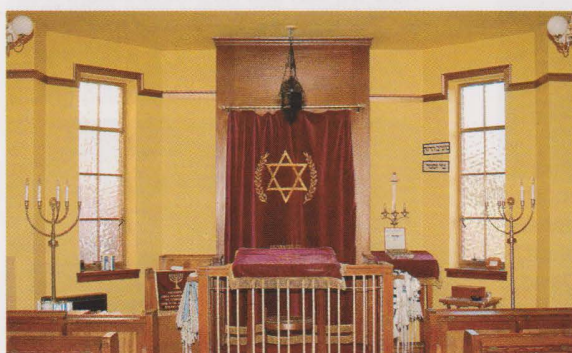
the building – all for a different reason and having a different impact.

Of immediate notice is the incredibly dramatic way in which the deep grey colour of the side-walls in the Synagogue now throw out and emphasize the beautiful stain glass windows – undoubtedly the Synagogue's best asset. But then there are so many other interesting and exciting features which have now appeared since the refurbishment took place. A special feature of the original building in 1932 was the method of lighting which was described as 'an atmospheric system, giving an evenly diffused light over the entire interior, cutting out all direct light and so avoiding glare'. With the introduction of a chandelier into the Synagogue in the 1960's, the 'atmospheric system' has now not been in operation for many years. The redecoration of the Synagogue however provided just the opportunity to reinstall the original



The Burns Kitchen

feature using on this occasion stronger halogen lamps. And how dramatic a change that has been – the cupola with its changed lighting and rich gold rim is now once more the special feature which the founders planned for the Synagogue in 1932. Other striking features within the Synagogue include the triple line decorations in rich gold designed by Edward and Maryla to echo the design of a tallit while the pediments above each of the exit doors at the eastern end of the Synagogue were designed



to copy the apex of the Aron Kodesh.

The Vestibule has undoubtedly come alive – what a beautiful entrance it now makes to the Synagogue – especially with the notice board removed. The soft colour mixture of coral with plum – specially mixed for the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation – and set against the white sills around the stain glass windows and the white wall plaques – is so attractive and inviting. At the end of the hallway the Beth Hamedrash provides another exciting experience – walls painted in a striking deep antique yellow and bearing a wooden frieze painted in rich gold as are both windows surrounds.

Edward and Maryla Green's design and vision for the Synagogue has, as can be seen above, led to a complete change in mood and feeling. To many, the Synagogue is more warm and cosy. I believe that the elegant redecoration of the Synagogue now provides the Community with a very uplifting environment in which to pray and meet.

When the Synagogue was consecrated in September 1932, a member of the Edinburgh Jewish Community remarked that the consecration was 'A noble dream come true'. Perhaps the same can be said once more. We now have a complex, including Synagogue, Beth Hamedrash, Mikveh and

Caretaker's House in a good state of repair, fully refurbished and elegantly redecorated – at a total cost approaching £230,000. This has been made possible as a result of the grant received from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the very kind, generous legacy received from the will of the late Betty Franklin and the very generous contribution received from Edward and Maryla Green in honour of Sam Latter's 100th birthday – to all of whom we are very, very thankful. I should also like to add sincere thanks to all members of the Building Committee which managed the Restoration project – especially Gerald Glass, the Committee's Convenor and Bill Simpson who ensured everything proceeded smoothly. Walking round our Synagogue complex today, I believe the sentiment 'A noble dream come true' to be just as appropriate now as it was in 1932.



Stained glass window donated by Val Simpson



# Stockholm Jewry

Rabbi David Rose

The time is 3.30pm. Outside it is already dark and seven below zero. Inside is a hive of activity.

At one end of the corridor teenagers surf the Internet. At the other, a Bnei Akiva group is meeting. In the rooms on the side adults are learning Modern Hebrew, the Rabbi is holding a class and second-generation Holocaust survivors hold a meeting. In the middle people buy coffee, cake and sandwiches from another youth serving at the counter. The place is the Jewish community centre in Stockholm on a winter Sunday afternoon. Centret, as it is called, is the centre of a diverse community and best illustrates the vibrancy and breadth of Scandinavia's largest Jewish community. Jews have lived in Sweden for over two hundred years and the community has been strengthened by successive waves of immigration; the last being Polish Jews fleeing the purge of 1969. Few of the original or 'Viking' Jews remain but Stockholm still contains about 10,000 out of Sweden's 18,000 Jews. About 5,500 of these are members of the community; a ratio much better than any community in Britain.

"People of any denomination or none join the community as individual members"

Stockholm is unique in being an 'Einheitsgemeinde', or unified community. The one Conservative and two Orthodox Synagogues, plus various other assorted groups; all belong to one overarching community organisation. People of any denomination or none join the community as individual members. The Community or Judiska Forsamling, deals with issues of common interest; such as security, welfare, the Heder and the annual summer camp. Other community institutions include an old age home and a day school. In another unique arrangement high school students study in a Jewish section of a local high school.

The two Orthodox shuls own their own buildings and run their own affairs. The Conservative synagogue has always been regarded as the 'main' one and until recently decisions about it were made by the whole community; meaning Orthodox representatives were deciding about services in a shul they never went to! The community is run by a 21 member elected council which in turn elects an executive. Politics in the community divide along party lines and follow the Swedish system of PR; with elections held every four years. There are three parties, Traditional, Liberal and Unity; the latter normally being the largest. In the elections held this October, the Traditional party increased its representation at the expense of Unity ending up only one seat behind. In general the system works and lets everyone feel part of one community.

Swedish Jews, like those in Scotland, feel integrated into Swedish society. The local youth even hold an 'anti-Yule' party on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December. Like the society around them, Swedish Jews are cautious and conservative and to change something often takes many months, lots of discussion and much black coffee! They share the Scandinavian penchant for consensus rather than confrontation; an attitude that has conditioned their response to the threats that face them. These include: strong anti-Israel sentiment, Muslim anti-Semitism and legal restrictions on the practice of circumcision. The present Swedish government, however, has had a strong relationship with the community and money paid by them in Holocaust restitution has enabled the establishment of a Jewish institution of higher learning or Padeia. This has been a great success and brings university graduates from all over Europe to study in Stockholm. Like Edinburgh, the community faces the loss of many of its young people; mostly to Israel. Yet some return to work in the community and a stream of Israeli and other immigrants boosts

numbers. The community employs two Rabbis, two Cantors and numerous other educators and bureaucrats. There exists a Jewish Student Society, whose level of activity varies and whose link to the community is often tenuous. The summer season sees an exodus of locals to their summer houses, a Swedish necessity, and an influx of masses of tourists. There are two restaurants certified as kosher and a list of kosher products that can be bought in most stores.

In short a unique country and culture have created a unique community and one well worth a visit.



Inside the Stockholm Orthodox Shul



Community leisure facility

**TACHLES**  
TACHLES is a community magazine for Jews in Sweden. It is published twice a year, in November and May.

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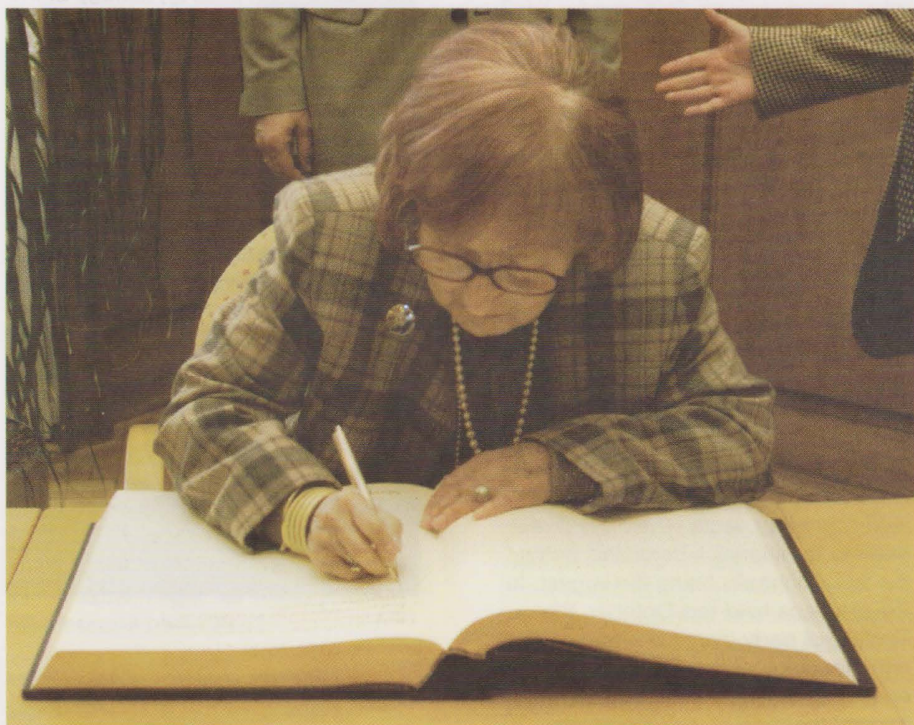
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Two local community magazines



# Return to Wuppertal

Dr Stephen Gruneberg writes together with his mother Vicky Gruneberg.



Vicky Gruneberg signing the Golden Book of the City of Wuppertal in the City Hall in May 2003.  
Photo: courtesy of Nedien Zentrum, Wuppertal.

In May 2003 we went on an extraordinary trip to Germany. The Mayor of the City of Wuppertal, Dr Hans Kremendahl, had invited the remnants of the pre-war Jewish community of Wuppertal to be his official guests. Our group was made up of émigrés from many countries including Australia, England, Germany, Holland, Israel, the United States and of course, Scotland.

The reason for our visit was to celebrate the opening of one of the first purpose-built synagogues to be built in Germany since the Third Reich. The synagogue had in fact been opened in December 2002. At the grand official opening were the German Chancellor and the Presidents of Germany and Israel, dignitaries from all over Europe and members of the local Jewish community.

The site of the synagogue is in the grounds of the Gemarker Church, an Evangelical church in the centre of Wuppertal-Barmen and it is remarkable that the site of the synagogue had been donated by the

church. It is also significant that in a declaration against the Nazis in 1934 this particular church had spoken out publicly against the treatment of the Jews.

Since the violent destruction of the synagogues in Wuppertal, the tiny Jewish community in common with many other remaining Jewish communities in Germany, had had to make do with converted buildings of one sort or another in order to conduct their weekly prayer services. In recent years the influx of Russian Jews to Germany meant new Jewish community centres were needed. The German Land of North Rhine Westphalia, the City of Wuppertal, all the surrounding towns and the Jewish community contributed to the building of the new synagogue.

Here was an opportunity for us to participate in a truly historical event. Here we stood on the steps of the very City Council Chambers, where countless decisions had been taken to carry out acts of racism, cruelty and murder against the Jews. To be made

welcome by Dr Kremendahl, the current mayor of the city, with genuine warmth and deep feelings of consciousness about the wrongs which had been committed was deeply moving.

