

THE EDINBURGH

# STAR

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THE MAGAZINE FOR THE EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY



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# From the Editor



"Would you consider being guest editor of the Star for one issue?" It was John Cosgrove asking the question and my mouth was wide open. I cannot remember whether it was to allow John to enact his professional skills or the shock of being asked that question. In any event, I seem to recall agreeing, eventually, and somehow I managed to edit all of the last ten issues. The time has, however, come for me to hand over the baton to a worthy successor.

As I sit to write this final editorial, my thoughts drift back to the issues that have

been mentioned on this page during my watch; man-made conflicts, intractable issues of creed and belief, together with the inevitable parochial politics. Today, these are all small by comparison with the awesome reminder that mother Earth is an entity of such great power that when she shakes her coat, the creations of man are crudely and cruelly brushed aside. We have seen entire towns wiped out, palaces of vacation luxury rendered as rubble. We have watched the forlorn faces of children, their glazed eyes painfully and vainly seeking the arms of a loving parent; relatives searching for their missing loved ones when each passing day brings the certainty of sorrow. But can we find any hope from this unspeakable pain and suffering? While governments have lumbered into action to support the beleaguered nations of the Indian Ocean, the ordinary people of every race, creed and colour have shown that there is compassion, there is caring, there is unity and there is just possibly some hope. The outpouring of support with money, clothing and supplies has been unprecedented. The ordinary people have shown they care. If only we could all care just a little more, respect diversity just a little more, then perhaps we could live together with some mutual respect and just maybe, without the need to kill our neighbours.

I could not say my farewell without acknowledging the huge support that I have received as editor. I particularly appreciate the generosity of those whose respect for our publication has motivated them to write wonderful articles, reviews, letters and other contributions. Their names, too numerous to mention, are a who's who of the Edinburgh Jewish Community, its Diaspora and its friends. I cannot tell you how many times I have sat in awe reading the marvellous writings that I have been offered. In addition, there is the business side of our publication. We have no subscription and yet we thrive, and that is down to the huge generosity of our readers across the world who regularly send donations to our funds. And that brings me to our readers, yes you. Without you we are nothing. I regularly hear from readers in every corner of the planet. I have learned that the Star is their link to

Edinburgh, their mirror, their memory, perhaps their nostalgia. Whatever their reason many tell me that each issue is awaited, appreciated and often read from cover to cover.

Finally there is the Editorial Board. Please do not assume that the Star is produced by the Editor alone. The Board is a strong group of very able people; the team who enable the editor to function. When I started as editor, John Cosgrove was the Chairman of the board. He was hugely supportive and I will remember his numerous words of advice and particularly, "you're the editor, just make it happen in your own way". Words of advice which were supplemented by those of our first editor, Eitan Abraham, who said, "remember Peter, the editor's indecision is final!". John retired as Chairman after my first few issues and was succeeded by Judith Sischy.

Judith remained in the Chair for a few issues before standing down. She did, however, remain on the Board and has been a great confidante and sounding board for me, particularly when dealing with contentious issues. Michael Adler the former editor remains on the board and has great connections when we are seeking specialist contributors. His wide experience has been of much value. Robin Spark has specialised in art topics and has contributed some fascinating articles on that theme. Philip Harris remains a loyal participant with excellent advice from his long experience. Eve Oppenheim has also been a great confidante and advisor to me with insightful comment on many issues and a regular proof reader with an accurate eye for punctuation. I have a special mention for Ian Shein. Not only is Ian a regular and talented contributor, he also manages our distribution without which the Star wouldn't reach its readers. Janet Mundy has made contributions and been part of the proofing team. Although her available time is limited, she has given much to our publication. New-comers to the board are Rabbi David Rose and Lindsay Levy. David Rose has been a great enthusiast for the Star with lots of opinions and ideas. He has often written for us and assisted greatly. Lindsay represents the Liberal community in Edinburgh and has been

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the conduit for several interesting articles. I have tried to widen our content to ensure that we do not only address those who are members of the orthodox Hebrew Congregation. Fortunately, we have Sidney Caplan as our treasurer and his competent and prudent management of our finances has removed such matters from my task list. Finally, I come to Judy Gilbert. For some time, Judy has been my deputy editor, working closely with me on production matters. She is a regular contributor, specialising in reports and reviews. Judy Gilbert will, I am sure, be more than able to continue and further develop the Star.

I must recall the words of Rabbi Shalom Shapira's Pesach Message in the very first edition of the Edinburgh Star in March 1989. "I wish to express my personal congratulations to the editor, Dr Eitan Abram, without whose quality of tenacity of

purpose and sincere dedication, the launching of this journal may have remained only a dream." After fifty editions, we all owe a vote of thanks to Eitan and indeed Shalom for their vision.

It now remains for me to say farewell to our readers and to thank you all for tolerating me as your editor for the last ten issues. It is my enduring wish that the Star shall continue to thrive, that the wonderful contributors keep up their flow of material, that the dedicated group comprising the Editorial Board maintain their energy and enthusiasm and that we all keep this important part of Edinburgh's Jewish Community. With that, we can ensure that the Edinburgh Star will continue to shine brightly.

Peter A Bennett

# A Star is Born

Eitan Abraham



The famous Jewish scientist Niels Bohr was once approached by his young assistant with a new idea. After explaining it for about ten minutes, he asked Bohr, "do you think my idea is crazy?". After pausing for a few seconds Bohr replied, "yes, but not crazy enough."

By contrast, when I presented my idea of creating a journal to the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society, the reaction was "your idea is too crazy."

The first time I went to the Lit was in October 1986 when the then President of the Board of Deputies, Dr Lionel Kopelowitz, was the inaugural speaker. I will never forget his words when he said that if we Jews were not dreamers, the State of Israel would not exist. But to reminisce about these words in the present context would give the impression that I am comparing the creation of Israel with the creation of The Edinburgh Star. Of course not: to create the Star even Ben Gurion's wildest dreams would not have sufficed!...Och aye, a wee bit of exaggeration here.

As 1988 was the 100th anniversary of the Lit, I thought it afforded a wonderful opportunity to launch a journal. The only difficulty was that nobody else thought it was such a splendid idea. Yet I kept lobbying. At one of the Lit meetings, a very nice lady told me, "...you know, Edinburgh

is fery conservatit for zis zinks. Efen Malcolm Rifkind tried vizout getting far..." This was news that made me question whether I knew the difference between a dream and a nightmare. After some reflection, the challenge became even more fascinating. The result was a strengthening of my resolve.

I started phoning Lit members and particularly the 'artist' of the Lit, Tony Gilbert. Being such a popular and kind person, he offered a sympathetic ear saying that I was right about the reasons for starting it but the others were also right about the reasons for not starting it. I soon realised that Tony found himself in the same predicament as the rabbi who sees a couple who wanted to separate. After seeing the man and the woman in turns and telling them that they were both right, the rabbi's wife appeared and said to her husband, "I overheard the discussions and both can't be right," to

which the rabbi said, "you know something, you're also right." Yet, unknown to Tony, he was destined to make a move that was crucial to the birth of the Star.

Then came an expression of support that made me think that perhaps there was some movement. The Lit speaker on a particular Sunday was Clive Sinclair, the author of "Diaspora Blues", and Julia Merrick invited me to have lunch with him in her house. The idea was to get his advice on how to take the project forward. And so as I was presenting my case to Clive, I noticed that his body language was telling me something that perhaps I did not want to hear. Indeed. When I finished, he gave me a hundred and one reasons for not getting involved in a new publication. He must have realised that my face became twice its original length and tried to encourage me. However, I still remember him with

a smile. After his talk and question time, the President of the Lit announced the next speaker, Sir Monty Finniston, "...who will talk about Jewish Ethics in Business". Then Clive, almost as if startled out of his dream-state exclaimed, "that will be a short one!!!"

It was becoming more and more apparent to me that in spite of some pockets of support, I would get nowhere unless I had the blessing of some local Establishment figure. But who? After all I had no history in the Community, no credentials to show for, only an enthusiasm that could have been easily mistaken for a 'meshuggah.' Then the unexpected happened.

Kate Goodwin, the local WIZO Chairman, organised her annual lunch in her home. This was on a beautiful Sunday afternoon in May 1988 which had the deserved weather for the wonderful effort made by Kate. I was enjoying a delicious piece of cake, that even Jackie Mason would have

praised, when I saw the figure of Tony Gilbert rushing towards me. "I have the man for you, I have the man!" He sounded like a very excited matchmaker. Yet I was no woman and not even in my darkest moments would I be seeking a man. As we walked towards this 'candidate', Tony managed to slow my heart rate down when he explained to me that he wanted to introduce me to the new Rabbi, Shalom Shapira, because he was expressing views on the need for a newsletter. After meeting him, I had a sigh of relief. I felt this marked 'the end of the beginning'.

Rabbi Shapira and I established an instant rapport that was to stand the test of time and distance. This was a man with a strong sense of community and a refreshing naivety that fitted Kopelowitz's description. His pastoral approach was a much needed injection. Up to that point I had never worked with a rabbi except for my Bar Mitzvah, which was difficult—for the rabbi!

A meeting was organised at Rabbi Shapira's flat involving all those interested in this 'newsletter' which at this stage I was too coy to call 'journal.' By this time I had learnt that showing too much ambition could jeopardise the fragile alliance of volunteers. The meeting was informally chaired by one of our Community 'heavyweights', Mark Sischy. There was an atmosphere of apprehension at the meeting. Everybody knew it would be hard work, it would cost money, and it would need somebody with the credentials to lead it. Mark could see through all this more than anybody else but never lost his eloquence. Mind you, if a cartoonist had been at the meeting he would have probably put a balloon on top of Mark with an inscription taken from a famous song, "I can see tzures ahead..." Anyway, the upshots were that my suggestion for the name of this publication was accepted and very nervously I was asked to be its Editor.

After a long labour, the Star was born.



*Harvey Bratt*

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# Travels with My Father

## Growing up with David Daiches

Jenni Calder

In the early summer of 1946 David and Isobel Daiches sailed from New York to return to Scotland. Since 1937 David had taught at the University of Chicago, followed by wartime posts at the British Information Service in New York and the British Embassy in Washington. A son and two daughters had been born. That summer they crossed the Atlantic on the battle-scarred Queen Mary to be reunited with their families in Glasgow and Edinburgh. But it was only a visit, as David had been offered a job at Cornell University in upper New York State, which he would take up in September.

The three children, Alan, Jenni and Liz, were about to meet their Scottish relatives for the first time. They were American children. Liz was only a few months old, but Alan and Jenni, aged seven and four, looked and sounded American. They had no conception of wartime Britain. They had only the haziest notion of their family in the place their parents always referred to as home. They would meet a grandmother, and aunts, uncles and cousins, who until then had been only names.

Between 1946 and 1950 the family – my family – made three summer visits to Scotland, and in 1951 returned to Britain for good. During those years I absorbed an understanding, or at least the beginnings of an understanding, of my Jewish inheritance. My father talked a great deal about his father, whom I would never meet, and his mother, my only surviving grandparent who was the focal point of our Edinburgh visits. I was told the story of how my parents met and married, and how it caused a

rift in the family which was later mended. I thought this enormously romantic and exciting. Later, I began to realise just how painful and difficult a time it had been for all concerned. My father did not break away from his orthodox upbringing so much as move beyond it, and that distance influenced the way we children were brought up. My mother, an agnostic Presbyterian, converted to Judaism; her family were mainly farming people



A portrait of David Daiches by Robin Spark which was exhibited at the RSA

from the Highlands and the north-east, and they of course were also part of the Scottish homecoming.

We kept some of the Jewish festivals but also celebrated Christmas. My father taught Alan and me to read Hebrew and when Alan was away at school I read the Four Questions at the Seder. I grew up thinking of myself as Jewish, but in America it was no big deal. There were plenty of other Jewish families around us. My father had Jewish colleagues and Jewish students. It was only when I went to

school in Cambridge, England, that I caught my first whiff of anti-semitism – and interestingly, from what my father says, he first encountered it when he went to Oxford.

As well as his university teaching, my father was often lecturing elsewhere, broadcasting, and above all writing, so he often had little time to spend with his children. When he did it was a treat. A highlight was when on occasional weekends I would go with him to the university. There I might sit in a corner of his office and draw while he worked – there was unlimited paper and I would bring my cherished box of Crayola crayons. Or I could wander into an empty classroom and

draw on the blackboard – what did Monday's students make of graphic depictions of cowboys and Indians and galloping horses, I wonder? Or I'd range around the campus which was like a vast playground.

By 1951, when he left the US my father had published ten books and countless articles. The transplantation to England wasn't an easy one for me, a Jewish Scottish American child, and I think even then I realised it was also difficult for my parents. In fact, I suspect my father was never entirely happy at the University of Cambridge, where he took up a lectureship in the autumn of 1951. It wasn't the return to Scotland that he had hoped for and Cambridge wasn't an

entirely welcoming environment. I think he was much more comfortable when he went to the newly-created University of Sussex to become Professor of English and American Studies and had the opportunity to forge innovative courses in an interdisciplinary environment. My memories of the US are happy ones. We had great freedom as children, explored widely on foot or roller skates or bikes. By contrast, England seemed constrained, and I sensed that the adults felt it as well as the children.



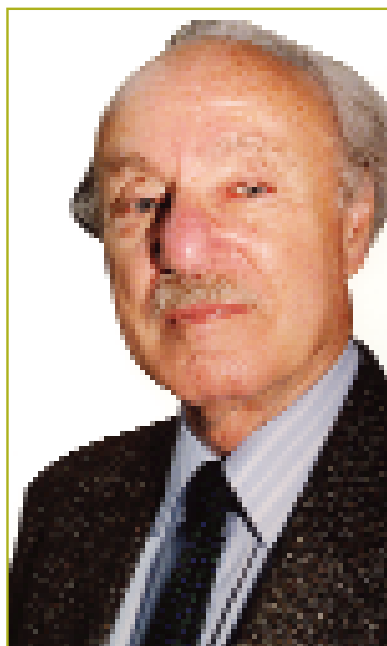
If there were long stretches when I saw little of my father, everything changed when we were on holiday in Scotland. We always rented the same house in Cullen on the Moray Firth. This was when we spent most time together as a family, replicating my father's own childhood holidays on the Fife coast. Travelling on the train from Edinburgh and the joyous arrival. Picnics on the beach, bathing and emerging from the water with chattering teeth, poking about in rock pools, walks, fishing off the end of Cullen pier. Visits to Cornhill where my mother's aunt and uncle farmed. Expeditions to Elgin or Banff. My father's birthday, early in September, came as the holiday drew to a close. We always went on a picnic, and the weather, my father still maintains, was always fine. A favourite destination was Sunnyside, a lovely sandy bay that could only be reached on foot, with the ruined Findlater Castle at the far end. We usually had the whole beach to ourselves. The climax was the building of a driftwood fire which we watched burn until reluctantly we filled our buckets with water to put it out and set off on the long trail home.

As a family we were good at celebrations – I think perhaps this is a particularly Jewish talent. My father, like his mother and most of her family, was a gifted musician, and birthdays and other special occasions generally ended with us gathered round him at the piano and singing anything from Scottish ballads to American show tunes. My father is particularly partial to the music hall ditties he had encountered in his childhood at seaside shows and pantomimes.

He grew up in a house full of music and books and I did the same. My mother brought her interest in art to add to the tapestry. We took these things for granted. Life without books was unimaginable, but it wasn't just reading that was important, but writing. From my earliest awareness I knew that writing was what my father did. But he didn't just produce scholarly books and articles. He made up comic poems and wrote witty anecdotal pieces for *The New Yorker*. He told us about the comic operas he

and his brother Lionel wrote and produced as boys.

In Ithaca, NY, we lived in a small apartment with no working space for my father, so he did all his writing at the university. It was 1952 before my parents owned their first home, in a village six miles from Cambridge, and my father had a study. We all became familiar with the sound of his typing and learned that the faster the keys rattled the less open he was to interruption. I would sometimes take him a mug of coffee. Without raising his eyes from the page he would reach out one hand and clear a space for the mug among the heap of papers beside him. When a new typewriter was purchased I would inherit the old one, and by the time I was eleven or twelve I could type fairly proficiently. In my eyes writing was just normal adult activity.



David Daiches

My father's study today is still lined with the books I grew up with. Both my parents encouraged my avid reading and books featured prominently in supertime conversations. But growing up with a distinguished literary scholar could be a mixed blessing. From his schooldays, my father had always excelled. I was aware of a string of prizes and bursaries, and although he never put any overt pressure on me, an expectation of achievement was in

the air. Just as he felt he had to measure up to his father's expectations, I felt the same. Now I know that we can never match our parents because we start at a different place and a different time. He grew up in a household that was both Scottish and cosmopolitan, rabbinical and literary, musical and multilingual. The household in which I grew up, while retaining some of these elements, was not the same.

In 1977 my parents at last came back to Scotland, although my mother was in the final stages of cancer. Her loss was a devastating blow to my father. For forty years they had dreamt of 'going home' and now my mother was not there to share in the return. Since then my father has lived in or near Edinburgh, the city in which he grew up, where his own parents put down such deep roots, and which inevitably influenced his life of intellectual and creative engagement. My grandfather's purposeful sustaining of a dual Scottish and Jewish identity was an inspiration. Although my father's relationship with Scotland and with Judaism has not been straightforward, he has never had doubts about his own dual identity. But the mix is different, just as it is different again for me, and different in yet other ways for his grandchildren.

It means a great deal to my father that his instrumental role in re-invigorating the climate of Scottish literature is now acknowledged. There are people all over the world who think 'Daiches' is a Scottish name, and it has come to represent an inspiring fusion of traditions. My father and my Uncle Lionel were both delighted when it was decided to name an Edinburgh street Daiches Braes in honour of my grandfather, bringing a name that had travelled through much of Europe together with a Scots word of Old Norse origin, a synthesis that would have pleased my grandfather as much as it pleased his sons.

Material in the article is drawn from Jenni Calder's forthcoming book, *Not Nebuchadnezzar: In Search of Identities*, to be published by Luath Press in the spring. Further information is obtainable from [gavin.macdougall@luath.co.uk](mailto:gavin.macdougall@luath.co.uk)

# Interview with Cecile Shea

American Consul General in Edinburgh. Wednesday 25th August 2004

Judy Gilbert

Cecile Shea arrived in Scotland in 2003, taking up the position of American Consul in Edinburgh. In no time at all she became acquainted with the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and has since demonstrated her kinship by attending Shul, joining the Edinburgh branch of the Association of Jewish Refugees and recently delivering a scholarly and animated talk to the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society.

I was most grateful that she gave up her time to allow me to interview her in the comfortable environs of the American Consulate, complete with its stars and stripes in one corner of the sitting room. Supping tea out of elegant cups, the following informal exchange took place.



**When you return to America where do you consider your home to be, have you strayed far from your roots?**

'I grew up in South Lake Tahoe, on the Californian Nevada border where my parents still live as they have done for over 40 years. I am going back for three weeks to see my family. My father is now 87. My sister who is a schoolteacher lives in the San Francisco Bay area.'

'One of the problems in my line of work is that you lose touch with things that are changing in the United States, and for that reason one of the State departments requirements is that between tours we go home for between a month and six weeks. I try as much as I can to get home once a year and when I was in Israel I got home twice a year, just to try and keep track with what is going on at home. The wonderful thing about the Internet is that it is a lot easier for me to follow American papers, but it's still not the same. I try to read the Washington Post and the New York Times on a regular basis, but my first job is to read the Scottish Press and by the time I have got through that I'm pretty tired.'

Cecile said that any spare time was spent reading, theatre going and visiting friends. She said she was famous for not owning a television, this being a conscious decision after too much watching in Israel.

**Where did you spend your most formative years and do you think**

**they had a bearing on what you have done with your life so far?**

'I lived in Lake Tahoe until I finished High School. I had some wonderful teachers who had travelled a great deal and who made Social Studies and History very interesting, so I was always keen on travelling in the world and in politics. My father being from Poland also gave me an interest in Europe and at that time it was the Warsaw block and Soviet Union so I followed things very closely and carefully. As the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, I had a huge interest in human rights. All very important factors in my formative years. Then I went to a wonderful University, UCLA, with a student population of about 34000, the opposite of Lake Tahoe in every way with only about 15000. Not knowing how to dress or understanding the social standards was quite a shock to me coming from a small town but educationally it was really wonderful as it expanded my mind revealed possibilities and opened my world.'

**In what did you major in your degree, did you ever consider an alternative?**

'My degree ended up being in history but I was 10 units short of a music degree which was what I was mostly studying at University. Then I became a teacher at college level English and Music where I was a department chairman and had six and half wonderful years. I played piano and was a singer in semi-professional choirs.'

**When did you realise that a diplomatic career was where you wanted to be?**

'I was living in San Jose. I had a pretty good life but the cost of living was unbearable on a teacher's salary and I was ready to try something different for a while. My generation knew we would work until 67 and I knew I could always go back to teaching, so I decided to try the Diplomatic Service and I enjoyed it very much. That was 14 years ago. In the first few years you don't do much diplomacy, you process a lot of visas, identify bodies and do all kinds of interesting consular work. I enjoyed the overseas work, especially my second job in Northern Thailand where I got to make a difference a few times dealing with refugees. This was very rewarding.'

**Has there ever been anyone who has had a serious influence on your personal life and or your professional life?**

'My parents who continue to influence me very deeply are the most important people in my life.'

Cecile laughed when asked if they were happy with her professional decision.

'They waited until I was 22, and teaching English, to tell me they always thought I would be a doctor. My father in particular has mixed feelings because he doesn't like my being so far away. He was very worried about my safety, particularly when I was in Israel, and to a certain extent when I was on the Burma



border. On the other hand I think they are very proud. My father is very much aware that I was the daughter of a refugee who is representing the United States overseas; it is quite incredible to him.

Professionally quite a few people have really influenced me. Supervisors and people around me throughout the years, people who I'd like to emulate in my life, I have found genuinely motivating.

One of the 5 years in Washington was spent working with Senator Lieberman, that was a fantastic year. Senator Lieberman is really such an outstanding individual morally. He really taught me that you could be quiet and yet have tremendous moral and political force. He influenced me very much.'

I had to ask what it was like working with such a high profile person.

'I happened to be working for him when we finally began the air attack on Kosovo so I wrote the first draft of the Air Authorisation Bill as he was one of the primary sponsors for that. He was on the Sunday talk shows every week for 13 weeks. I would go in, write him a memo, wait until the sun had gone down to fax it to his house and on Sunday morning I would hear my words coming back at me from the television. It was just the most incredible feeling. Normally anything I write would be for just 20 people and maybe changed 50 times and still not be used. This time I had direct access to him and Bureaucratically, it was such a relief. Sometimes his political people would be saying, vote this or that way or don't, whatever you do, say this. There were times when he was 1 of 13 people voting a certain way out of 100 senators because he thought he was doing the right thing. I was in a car with him when we were in Israel and he announced that he was going to run for President. He said he knew it was a long shot, but he was going to say and do what he believed, and if people didn't like it, then he would know that they voted for or against something that he was, and not for or

against something that he was not. That is really how he ran his campaign and I have a lot of respect for him.'

### **What do you consider to be the most challenging part of your job?**

I think the most challenging thing for most diplomats right now is that the United States is not terribly popular in some quarters. People have particularly strong feelings about President Bush. Feelings they might have about one or two individual people tend to spread throughout my field, and the entire population of my country is then tarred with the same brush. I spend a lot of time talking to people to remind them what the US stands for, the good that we've tried to do in the world, the importance of the UK/US relationship, and all the good that has done in the world.

This prompted me to ask Cecile if ever she had any reservations about policies, would she still give her support no matter what.

'I work for the President of the United States, who ever that happens to be, and if I ever publicly could not support what we were doing, I would just resign. I would not speak against him, not even at a cocktail party. It gets a little lonely being in a country like this sometimes. I'm all by myself largely, and I'm always on; representing my country, and that's my job. I don't feel that I have anything to apologise for in terms of the way that my country behaves. We may occasionally make errors, but any country is going to occasionally make errors and I think we do things with the best of intentions and with

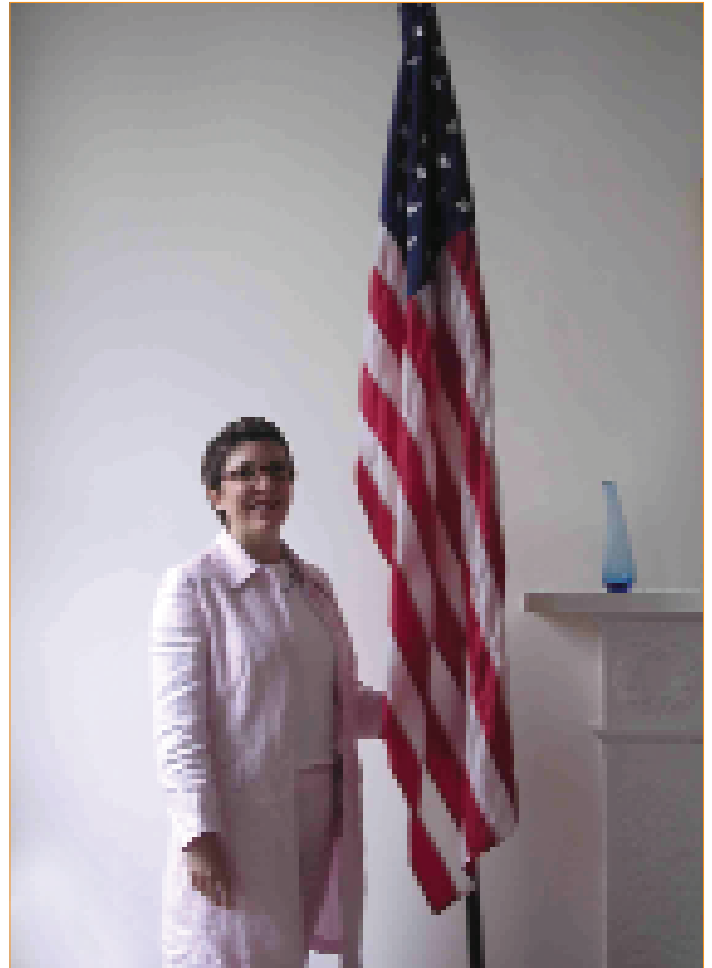
a commitment of trying to see things through.'

### **Have you reached the zenith of your career?**

'I hope not. I knew when I came here that this assignment would be for 3 years. There is normally a minimum of a 24-year career and this is year 14. The problem is that it is going to be very difficult to top this job. I tend to say that about everywhere that I've been, so it makes me excited to know what's coming for the future. But if I never have another job I'll be happy because this one is so spectacular.'

### **What aspect of your profession gives you the most satisfaction?**

'That really depends on which country I'm in. When I was in Israel, several times I had the opportunity to basically save people's lives; to intervene on a very personal level and create a situation where riots would not start. I have helped human rights workers who were being shot at, get out of a place where they shouldn't have been in the first place. That is



obviously enormously rewarding. Thank G-d those opportunities don't arise in every country. Not every country is as volatile as Israel.'

I had to ask if she ever felt any fear in those situations?

'I was in a car when a rock was thrown at the windshield and that was very disconcerting. I got close to a few riots but again I was in an armoured car with a bodyguard so I never worried very much. I tended to worry less than some of the other people with whom I worked. I was fortunate I could speak enough of the language to know if I was somewhere I shouldn't be, something a lot of my colleagues didn't have advantage of. I felt very safe and got through it just fine.'

#### **Do you have any influence over where or with whom you will work?**

'We have a list and it is a very transparent process which takes place in smoke filled rooms. Then there is the lobbying that takes place in the background. I wanted this job and there were 60 others who did too. I was very happy to get it.'