In his speech Dr Kremendahl made no attempt to paper over the crimes the state had committed. He had a vision of his city in the future thriving as a multicultural city with Jews playing a full and productive role in its cultural, social and economic life. It was only as a tolerant city, which encouraged all its citizens of all religions, creeds and backgrounds, that Wuppertal could possibly hold its head up high in the world and be proud once again of the enlightened human values it represented. After his speech three people, including my mother, spoke in reply on behalf of the visitors. To mark the occasion, the members of our group were invited to sign our names in the Golden Book of the City of Wuppertal.

“The reason for our visit was to celebrate the opening of one of the first purpose built synagogues to be built in Germany since the Third Reich”

At the reception held in the City Chambers and at several official events organised for us, we were joined by a number of remarkable people from Wuppertal, who were making it their life's work to study the history of the Jews in their city. Amongst them was Dr Ulrike Schrader, who is the Head of the Holocaust Education Centre in Wuppertal. Her research and collection of artefacts relating to the Holocaust are housed on the site of the former synagogue in Wuppertal-Elberfeld. The only part of the old synagogue building to survive is a small part of the right-hand brick wall. It had been a building that was very



familiar to my mother Vicky as she revisited the site that long ago in her youth had been the regular meeting place of her family and friends.

We also met Professor Manfred Brusten from the University of Wuppertal. The theme of his research focuses on the Holocaust as an example of State crime. He is also studying the Jewish family units that were destroyed in the period of the Third Reich. This is very similar to the work of Herr Ulrich Föhse who has for years been tracing the family histories of the Jews of Wuppertal and the persecution they suffered. We also met Dr Ernst-Andreas Ziegler who has for many years worked in support of German-Israeli relations and the twinning of the cities of Wuppertal and Beer Sheva.

Our visit marked an opportunity to preserve the memory of the old Jewish community of Wuppertal and give the present Jews living there a sense of continuity with their past. However, it was striking how few members of the present-day Wuppertal Jewish community came out to meet us.

Even in the schul at the Shabbat service there were extremely few members of the present congregation. There would have been barely a *minyan* without the visitors. Although we were invited to partake of lunch after the service in the hall underneath the synagogue, there were hardly any local members to talk to and apart from the young and friendly Russian, who led the service, certainly very few of the 2,000 Russian Jews whose arrival in Wuppertal had made the Jewish community centre and synagogue "necessary".

Nevertheless, the synagogue building itself is notable. It is modern and sensitive with many attractive features. We were given a guided tour by the architect of the building, Hans Christoph Goedecking, who showed us its classrooms, the large hall and of course the synagogue itself. It is undoubtedly a beautiful modern building with the outside windows representing a *menorah*. The steel beams in the ceiling form the diagonals of a giant *Mogen David* and dominate the synagogue. There is also a memorial light and plaque dedicated to the victims of the Holocaust who had come from

Wuppertal.

The events laid on by the City fathers were well suited to the group and had been brilliantly organised. There was a visit to the Jewish cemeteries, a night out at the opera to see Rossini's *Barber of Seville* and we were given a special ride on the famous monorail, built over 100 years ago, which runs suspended from a rail high above the length of the River Wupper from one end of Wuppertal to the other and is a great tourist attraction as well as being a very practical means of transport.

"the whole experience gave us reason to hope and to remember that there are many decent people in Germany who deeply regret what happened. And we, as Jews, have a duty to support them"

We also went on a bus tour and passed the street named after Vicky's brother in law and Stephen's uncle – Giveonstrasse. Born Richard Gruneberg he left Wuppertal under the Third Reich before he had even finished his schooling. He assisted many people to escape out of Nazi Europe to get to what was then Palestine. After the war he settled in a

kibbutz called Mishmar Ha Emek and changed his name to Raphael Giveon. He became interested in ancient history and was awarded a PhD from the Sorbonne in Paris, never having prepared for, or sat any other examination. He went on to become the first Professor of Egyptology at the University of Tel Aviv and a good friend of Moshe Dayan. In recognition of his achievements the town of his birth had named a street after him, stating on the street name board that he had been a forced emigrant of the Third Reich.

On reflection our trip was emotional, profound and instructive. We were part of a process of healing and reconciliation. There had not been any attempt to paper over the history of Wuppertal. Although my mother and I were aware that not everybody in Wuppertal necessarily shared the views of the people we had the good fortune to meet, the whole experience gave us reason to hope and to remember that there are many decent people in Germany who deeply regret what happened. And we, as Jews, have a duty to support *them*.

Dr Stephen Gruneberg is a Research Fellow at the University of Reading having taught for some years in the Bartlett School of Architecture, Planning and Construction Management at UCL. Stephen has written several books on the economics of the construction industry and lives in London.

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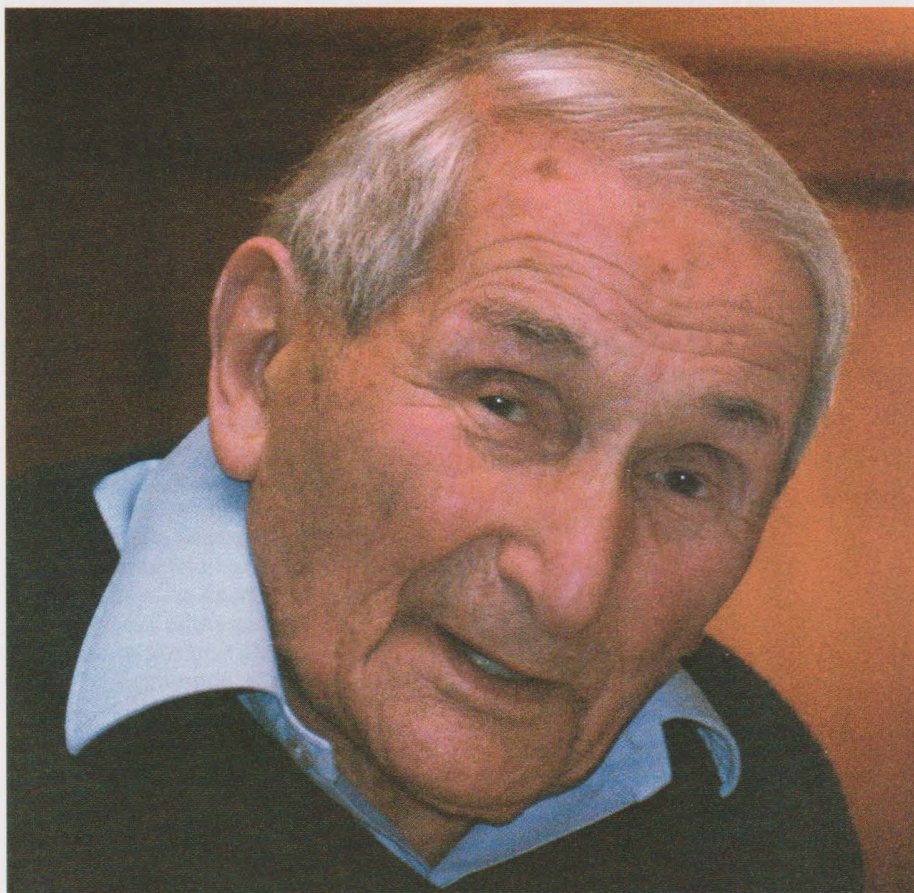
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# Sam Latter - an appreciation

Edward Green



It's official! A telegram from Her Majesty the Queen and a celebratory card from the Scottish Football Association is all the proof I require to confirm that Sam Latter is now a centenarian. A man who has been on this earth for one hundred years. Of course, in biblical terms, that could be seen as a mere stripling, but for us a hundred years is a fine achievement, and even more so when it is achieved with such grace, humour and panache.

"Perhaps, Sam's greatest strength and the thing I admire in him most, is that he has not only moved with the times, but embraced the new world thrown at him from every direction"

Sammy has seen the world literally

change in front of his eyes. That is no metaphor for him; it is a fact for Sammy was born into the world of horse drawn carriages, of gas lamps and fashions we would regard as ancient. Now Sammy enjoys a life within a world that is fast moving, both physically and mentally and quite transformed from the days of old.

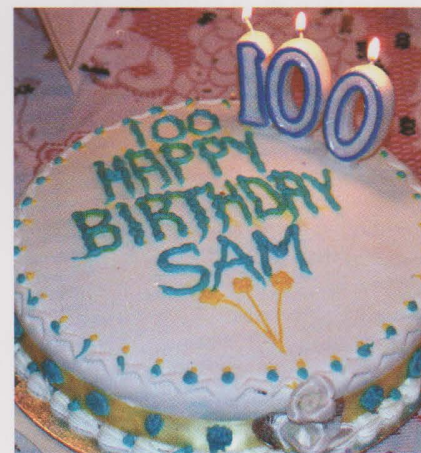
Sam's age is unique in our family. My late maternal grandmother, Mona, was a Latter (one of the many Latter cousins) and she married a Joe Sagman (also a cousin) and in both families, there is longevity but no centenarian. So that makes Sammy special to us before we start. However, he is a man of many fine attributes, and age has nothing to do with that. In fact, age can often dampen these qualities.

Perhaps, Sam's greatest strength and the thing I admire in him most, is that he has not only moved with the times, but embraced the new world thrown

at him from every direction, whilst retaining his interest in all that has past. Born into a large family, and a family typical of the times, he was quick enough to realise that things were not going to be as they were. He trod a path, which whilst not unique for a Jewish boy at that time, was most unusual, becoming a professional footballer in his twenties. Nowadays, we are used to Jewish footballers and their large salaries, then he was a rarity, and all for the princely sum of £6.10s.00 a week.

Being from a large family myself, with relations 'in every port', there are cousins that one is destined never to meet. On moving to Edinburgh, I was to learn that we had one cousin there, a Sam Latter, and I put it to the back of my mind. However, sitting in shul some weeks later, a gentleman came over, and I knew at once that this man with his distinctive Latter looks was that man! I was delighted to be acquainted with him, but even more so when I realised what a special man he was and remains.

Here was a man, who was over 90, drove his own car, and a new one at that, played a mean game of bridge, was the Treasurer of the Luncheon Club, delivered meals on behalf of the Club to those who couldn't get out, and above all regaled us with wonderfully fascinating stories from the past without ever repeating himself!! Friday nights were often to become a trip down the family's memory lane, and hearing stories about your parents and grandparents





and their siblings as children has proven to be the most fascinating of all.

Maryla and I quickly realised what a loveable man Sam was, not only to those close to him but to anyone with whom he came into contact. We soon learnt that Sam has his many admirers, both within and outside of the Community, and is much loved in the City of Edinburgh. At the last count, he has received over ninety birthday cards and we're still counting! His genuine interest in people, their lives, and all that goes on around them has endeared him to all that meet him, and has ensured that he has an impressive collection of friends encompassing all ages and circles.

Ian Shein wrote a wonderful article in the Edinburgh Star about Sammy in 1997, detailing his career so I shall not go over old ground. However, in this appreciation, I would remind the reader of certain of the highlights of Sam's life.



Philip Mason, President of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation congratulates Sam on his century.

In his teens, he was to take a great interest and to be immensely talented in football, becoming a professional playing for the well known and well supported Scottish team, Third Lanark. This passion has survived to the present day; many a time I have called to visit to find Sammy sitting on the end of his bed, as close to the action as he can be, watching the latest match on TV, and praying, I know, that there will be no interruptions from visiting relations!! Marrying an Edinburgh girl, Flora Strachan, in 1931, he moved to Edinburgh and was to purchase and live in the same house in Liberton

Gardens for over seventy years. They were to open three gown shops in Edinburgh prior to the war; interrupted supply at the war's start made this business unsustainable. Sammy was then called up to join in the war effort, and initially served in the RAF at Drem, coincidentally with other members of the Community. Receiving his discharge in 1945, Sam and Flora were to run a confectionery and cigarette shop at the exit to the old Caledonian Goods yard for 21 years and there must be many of his old customers who remember Sam and Flora from there with great affection.

Upon the expiry of the lease, (the property is no longer there), Sam bought a tyre and battery business in Lauriston Street; and on his retirement in 1973, Sam sold the business to his manager, whose sons are still there to this day.

Sadly, I never met Flora, his wife of near sixty years but by all accounts

they made a great and adoring couple. In her, Sam, I believe, found his soul mate, a partner who was to share every facet of their lives, both at home and at work. His devotion was clear and undoubtedly her loss since 1990 has left a void that has never been filled.

In January of 2000, Sam fell whilst crossing the road at Cameron Toll. He does not remember the fall, but in doing so, his hip was broken. Taken into the Royal Infirmary, he was unfortunately to break his other hip when he was undergoing physio. In July, of that year, he was eventually

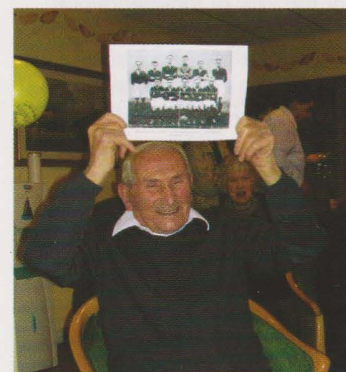
able to leave hospital and he made the decision that a move to a residential home would be best. Strachan House in Craigcrook Road was selected, and it proved to be a good choice as Sammy has been well cared for and been happy there. In his indomitable style, it was not long before he knew about all the residents, the staff and the management of the home, and in doing so has become their most popular resident.

Sammy keeps a keen interest in all that happens at Strachan House and is consulted about any improvements or projects they may have. When plans were announced for an expensive new conservatory to be situated on what he and other residents felt was the wrong side of the home, Sam was the one to lobby for a change of plans for this heavy capital outlay. Instead, at Sam's recommendation, Strachan House bought a minibus so that the residents could enjoy outings. This has proven to be a great success.

And imagine my surprise, when a few weeks ago, I popped in to see him during luncheon, and found Sammy the disc jockey in charge of the HiFi and choosing and changing the music for all the residents' enjoyment.

Ever the 'outdoor' type, Sam was a keen golfer and walker. His ruddy complexion, evident today, is testament to that. Every day, apart from the most hazardous, Sammy will take his constitutional and from early to late summer, as long as there is a hint of the sun, Sammy is to be found in the garden at Strachan House, equally happy on his own or with company.

He is a man with a great sense of humour, easy to love and undoubtedly an inspiration to us all.



Sammy with his Third Lanark team photo.



# Visiting Israel 2003

John Cosgrove

We used to visit Israel every year, usually at Passover time in April, which is a splendid time to go because the weather is perfect, not too hot and the spring flowers are starting to bloom and the perfume of the orange blossom greets you when you touch down at Ben Gurion Airport. However, for the past two years, because of the security situation, we felt it was "too dangerous" to go. When we decided that this was simply an excuse and that it might be good



Rabbi Shalom Shapira with Yehudith

to go at Succot time in October, our friends started to question our sanity. Indeed, as the time grew nearer, my colleagues at work seemed to take it in turn to ask me if I realised I was going to a war zone and if this was what I really wanted to do. Let me say at the outset, we did not think that it was "brave" or "heroic" to go, nor did we go out of a sense of duty, we went simply because we wanted to and I hope that some of you reading this might be encouraged to go there and see for yourselves.

My interest in Israel was kindled as a five year old in Hebrew Classes in Garnethill in Glasgow when my charismatic teacher Dorothy Isaacs (nee Berman) used to tell us heroic stories of the War of Independence. (She eventually moved to Birmingham where she taught my future son in law Joel Korn.) When I was seven I joined the Zionist youth movements, first Habonim then B'nai Akiva and enjoyed the summer camps which always had an Israeli theme. From a family point of view, I was fascinated by the fact that my paternal grandparents, who died before the establishment of the State of Israel, were such strong Zionists that their

greatest wish was to be buried in the Holy Land. To ensure this, they emigrated from London to Palestine in 1935, died during the Second World War and were buried on the Mount of Olives. Because of the War and because the Mount of Olives fell into Jordanian territory, my father was not able to visit the graves of his parents until 1967. My father used to send regular sums of money to his aged parents in Palestine, but they were too proud to accept it. Instead, my grandmother Sarah took a lawyer to a plot of waste land covered with sand, appropriately called Ohel Sara (the tent of Sarah), brought out the bag of money and said to him in Yiddish, "Buy it for my children". When my father died in 1973, we found the Kushan (land registry certificate) amongst his papers. We took it to a lawyer in Tel Aviv who discovered that the sandy plot of land was now in Holon, the 5<sup>th</sup> largest city in Israel and that builders were keen to buy the land to build flats. That was the good news. The bad news was that although my brother and I owned half the plot of land between us, the other half now belonged to sixteen different descendants of Grandma Sarah and was therefore very much reduced in value. Eventually we found a builder who was willing to buy the land from eighteen different people at a knockdown price and I used my share to fund an annual "Grandma Sarah" meal at a Tel Aviv restaurant. But even that offer of a free meal in Tel Aviv was not enough to entice us back in bad times.



John and Hazel Cosgrove at a wine tasting with Yehudith Shapira

On Yom Kippur this year in Edinburgh, Rabbi David Rose gave an impassioned sermon, exhorting members of the congregation to resolve to visit Israel in the course of

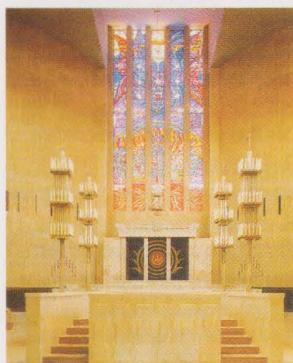
the next year. He painted a gloomy picture of life in Israel caused by the current intifada producing fear, political uncertainty and economic depression. The consequent lack of tourists had had a devastating effect on an industry upon which the economy relied. So when we left for Israel on the very next day, we were prepared for the very worst. As we waited to board our flight, we observed the passengers on the incoming flight arriving in London, a high percentage of them religious, bearing with them their Lulavim (palm branches) for the forthcoming festival of Succot which they were going to celebrate in the UK. At the same time we observed that many of our fellow passengers were going to Israel with Lulavim purchased in the UK. So we concluded that the 'in thing' in religious circles is to have a lulav from abroad wherever that may be. El Al flights being full of Jewish passengers are always very lively with many interesting scenes and I am reminded of the current joke circulating on the internet which sums up a typical El Al flight to Israel. It is the month of December and the plane has just landed in Israel and the Captain announces over the intercom, "Ladies

"we did not think that it was "brave" or "heroic" to go, nor did we go out of a sense of duty, we went simply because we wanted to"

and Gentlemen we have just landed at Ben Gurion Airport; we trust you have had a pleasant flight; please remain in your seats and do not remove your seat belts until the plane has come to a complete stop. For those of you in your seats we wish you a Merry Christmas and to those of you already standing in the aisles we wish you a Happy Chanukah". Despite Rabbi Rose's gloomy prediction, we did not encounter gloom and doom. Succot is the Festival of Joy and people were determined to be happy. We got together with friends, many of whom had an Edinburgh connection. Danny and Debby Sinclair and their children are all well and busy. Yonatan who is in the army had volunteered to join a crack paratroop regiment and his parents were understandably concerned but very proud



nevertheless. Yael now has two children, a girl of two and a baby boy. We also met up with Shalom Shapira and his charming new wife, Yehudith. They had just returned from Germany where Rabbi Shapira had officiated at the High Holydays. They took us on a fascinating tour of Zichron Yaakov, a town in the foothills of Mount Carmel where we visited the Winery founded by Baron Edmund de Rothschild. Naturally we went for a tasting which was conducted in Hebrew, but this was no problem as Shalom provided us with a simultaneous translation and ensured that all my questions were adequately answered. We stayed in one of our favourite spots, Herzliya Pituach, a small town



The Great Synagogue in Jerusalem

on the coast between Tel Aviv and Netanya. There are several large hotels and because of its dependence on the tourist industry, we expected to find a town on the decline. Far from it. In the last two years they have built a large Marina packed with boats of all shapes and sizes, surrounded by

dozens of new restaurants serving meals to suit every taste, kosher and not so kosher. Close by is a huge upmarket shopping mall which would rival the best in the USA, busy and bustling with fashion conscious Israelis. Eating a meal in one of these outdoor restaurants and watching the boats gliding in and out of their berths was idyllic, almost like dining at the old harbour in Nice. Almost, because in Nice, there is not a Succah attached to any of the restaurants! Reassuringly, the degree of security was high in these public places and everyone was scanned as they entered, just as they would be at an airport, but it was all done efficiently and politely.

One of the highlights of our short stay was to worship on the first day of Succot at the beautiful Great Synagogue in Jerusalem. It was packed with mainly English speaking people who were spellbound by the wonderful service led by Cantor Naftali Hershtik accompanied by a large professional choir conducted by Eli Jaffe. Some of us will recall that when they visited Glasgow a few years ago as part of a UK tour and performed in Queens Park Synagogue, a coach load of us went from Edinburgh to hear them in concert. Hearing them live at an actual service is something very special.

The current situation in the Middle East has made me think about my whole relationship with Israel and what it means to me. As a Jew, I feel that my love for Israel is unconditional,

similar to that between a parent and a child. And just as I don't always agree with all that my children do, I don't have to agree with everything the Israeli Government does. Sometimes I violently disagree and it hurts, but deep down I have an understanding

"Eating a meal in one of these outdoor restaurants and watching the boats gliding in and out of their berths was idyllic, almost like dining at the old harbour in Nice"

that they have to live there while we are hundreds of miles away living in relative safety. If a non Jew criticises Israel, my automatic reaction is to jump to its defence and often it is difficult to defend the indefensible but I do my best. The older I get, the more I tend to see attacks against Israel as an attack against the Jewish People and I find the recent but not unprecedented wave of anti-Semitism in Europe quite alarming. The UK is not quite so bad, but the Board of Deputies and SCoJeC (The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities) is acutely aware of any moves which affect Jews living in Scotland. If I had children living at the other end of the world in Australia or New Zealand, I would surely make the effort to visit them, despite the dangers of air travel, so how can I abandon visiting Israel especially at this time when things are so difficult. It is up to each individual to assess the situation and make up his or her mind - we are booking to go for Passover.