#### **Has being a woman ever held you back or conversely been an advantage to you?**

'The State Department is still famous for being a somewhat sexist organisation although it's made huge improvements in the last 10 years. I think there are some officers who would think twice before hiring a woman, but that is slowly changing. I would imagine that if a man had been as equally qualified for this job, I would still have got it because of the very public nature of it. We are trying to put women into very public positions but of course it is of no help if you are not equally qualified. Until 1973 if a woman got married she was given notice, and for a man, there was a box on the application, for the evaluation of his wife. I give Secretary Powell a lot of credit for moving the service forward 20 years in 4 years.'

#### **Where did you work before this and what were your initial impressions on coming to Edinburgh?**

'I was in Tel Aviv arriving the day before the intifada had started. My first impression on arriving here was how

friendly and welcoming everyone was. People in Israel had warned me I was going to find the British cold, and frankly some Arabs and Jews, have a view that is 50 years out of date.'

#### **Is it within your remit to have contact with other mainstream religious groups?**

'It is an absolute requirement. The 1998 law called 'The International Religious Freedom Act', sponsored by Joseph Lieberman, states that foreign diplomats should meet regularly with all the religious leaders in any country. Yes I see Cardinal O'Brien, the moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Bishop of Edinburgh and I spend a large proportion of my time here trying to talk to Muslims; a group that we have ignored for too long in too many parts of the world and we're paying for it now. I think it's important that they see a human face to the United States and that they know we are listening to them. I enjoy it because they tend to be very well informed about what is going on in Israel and Palestine, more than some very pro Palestinian, non-Muslims who think they know what is going on, but they really don't understand the complexity of the situation. Muslims are very well educated and I can talk to them, for instance, about 242 and 338 and I don't have to explain the difference between these UN resolutions.'

#### **Have you ever had a particularly humorous incident, which sticks in your mind?**

'One of the funniest things that ever happened to me was when I picked up the phone in Calgary one day, very early on in my career. An American man was on the line saying he wanted to speak to the Consulate General, I said you're speaking to the Consulate General knowing that this is actually the building. He really wanted to speak to a man. He said 'I don't want to speak to some secretary', however he continued 'I was trying to come into Canada when they asked me if I had a weapon and I said no because I didn't know they considered a shotgun a weapon'. A weapon to an American means something different to what weapons mean to you or me. They were forever keeping weapons in their glove boxes and forgetting to tell the

police. So the customs searched his car and found the shotgun, which is, of course, a weapon. So I said 'yes sir, I assume you were arrested.' He agreed but said 'they let me out, but they constipated my weapon, and I want to know when I'm going to get it back because it's been constipated'. To this day I always say how much safer the world would be if we only constipated more weapons!'

#### **Has the fact that you are the daughter of a Holocaust victim ever been an equation as your life has evolved, either emotionally or professionally?**

'It is probably one of the most significant factors in my life. Professionally it makes me very sensitive to human rights issues and it also gives me a perspective on Israel that a lot of my colleagues don't have. People would ask me to explain certain aspects of Israeli society, which are very difficult to understand if you don't have a background where you have parents who are Eastern European Jews and survived the Holocaust. For all that Israel has changed, the leadership is still primarily Eastern European, and that is the milieu from which my family emerged.'

I questioned whether Cecile ever suffered from anti-Semitic attitudes as a child.

'No because we were quite hidden. It was a strange place to grow up in. There were far more war criminals than Jews in Lake Tahoe and even to this day the immigration service finds a war criminal every 5 years or so. It transpired that the head of the ski school had been an SS officer; and they sent him home 15 years ago. Austrians and Germans like settling in this familiar alpine area. Ironically my mother's best friends were in the Nazi Youth, both Germans. I give my father credit for being able to sit in the same room with those people though he may not have been so happy. The greatest gift my father gave me was that he made a conscious decision not to say anything bad about the Germans until I was 18. It enabled me to grow up and have a normal, non hate-filled life.'



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# Kosher Reekie

Nick Cosgrove



"My name is Nick Cosgrove."

"I am a meat-a-holic."

How bad is the condition? Well, put it this way, (and please don't tell my parents), my daydream fantasy is to own my own kosher meat emporium.

I have even come up with the perfect name. Flay-Chic. I don't blame my parents for my condition, the responsibility for my obsession lies entirely with the late Jo Lurie. If I could be transported back in time to one location from my childhood, it would, without doubt, be to Jo Lurie's butcher shop.

When the shop closed in 1986 it truly marked the end of an era. Having left Edinburgh fourteen years ago, I have since discovered the common Sunday morning practice in many Jewish communities of going to a baker or a delicatessen to buy bagels, smoked salmon and cream cheese. Despite the fact that smoked salmon tends to be Scottish, this was something we never did growing up in Edinburgh. It's alright as a way of passing a Sunday morning but it doesn't compare with our Sunday morning childhood ritual, and I'm not talking about cheder in case you were wondering. I'll come back to smoked salmon later.

Our Sunday mornings were different. After Cheder we would drive to the butcher and walk into a shop that was full of mysteries and excitement to a wee boy. It wasn't Hamleys. The floor was covered in saw dust. Why? The shop window was not, as you might expect, full of meat or the green plastic grass that usually adorns butcher's shop windows. No. Instead, it was stacked full of cans of Tennents Lager and Krakus' Pickled cucumbers from Poland! Krakus' cucumbers were a permanent fixture in our fridge in Queens Crescent. The cucumbers lay in the jar surrounded by what seemed to me to be murky underwater plants. The adult realisation that these were merely sprigs of dill is not so enchanting!

I always think, in a way, it was good timing that Lurie's shut in the mid 1980's for we stopped eating those cucumbers after the nuclear disaster of Chernobyl. In our house, from around 1987, products from Eastern Europe were off the menu. I'm pleased to report that Krakus' cucumbers survived the Cosgrove cherm, but while they were removed from our fridge a new pickle inveigled its way in. Those of Mrs Elswood. To those of you who can't fathom how Mrs Elswood continues to look so good year on year, you'd better sit down... Mrs Elswood is not a real person. Her name is made up of the first and last syllables of the Elstree and Borehamwood region of outer London.

If my mother was worried about the pickled cucumbers she was less worried about those cans of lager with a picture of a Tennents lovely on the back. She ought to have been. The cans of lager were all the more interesting to a boy on the threshold of adolescence because of the pictures of scantily clad women on one side. It was Page Three on a tin! On second thoughts, no wonder Jo put those cans in the window, he was clearly brilliant at marketing!

No one ever seemed to buy those cans of lager. Certainly not in the Cosgrove family. Any lager in our household would be firmly past its sell by date. Did anyone buy lager from Jo Lurie?

My interest in the Tennents ladies was soon surpassed by the lure of the pickled meat. This is what really got me into the shop. Jo Lurie would stand behind a huge meat cutting machine and every time I went in, he would, without fail, hand me a few complimentary slices of beef. It was one of the few certainties of life you could

depend upon: death, taxes and a slice or two of Jo Lurie's mouth watering pickled meat. Delicious. What was it about the cuts that he offered there and then that made them so tasty? The meat was lean and pink and never tasted quite as good outside the shop. To those not fortunate to have been around pre 1986, it's the same sensation as pinching a chip from your friend's plate. For some reason you own chips never taste as good.

It wasn't always pickled meat, or what my English children now know as Salt Beef, that passed from Jo's hands to mine. Sometimes it would be a large piece of wurst wrapped in the red skin from the "World Famous" Blooms in far away London. Then, of course, behind the counter was always strung up a line of pink viennas... I am drooling as I write.

My Dad must have bought chicken, lamb, mince and other delicacies because we enjoyed these at home, but I have no recollection of him buying these items. Only the pickled

**It was one of the few certainties of life you could depend upon: death, taxes and a slice or two of Jo Lurie's mouth watering pickled meat.**

meat which we would then take home wrapped in a kind of waxed white paper. Sometimes if we were really hungry (and even if we weren't) we would take great pleasure eating the beef on the short journey home.

One of my favourite experiences in London is to queue in Blooms' restaurant in Golders Green for a salt beef sandwich. It is the closest feeling to being in Lurie's butcher shop. The meat doesn't taste as good, there are certainly no handouts and there's no

communal gossip- but it's the closest you can get.

If I'm recalling Kosher Edinburgh of the 1970's and 1980's. I couldn't fail to mention, Kleinbergs, the baker shop located on the corner where East Cross Causeway meets the romantically named Lamb's Passage. On a Friday afternoon after school in the summer we'd procure challah, bulkies, kichels and buttercake and maybe a small packet of sesame snaps for a treat on the way home. The kichels were the colour of a pale golden Labrador dog. We always had them in. You'd get them in shul at Kiddush too, washed down with a glass of Barr's Red Kola, still on sale in Scotland in a large glass bottle. If you return the bottle you get 20 pence back (some things don't change). Red kola is, by the way, impossible to source in England and believe me I have tried. While we're on the subject of Barrs - who remembers Sun Kool Cola? Can you still buy it? Back at Kleinbergs, sometimes we would buy large iced biscuits with a glacé cherry on the top, a special treat. The buttercake would be a Shabbat morning speciality, making a change from weekday cereal, to be enjoyed alongside a copy of the Jewish Echo which always arrived on a Saturday morning. The Jewish Chronicle was old news by then. Pickled Meat lives on but no one makes buttercake. They will

look at you strangely if you ask for it in the kosher bakers of London. The nearest you can find is something called Brunswick. A raisin filled cake covered in icing with a cherry topping. My advice is not to bother. You will be disappointed.

What about that staple of Jewish bakeries? Why did we never buy bagels. Did he sell them? He must have. We never bought bagels from Kleinbergs. My Glaswegian parents had a firm loyalty to Michael Morrison's bagels in Glasgow. We were never exposed to anything else. Did Kleinberg bake bagels?

While we're on the subject of bagels, it would be churlish not to mention smoked salmon. Smoked salmon was a treat. We bought ours from Victor Hugo's delicatessen which had a distinctive aromatic delicatessen smell I can still remember but couldn't for the life of me begin to describe. The shop was conveniently located on Melville Terrace, a mid point between Uncle Benny Aronson's house and Auntie Flora Gordon's Flat on Melville Drive next to the Meadows. I believe it is still open. Is it any good?

Smoked Salmon, in those days, was not really for the children. My sister, would you believe, doesn't actually like it. I question whether she is properly Jewish. Even more amazingly she

found a husband who doesn't like it! Thankfully their three children have better taste and, like mine, enjoy eating the oily fish with gusto.

Victor Hugo's smoked salmon was different to the kosher smoked salmon we would eat at my Granny's house on a Sunday afternoon. That variety was greasier. Victor Hugo's was drier. I couldn't tell you which was tastier.

Smoked Salmon is so widely available and cheap now it's funny to look back and remember how much reverence it was given twenty years ago. To my children it's another meal like chicken nuggets or pasta. When I was their age I doubt whether I would even have had the privilege of tasting it. It had the kind of status associated with Beluga caviar or Krug Champagne, both of which I have yet to taste!

Growing up in Edinburgh we were truly fortunate to have fabulous institutions like Luries and Kleinbergs. They don't make 'em like they used to. Ok, I'm not really a meat-a-holic but I enjoy my food and it's thanks, in no small part, to Edinburgh's kosher shops. Will my children enjoy their food bought from the supermarket in the same way? I very much doubt it.

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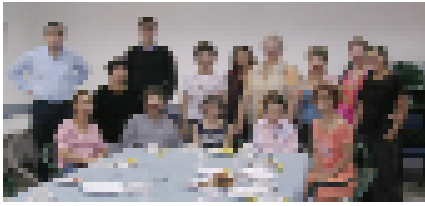
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# WIZO Special

Judy Gilbert



Haifa: Rainbow Centre staff and residents entertain WIZO visitors

If you have to arrive three hours early at the airport you know you are on your way to Israel. We knew we were in safe hands when the person in front, when questioned if he was carrying any weapons answered in the negative, so it must have been so. We were certainly reassured when a large proportion of the passengers waiting in the departure lounge suddenly formed a prayer group before boarding. (Did they know something we didn't?) No just that it was time for Maariv and the Chasidim were just doing what comes naturally.

After being told that I couldn't take a picture of our little party outside the El Al plane for security reasons, and safely on board, we began a little game of musical chairs so that the ultra orthodox men didn't have to sit next to a lady. The passengers all sorted themselves out in a near miraculous way.

Once airborne, the plane transformed itself into a Yeshiva with gentlemen animatedly discussing the finer points of Torah. There was never a dull moment and our WIZO group was just as excited at the prospect of arriving at Ben Gurion Airport four and half hours later, as anyone else.

Katie Goodwin and Sylvia Donne, Co chairmen of the Edinburgh branch of WIZO, had organised a comprehensive itinerary which would allow us to visit some of the projects we helped fund. Our small band consisted of the aforementioned, Barbara Kwiecinska, Maxine Berman from Glasgow and our 'honorary women' Edward Green and his nephew Joe from London.

Our arrival at the Dan Panorama at 9.30 in the evening meant that we were too late to eat in the dining room, and though we had been royally fed on the plane, were in need of some sustenance. There is nothing finer or more bonding than sharing a late night picnic of succulent cheeses and salads with a variety of fruit and bread brought up to one of our bedrooms on two gigantic plates. Returning to our respective rooms that overlooked the sea and the twinkling lights of Jaffa, we soon slept.



Netanya: WIZO Hadassah Canada Youth Village

The daily breakfast buffet could have fed two armies for several days. We were well set up for the first of our visits to the WIZO Hadassah Canada Youth Village in Netanya.

The village houses 1100 who have come from far and wide. There are some family units, and 200 children between the ages of 5 to 18, who come from families with economic problems and board without their parents. The centre acts as a school in the morning, a culture centre in the afternoon and a venue devoted to discussing social problems in the evening. These are mostly related to difficulties in adaptation, which tends to last 2 to 3 months after the initial period of euphoria engendered by living in comparative luxury. Madricha (leader/parent substitutes) greatly exceed the mere 14 minute's daily verbal contact which research finds that on average parents have with their children. The enforced and often initially resented discipline meets the children's needs and soon encourages

them to adapt to Israeli life and integration. Each unit is shared by up to four individuals, strange to each other initially, and with different problems, who eventually come to identify as a family.