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# Polish Taxi Blues

Micheline Brannan



Heroes Monument

My mother was born in Poland in 1929, and in September 1939, my grandmother had the good sense to take the family to the Soviet Union, where, by a mixture of luck and judgement, they survived various privations, to be repatriated to Poland by the Soviets in 1945. The family left

“We arrived to find an aspiring Western capitalist country with a Marks and Spencer and a Macdonalds in the centre of Warsaw and a major campaign under way to persuade Poles to vote ‘yes’ in their forthcoming referendum on EU membership”

for Glasgow in 1947, and my mother did not return to Poland until 1985, when she paid a visit with my brother. Now it was my turn to join her in what might be a last visit.

Her last visit was during the rise of Solidarity, but before the fall of Communism. She and my brother had help from Kazhik, a survivor living in Warsaw who had the luxury of a car, and she found everything she was looking for. She was convinced that nothing would have changed. But 18 years is a long time and in that period Communism has been swept away. We arrived to find an aspiring Western capitalist country with a Marks and Spencer and a Macdonalds in the centre of Warsaw and a major campaign under way to persuade Poles to vote ‘yes’ in their forthcoming referendum on EU membership. We

There were 2 countries I never expected to visit in my life – Poland and Germany – and I have spent a week in each in the last 12 months. I didn’t write anything after Germany but the visit to Poland has given me an urge to share my experiences with readers of the Star. Maybe others would like to tell me about similar visits and how they felt.

Last summer we visited Budapest and Prague on a coach trip. In each city I was drawn to the museum-like remnants of once vibrant Jewish communities, which will be familiar to many readers. On the journey back Mike was taken ill and hospitalised in Giessen, a small town near Frankfurt. Even in such an obscure place, I sought out reminders of the Holocaust. Giessen had 2 shuls before WW2. They were destroyed on Kristallnacht but in 1996 one was rebuilt and now nestles behind high walls and railings near to Giessen’s small historic town centre. Duncan and I visited twice but never found it open.

I liked Germany much more than I expected to. The German doctors and nurses were efficient, good humoured and kind. However I still felt strangely vulnerable, and I was a bit apprehensive about going to Poland with my mother on a planned trip down memory lane.

found a country of contrasts, mainly friendly, Western, service orientated, but with surprising relics of Communism scattered about.

To me there was also a disturbing disjunction, similar to what I had felt in Prague and Budapest, between the seemingly ‘normal’ present and the ghosts of the past. In my worst moments I felt that the Poles prefer their Jews dead and in ghostly form. The taxi drivers are on the look out for Jewish tourists and anxious to take them on a tour of the obvious and less obvious places, but some do it with consideration and empathy and others with a hint of real condescension. This article reflects both experiences.

Our first destination was Otwock. To go there, we had to leave from the station in central Warsaw, which



serves the suburban lines. It is a remnant of Communism, with uncaring ticket office staff who cannot muster a smile and who tell you smugly that the toilet is closed today. The local trains are covered in graffiti from end to end and have hard plastic benches that keep your back ramrod straight the length of the hour long journey, in which the train crawls at snail's pace through rundown suburban stations.

On arrival in Otwock we found scores of taxis lined up around a horseshoe road – the approach to the station – which has not changed from the street my mother remembers from 64 years ago. Everyone was desperate for a fare, but we ignored them and started to walk. My mother was heading for her first home, on Reymont Street. She was sure she remembered how to get there.

But first we had a more pressing need, which caused us to gatecrash a Catholic church, and surprise an old woman in a nylon overall who found us in the act of using the priest's private toilet. No public loos in Otwock – another reminder of Communism.

We headed on towards Reymont Street and I gradually became aware that my mother had regressed in her mind to a little girl of 6 or 7 with a front ponytail, as in old photographs, running home from her primary

school. But now she was dragging herself along in the heat, barely able to believe that she had found this journey so manageable as a small child. We reached Reymont Street, which was a long road through villas set about with woods and gardens. My mother was looking for her old house but she could recognise no landmarks and eventually we gave up and asked in a florist shop and then a tavern. With their help we found the proper intersection, but no sign of my mother's former home. 'But it was here when I came with Kazhik,' she said. 'I found it immediately.' I felt so sorry for her, trying futilely to locate the half-remembered dwelling. There were some rather ancient wooden houses, but not hers, she was sure. We pressed on, looking for her second home, and then her third. We failed each time. We decided to head back for the railway station.

On arrival there, my mother said that she wanted to visit the 'Shtetl' – the township she remembered from her childhood that would give me an idea what the Jewish Shtetl had been like. So at long last we commandeered a taxi and she explained to the driver what she was looking for. He was mystified. He accepted there was a shopping street but it was about two minutes walk from the station and what was the point of his driving us there? But my mother insisted and once we were there, she asked to see the ghetto. The penny dropped with

our driver and he offered to take us on a tour of 'Jewish' Otwock. This was a very considerate and empathic driver. He knew exactly what we wanted. We were not the first. For 50 Zlotys (about £10) he took us to the ghetto, now just a cobbled yard near the railway track, to my mother's old primary school, to a memorial to Otwock Jews who had been rounded up and shot, and to a Jewish hotel with wooden statues of iconic orthodox figures in its garden. At each place he stopped while we

got out to have a proper look. At the hotel he waited for quite a long time outside while we explored. We found a party of elderly Jews from Warsaw who were receiving their keys for a two week stay. My mother fell into conversation with one of them – a survivor who had got through the War by being married to a Pole, to whom she is still married after 64 years. We returned to our taxi. My mother was satisfied. She had seen, and shown her daughter, Jewish Otwock.

"I wandered around feeling intensely sad and overawed by the ghosts haunting those streets"

While in Warsaw we were taken to see the sights by a new acquaintance. A..... is a 66 year old Polish academic who did not even know that she was Jewish until her uncle from Australia told her a few years ago. Her mother, who had been married to a Polish officer, kept this from her for decades, and even when A..... discovered the truth, she found it difficult to discuss the matter openly with her mother. During WW2, her family had gone to stay in the country where they owned a water mill. Her father's secret was known to the family and one day he was betrayed by a young worker at the mill. An argument ensued which resulted in A.....'s father being pushed into the mill and ground to pieces in the works. Her 12 year old brother had to take out the bits and then there was a funeral. Her father's family disowned the Jewish wife and her children so they were forced to hide in various places until the War was over, following which her mother did well in the Communist Polish administration. This daughter of a civil servant had done well academically and had a university career but her marriage to a colleague failed partly because he could not cope with the revelation about her origins. To this day her university colleagues do not know.

She took us to the 'ghetto' which has no visible borders now, but has merged into Warsaw proper. Only here and there are memorials, such as the Umschlagplatz, the notorious waiting area where Jews were rounded up to be deported by train to the concentration camps. Although there is a large significant marble



Isaac Synagogue





Symbolic Graves

memorial, she had never visited it until she took us there. I did not like the way the ground around the Umschlagplatz memorial was untended and overgrown with dandelions and young men were loitering and smoking in the area. The locals seemed perfectly aware of the notorious past. Even the girls in the camera shop knew where it was. A..... was quite familiar with the memorial to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising where the various wreaths left by AJEX and others after a recent 60 year commemoration ceremony were still hanging. I wandered around feeling intensely sad and overawed by the ghosts haunting those streets – Mila, Krochmalnaya, Anielska – so well known as ghetto street names. A little stall was selling postcards and souvenirs. There were all sorts of tour groups.. I saw trams driving through one of the main streets and imagined

the trams with windows blacked out, so that the Poles could not see the sufferings of their Jewish neighbours. And I was conscious of contradiction. The Communists took the rubble of the ghetto and ground it into concrete to build undistinguished four storey blocks of flats, keeping only the ghetto street names but none of its features. They built up housing behind the Memorial to the Uprising so that it no longer stood out against the sky as it was meant to do, but against a backdrop of these ugly flats. Yet ceremonies are held regularly involving hordes of foreign dignitaries. And Marek Edelman, the last survivor of the uprising, is frequently on TV and is a celebrity. 'The Pianist' had a prestigious opening and has been a huge success in Warsaw. So it appears that the Poles really care to honour and preserve the memory of these Jews, but are they being used

for something?

Not far from the Uprising Memorial is a monument commemorating Willi Brandt's visit in 1970 when he came to 'apologise' for the War. In the top right hand corner a small menorah is the only testimony to the fact that the Jews deserved the bulk of these apologies. And yet this memorial was only erected in 2000. The inscription extols German-Polish friendship and it was obviously one of the first steps in pro-EU membership propaganda. Another ambiguous message, it seemed to me.

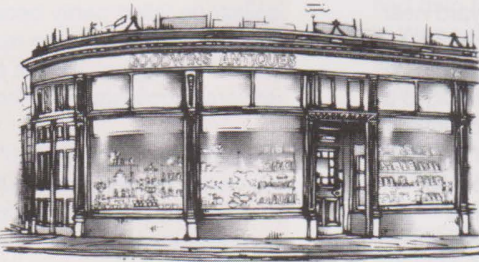
*"maybe dead Jews are just a live tourist industry"*

At least there is Jewish life of a sort in Warsaw but when we went to Krakow, we found a whole area – Kasimierz – with seven preserved synagogues and not a Jewish person in sight, except for the tour parties of Israeli and American Jewish kids, and a few Jews mixed in with a party from France. We took a tour by electric buggy from Krakow's historic town centre to Kasimierz. The geography student who drove us was charming. He played a CD in English describing the landmarks but added comments of his own and when we arrived at a synagogue that he knew to be open to the public, he offered us the chance to take a peep inside. But it was very discouraging. Even though we only had a few seconds, someone at the door wanted our money and was relentless in demanding it before we could even glance through at the interior. Maybe the flow of tourists is such that the people feel overwhelmed and this is their way of protecting themselves – or maybe dead Jews are just a live tourist industry.

Despite this offputting start we returned to Kasimierz under our own steam on our second day, and we visited the Isaac synagogue, paying the requisite admission fee. This bare building has two video shows running constantly. One is of the ghetto, before everyone was rounded up and deported. Another is of a most remarkable propaganda film on behalf of an organisation called TOZ, that

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was active before the War in raising money for public health measures among Poland's poor Jews. The soundtrack was in Yiddish and the subtitles in French. We saw how young Jewish women were trained as nurses; how baby clinics were set up, how children were given school meals and encouraged to do exercise and how their health was monitored. The poverty was abject, the TOZ measures paternalistic but largely successful in rescuing children from the worst effects of ignorance, bad housing and inadequate food and clothes. I watched this with fascination, thinking how many of these TOZ babies ended up in the crematoria at Auschwitz, and wondering what point there had been in looking after them so well. It was heartbreaking.

It was also heartbreaking to see the footage of Jews in the ghetto, smiling at the cameras as no doubt ordered to do by the Nazis, because this was propaganda, just as the TOZ film was propaganda, only for a different purpose. The Nazi film was to show Jews happy in the ghetto so the world would not suspect what was to come.

In Krakow Hitler certainly had his way – to turn the Jews into a museum piece. They are sold in the market, as carved statues, in Chassidic garb, Jewish leprechauns!

And yet we loved Krakow, which is just as picturesque as Prague and yet unspoilt. It was an absolute gem architecturally and atmospherically. And I found myself wishing it had never had Jews so that we did not have to carry all this terrible baggage and could have enjoyed it properly.

In Krakow we met up with another of

my mother's second friend Rutka, a lady of about 78 who has never left Poland and survived the War in hiding. She is active in the Polish 'hidden children' movement, and has told her story in a book which has just been published in Poland and I hope to get an English copy from her by e-mail. I cannot say more as she hopes to find an English publisher.

So finally, we returned to Warsaw, and decided to spend our last afternoon visiting the cemetery at Okopowa Street. We boarded a taxi outside our hotel and we got the taxi driver from hell. As soon as he discovered we wanted to go to the Jewish cemetery he started aggressively offering to take us to the Jewish sights of Warsaw, including places that were very far away and would be expensive to get to, as I knew from my map. We refused. We only wanted to go to the cemetery. So he started a tirade to my mother about how Jews were gangsters and cheats and were involved in money laundering scams between Poland and Israel and how he had worked for Jews but had to leave etc etc. While I could not tell exactly what he was saying I could tell that it was not pleasant and my mother was feeling harassed.

When he stopped I did not have exactly the right change for the fare, so rather than let him go short I passed him a 50 Zloty note, and he misinterpreted my wave of my hand to mean I did not want any change. He pocketed the lot, in other words taking a 30 Zloty tip, and drove off. He must have thought that Jews were very stupid, whereas we had not wanted him to think we were mean!

There were more Jews in the

cemetery than anywhere else. This included Jews who died before and during the War, and others whose gravestones showed that they had survived throughout the War and lived to be buried in Warsaw. There were also symbolic graves for Holocaust victims, financed by benefactors, and many many tins from the Yahrzeit candles that visitors had lit. We were

**"I found myself wishing it had never had Jews so that we did not have to carry all this terrible baggage"**

cross about the taxi driver and it was difficult to get into the right mood for the cemetery. But we were glad we had gone there and it seemed a fitting end to our trip.

I don't know what I think about Eastern Europe and its lost Jews. I asked my mother, who is a survivor of those folk. She said that perhaps the Holocaust had eugenic benefits for the Jews. Watching the TOZ film, God forgive me, I could not help feeling that there might be something in that. But surely there was a way to lift those Jews out of their abject poverty and ignorance. Surely they did not have to be ethnically cleansed.

I recently saw an advert for a film that asks, "If you could be God for a week, what would you do?" My answer is definitely that I would stop Hitler ever coming to power and I would have 6 million Jews and their descendants still living in Europe. I am one of those people who cannot find a meaning for the Holocaust in the creation of the State of Israel. But there is some meaning in the European Convention on Human Rights and in the enormous turnaround in public attitudes in Germany.

I was excited to read in *Scotland on Sunday* on 22 June that 200,000 Jews now live in Germany compared with 15,000 after WW2. The pre-War population was 500,000, so the build up is remarkable. The Germans have welcomed all sorts of migrants and Jews take their place among Turks and others who have found a decent living and a reasonably safe environment in that previously xenophobic country.

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# Keeping a sense of proportion

## Anti-semitism in Britain today

Michael Adler



According to the Chief Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Sacks, 'after more than half a century of Holocaust education, inter-faith dialogue, United Nations declarations, dozens of museums and memorials, hundreds of films, thousands of courses, and tens of thousands of books dedicated to exposing its evils' anti-semitism is not only 'alive, active and virulent' but has reached 'unprecedented levels today'. And he is not alone in this belief. The argument that anti-semitism is deadly serious and getting worse in Europe was set out in a recent article in the *Washington Post*. According to

"What is odd is not the anti-semitism of today but its relative absence during the past half century"

Charles Krauthamer, 'In Europe, it is not very safe to be a Jew... ...What is odd is not the anti-semitism of today but its relative absence during the past half century. That was the historical anomaly. Holocaust shame kept the demon corked... ...But now the atonement is passed'. France's large Jewish community [there are about twice as many Jews in France as there in the UK] has been especially hard-hit by a spate of attacks on synagogues but anti-semitism in Britain is also said to be on the increase. In April, the *Independent* published a front-page

picture of a desecrated synagogue in north London with the headline 'A picture that tells a shocking story: the rise of anti-semitism in Britain.'

What is the explanation for, and evidence of, this alleged rise in anti-semitism? Antony Lerman, formerly Executive Director of the London-based *Institute for Jewish Policy Research*, has identified four possible explanations. First, it is suggested that we are witnessing a 'new anti-semitism', in the form of criticism of Israel that is so hostile that it can only be explained as hatred of Jews. Melanie Phillips, the *Daily Mail* columnist, is an exponent of this view. According to her, a new form of anti-semitism has indeed emerged in Britain. She claims that 'Anti-semitism is protean. After the Holocaust it went underground, but it has now been given a respectable new identity as anti-Zionism. Israel is being systematically dehumanised and demonised as the source of world terror and evil, rather than represented for what it actually is: the front line in the struggle against totalitarian terrorism... ...Double standards are applied so that Israel is damned for its behaviour while silence is maintained over countries doing far worse. Impossible expectations are made of Israel that are applied to no other country in such circumstances. It is the target of systematic and egregious lies and smears. It is presented in the worst possible light by people who display an eagerness to believe that all its actions are malign, even when the facts clearly refute such assumptions'.

Second, anti-semitism is said to be returning because the taboo on it, which has been in place since the Holocaust, has now been lifted. This is because, with Israel portrayed as behaving brutally towards the Palestinians by taking their land, denying their rights and using excessive force in its response to terrorism, Europeans have been relieved of the residual guilt they have felt for the Holocaust. This has freed

the media from the restraints that controlled them in the past and made anti-semitism respectable again. Third, the emergence of crude forms of anti-semitism among Muslims in the Arab world and in European countries is seen as a key component of the new anti-semitism. Finally, the number and severity of anti-Jewish incidents is said to have increased and regarded as unprecedented.

"Israel is being systematically dehumanised and demonised as the source of world terror and evil, rather than represented for what it actually is: the front line in the struggle against totalitarian terrorism"

Most supporters of the 'new anti-semitism' make a distinction between criticism of Israeli government policies, which is, in principle, accepted as legitimate, and denial of the right of Israel to exist, which is not. However, there is a tendency to lump all criticisms of Israel together and to regard them as anti-Zionist. Given that Zionism is the ideology of Jewish national liberation, opposition to it is regarded as anti-Jewish or anti-semitic.

Before scrutinising the four arguments identified by Antony Lerman, it is important to acknowledge that if the tombstones of your relatives are desecrated (as happened in Piershill Cemetery not so long ago), if your synagogue is vandalised or if you are subject to anti-semitic abuse, you will have good reason to feel persecuted and may well attribute this to anti-semitism. However, it is important to keep a sense of perspective. A recent article in the *Guardian* contained a summary of serious anti-semitic incidents in a number of European countries in 2003. These are summarised below:



**Britain:** In May, 386 Jewish graves at the Plashet Cemetery, London were desecrated. In August, vandals smashed headstones at a Jewish cemetery in Prestwich and in November the Hillcock Hebrew Congregation Synagogue near Manchester was damaged in an arson attack.

**Germany:** In October, vandals sprayed Nazi slogans on headstones and the cemetery gate in Gundersberg and wreaths laid at a memorial for *Kristallnacht* were defaced.

**France:** In July, a synagogue in Saint-Denis was ransacked, prayer books were torn and 'Juif-mort' ('Jew death') was written on a wall while, in November, the Marcaz Hatorah School in Paris was set on fire.

**Italy:** In March, anti-semitic graffiti appeared on the office of the state-owned radio and television network, in Milan after a journalist of Jewish origin was named director.

**Austria:** A rabbi was assaulted by two youths as he walked home from prayer in Vienna. The attackers kicked the victim and struck his head with a bottle.

**Belgium:** In April, a synagogue in Charleroi was the target of gunfire while, in June, a man of Moroccan descent attempted to explode a vehicle loaded with gas canisters in front of the same synagogue.

These incidents represent only the tip of the iceberg and there were undoubtedly much larger numbers of less-serious anti-semitic incidents in each of the countries referred to. However, it should be noted that there were no race riots and no pogroms and that the number of serious incidents and fatalities were thankfully very few. Since the publication of that article in early November, two of Istanbul's 17 synagogues were destroyed in terrorist attacks in which 24 people, including five Jews, died. Nevertheless, compared with similar tallies that might have been made in the past, the record is not indicative of 'unprecedented levels of anti-semitism'. In any case, isolated anti-semitic incidents, because that is really what they are, are not indicative of widespread or deep-rooted anti-semitism in society. It should be borne in mind that, in Britain and in most European countries, Jews are enjoying unprecedented levels of education and material affluence, and that most of them have probably 'never had it so good'. Jews no

longer work in sweatshops and are no longer subject to the pervasive forms of discrimination that they experienced in the past. They enjoy the same civil, political and social rights and play a prominent part in the life of society, in Britain and in many other European countries.

We should now turn to the four explanations for the alleged rise in anti-semitism outlined above. The first argument, which equates anti-Zionism with anti-semitism, gives an entirely new meaning to the word anti-semitism. It implies that to count as an anti-semite, it is sufficient to hold any view which can be described as 'anti-Zionist' without having to subscribe to any of those things which have historically been associated with an anti-semitic world view, i.e. hatred of Jews per se, belief in a worldwide Jewish conspiracy, belief that Jews either controlled communism and/or capitalism, belief that Jews are racially inferior and so on. In addition, although those who hold this view accept that, in theory, criticism of Israeli government policies is legitimate, they tend not to do so in practice. This is illustrated by a claim in the Chief Rabbi's recent lecture to the *Inter-Parliamentary Committee against Anti-semitism*, in which he argued that accusing Israel of 'racism, ethnic cleansing, attempted genocide, crimes against humanity' was itself 'anti-semitic'. Such an attitude, in my view, is suggestive of paranoia and is extremely hard to justify. If a British institution is accused of 'institutional racism', this does not imply that the accuser is anti-British. Moreover, if the argument were applied to those Israelis who see elements of racism and the denial of human rights in Sharon's policies towards the Palestinians, it would follow that they were being anti-semitic.