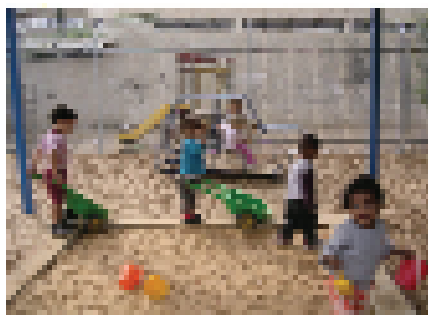
We were driven on to Haifa Rainbow Centre. Here underprivileged women can learn to support themselves by taking hairdressing, cosmetics, massage, manicure and pedicure courses. A government diploma allows them to start up their own concern and become independent. These women are not cowed by any manner of means. They learn quickly how to adjust to a way of life that everyone has a right to expect and they become important members of Israeli society. We were introduced to Avigail, a woman from the Kafka community of Azerbaijan, married at 16, rejected by her husband and with 3 children. With her fighting spirit and hitherto undiscovered abilities she was a wonderful ambassador for all repressed women in her situation.

The next stop should have been a visit to the beautiful and unusual Bahai Gardens. It was sadly not to be, as it was closed for maintenance. Instead we lunched at the foot of the hill looking high up into the gardens and Joe maintained his reputation for having hollow legs.

Later we met up with Rabbi Shalom Shapira and his delightful and highly organised wife Yehudit, at the hotel for coffee. Following our request to recommend somewhere to eat, a short and animated discussion ensued. Two minutes later Yehudit had booked a table at a kosher vegetarian restaurant whose name was duly written on a scrap of paper since they could not come. Too late, our two taxi drivers discovered there were no instructions and radio communication between them was soon established. Though none of us understood Hebrew we somehow knew that the conversation went something like 'Do you know

where this place is?' 'No I don't know, do you?' Driving round in circles a couple of times, then into some kind of road with manned barriers and carefully manoeuvring out again, they eventually set us down as unperturbed as if they had really known all along where they were going. The disparity between the rates charged by the two drivers was also a little perplexing. Following a satisfying meal, a visit to the 'ladies' was highly recommended by an excited member of our party. Like Moses, all you had to do to receive gushing water was speak nicely to the faucet. Not as romantic as a rock, but quite as efficient.

A pre-bed amble on the Tel Aviv promenade revealed how wonderfully diverse Israeli society really is. The celebration of Eid was in evidence with hundreds of families sitting round their barbecues; smoke curling in thick swathes round children happily playing on the swings. Maxine and I felt perfectly safe despite being the only two interlopers.



Ashdod: Multi purpose day care centre

Our next port of call was to a multi purpose day centre in Ashdod complete with rest rooms for twenty-seven two year olds and eight babies. We watched the extraordinary care with which volunteers supervised Ethiopian, Russian but mostly Sabra children using the outdoor play facilities. In these centres WIZO provides funds for social workers and food but not necessarily buildings. Social workers are on call until 8.00pm to help with personal problems and to assess the potential need for a child to be fostered out, a very difficult action to be justified according to Israeli law.

A shelter for battered women was the next stop. To me a strangely surprising concept in Israel, but a sad reflection

of modern society wherever it may be. There was a shelter for Arab women and a shelter for Jewish women, each with their own agenda but with the same ideology. They had all lived with violence and were being helped to raise their battered self-esteem. The young woman eager to present her baby with such pride to us was most moving, and convinced us of the important job that WIZO carries out.

Standing outside the 'Beit Heuss Centre for Enrichment of Family Life' we could just as well have been at any of the schools placed in the most deprived areas of Edinburgh. Young people with real social problems, and in some, the aggressive attitude that hinted at their background was very apparent. The defiant and noisy exchanges outside were, however, totally absent inside. The method of assimilating angry youngsters into contributing members of the community was inspired and could be used as a template in the West. Conventional classrooms were replaced by workshops for hairdressing and fitness centres. The teachers were more like instructors and the pupils could more easily identify with this adult approach. The true proof of the high standard of education, with which the youngsters emerged, was that now even parents without problems were applying for their children to enter the school.

Our last full day in Israel was divided between business and pleasure. Accompanied by a charming armed guard, we drove first through Gilo where a substantial part of the wall dividing two communities stood, and then on to Jerusalem where our volunteer guide took us round Yad Vashem. Although we had all been here before, one new memorial to the children who died in the Holocaust took our breath away. With the help of a guide rail, we carefully edged our way through a pitch-black interior, even though we gazed upon what appeared to be thousands of candles, all the while listening to a roll call of every child lost. There were in fact only two candles, infinitely reproduced very cleverly with mirrors and prisms. The monument summed up all that Yad

Vashem stood for. A speedy appearance was made at the Kotel and then a lightning tour through first the Armenian then the Jewish quarters of the Old City and lastly the Herodian House.

That WIZO projects encompass all family life was neatly demonstrated by our last visit to the Rebecca Sief Centre in Jerusalem. Here there is a holistic approach where families spend an entire week either being counselled as a family or taking part in group sessions. It is a way of bringing self-understanding to dysfunctional families. They make informed decisions as to whether they could become a viable unit again or they come to terms amicably, with going their own separate ways.

Our last meal out was in a marvellous restaurant on the waters edge in Tel Aviv, only 10 minutes walk away from the hotel if you had any sense of direction, and I hour, if like us, you don't. At 6.00am we left the hotel with its piano playing crooner in the lounge; its hundreds of comfortable rooms; its pleasant staff and gargantuan breakfasts, and in due course relaxed on the plane Britain bound. Fish and two veg is not everyone's idea of what to have for breakfast but if, like me, you put down 'no meat' in the booking form where it asked for special food requests, then never mind the time of day, that is what you get when everybody else is enjoying a sensible breakfast-like breakfast.!

I love Israel and all its idiosyncrasies and on this occasion I felt privileged to see for myself all the wonderful things that our fund raising was going towards; a rare insight that most charity givers miss out on.



Edward, Sylvia, Joe, Kate and Barbara board the El Al 'Yeshiva'

# Around and About

## The Shein Scene

The annual **pre-Yomtov Coffee Morning** took place in the Community Centre on 5 September. As well as the exciting prospect of unlimited gossip within the little conclave of members, surely an attraction in itself, there was an opportunity to purchase greeting cards and books from the stalls manned by eager volunteers. Co-chairman Anita Mendelssohn thanked all who attended and those who had helped in the event which raised £300 for Community Centre funds.

On the same day, a number of non-Jewish visitors were welcomed into the **Synagogue Open Day** organised by the European Day of Jewish Culture and Heritage. Rabbi Rose and members of the Synagogue escorted the interested visitors around the building which, was described in the brochure as being "a rare modernist 1930s Grade 'B' listed building, faced in red brick by leading Glasgow architect James Miller".

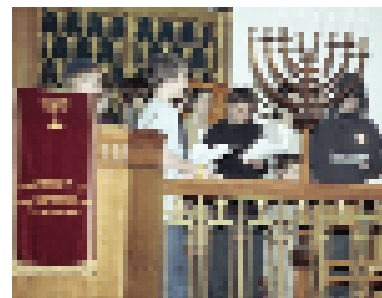
To round off a busy day, WIZO held a supper and end of **Festival Fireworks House Party** in the home of Judith and Mark Sischy. About 50 enjoyed a most appetising buffet enhanced by a musical soirée performed by a talented trio of musicians. Sadly the vagaries of Edinburgh Festival weather, although remaining fairly dry, decided to retain low cloud formations over the city, preventing the usual colourful spectacle from being seen in all its glory. Nevertheless the happy crowd had an enjoyable evening which raised over £800 for WIZO.

In Edinburgh, the strange minhag whereby the appointments of **Chosan Torah and Chosan Bereiseth** are kept a close secret until the latter part of Yom Kippur, result in a guessing game among congregants during the High Festivals. This was dispelled at Mincha on Yom Kippur when Rabbi David Rose and Parnis David Goldberg were called up for Hagbah and Gelila. Only then did the congregation discover who were to have the honours this

year. Mazeltov to both gentlemen. On 13 October the popular **WIZO lunch** meetings continued at the home of Sylvia Donne, About 15 ladies attended and helped swell funds by £150. The following month, another lunch was held at Kate Goodwin's home where Kate addressed the group on her recent visit to Israel. This trip had been organised by Sylvia, in which several Edinburgh WIZO members participated. Kate talked of the varied and interesting projects the group had seen and of the success of the whole venture. £230 was raised.

On 14 November, the annual **Remembrance Service** took place in the Synagogue, when Rabbi 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 Last Post, played by a bugler, added to the solemnity of the occasion. Alec Kleinberg and Lenny Berger carried the banners of the Edinburgh Jewish Branch of the British Legion and AJEX. After the service, tea was served. In the morning, along with other representatives of organisations, Lenny was present at the City Chambers where he laid a wreath in the shape of a Mogen Dovid.

**Dr. Margaret Brearley**, honorary advisor on the Holocaust to the Archbishops' Council of the Church of



Children at the Chanukah Service

England, gave a talk to WIZO members in Kate Goodwin's home on 1 December. Her subjects on how she became involved in Judaism, the situation of Jews living in the Ukraine and of the political problems of that country proved of great interest to the members who attended. The informal evening ended with refreshments and an opportunity to talk to Dr. Brearley.

24 members attended a WIZO outing to the Playhouse Theatre on 11 December where they saw the tremendously successful musical **'Mama Mia'**. There followed a gourmet supper at the home of Kate and Ronnie Goodwin. WIZO funds benefited by £355.

Children sang **Chanukah Songs** for the parent and toddler group run by Shari Cohn-Simmen in the community centre on the 6th day of the Festival. They previously had enjoyed a morning break eating doughnuts. At the afternoon Chanukah Service, Isaac, Michael, Sarah, Benjamin, Jonathan and Jessica lit the candles. Hilary Rifkind and her functions committee provided latkes and doughnuts while

games were organised by cheder assistants Duncan, Jonathan and Maurice.

The annual **Chanukah Social** took place on 18 December when the Official Secrets Act, last used to conceal the identity of the Chosen Torah and Chosen Bereiseth, was again in force to prevent the 85-strong crowd from knowing what they were



Anita Mendlesome - This is your life

being subjected to. At least they had the pleasure of partaking of a first-class meal. With tension at breaking point, they then witnessed a mock 'This Is Your Life' with Anita Mendlesohn, sometimes known as Mendelssohn, as the victim. The comically attired guests turned out to be her friend Mrs. Fisheemelt (Judy Gilbert), the Rabbi (Gersh Mendick), mother-in-law (Myrna Kaplan), music teacher (Pearl Shein), and long lost husband Issy (Norman Berger).

The writer and compère of the show, Ian Shein, also directed it, dispelling rumours that the farce had been cobbled up on the spot. Audience response was such as to encourage the cast not to leave town. Myrna thanked Ian, who responded by praising the cast for being such good sports. Avril Berger proved to be an inventive wardrobe mistress, even if the cast improvised as they did with the script. Many thanks to all concerned in the excellent catering and event which raised over £1000 for community centre funds.

25 Luncheon Club members and cooks attended a colourful matinee performance of 'Kiss Me Kate' at the Festival Theatre on 22 December. Previously they had enjoyed a most appetising lunch cooked by Kate and Val. Sadly, Kate failed to respond to the title of the musical but hope springs eternal.

### Community Golf Competition

In a very exciting 2004 Golf Competition, the winner was Jonathan Roberts, who narrowly defeated John Danzig by 4 games with two games drawn.

Each finalist received an engraved golf statuette and in addition Jonathan took the Rueben Zack golf trophy. This was all played at the new Princess golf course nine holes at the Braids. The rainy weather took its toll this season, but the finalist is Lionel Freedman, who plays the winner between John Danzig and Syd Zoltie. This will be played early in 2005. Another draw will be made just after Pesach, when hopefully the course will be firmer. In addition I would like to arrange a one day doubles tournament on a Sunday.

Leonard Berger



### Marie Curie Cancer Charity

We hear that Stella Bierman has been successfully raising money for the Marie Curie Charity, her most recent effort being a charity run in the summer from which she raised a remarkable £1,050. We believe that Stella is one of those featured in this photograph.

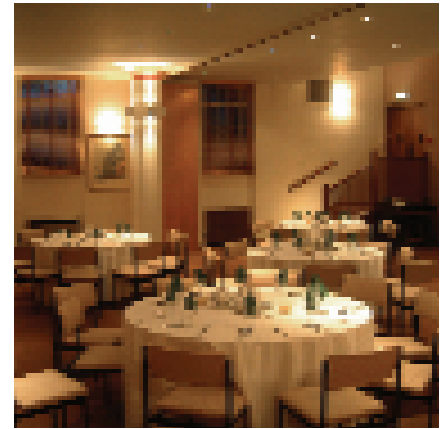


Herbert Dryden; Bonnyrigg's role with the Kinder Transport

### Herbert Dryden: Bonnyrigg's role with the Kindertransport

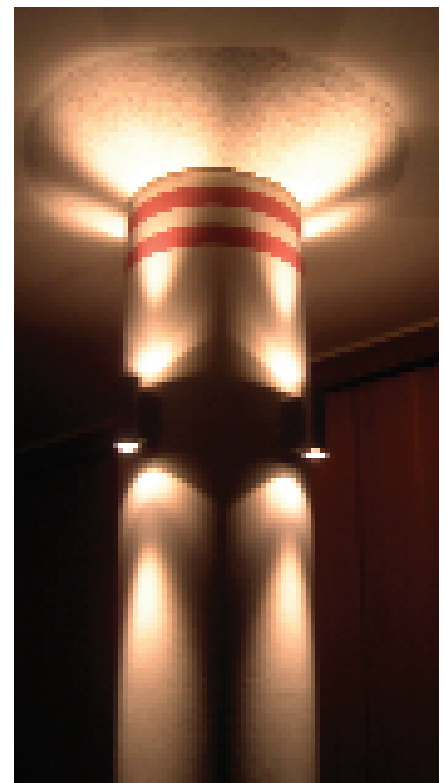
On Sunday 16th January, Herbert Dryden was invited to speak about 'Bonnyrigg's role with the kindertransport' at a supper evening organised by Ed. Jewish Community Centre Chairman, Anita Mendelssohn. Herbert Dryden has researched into the history of Polton House where children coming off the kinder transport were taken in for board and education. The house started off as a printing works was purchased by Sir Philip Dundas who finally used it to give refuge to Jewish children from Europe. By 1945 priority was given to children released from the concentration camps. The house was run on the lines of a kibbutz with children up to the age of 17 working in a farming environment. One of its most esteemed residents was Hugo Gryn who resided there from 1946. Some extraordinary reminiscences of former residents, now elderly, were recalled. Herbert Dryden would welcome any new insights into the events of that time.