The second argument, that perceptions of Israel's behaviour have led to the end of the Holocaust taboo, is also problematic. Although there may be some Holocaust 'fatigue', it has to be set against the extent to which the Holocaust itself has now become embedded in western culture as a moral reference point. There are Holocaust Museums in many countries, Holocaust education programmes are well established and many countries 'celebrate' (if that is the right word) Holocaust Memorial Day. There is clearly some basis for the third

argument, that crude forms of anti-semitism among Muslims in the Arab world and in the west are a key component of the 'new anti-semitism'. Hostility to Israel and to Zionism in the Arab and Muslim worlds is often expressed in extremely offensive anti-semitic terms. Anti-semitism is no longer associated only with the far right but has many supporters among disgruntled Muslims. The emergence of radical forms of Islam undoubtedly poses a real threat to Jewish communities and the growth of Muslim communities in western societies makes them vulnerable. However, it needs to be recognised that Arab and Muslim hostility to Jews is grounded in a genuine political grievance and that it increases and decreases in response to political developments. There were marked increases in the number of violent anti-semitic incidents after the wars in 1967, 1973 and 1982 and during the various *intifadas* and there was a significant decrease following the Oslo Accords. This makes it different from classic European anti-semitism (the 'old anti-semitism'), which was largely based on myth and fantasy and was not particularly sensitive to changes in the outside world. The fourth argument, that there has been a significant increase in the number of anti-semitic incidents, is actually very hard to prove. This is because figures for previous decades are so incomplete that making valid comparisons is actually very difficult indeed.

So what lies behind this claim of a resurgence of anti-semitism today? It is not really surprising that many Jews outside Israel find severe criticism of the Jewish state unsettling and seek to brand it anti-semitic. The State of Israel is, after all, a key element of Jewish identity for religious and non-religious Jews. It came into existence at the moment of greatest weakness for Jews, after the Holocaust, and gave Jews in the diaspora a sense of security and pride. It follows that the 'new anti-semitism' is not just a set of hostile attitudes directed towards Jews but is, in part, a device used by Jews as a means of de-legitimising criticisms of Israel.

We know the extent of anti-immigrant feeling from recent European elections, but it is not the Jews who are being demonised. They are not visible targets for racists in the way



that people of African, Caribbean or Asian origin are. This is never to minimise the evil nature of expressions of race hatred, nor to delude oneself into thinking that anti-semitism has disappeared. However, the dangers of exaggerating the threat of anti-semitism are serious because they devalue the currency. By making statements that imply anti-semitism is as bad now as it was in the 1930s, we are demeaning and degrading the memory of the millions of Jews, including my own grandparents, who were dehumanised, persecuted and murdered in Nazi concentration camps. As the Liberal Rabbi, Dr. David Goldberg, wrote in a recent article in the *Guardian*: 'We should never be complacent or cease to be vigilant about anti-semitism. But, at the present time, it is far easier [in Britain and in many other European countries] to be a Jew than a Muslim, a black person or an Eastern European Asylum seeker.'

Michael Adler is a Member of the Editorial Board of the *Edinburgh Star* and was Editor from 1995-2000.

# Announcements

## Congratulations

To **David and Elisheva Mason** on the birth of their daughter, **Hodaya Rivka Bracha** on 21 September 2003. A first grandchild for **Irene and Philip Mason**.

## A Good Score?

Devoted Jewish fans of Edinburgh football club Hearts (there must be some due to the Jewish propensity for suffering) who attended the recent derby match at Tynecastle between their team and Hibs - let me emphasise, this was on a Sunday - were treated to an unusual announcement over the tannoy at half time. Not a change of players, not an intimation of the next fixture, but a proclamation to the effect that one David Kaplan's proposal of marriage to Sheryl White had been accepted. David, son of Myrna and Morris, is an avid Hearts fan. We are led to believe that the wedding will not take place at Tynecastle as the ground only holds

15,000. A hearty Mazeltov to the happy couple and both families.

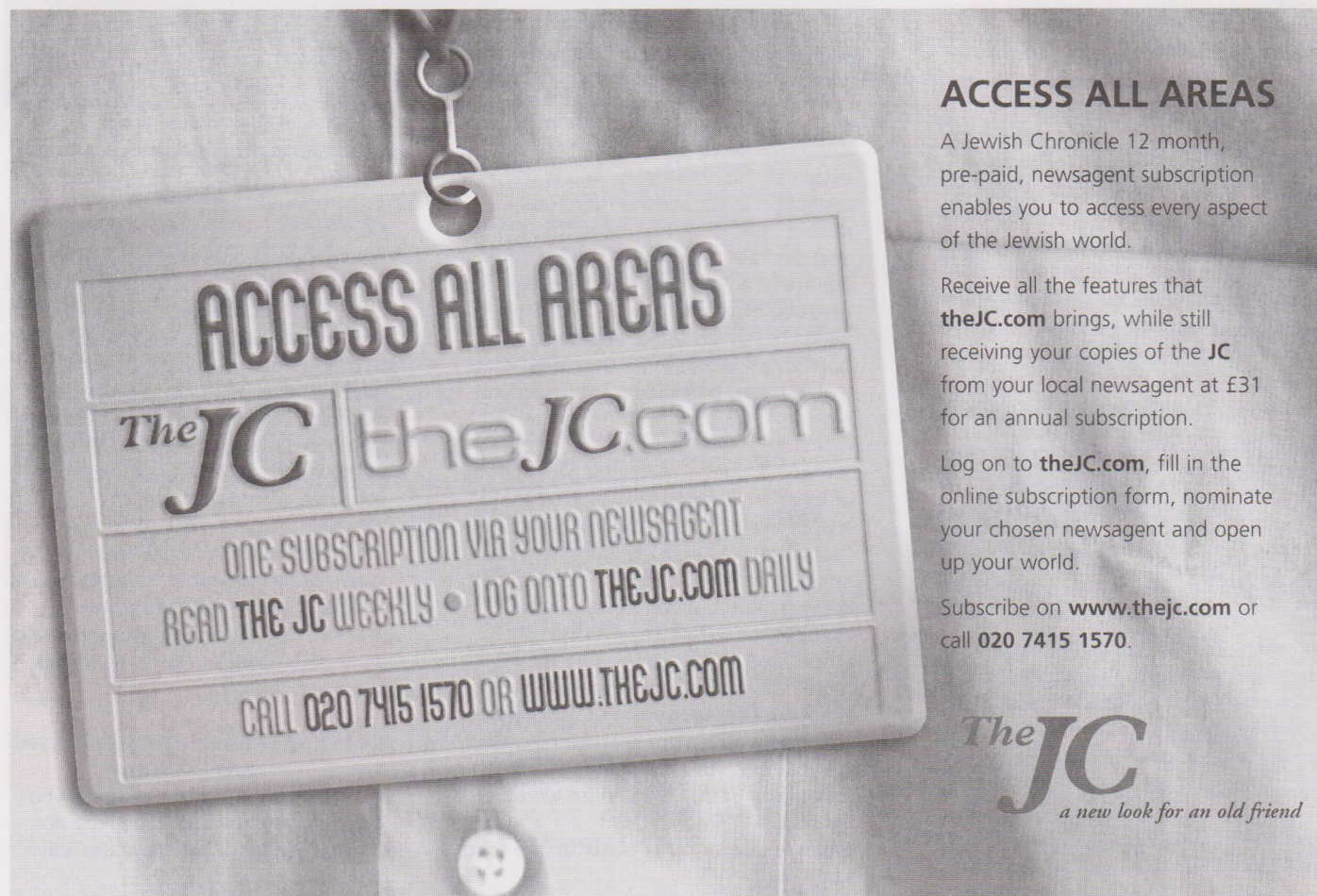
## Correction

In the last issue, we reported the WIZO Bagel Lunch as having raised £170. we are please to correct this number to £700 raised - well done!

## Appreciation

**Rose Orgel** would like to thank most sincerely, all who visited, sent cards and flowers and other gifts during her long spell in hospital. To David to whom I owe a special heartfelt thanks, and all who phoned and e-mailed continually to enquire as to my progress, even Rabbi Shapira who regularly phoned from Israel - thank you all.

**Rachelle and Monty Braverman** wish to thank **Rabbi David Rose** and all their good friends in the Community for their kindness and thoughtfulness during Rochelle's recent hospitalisation. The Community's caring support was much appreciated.



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# Society Reports

The Lit was delighted to open its 115<sup>th</sup> year with the writer **Eva Hoffman**, who spoke on "Memories, Contested Pasts: Some Thoughts on the Polish-Jewish Relationship." An immigrant from Poland to Canada in the 1950's, Ms Hoffman's writing has been informed by the radical change in cultures she faced as a child. In her new environment, she, like many Jewish immigrants, was forced to face her dual background. As a Polish-Jew, she was often asked "Are you Polish or are you Jewish?" Her preferred answer was that of the poet Alexander Wat, who would answer back "I am Polish-Polish and Jewish-Jewish." As both a Pole and a Jew, Ms Hoffman is unable to part from either identity, yet unable to reconcile them either. The wartime tragedy faced by the Jews of Poland made this duality all the more poignant. Today people often view Poles collectively as extreme anti-Semites. This belies Ms Hoffman's experiences as a child, and the story of her parents who were hidden during the war by two Ukrainian families in the Polish part of the Ukraine at great risk to their own lives. It was no isolated case. Other Poles similarly hid Jews, not for profit, but because it was "obviously" the right thing to do. Her main message of the evening was one of greater inter-cultural understanding, a message the world is badly in need of today.

The Lit's second speaker of the season was **Dr Efraim Lev**, speaking on "Natural Medicinal Substances of Israel: Past and Present." A Visiting Scholar at Cambridge University from the University of Haifa, Dr Lev has written extensively on medicinal materials used in the Levant from ancient times to the present. Though somewhat technical in nature, the subject was enlivened by Dr Lev's effervescent sense of humour. Israel's unusual geographic location between two continents made it an ideal location for obtaining medicinal materials, plant, animal and even mineral. While many were substances easily obtained ("lice could be picked off any kid's head", he quipped), others were as exotic as parts of mummies, known to and even advocated by Maimonides, a doctor

himself! A nexus of trading routes, Israel was the origin of many medicines spread throughout the Middle East and even Europe. Many of them were attributed to Jerusalem as the source, though the attribution was often of dubious authenticity, and likely chiefly a marketing ploy. Some things never change!

What preserves Judaism? The Lit's third speaker, **Dr Linda Rosen**, explored the history of the ancient Chinese Jewish community in her talk "On the Banks of the Yellow River: The Jews of Keifeng." It is unclear when the community first settled in China, but evidence suggests it may have been as long ago as 60C.E. By the twelfth century, however, the community had become firmly established, with the approval of the regional prince as a reward for the Jews who had, in Purim-fashion, saved him from assassination by reporting an overheard plot. The Jews were permitted to settle in the capital at the time, Keifeng, where they built a synagogue. There they integrated local customs into their practices. On Simchat Torah, the Rabbi would observe the ceremonies sporting a red silk sash while sitting under an umbrella. But at the same time, isolated from the remainder of the Jewish world and without a group of scholars to sustain it, the community began to disintegrate, taking on such local non-Jewish rituals as animal sacrifices to dead ancestors. When the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci 'discovered' the community in 1605, hardly any member of the community could read Hebrew or understand the scriptures. So impressed was the Rabbi with Ricci that he offered him the succession as chief rabbi, but only on the condition that he gave up eating pork! The concept of Christianity was completely unknown to the community. Ricci graciously declined the position. Over the centuries, the community dwindled, and came to an end in the mid-eighteenth century, though members continued to maintain some Jewish customs, like keeping Kosher, into the twentieth century. Today a small number of Chinese still identify themselves as a distinct cultural

Jewish minority, and attempts from the outside have been made to bring them back into the Jewish fold, but their future remains highly uncertain.

Moshiach or meshugah? The last speaker before the winter break was **Rabbi David Rose**, who spoke on "Chassidism, Messianism and Chabadism." He related the history of the Chassidic movement, in particular of Chabad, and the unusual direction the movement has taken in recent years. A response to the frenzy of messianism that grew out of Lurianic Kabbalism, the Chassidic movement originated in the eighteenth century with the Baal Shem Tov, who strove to imbue Jews with a sense of joy in the world of today rather than postponing all hopes for a joyful life to the messianic age, which he didn't believe would arrive for a long time to come, some three hundred years. Instead the notion of a Chassidic Rebbe grew into a replacement, or place-holder, for the Messiah, providing a spiritual focus for the community that served to neutralise the drive to expect a Messiah in their lifetime. Well, today is three hundred years later. There were seven Rebbe's expected, and the Messiah was due to arrive with the seventh. Who could make a better candidate than the Rebbe himself? This led in recent years into a fervent hope that the then current Rebbe, Menachem Mendel, who was the seventh, would be the Messiah. This has blown off the cap on messianism put in place in the eighteenth century. Many in the chassidic community have retained this hope, producing a split. Worse still, there's been among some a burgeoning apotheosis of the Rebbe, which means little else than starting a new religion. Today, with no leader, the Chabad movement is in crisis. And it's a crisis that Rabbi Rose argued involves all of us, for it means that all Jews will have to make a decision on the acceptability of the Chassidim, or at least those affiliated with the more extreme movement within it, as Jews.

There are plenty of Lit talks to come: 1 Feb, Joyce Caplan will speak on Holocaust poetry; 22 Feb (note new date), Joel Cahen will speak on Dutch Jewry in the past and present; 14 Mar, Prof. Marc Ellis will speak on the current Jewish situation; and 28 Mar, Heather Valencia will speak on the King of Lampedusa.



# Film Reviews

Judy Gilbert

## La Petite Prairie aux Bouleaux The Birch Tree Meadow



'Once upon a time there was a 15 year old girl.' announces Director Marceline Loridan-Ivans. This is Myriam's story. At a memorial event commemorating the liberation of Auschwitz Birkenau her friend Suzanne, with whom she was encamped, persuades her to accept a prize ticket to Krakow. Her journey is a psychological exercise and a two-way struggle begins; the first to remember past events; the second to put some painful memories to the back of her mind. The desire to forget is born out of guilt. If she had not ignored Gitlek's plea to declare her as her sister, might her friend also have escaped selection?

Myriam initially returns to the camp alone. She revisits her old bunkhouse where she intones all the names of the other inmates by way of prayer. It is after having spent the night here that she encounters young Oskar, making a photographic record of the camp. She asks the rhetorical question, 'in your opinion we survived because we're strong or (was it perhaps\*) because we let others die for us'.

Marceline Loridan-Ivans, herself an Auschwitz survivor, is willing us to look through her own eyes and uses Myriam as her tool. Does she believe that people who have not experienced her trauma, could never understand? Demonstrably one of the many daily visitors to the camp wanders briefly through the washhouse, looks round her and declares 'There is nothing to see here, I'm looking for the invisible'. But the youngest pilgrims to the camp remedy this kind of remark. Loridan-Ivans uses Oskar to discover, in a deeply personal way, what it was really like. Ironically Oskar reveals, to Myriam's outrage, his descendancy from an SS grandfather. He behaves however with sensitivity to his grandfather's victims and is furthermore ashamed. Loridan-Ivans offers further proof that it is possible to find empathy. Myriam quietly joins a

group of people gathered in the former death camp, honouring the dead. A young girl clearly recognises the pain in Myriam's eyes and silently embraces her.

Though finding it almost impossible to accept, Myriam is finally forced to acknowledge that she took part in digging trenches to bury victims of the crematorium. As if her feelings of guilt have at last been expiated, a young girl with long red hair passes Myriam by. There is a dream-like quality about this scene and we are left wondering if this is in fact the ghost of her own youth.

Loridan-Ivans has given us the facts most elegantly. The film is not sensational and we are left not quite understanding Myriam who muses 'Perhaps it was here that I was most loved'. Her vehement pronouncement, however, from the top of one of the old look out towers 'I am 75750, I am alive' assures us that no matter what the Nazis tried to do to destroy our identity they did not succeed.

\* My interpretation

## Un Monde Presque Paisible (Almost Peaceful)

This is a charming and gentle look into the life of a small group of post war Parisian Jews. Director Michel Deville has based the story on a book by Robert Bobber.

Most of the action takes place in a Jewish tailor's workroom, employing all Jewish staff with the exception of one non-Jewish finisher whose sister was punished after the liberation in the traditional manner for liaising with the enemy. Although there is no overriding story, the theme is clearly one of Jews who, having suffered during the occupation, are determined to make the most of their lives despite the still prevalent anti-Semitic attitude of some of those in authority. There are expressions of longings and awaiting fulfilment. The shop owner's wife tailor shop's wife is searching for the physical affection her husband denies her due to his preoccupation to maintain his business. An employee

who is nurturing a deep grief for his dead wife will never be able to return the yearning she so openly directs at him and with such touching naivety.

The inexperienced, newcomer's writing aspirations are heightened after courageously confronting the naturalisation officer who declares that as long as he has any influence, he will never enable employment for Jews and his kind.

What was it that made the charming prostitute with finer feelings take up her profession? Was it a continuation of what she was forced to do during the occupation, or perhaps the only employment she could find after? Whatever the reason there is a certain joy in her soul, which finds expression during the community outing with a man she hopes will be more than just another client 'I told you I had no pleasant memories but I think I am making one now.'

Michel Deville employs a variety of techniques to illustrate the atmosphere of the time. Still pictures suggestive of newspaper articles give the feeling of immediacy, capturing a fleeting moment in time. The old lady who tries to make an income in any way she can; matchmaking, selling underwear and finally she introduces works by Chagal. She too, is desperately searching for the correct recipe to secure a happy future.

Hope too is implied by the presence of numerous children. The story of a sick child is told to the employer's son that enabled reassurance of the continuation of a persecuted people no matter what. '...he will have five children, and they will marry and have five children and those twenty five will marry....that's 625'

One of the audience members remarked that 'Deville has possibly created an atmosphere that is a little too happy, not haunted enough considering recent events'. This may be a valid point but with so many depressing explorations into this most serious of subjects it was almost a relief to be presented with such a little gem, something the French seem to be so consistently good at.

Both of these films were viewed at the Filmhouse, Edinburgh.



# Star Trek into the Past



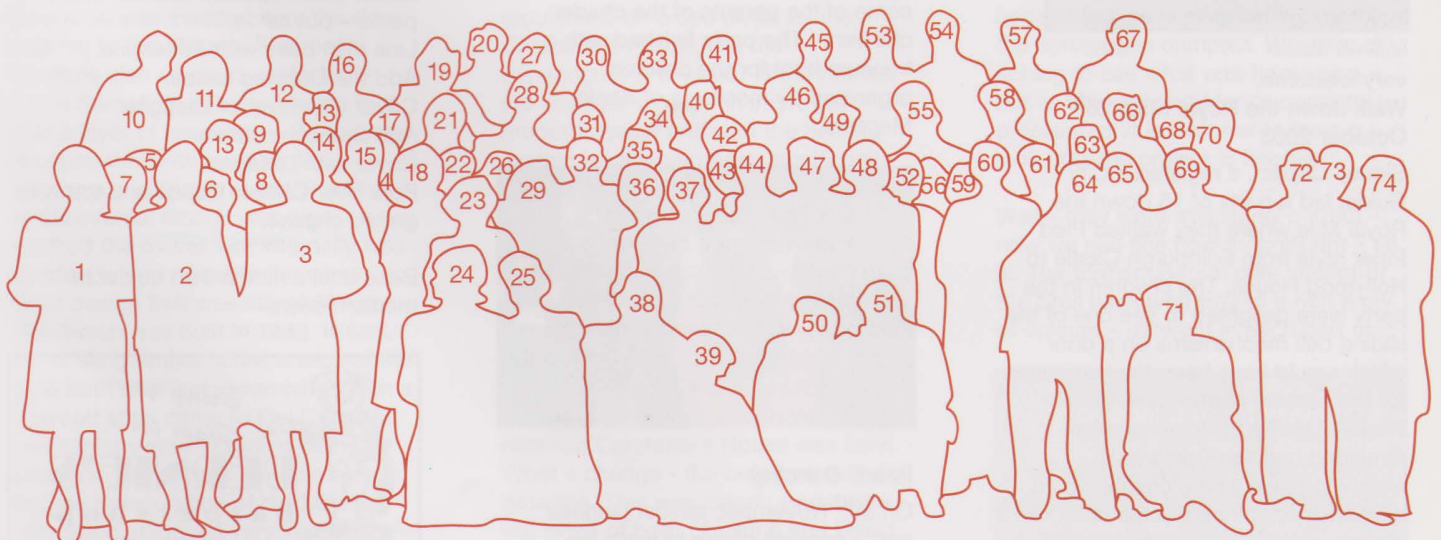
## For this issue, we have a competition.

Our sincere thanks to Joyce and Norman Cram for this wonderful photograph taken at a Maccabi dance in 1947.

Sandra and Sidney Caplan have kindly donated a prize of

a £25 Marks and Spencer gift token for the entry which identifies (with some accuracy) the most names of people in this group.

Your entry should be sent to: Sidney Caplan, Edinburgh Star Competition, 30 Duddingston Road West, Edinburgh EH15 3PS. Not later than 30 April.





# Around and About



Colin Maclellan's band "Scotch Snaps", augmented by "Beyond the Pale".



Royal Mile Walkers

very welcome.

**Walk down the Royal Mile, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2003**

Sidney Caplan, a registered City Guide, led a party of 15 down the Royal Mile where they walked Pied Piper style from Edinburgh Castle to Hollyrood House. The children in the party were delighted to see one of the sliding bell mechanisms on a door which would have been the inspiration for the nursery rhyme 'Wee Willie Winkey.' Half way down we were reminded that the Tron was a weighing place where cheats would have their ear pinned to the door. Of Jewish interest, Sidney drew our attention to the initials IM on the wall

of John Knox's House where Isaac Mossman, a goldsmith, moneylender and financier to Mary queen of Scots had lived. This was the first of future walks and Sidney's generous gesture has so far raised £70.00.

## Annual Chanukah Service and Party 21st December

The candles were lit by Clare Levy and the blessings sang by Sarah Levy and Benjamin Griffin. The cheder children sang Chanukah songs led by Julian Goodman. The service was followed by a tea and party organised by Mrs Susan Hyams, with latkes prepared by some of the parents of the cheder children. The party finished with a treasure hunt for the children organised by members of Senior Maccabi.