Judy Gilbert



### Community Centre Refurbishment

Those who have been in the Community Centre recently will have seen the huge difference that has been made by the new lighting and re-decoration. We are grateful to Mrs Enid Sandelson for the generous donation which made this possible. Mrs Sandelson is the widow of Harold Oppenheim from the well-known Edinburgh Oppenheim family and is now married to Basil Sandelson. The Hall is named in memory of her daughter, Marian who tragically was killed in a car accident over thirty years ago. It was Mrs Sandelson's wish to see the Hall refurbished into a modern setting for the present-day requirements of the Synagogue.





# Society Reports

## Council of Christians and Jews Report

AUTUMN 2004

the 15 participants into 3 study groups to read the passage, identify the main issues and report back. The passage concerns the deception of Isaac by Rebecca and younger son Jacob, which results in Isaac giving Jacob the blessing he had intended for Esau as firstborn. The passage raised a number of questions, such as whether it was such a heinous crime for Rebecca to devise and encourage Jacob in the deception, whether the deception detracted from the blessing, whether the exclusion of Esau from the blessing was unfair, and what the benefit was of the deception in the end. Various answers were suggested and the Rabbi helped to shed light on the questions through references to Jewish commentators. The opposition between Jacob (as forefather of the Jewish people) and Esau, the forefather of Edom, metaphorically the Roman empire and all that it stood for, is a powerful motif of Rabbinic interpretation and results in the commentators painting Esau in negative colours, despite the apparent reconciliation of the brothers after Jacob's return to Canaan. This is unlike the position of Isaac and Ishmael who can, basically, co-exist, and implies that ultimately Judaism and Islam can co-exist while Judaism and Christianity cannot. This provided

was a wonderful opportunity to listen to Dr Margaret Brearley, speaking on "Dionysus, god of terror irresistible": Neitzsche, Wagner and the Holocaust". Dr Brearley is honorary Advisor on the Holocaust to the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England and is Chairman of Daphna WIZO in London, and as such, we shared her with Edinburgh WIZO whom she addressed on 1 December. Her main point was to show that the 'philosophical' basis of Wagner's music and Neitzsche's writings led very directly to Hitler's ideas, to the vast support he was able to command, and to the Holocaust. She has carried out her own original research into the German language writings of Richard Wagner which have not been translated, and which confirm the very deep anti-Semitic motivation of his music. This made disturbing listening for someone like myself so recently beguiled by the Ring Cycle staged by Scottish Opera. For example, she can show that the *Nibelungen* are the Jews, that Alberich and Mime are conceived of as Jewish archetypes, and that Hagen is meant to be the most feared of all, the Mischling or mixed race person, who brings the whole show down. She explained that Wagner saw in Siegfried (as in *Parsifal*) an Aryan Christlike figure, similar to the Greek god

sword Notung 'Needful' is needed to kill the Jews, and Hitler picked up this idea in *Mein Kampf* when he said that the deepest need was to understand the threat of the Jews, and the only way to fight it was through using the sword to destroy every last individual and hence annihilate the idea of a compassionate God. Neitzsche, who idealized Wagner, distanced himself from contemporary anti-Semitism but wanted to annihilate Judaeo-Christian morality in order to 'liberate life' which he identified with the orgiastic worship of Dionysus in which all moral inhibitions disappeared. This idea of mass ritual in which personal morality disappeared was taken up by Hitler in stage-managing the Nuremberg rallies with their mass participation and pagan symbolism. It was a real privilege to hear such a learned talk from a scholar who never oversimplifies, who is so well-informed and has researched her subject so thoroughly, and who is so committed to the strengthening of Jewish – Christian relations in the modern world. She leads a very busy life but gave her time generously to spend 2 whole days in Edinburgh and this was much appreciated by everyone who met her.

Micheline Brannan  
Secretary

## Brain Teaser

Dr Berl Osborne

You are in a cell leading out of which are two doors. One door leads to freedom and the other to the lions. You do not know which.

In the cell are two men, both of whom know the way to freedom. One of them always lies and the other always tells the truth; again you do not know which.

You are allowed to ask one of them one question, the answer to which will enable you to escape.

What is the question? [Answer on page 19](#)

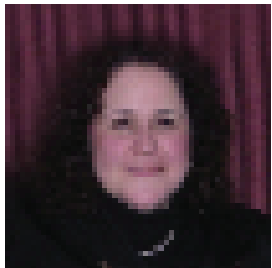


# Literary Society Report

The Lit was delighted to open its 117th year with the Middle East expert David Capitanchik, who spoke on "The Middle East, Israel and the War Against Terror." Dr Capitanchik has been a long time friend of the Lit. Dr Capitanchik posed several key questions related to the Middle East, and offered his answers. What is Al Qaeda after? Their principal concern is the Arab world, not the West, wishing to spread fundamentalist Islam, first throughout the Muslim world, and then the world. What policies must Israel follow today?

1. Withdraw from Gaza 2. Move the security fence as close as possible to the pre-1967 borders. 3. Accept that the land outside the fence will never be a part of Israel. In Dr Capitanchik's opinion, Sharon may well be the man for the job - Israel's answer to de Gaulle ('haaretz, ze ani'), who extracted France from Algiers against French hardliners. As for the Palestinians, current Palestinian leaders must build up the infrastructure of the state to gain popular support, else lose it to Hamas.

The second speaker was Richard Calvocoressi, the Director of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and of the Dean Gallery. He spoke about the recently opened controversial art exhibit of contemporary works collected by Friedrich Flick, the grandson of a Nazi industrialist. A review of his talk "The Flick Collection of Contemporary Art: Whitewashing of Blood Money or the Jewel in Berlin's Crown?" is given in this edition by Robin Spark.



Nancy Morris

Our third event of the season was a Chanukah treat: a showing of the video of David

Neville's play

"The Audition." Currently a producer for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Radio 3, David early in his career wrote the prize-winning short play "The Audition" for Scottish Television. A candid revelation of the interview process for a new rabbi and of the Shul members and council, the play could hardly have been written without humour, and humour abounds. "How can we get to Shabbat service without driving?" asks one council member. The Rabbi replies, "I can say I've never SEEN anyone drive to Shul." "You can never get a straight

answer from a rabbi," the council member grumbles. The story was accompanied by delightful violin music chosen and played incomparably by the late Leonard Friedman.

The fourth speaker was Cecile Shea, the Principal Officer of the US Consulate General in Edinburgh, who spoke on "Religion and American Politics: Strange Bedfellows." Ostensibly an enlightened country that keeps religion and politics legally at bay, in reality the distinction is murkier. Quoting a litany of statistics, Cecile revealed how paramount religion features in the belief systems of Americans. Showing a clip of the television series 'Westwing,' which depicted various religious viewpoints towards the death penalty and how these should inform the President's decision on its enforcement, Cecile questioned whether Europeans would have reacted the same way as Americans. The office-talk the next day in America was dominated by the issues raised. Europeans more likely, she felt, would have objected to any religious influence on the President. Americans take their religion seriously. Where will it lead? About 35 per cent. of Americans are Born-Again Evangelists, about half of whom are Christian Fundamentalists. It's a trend not about to change, and a trend that will continue to impact on



Richard Calvocoressi

US politics and policies, and therefore the world.

The fifth speaker of

the year was Scotland's first female rabbi, Nancy Morris, of the Glasgow New Synagogue. She spoke on "Sexuality, Law and Leadership: Pushing the Boundaries of Orthodox." Why are there no women rabbis in Orthodox Judaism? Rabbi Morris made the case that there's really no halachic basis for denying smicha to a woman, and indeed, some have received it in the past. The first was Regina Jonas, ordained by a Liberal Rabbi in 1935 in Germany. She served as a rabbi within Germany before her murder in Auschwitz. But the Orthodox have never ordained a woman. The reason rests on Talmudic interpretation: women are not permitted to act as witnesses or judges, and their singing in public is considered lewd. On the other hand, Orthodoxy does now grant a kind of limited smicha to women, permitting them to provide valid responses to halachic queries. Orthodox organisations like Edah are further striving to incorporate women more broadly into Jewish practice.

There are plenty of Lit talks to come: 23 Jan, Professor Michael Berkowitz will speak on Jewish criminality; 27 Feb, Brian Klug will speak on pre-Balfour British legislation relating to Jews; 18 Mar, Claire Singerman will offer her reflections on being a Jewish teacher; and the season will conclude on 3 April with Jonathan Freedland speaking on 'Jacob's Gift.'

Avery Meiksin

# The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

## REPRESENTING THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AT THE SCOTTISH LEVEL.

Leah Granat



Members of SCoJeC at Edinburgh AGM with Rami Ousta who is the director of BEMIS

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities is a relatively new organisation which came into existence 5? years ago in response to the new political situation created by devolution. It was recognised that the existence of a Scottish Parliament and government structure would inevitably have an impact on the Jewish Community in Scotland, and also that it would be impractical to monitor and liaise with the new structures from London. It also became clear that, for its concerns to be heard, the Scottish Jewish community would need to be represented by a single voice at the Scottish rather than simply at the communal level, and it was with all of these things in mind that the Scottish Jewish Communities came together to set up the Scottish Council.

Its aim is to represent the Jewish Community from across the whole of Scotland, from the largest community in East Renfrewshire to the smallest in Dundee, and including the scattered Jewish Network of Argyll and the Highlands as well as students in Scottish colleges and universities, and to do this across the whole of the religious and political spectrum.

Each Community sends representatives to the Scottish Council according to its size. Hence Glasgow has five members, Edinburgh three and each of the smaller communities one. John Cosgrove is the current Chair and Dr Philip Mason, the President of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation is one

of the two vice-Chairs, the other being Dr Kenneth Collins, President of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council. The Director of the Scottish Council is Ephraim Borowski.

All well and fine, but what does the Scottish Council actually do? And how does it go about its work?

The culture of the Scottish Parliament and Executive is one of interaction with the wider Scottish community, and all new legislation and policy is the subject of wide and open consultation. Alongside this Ministers and MSPs are far more accessible than their counterparts in England, and regularly meet with different community and interest groups to discuss a wide range of issues.

The Scottish Council acts as the Jewish voice in this interchange, regularly responding to consultations and liaising with Ministers, MSPs and civil servants. A new group, set up by the Scottish Executive to take account of the concerns of faith communities includes a Scottish Council representative as one of its core members.

During the last year we have responded to issues such as religious education in schools, hate crime, organ donation, race equality, proposals for a Commission for Equality and Human Rights, the census, and shechitah to name but a few. As a representative body the Scottish Council itself does

not take a view on these matters but before putting a response together, consults widely within the Jewish Community. Depending on the subject this might include local Rabbis, for example Rabbi Weiss of the Glasgow Beth Din, Rabbi Rose of Edinburgh and Rabbi Morris of Glasgow New Synagogue, communal organisations such as the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, representatives of the smaller communities of Aberdeen, Dundee, the Jewish Network of Argyll and the Highlands, and Sukkat Shalom, (the Edinburgh Liberal Community) and those with a particular expertise in the relevant area – for example Jewish health professionals in relation to medical consultations and members of the Association of Jewish Teachers for educational matters.

Because it monitors the Scottish Parliament daily the Scottish Council is in an ideal position to provide up-to-date and accurate information and to advise on the best means of responding to situations that affect the Jewish Community. Recently, for example, the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign submitted a petition to the Scottish Parliament which demanded that the JNF should lose its charitable status. In addition to liaising with the various bodies concerned the Scottish Council also submitted evidence to the Public Petitions Committee about the workings of the Petitions system as a result of our experience on that occasion.

Another side of the Scottish Council's work is to build links between the smaller communities and to inform them about what is going on elsewhere in the Scottish Jewish community. Just over a year ago it was suggested by a member of the Jewish Network of Argyll and the Highlands that a newsletter would provide a useful resource and the result has been Four Corners, which now appears quarterly and has met with an extremely positive

response after just four issues. As well as being produced in a paper copy this is available via e-mail and on the Scottish Council website [www.j-scot.org.uk](http://www.j-scot.org.uk) (which currently in the process of being redesigned so doesn't look its best at the moment).

The Scottish Council also helps the smaller communities to run inter-communal events such as last October's very successful Succot get-together in Oban (in what was, as far as we know, Oban's first ever succah) and the recent Chanukah party in Dundee attended by people from as far

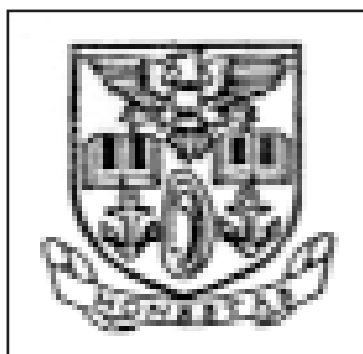
afield as Gairloch, Inverness, Oban, Ullapool, Airdrie and Glasgow. These occasions provide an opportunity for people, who may live quite far from any of the more established communities to get together, for a social event that also links in to the Jewish calendar.

Observers are welcome at meetings of the full Council, and there was a good attendance at the last AGM which was held at Edinburgh shul in November 2004. The Ladies Guild provided a superb lunch to start off the proceedings and the Director of BEMIS (the Black and Ethnic Minority

Infrastructure in Scotland) an organisation that supported the Scottish Council in recent successful grant applications, was the guest speaker.

As the home of the Scottish Parliament and Executive, Edinburgh is obviously a key location for the work of the Scottish Council, and we appreciate the consistent support that has been given by members of EHC, notably John Cosgrove, Philip Mason and Rabbi Rose, and look forward to developing our links with the new Liberal community in the city.