## Israeli Dancing

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November, amidst laughter and a genuine desire to learn the dances Jane Mackenzie voluntarily

took us through the steps of a number of Circular Israeli dances. She was aided by Graeme who manned the tape deck. This was an event organised by the CCC committee where young and the not so young, joined together in a dancing event where, unlike others, having a partner is not essential, but having fun certainly is. £300 was raised for the community centre.

## WIZO Nearly New Sale 23 and 25 November 2003

This was held in the Glasgow Central Hall and raised £500 for the Edinburgh Group. Many thanks to all who generously cleared out wardrobes, cupboards and drawers to help us achieve this excellent result.

## How to cook it

In response to public demand, here is the recipe for the Vegetarian Lasagne served at the WIZO lunch at the home of Esther Mendelssohn 1 October last year:

- 1 Large Aubergine
- 1 Jar Dolmino sauce
- 1 Jar Pesto Sauce
- Lasagne sheets
- 1 pint cheese sauce with a little nutmeg
- Seasoning

Slice and sauté the Aubergine – put aside. Sauté spinach and stir in the pesto – put aside. Line dish base with Aubergine. Add the Dolmino sauce. Cover with layer of Lasagne. Add Spinach mixture. Cover with Lasagne. Pour over Cheese Sauce and top with grated cheese.

Bake until a nice brown colour in medium oven.



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## The Shein Scene

### Coffee Morning 21 September 2003

As a prelude to the New Year, the Community Centre Management Committee held a coffee/chat/communal evening. 40 participants spent a pleasant few hours catching up on the latest gossip and purchasing at knock down prices greeting cards from the Israeli stall enticed and encouraged by Steven Hyams and Susie Kelpie, home made cake from the ever welcoming Anita Mendelssohn and refreshments from the six capable hands of Joyce Sperber, Avril Berger and Susan Hyams.

### Golf

Our well know sports enthusiast Lenny Berger organised a golf tournament for novices and beginners in which 16 players took part at the new Princess Golf Course at Braid Hills. The finals will take place between John Danzig and Jonathan Roberts. Lenny praised the schoolboys who played like veterans in their respective ties. The 2004 competition will commence in March and it is hoped that 26 addicts will take part. Anyone wishing to play, please contact Lenny at 664 4573 for further information.

### Annual Remembrance Service 9 November 2003

Rabbi David Rose conducted the service to commemorate the members of the Congregation who gave their lives in the two World Wars and in the Sinai campaign. The Synagogue Choir under the leadership of David Mendelssohn and the Last Post sounded by a bugler added to the dignity and solemnity of the occasion. Alec Kleinberg and Lenny Berger carried the banners of Edinburgh Jewish Branch of the British Legion and AJEX. After the Service, tea was served. Previously, along with other representatives of organisations, Lenny attended the City Chambers where he laid a wreath in the shape of a Mogen Dovid.

### Sabbath evening dinner 21 November 2003

The new shul events committee under the convenership of Hilary Rifkind organised a dinner which attracted 90 people. The warm, inviting atmosphere in the Community Centre

was complemented by an excellent meal provided by first class cooks Hilary, Irene Mason, Eve Oppenheim and Anita Mendelssohn. Back room girls providing great support included Jackie Taylor, Doreen Bowman and Eileen Levy. To all those concerned must go sincere thanks for what can only be described as an outstanding successful social evening. So much so that one was reluctant to leave at the end but did so with the question "when are you having another?".

At the dinner was the community's latest octogenarian. Sprightly David Goldberg, Senior Warden, certainly belying his years, was delighted to have family from Gilmerton, Glasgow and Chicago with him. President, Philip Mason, made reference to his work within the Synagogue. David was presented with a bouquet of flowers and a birthday cake, no less appealing for having 80 candles.

### Lunch Club Panto

Fried fish and roast chicken were cast aside for the vegan attraction of the bean when 30 Luncheon Club members and cooks attended a matinee performance of the pantomime Jack and the Beanstalk at the Kings Theatre on 7 January. "Very colourful", beautifully staged", "noisy", "different from days gone by" were some of the comments from the appreciative group, each of whom had been presented with a box of chocolates prior to the show. An enjoyable afternoon was had by all even if the natural shyness and innocence of the Club members prevented them from active audience participation. Oh no it didn't...oh yes it did.

### WIZO Ladies Lunch 26<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Held at the home of Mr and Mrs Sylvia Donne, this event was well attended. Could that be due to the splendid food and fine wine? This event completed the WIZO programme for 2003 and raised £210. Thanks to all who have supported us.

### Dinner and Ceilidh, 13 December

80 people were welcomed by Anita Mendelssohn who added her delight at seeing Rabbi Rose attend his first Chanukah function since arriving in Edinburgh, probably his first ceilidh as well. The appetising delightful meal prepared the eager crowd for



Revellers at the Ceilidh

entertainment provided by Colin Maclellan's band "Scotch Snaps", later augmented by a group "Beyond the Pale". The dancing commenced with a vigorous Dashing White Sergeant even if a few participants merited demotion for unwittingly contributing to a sergeant major's apoplexy. The Gay Gordons, not to be confused with current definition, and the more sedate St. Bernard's Waltz, filled the dance floor, hesitant dancers encouraged by timely instructions from the affable Colin. Klezmer music added to the attraction which was rounded off by Hava Negila. Lawrence Bowman thanked everyone for attending and those who had done so much to provide a hugely entertaining evening.

### Rabbi Rose Lectures

Rabbi David Rose has inaugurated a series of lectures which include topics on 'Gemara', 'History ...3000 years in 60 minutes', 'Shul Survival ... Yom Kippur', 'Learning Shofar', 'and 'What is Kabbalah' amongst others. It is understood that these talks on varied subjects will continue during 2004. All



# Obituary



**Anne Weisman** 1907–2003

Anne Weisman was born in Edinburgh in 1907 and was the only daughter of Esther and Louis Lurie, who was one of the founder members of the Edinburgh Shul.

In 1931 she married Saul Weisman, from London, in Edinburgh where they settled, during which time Dorothy & I were born. Mum's home was a heimeshe one and every Shabbat and Yom Tov the house

was always full of Jewish soldiers stationed in Edinburgh. In 1949, Mum & Dad moved to Glasgow where Dad became a founder member of Newton Mearns Shul, and Mum started what was to be many years of 'Emunah' charity work within the Community.

Mum & Dad then moved to London nearly 40 years ago and, again, became active members of Cockfosters & North Southgate Shul where they made many friends and became much-loved members of the Community but never forgot their family and friends in Edinburgh and Glasgow and Mum still continued to carry out her charity work here.

Mum and Dad were married for 64 1/2

wonderful years and after Dad died in 1995, Mum moved into a Retirement Home where she looked forward to, and enjoyed, the many visits from her devoted family.

Mum and Dad lived for their family and their Friday nights were unforgettable. Her love for Dorothy and me knew no bounds and this was extended to her sons-in-law, John and Brian, and was never happier than when she was surrounded by her children and adoring grandchildren, Gail, Evelyn, Gillian, Stephanie and Stuart and three great grandchildren. She leaves a void that can never be filled, but with wonderful memories we will never forget. Shalom.

Ester Levy



## How much Inheritance Tax can you save?

Inheritance Tax takes a bite out of many Estates, but it can be easy to avoid. Through wise planning and drafting, some or all of that tax can be saved.

Harvey Bratt of KKL Executors and Trustees is recognised throughout the community as being an expert in this area. He is a solicitor with a difference. For a start, he'll come to you if you prefer. For another thing, he won't charge a fee, because KKL's services are free if JNF benefits from a legacy.

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**KKL** Charity  
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CPE02

## Dear Editor

Many of your readers respond so generously to my appeals on behalf of the ALYN Hospital in Jerusalem for disabled children, I thought they would be interested to know in practical terms how their money is spent.

This year our funds provided four new wheelchairs suitable for use in the showers so that adolescents and young adults can be assured of privacy. In addition, we have provided computer technology units with special programmes so that disabled children can operate these with their chin, tongue or forehead. Our donors can thus see the benefits that derive from their contributions.

Clarice Osbourne  
Chair, Scottish Friends of ALYN

### Dear Editor

AJEX is engaged in computerising the names of Jewish men and women who served in World War II, and after, in the armed forces and Ancillary Forces (Land Army, Nursing, Civic Defence, Fire Service, Auxiliary Air Force, etc)

While we have a large number of names on record, we believe our records are incomplete. I would, therefore like to hear from men and women who served or from relatives and friends who can give information. Background stories of interest would be particularly welcome.

Please write to: Henry Morris, Curator  
Jewish Military Museum, AJEX House, Stamford Hill, London N16 5RT

Yours sincerely  
Henry Morris.

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# Coming Events

## February 2004

1 Sunday 8pm

Literary Society

Holocaust Poetry: Light in Darkness

Joyce Caplan

16 Monday 7.00pm

Lodge Solomon

18 Wednesday

WIZO Ladies Lunch at the home  
of Sylvia and John Donne

22 Sunday 8.00pm

Literary Society

Lopes Suasso Family: Dutch

Jewry prominent in the 17<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>

Centuries Joel Cahen

26 Thursday 7.30pm

Council of Christians and Jews

Faith in our Schools

– Reflections by a Scottish Jewish

Teacher Claire Singerman

## March 2004

7 Sunday

Purim

14 Sunday 8.00pm

Literary Society

Beyond Innocence and redemption:

A Meditation on Jewish Power and

the Future of the Prophetic

Professor Marc H Ellis

15 Monday 7.00pm

Lodge Solomon

26 March (Details to be advised)

Council of Christians and Jews

Sabbath eve Dinner

Rabbi David Rose

28 Sunday 8pm

Literary Society

The King of Lampedusa

Heather Valencia

## April 2004

6-7 Tuesday-Wednesday

First two days of Pesach

19 Monday 7.00pm

Lodge Solomon

## May 2004

13 Thursday 7.30pm

Council of Christians and Jews

AGM followed by talk on

The Role of Religion in Prisons

Andrew McLellan

## June 2004

20 Sunday

WIZO Annual Brunch and

Grand Prize Draw

## August 2004

(date to be advised)

WIZO Festival Fireworks Supper at  
the home of Judy and Mark Sischy

Junior Maccabi meets on alternate  
Sundays from 1pm to 3pm.

For further information, contact  
Benjamin Danzig (229 3054).

Senior Maccabi meets on Sunday  
evenings in members' homes.

For further information, contact  
Hannah Cohen (653 0570).

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.

# Children's Competition

Two prizes of **£25 CD** or  
**book vouchers** to be won

### Category 1 - Age under 13

Design a front cover for the next Rosh Hashanah edition of the Edinburgh Star.  
All entries for this category must be received by 30 June 2004.

### Category 2 - Age 13 and over

Write an article for the Star, the topic? The future of the Edinburgh Jewish Community.  
All entries for this category must be received by 30 April 2004.

#### Entries should be sent to:

Peter A Bennett, Editor  
5 Oswald Court  
Edinburgh EH9 2HY