If you would like to learn more about the work of the Scottish Council, join the e-mail distribution list for Four Corners or submit an article for publication, please contact the Public Affairs Officer, Leah Granat, tel: 0141 638 7550 / 07887 488 100 or e-mail [leah.granat@onetel.net](mailto:leah.granat@onetel.net)



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# Two Days at Limmud Conference 2004

John A Cosgrove

The Times newspaper once described a previous Limmud conference as “Judaism’s equivalent of the Edinburgh Fringe”. Having over forty years experience of the strengths and weaknesses of the Fringe and being curious, we sought to find out whether there was any truth in that statement. Hazel and I reckoned that two days out of the five days of Conference would be enough to test the waters and we went with our good friends, Brian and Wendy Fidler now of Oxford, formerly of Edinburgh. (Wendy was a founder member of the editorial board of the Edinburgh Star and served for several years). We were quite wrong. It would be foolhardy to imagine that you could do justice to a conference of such magnitude and scope in two days. Limmud is so vast: 2000 participants attending more than 750 lectures, discussions, workshops and performances taking over the campus of Nottingham University. This brief report can do no more than give a mere whiff of the flavour of the experience. Making choices, deciding which sessions to go to, proved to be the most difficult task. Each day there were 11 sessions each lasting about 70 minutes from early morning till the wee small hours. In each session there were up to 30 different activities going on simultaneously, so choosing wisely was critical. Fortunately, with four of us we were able to spread ourselves around and report back. To make the task easier, Limmud had set up a superb web site at [www.limmud.org/conf/conf2004/](http://www.limmud.org/conf/conf2004/) through which you could pick and choose your own personal programme. The conference handbook which lists all the various activities runs into nearly 300 pages and as you only receive it when you arrive, there is barely time to study it at the conference as the time between sessions (20-30 minutes) is spent a) finding out where the next session is and getting there b) eating and drinking c) saying hello to people you haven’t met for years d) dialling/texting your mobile phone to ask your spouse/partner/friend why they are not at the place you arranged to see them at. During one of these intervals we bumped into Rabbi David Rose who gave four presentations on aspects of the Jewish Calendar which were well attended.

So what were the highlights for me? Clive Lawton, the part time executive director of Limmud and a brilliant educator and communicator, gave a four part series of talks entitled “A Jewish Tour of World Religions”. Understanding how other religions tick is important and this year there were about a dozen Muslims attending including a couple of Imams who took part in various dialogue sessions. A session on Synagogue Music, taken by a lady cantor (Josée Wolff) with a wonderful voice, left me wondering why orthodox communities exclude 50% of the community from taking part in the service. A session on the Kaddish taken by Uri Melammed, an expert in Aramaic, proved very instructive. Henry Grunwald, the President of the Board of Deputies, led a discussion on the continuing threat facing Shechita. In a lighter vein, Joel Chasnoff an American comedian, led a discussion on Jewish humour.

The husband and wife team of Melanie

Phillips of the Daily Mail and Jewish Chronicle and Joshua Rozenberg, formerly legal correspondent of the BBC and now of the Daily Telegraph, are regulars at Limmud. Joshua gave an amusing talk on “How to Chair a Jewish Public Meeting”. Melanie took part in a discussion with Ned Temko, the Editor of the Jewish Chronicle and other journalists, on the way Jews are reported in the news which centred on the question of whether we are subject to extreme criticism or are we paranoid. I also attended her talk on the Politics of Progress subtitled “The Left, the Right and the Jews” which can now be found on her website at: <http://www.melaniephillips.com/articles/archives/limmud%20neocons.pdf>. Rarely do you find a professional writer who speaks powerfully and with such great passion and conviction. The largest session I attended was Lord Winston’s talk “Has Science Replaced Religion” at which the Kippa-wearing television personality showed that he was equally at home with

science, medicine and Jewish sources, a true polymath.

Although many of the participants were orthodox and Kippot were worn by a significant proportion of men, one of the sad aspects of Limmud is the non-participation of many Orthodox Rabbis on the grounds that they do not wish to share a platform with Reform and Conservative Rabbis. This goes entirely against the ethos of Limmud which is non-denominational and values diversity and choice in form content and style. There were a few notable exceptions and our Edinburgh Rabbi is to be commended for his support for Limmud. Another exception was the public debate between a United Synagogue Rabbi, Naftali Brawer and the dynamic Masorti Rabbi, Jonathan Wittenberg which the Jewish Chronicle described as a duet rather than a duel.

Apart from the sessions, there was the Jewish Film Festival running throughout the conference and also a well equipped bookshop selling books of Jewish interest and a Shuk (a market) selling music, paintings, jewellery, software and other items of Jewish interest housed with a giant café serving refreshments throughout the day and evening.

But is it a Jewish Fringe Festival? Yes and probably better. How many times have you walked away after seeing something disappointing at the Fringe? At Limmud, the standard is high and I learnt something at each session. Go to the next Limmud Conference! You won’t be disappointed. There is something for everyone.

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## Symposium on Jewish Settlement, development and identities in Scotland, 1879-2004.

Lindsay Levy

This symposium was held at Garnethill Synagogue in October 2004 as part of 125th anniversary celebrations of Scotland's oldest purpose-built synagogue, and was jointly hosted by the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, and the Research Institute of Scottish and Irish studies.

The Scottish Jewish Archive Centre opened in Garnethill Synagogue in 1987. Its remit is to collect and salvage evidence of all aspects of Jewish life in Scotland, from circumcision and cemetery records, photographs, letters and artefacts, to recorded interviews of oral history. The emphasis is on creating and maintaining an archive rather than a museum, for as Bill Williams of the Manchester Jewish Museum insisted 'without archives we have no history'. The truth of this statement was amply borne out in the papers presented during the day.

Professor Aubrey Newman of the University of Leicester gave the keynote speech of the conference on immigrant settlement. Although individual Jews settled in Britain from the Norman conquest, and in Scotland from the 17th century, the major move known as the Great Migration took place between 1881 and 1914. Pogroms and political events motivated many Jews to leave eastern Europe, and improved transport links and the growth of ocean liners transformed migration patterns into Britain and beyond. We should, however, be wary of the well-worn family stories of ancestors who arrived in Hull believing they had reached the United States. Many did come to Britain with the intention of raising money for an onward passage, but never managed to do so. Instead they moved throughout Britain as traders and peddlers, and when increased prosperity among the wider British population led to a demand for manufactured goods, Jewish traders were there to supply them, selling luxury goods to the middle classes and providing credit to the working classes. One enterprising Jewish peddler even learnt Gaelic to trade in the Highlands!

The story of Jewish settlement in Scotland, from its origins to the second world war, was taken up by a variety of speakers. Organised Jewish communities moved into Scotland in the 19th century, the vast majority by transmigratory routes through England. Often they came in groups to fill a particular market niche. Tailors and tobacco workers came to Glasgow; waterproofers came to

**The first synagogue in Scotland was opened in Nicholson Street in Edinburgh in 1816**

Edinburgh and formed their own synagogue known locally as the Schmeerers Shul. (A reference to the waterproofing process, which it was suggested might make a separate shul desirable!) The first synagogue in Scotland was opened in Nicholson Street in Edinburgh in 1816, but before a Jewish community establishes a place of worship it is usually concerned with finding a cemetery. Dr Sharman Kaddish spoke on the Jewish monuments and

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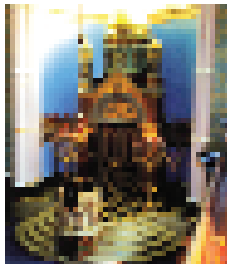


buildings of Scotland, and it was particularly interesting to sit in the beautiful Garnethill Synagogue as she pointed out typical features of 19th century shul architecture.

As the wave of immigrants grew, the host Jewish community offered hospitality and support, and voiced concern over increasing numbers of destitute migrants. There was a qualitative difference in the experience of Jewish immigrants to Scotland as opposed to England, for in England the Jews comprised the first large immigrant community. In Scotland this unenviable position had already been taken by the Irish, and the polarity which existed was between Catholics and Protestants, rather than Christians and Jews, with Jews seen as impartial. Jewish immigrants often lived and worked in close proximity to Catholics in areas like the Gorbals, and the archives suggest this co-existence was mostly peaceful. When trouble broke out between Catholics and Protestants the challenging cry was “Are you a Billy (Protestant), a Dan (Catholic) or an Old Tin Can (Jew)?” Billy, from King William, Dan from Daniel O’Connell;

no-one was able to provide a rationale for Old Tin Can.

Many speakers compared the experiences of Irish and Jewish immigrants in Scotland, and for the most part the Jews experienced less prejudice and assimilated quicker. When the Fascist movement became active in Scotland in the 1920s it associated with anti-Catholic leagues, and socialists, trade unionists and



Jews joined together in active protests against the BUF and, in the 30s, in boycotts of German businesses.

Although most Jews who came to Scotland used a trans migratory route through England, some continued their journey across the Atlantic, sometimes following the well-established Scottish emigration route to Montreal. Ships’ manifests form another rich archival source of information. After 1908 an increased level of racial identification developed

in Scottish ports with passengers distinguished as Russian or German with the addition of the word ‘Jew’, rather than simply by nationality. This is perhaps because Jews were seen as unhealthy, and susceptible to such diseases as cholera and trachoma, and if the emigrants were rejected by US immigration authorities for reasons of ill health, the shipping line bore the cost of transporting them back.

This was a day filled with interesting talks, and during the lunch break we were given a demonstration of the remarkable JewishGen website which can be used with great effect to trace family histories. Very little work has been done on the history of Jews in Scotland, and it is to be hoped that this seminar will promote more research and study.

The Scottish Jewish Archives Centre can be reached at:  
[www.sjac.org.uk](http://www.sjac.org.uk)

The JewishGen database is at:  
[www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org)

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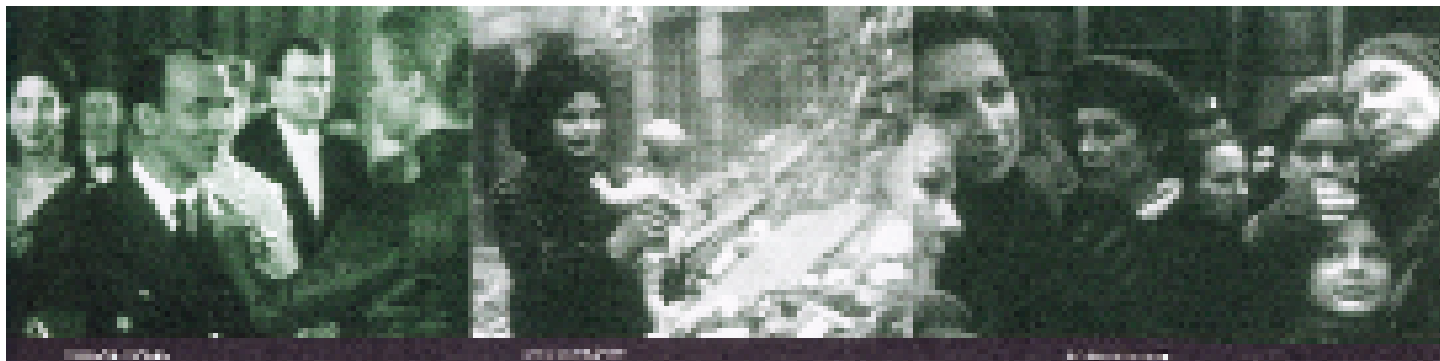
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# Jewish Film Festival

Micheline Brannan



I have been waiting a long time for the Filmhouse to stage a Jewish film festival and at long last it came in December 2004. I managed to attend 4 times, and as each film was shown only once I can be fairly certain that few Star readers saw them, hence this article.

**‘Forerunners’ was about the start of the Israeli Women’s Football League** which was required in 1997 as a condition of mens’ teams participation in international soccer. It followed the champions, Tel Aviv Hapoel, as they struggled to maintain their lead for a second season. It focused on 3 players, Inna, a Ukrainian immigrant, Sylvie, a player with an established international reputation, and Salwa, a Christian – the only Arab on the team. Inna had left behind in the Ukraine her only relative, her grandmother, and she was having a hard time making a go of it in Israel. She came across as a loner, a tomboy, refusing work in a shop selling cosmetics and accessories in favour of car valeting. We saw her in callboxes, desperately shoving tokens into the phone to try to maintain contact with her grandmother and finally at the airport on the way to her funeral. Sylvie was a real Sabra, a mixture of hard exterior and vulnerable inside. Though the best player, she could ruin things for herself by being over-critical of her team-mates and not supporting them. She had a hard time during the filming, having lost her mother from cancer just before and her father during this difficult season. The coach, Ami, clearly admired her but also got exasperated and gave her a good dressing down on one occasion, resulting in tears and reconciliation. But in the final, when the team were already losing to Maccabi Haifa, she went too far, and was ordered off at half time. It was painful to watch her view the wreckage of the team’s hopes from the benches, but in the end, the final screen informed us that she had got a place on another team. Salwa was in many ways the most normal of the team members. She had a wonderful family who, unlike the family of the heroine of ‘Bend it like Beckham’, fully supported her. Her delightful father was the most enthusiastic parent imaginable, reliving vicariously the footballing prowess of his youth. For her the season ended in marriage to her sweetheart. The film contained unexpected sidelights on Israeli society, such as when the whole team attended the Arab Christian Christmas Party complete with Tree and Santa.

**‘Arna’s Children’ was another take on the destruction of the Jenin Refugee Camp in April 2002.** (The Filmhouse has recently shown ‘Jenin Jenin’ by Israeli Arab Director Mohammed Bakri.) Arna, a Sabra who had fought in the War of Independence but subsequently married an Arab Israeli from Nazareth, had won some money in an ‘alternative’ Nobel Peace Prize, which enabled her to set up a youth theatre in the Jenin camp where she was already running a children’s project. This happened in the 1990s when peace was looking hopeful and the Palestinian children were prepared to express their frustration, their fears and their hopes through the medium of drama rather than war. We saw her, at the start of the film, already sick with cancer, demonstrating at a checkpoint against the injustice of keeping so many Palestinians waiting in line to cross. She paid a return visit to the theatre, now closed, had a reunion with the actors, and then died. Her son Julian, an

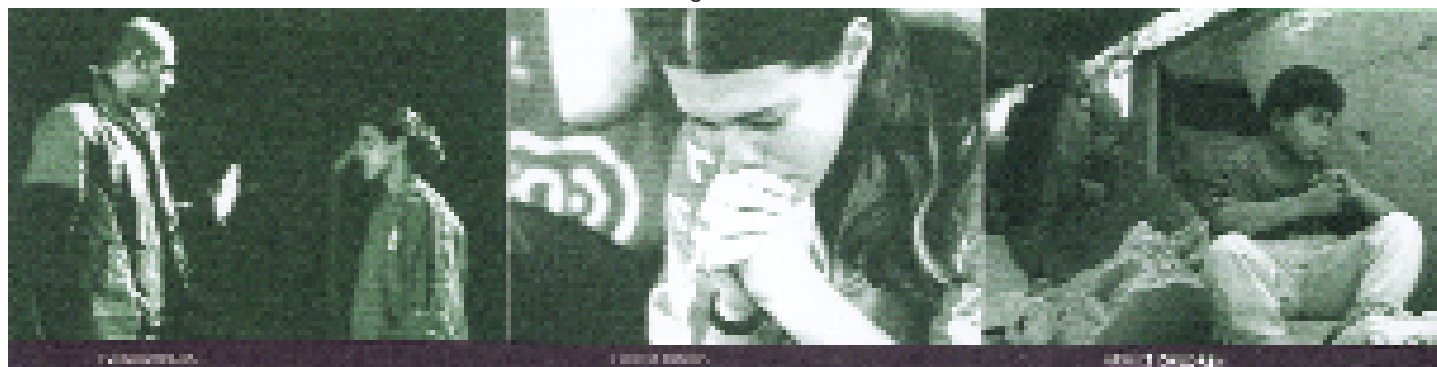
actor and director, had difficulty arranging a Jewish funeral as she was regarded as a traitor for her actions. The film switched backwards and forwards among events from the heyday of the youth theatre, the events surrounding Arna’s illness and death, and Juliano’s return visit to the Jenin camp five years after Arna’s death. By now the camp had been destroyed and the former theatre was in ruins. Rather than Arna’s literal child, Juliano, who told the story, the film was about the young actors who were Arna’s children and what became of them as a result of the Intifada. They began to act out their anger for real by becoming militants and even in one case going on a suicide mission to machine gun random Jewish passers-by in Hadera before being shot himself. Some had died, one was in prison, one had disappeared. We only saw one young man who had grown up, married and had a child. The contrast between the innocent children acting on the stage, and the young fighters most of them had become, was painful and harrowing. For a Jewish person, and a supporter of Israel, it was a difficult film to watch and gave little cause for hope.

**“Behind Enemy Lines” was a documentary made for Israel television about Benny, a Superintendent in the Israeli police who teaches officers how to deal with terrorists, and Adnan, a Palestinian Journalist.** Benny and Adnan first met in 1999 on a peace mission of

young Israelis and Palestinians to Japan. They were reunited in 2003 to make this film. They were filmed travelling around together for 4 days, each getting an equal opportunity to choose what places to visit. Benny's choices included a café which had been the site of a suicide bombing, and Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial, while Adnan's included the café where one of his relatives was shot dead by an Israeli settler, and the Jenin camp, following its destruction. At each venue the two protagonists argued, sometimes quite heatedly. There are 2 conflicting narratives which cannot be reconciled – the Israeli narrative in which the State of Israel was set up to safeguard the Jewish people from another Holocaust, and the Palestinian narrative in which the 1948 War of Independence was the 'Naqbah' or disaster for their people. Adnan craves recognition that the Palestinians should not have been made to suffer for the evils of the Holocaust, but Benny does not grant this. The director had a surprise in store for both by taking them on the last day to the site at the corner of Rehov Kaplan and Rehov Petach

**repercussions into the next generation.** Lena Fischer was an aristocratic German pianist who was married to successful violinist Fabian Israel Fischer with whom she enjoyed a successful concert career before the War. Ruth Sussman (now Weinstein) was a young girl at the start of the War whose mother Miriam was deported from Berlin and never seen again. We first see Ruth as an old woman mourning upon the death of her husband in New York. Bereavement makes Ruth turn back to Judaism, indulging in elaborate mirror covering and candle lighting, and turns her against daughter Hannah's fiancée, a non-Jewish South American. Hannah confronts Ruth and realises how little she knows about her mother's past. A cousin, Rachel, enlightens Hannah that a woman called Lena Fischer saved her mother. Hannah, now suffering from her own identity crisis and uncertainty about her marriage plans, goes off to Berlin in search of Lena Fischer and the truth. She has several interviews with Lena, a charming old lady still playing the piano in her Berlin flat, and gradually the story is uncovered through flashbacks of

returned to them. There is a scene in which Lena plays the piano for Goebbels, having been introduced by her war hero brother. Whether for that reason or some other, the women's protest was eventually successful and the Nazis emptied the Rosenstrasse prison. However Miriam Sussman was not so lucky because her German husband had abandoned her and when the various Jewish husbands came out of the building to be reunited with their wives, she did not appear. Ruth Sussman was devastated by this, plaintively asking about 'Muti, Muti' as the reunited couples dispersed. She spent the rest of the War being brought up by the Fischers, and after the War was claimed by her relatives in the USA. The death of her husband had brought all this back. Hannah returns from Berlin with her grandmother's wedding ring, preserved all these years by Lena Fischer, and that somehow reconciles Ruth with her past. Later Hannah's marriage goes ahead. I found this film quite moving with its complicated layers of emotion. There is a feeling of dread and danger that permeates the flashback scenes and some credible depiction of aristocratic



Tikvah in Tel Aviv where a lone gunman went on a shooting spree. This turns out to have been Adnan's cousin. This finally takes the wind out of Adnan's sails and reduces him to bemused apologies. In the final scene both men are sitting on deckchairs on the beach in the sunset, discussing what it would take to bring peace. While they appear friendly and have put their arguments behind them, I am not sure it left me very hopeful.

**"Rosenstrasse" was a fictional film from the Netherlands. Its subject was Holocaust survival and its**

increasing length and complexity. The events in the Rosenstrasse are historical, though I think the characters are fictional. Basically, both Fabian, Lena's husband, and Miriam, Ruth's mother, having previously been protected by their marriages to Aryans, were rounded up in 1943 and imprisoned in the former Jewish Institute building in the Rosenstrasse. Lena Fischer meets the child Ruth Sussman outside the building and takes her under her protection. The Aryan wives, including Lena Fischer, held a vigil outside the building, resisting the SS and the police and pleading for their husbands to be

German life going on as normal under Nazism, and contrasting with the fate of the Jews. Despite some unconvincing acting, especially in the New York scenes, this was a gripping film.

Some of the long films were accompanied by shorts. I saw "A Good Uplift" which featured bewigged Mrs Magda Bergstein and her portly and equally 'frum' son serving customers in their traditional corsetiere shop in New York. This was a compassionate and entertaining film, showing all sizes, shapes and ages of women entering the shop sagging and emerging uplifted in figure and self-

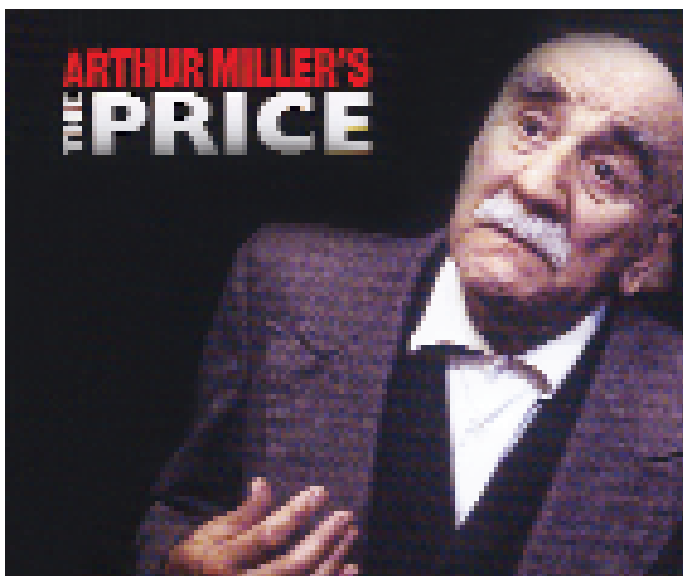
esteem thanks to Mrs Bergstein's and her son's ministrations. I also saw 'A Saturday Walk' in which an Israeli woman, now living in Germany, comes back to Jerusalem and takes a Saturday walk around the city, visiting her childhood haunts and seeing how they have changed. The changes are not only physical, eg the ruin of the old railway station, which closed in the 1980s; but also symbolic of the polarisation of religious and non-religious Jews, and Jew and Arab, and the

militarisation, which have become so deeply embedded in Israeli society. I did not see the film in which an Israeli child living in a settlement takes a stand against his friends by refusing to go up onto a boundary wall to shout 'Death to the Arabs' but it made a big impression on my husband. He saw the whole series and thought that this was the best film of the lot.

# A Review of "The Price"

by Arthur Miller, starring Warren Mitchell

Janet Mundy



Many years ago, I went with my father to see a production of Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" starring Warren Mitchell. I had studied the play at school and was mesmerised by Mitchell's performance, bringing the words I knew so well to life, and playing out the tragedy behind the failure of the American dream. Like everyone else, I knew Warren Mitchell primarily in his role as Alf Garnett in "Till Death Us Do Part", and seeing him on the stage was a revelation. That both Mitchell and Miller were Jewish was of negligible importance to me at that time, and I have no idea how significant their Jewishness was to my father, sitting beside me.

So when I saw a poster a few months ago advertising Warren Mitchell in another Arthur Miller play, I was overjoyed that I would have the opportunity to relive a fantastic

theatrical experience (this time with my mother). Although I knew a lot more about the Jewish backgrounds of both men, I was still driven more by a desire to repeat the frisson of that earlier time than by a shared cultural background. I was therefore unprepared for the shock of seeing a little old Jewish man shuffle on stage, who far more

resembled my now long-dead father than Willy Loman. In the play, Warren Mitchell plays Solomon, an elderly antiques dealer. Solomon has been asked to value the contents of a New York apartment long after the death of their owner by the older of his two sons. This son, Victor, had cared for his father, and freed his younger brother, Walter, to make his own life without family constraint. The main theme of the play is the tension between the two brothers since their youth, echoing Miller's own life, as his older brother Kermit had given up his place at university during the Depression to support the family. "The Price" of the title is therefore not only the value placed on the contents of the apartment by Solomon, but also the sacrifice perceived as having been made by one brother to support the other. The stresses of the relationship are emphasised by Victor's wife,

Esther, who in many ways is the catalyst of the play. She encourages Victor to call in Solomon to make the valuation, and also she vocalises the history and nature of the resentment Victor feels towards Walter going back to their youth and the 1929 crash, 40 years previously.

Solomon is the outsider in the midst of this family drama and, as such, lightens the mood for the audience. As an overtly Jewish character, he also reminds us that Jews came to the United States as outsiders. There is a faint echo of "The Merchant of Venice" in having a Jewish character whose relationship with the other characters is based on money. Strange that Miller chooses to portray his relationship with his own brother through the non-Jewish brothers in this play, while caricaturing a Jewish stereotype in Solomon, however affectionately.

Despite that unease, this was an excellent production of a fine play, full of drama with some lighter moments, and beautifully acted throughout. No doubt Warren Mitchell's Solomon was the star of the show, but the other actors – Larry Lamb, Brian Protheroe and Nancy Crane – portrayed the difficult relationships within the family realistically and with a fine dramatic tension.

# Obituaries



**Ethel Goldstein**  
(nee Davidson)  
1914-2004

When I was a little girl in the late 40's and early 50's, Ethel was my Fairy Godmother. For a small person Edinburgh seemed a cold and forbidding city but Ethel used to collect me every morning from my Grandmother Slata Kaufman and take me to the wonderful world of "Dress Shop" where I used to play all day at shop keeping with her. Afterwards the treat was Mackay's for tea.

I have never forgotten those days even though I have grown older and Edinburgh is no longer on the agenda.

She used to sing songs with me and until recently her rendering of "My Yiddisher Momma" would bring tears to my eyes. So now the passing of an era is all too sad and so, goodbye to Ethel, my Fairy Godmother.  
Dale Cowen (Pinkerton)



**Michael Gold**  
1928-2004

My father, Michael Gold, had a big, big heart. Always generous to others, always trying to help and disappointed if he found he could not. He looked for, and often found, the good side in people, which was, I believe, part of his natural charm.

However, in many ways he was also a fragile man, woefully self-effacing and unwilling or unable to recognise his own achievements. Hardly surprising really, considering that his mother died when he was born and his father when he was six.

It is not possible to discuss Dad's life without mentioning my late mother Betty, who equally tragically, died in July 2003. She had always been the centre of his life.

During my mother's fight against cancer, Dad attended her bedside every single day without exception for around two and a half years. And not just during visiting hours – he spent most of each day there. I pay tribute to Dad's commitment, and the strength he found when she finally passed.

It is now my task to clear and sell the Marchmont Road family home. In the process of doing so, I discovered Dad's first love letter to my mother, written in 1946. This was obviously by his hand, choosing larger words when smaller ones would have done equally well, his lengthy declaration of love fitting between introductory paragraphs about a cricket match he participated in and a classical concert he attended.

The irony of his offspring 'witnessing' such a letter, even retrospectively, does not escape me.

As a result, I no longer see my father, or mother, as cancer victims, their bodies cruelly reduced by the vile disease, but as young and vibrant romantic lovers, a better lasting memory than the former.

Perhaps Star readers who knew Michael and Betty Gold should also remember them both this way.

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**Flora Ciprut**  
1921 - 2004

Flora was a passionate, kind and vivacious character. Her joy for life was second to none. She was a devoted mother and much-loved grandmother and mother-in-law. She was a very special lady with lots of energy and humour. Her sons have always felt privileged to have her as their mother.

She was born in Istanbul, Turkey, 83 years ago. She lost her father at an early age. In her twenties she married Shlomo Chiprut and they had 2 boys, Danny and Moris. She lost her husband when the elder son Daniel was 12 and Moris was 5. She rejoined working life as a book-keeper and worked hard to raise her 2 children all

by herself. She devoted most of her life to bringing up her children and to preparing them for later life.

She was a well-known figure within the Jewish Community of Istanbul. Almost 20 years ago she followed her son Moris' trail and established a new life in Edinburgh. She soon felt at home here and was made to feel very welcome by the Jewish Community and her new extended family.

Flora had a joyful nature. She thrived in company, especially of family and friends. She loved the vibrancy and diversity of the area where she lived for almost two decades (Nicolson Street) and the relative nearness of the Shul. Her home was her sanctuary.

She was fluent in several languages, and although at times she struggled to master the English language, she led an independent and happy life in Edinburgh.

Flora was present at Shabbat prayers in the Shul every week regardless of her health condition or her circumstances. She always wanted the Shul to be the last stop of her eventful life. She is survived by her 2 sons and their wives, Anna-Lee and Fiona, and 2 grand children Sheri and Amanda, who

meant a lot to her, and by her younger brother Moiz Pardo in Istanbul, Turkey. Flora loved life. She will be sadly missed.

Flora's family would like to thank everyone involved, including those who attended the Shiva at Nicolson Street, for their kindness, care and compassion in time of sadness. They would also like to express their gratitude to the many people who helped her over the years in different ways.

### Brain Teaser Answer

You ask one of the men: What would your friend say if I asked him to name the correct door to freedom?

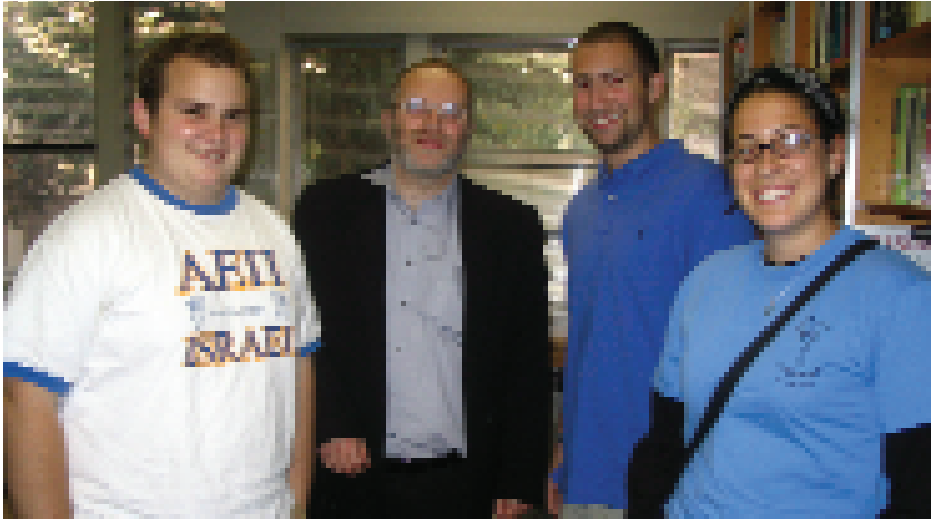
Whatever the answer, you will get a false response because if you speak to the one who always tells the truth, he will give you a truthful account of the other's false response. If you speak to the other man, he will give you a false account of the others truthful response.

## Star Trek into the past Answers in the next issue



# A Churchyard Full of Pumpkins

Rabbi David Rose



A churchyard full of pumpkins, tornado shelters in airport toilets, black squirrels on the lawn, mighty mountain ranges as far as the eye can see, an all white country club, a bustling multiracial market; these are some of the impressions of the United States that I gleaned in an amazing three week journey. Proposed by Cecile Shea, our local consul, to take part in the State Department's International Visitor Program, I travelled the United States for three weeks as a guest of the US government. While hotels and flights were arranged before hand, as were my appointments; I was given a sum of money in Washington and basically travelled around by myself. This gave me a unique opportunity to observe America as it really is; not as portrayed by an often biased media. I travelled officially to five states; though through the quarks of the US airways system visited many more. I met many people from advisers to the President to Catholic High School students; from state officials to welfare workers. I was able to learn from big things, the ever present election campaign; as well as from little; the lack of fresh fruit at airports. I travelled from Washington DC in the East to New Mexico in the West and Alabama in the South to Seattle in the North. I stopped on the way in North Carolina, Texas and Colorado; ending up in New York. How does one condense all this into an article? I'm not sure but I'll try.

First of all politics. My visit coincided with the climatic stages of the election campaign. George Bush or John Kerry was the background to my journeying. Wherever you went it was the election people were talking about and often, uncomfortably as a non-citizen, they wanted my opinion! What became clear, as also shown by the results of the election, was that the country was divided. Two of the states I visited DC and Washington are Democratic. One, Alabama, is heavily Republican; while New Mexico was a swing state. One thing was clear. Those who were for Kerry often hated George Bush. You may think people in Scotland don't like the man but that is nothing to the vitriol I heard from some Americans. Whether from Jewish lady on the metro in DC or a taxi driver in Seattle, I was subjected to diatribes on the evils of the current administration. John Kerry, on the other hand, didn't seem to inspire much feeling. Maybe that was his problem. Yet neither, interestingly enough, did George Bush among his supporters. Even in Alabama people were unsure about his record; except on moral issues. This, for example, not the economy or foreign policy, was the main thrust of a speech by the Attorney General of Alabama at a Jewish Republican rally. Talking of which more and more Jews, especially Orthodox, are becoming Republicans both over Israel but also, again, on moral issues. This, then, is certainly not like European politics.

Which brings us to foreign policy. I was fortunate to meet with both relatively high ranking officials in both the National Security Council and the State Department. From what they said it was clear that Bush's policies are largely informed by his own world view and priorities and not by outside pressures. This is especially true over Israel. It was made clear to me that Bush sidelined Arafat, for example, because he was on the wrong side of the war on terror and thus an enemy of the United States: black and white. Bush and Sharon get on because they share a common assessment of the problem and, largely, of its solutions. Interestingly, another myth was also debunked. Both speaking to Administration officials who deal with the Middle East and to Arab Americans, I discovered the Palestinian issue is not the main cause of anger against the US in the region. America is hated more in Egypt than in Syria because America supports Mubarak while opposing Assad. The



representative of Arab American's was annoyed not by US support for Israel but by the fact women can still not vote in her native Kuwait; despite American promises at the time of the Gulf War. Where do our media get their information from?

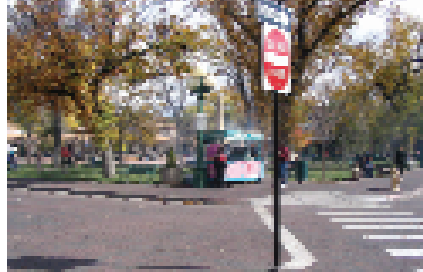
So what about the Jews? The overwhelming impression one gets of American Jewry is of self confidence and a total lack of self-consciousness. Jews in America are comfortable being Jewish because being Jewish is part of being American. America has largely cracked the diversity versus integration conundrum that plagues Europe and

needs to export its success to the world. It is only the British media that sees Joe Lieberman as first and foremost the 'Jewish' Senator from Connecticut. For most Americans he is simply another Senator who is seen as a man of faith: which they like. This self-confidence is seen in the ability of a community in Alabama the size of Edinburgh being able to raise 5 million dollars for a new shule or in the unabashed involvement of Jews in the political process at every level; largely not on Jewish issues. It is now even cracking the traditional Jewish position on Church and State. Many Orthodox Jews see great benefit in breaking down the 'iron wall' that is meant to separate them and approve of the moral stand of the Republicans.

Which brings us to religion. America is overwhelmingly a religious country and religion is news. Whether it's an Alabama Supreme Court Justice refusing to remove the Ten Commandments from his courtroom or the furore over gay marriage; the news is dominated by issues of Church and State. Furthermore religion is politics. One example will suffice. I said earlier that New Mexico was a swing state. Yet it shouldn't be. It has a Democratic governor and legislature and traditionally votes Democratic. Yet it was a swing state for one main reason: abortion. Traditional Catholic Hispanic voters that make up a large portion of the state's population would not vote for John Kerry because of his pro-choice stand. Religious fundamentalism also impacts on the Jewish community. Evangelical Christians are strong supporters of Israel; often in ways that make Jews feel uncomfortable: even in places like Alabama. That state had a governor who held a Yom Ha-atzmaut party in the governor's mansion. Shortly afterwards Alabama received 90 million dollars in oil windfalls from the Gulf Coast. The governor's wife will tell you to this day that the money came because they held that party. G-d helps those that help the Jews. Maybe we should suggest it to the Scottish Parliament?

So much for the big things. The true measure of a country lies in its daily life and its little observations that can tell

you the most. For example, I noticed that every male toilet had a baby changing station. That tells you a lot about attitudes to childcare and equality and doesn't exist in supposedly progressive Scotland where such things are usually the preserve of exclusively women's



facilities. Or the fact that it is almost impossible to find fresh fruit at an American airport. No wonder they have an obesity problem. Talking of airports, the American airline system works a lot better than ours. Despite the hugeness of the country, flights, connections and luggage all seem to mesh to get you where you want to go on time. And the country is huge. Being in Dallas airport which dwarfs even Heathrow and realising that almost all the flights are domestic, gives you a sense of the scale involved. As does the four hour flight from Dallas to Seattle, the equivalent of London to Tel Aviv; all in one country. And Americans travel. Despite a reputation in Europe for being insular they are far more likely to 'get on their bike' (in this case a plane) and move for employment opportunities. By the time most Americans have finished annual visits

to their family elsewhere in the country they simply don't have time to visit overseas. And this vast country is diverse. As Alabama is different to DC; so is Seattle worlds away from New Mexico. The latter feels like Israel; while the former reminded me of New Zealand. If Glasgow and Edinburgh feel worlds apart imagine the difference between Seattle and New York that are not only distant by six hours flight but by three time zones.

The most important thing about a country is its people and nowhere more than in the United States. The very diversity of its population is its strength and few countries are more diverse. People are overwhelmingly friendly and helpful; far more than in Europe. There is also an atmosphere of openness and innovation. People with new ideas are welcomed rather than feared and if you want to do something you go ahead and do it rather than set up a committee to investigate it for six months. That is as true in the Jewish community as in general; leading to dynamic forward looking congregations and movements. It is, with all its faults an exciting and invigorating place to live. Flying home on a plane with a British stewardess that had a congenital aversion to smiling, it felt somewhat like going back to prison after being on furlough. Something worth thinking about.



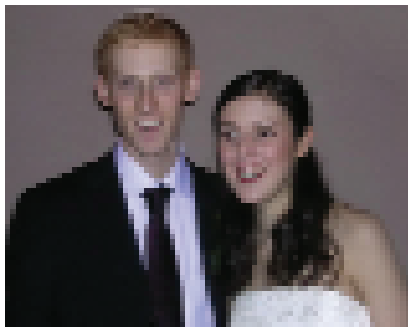
# Announcements

## Congratulations

**Irene and David Hyams** on the



occasion of their Golden Wedding.  
**Doreen and Lawrence Bowman**



on the engagement of their daughter  
**Jacqueline to Joseph Gaffin.**



**Ida Skubiejska**  
on her 90th  
Birthday.

**Pearl and Ian Shein** on their 'Tin'  
Wedding Anniversary.

**Norman Berger** on his 'Platinum'  
birthday.



**Lady Hazel Cosgrove** with husband  
**John** at Buckingham Palace receiving  
her CBE.

**Marcia and Lenny Berger** on their  
'Coral' wedding Anniversary.

**Jacqueline Kahn** on her Bat Mitzvah.

**Rabbi David Rose** on his 'Ruby'  
birthday.

**Sandra and Sidney Caplan** on their  
'Ruby' Anniversary.

Warmest congratulations to the Edinburgh Star on the occasion of its 50th edition. The magazine has achieved a fine balance between informative and stimulating articles on contemporary Jewish issues, community concerns, and trips down memory lane. It is also a wonderful way of maintaining a link between Edinburgh and its "Diaspora"! Opening the Star always brings back warm memories of our times in Edinburgh, both during my ministry, and on subsequent visits. Debbie and I, together with our family, wish the Star and the community many more years of success and achievement.

Rabbi Danny and Debbie Sinclair

## Forthcoming Events

### February

**12 Saturday**

**Edinburgh Star dinner**  
Celebrating the 50th edition

**27 Sunday**

**EJLS: The other Balfour**  
Recalling the 1905 Aliens Act;  
Dr Brian Klug, senior research fellow  
in Philosophy Oxford, Prof. St Xavier  
Un. Chicago

### March

**1 Tuesday**

**CCJ Dinner**  
Joint meeting with Glasgow CCJ, in  
Glasgow; Dr Alison Elliot, Moderator  
of the General Assembly of the  
Church of Scotland

**6 Sunday**

**Toddlers Group**

**CCC: Quiz**

**13 Sunday**

**CCC: Coffee morning**

**EJLS: Which way now?**

Reflections of a Jewish teacher; Claire  
Singerman, Senior teacher,  
Hutchison's Grammar School

### April

**3 Sunday**

**EJLS: Jacob's gift**  
Jonathan Freedland, journalist  
and broadcaster

**14 Tuesday**

**CCJ: The Passover Seder**  
experience the real atmosphere of  
a Jewish Seder; introduced by Rabbi  
David Rose

**23 Saturday**

**Erev Pesach**

**Junior Maccabi** meets on alternate  
Sundays from 1pm to 3pm.  
For further information, contact  
Jonathan Danzig (229 3054).

**Senior Maccabi** meets on Sunday  
evenings in members' homes.  
For further information, contact Alice  
Kelpie (337 1894) Chairman Duncan  
Brannan.

**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.

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