

## Israeli in North Highlands

KATHY HAGLER

It was unbearably hot yet again, I was too tired for words, the wrong political party just got into power, and I finally made my decision.

"Scotland, here I come", I thought, and it only took me a few weeks to make all the arrangements – to inform the Kibbutz I was leaving, to give away most of my books, pack two cases for travelling, and fill three boxes to be sent to me once I had an address. The most difficult of all was to tell my aunt it, and I was on my way.

All that happened in the 70s and I have lived in Inverness ever since, being – to my knowledge – the only Jew in the area.

The Highlands were a hundred hues of green and it rained a lot – a wonderful experience for someone who had spent all her adult life in a hot, dry, edge-of-desert environment.

The hills wore lilac and purple with heather and the lochs, rivers and waterfalls made my new world into a multi-coloured patchwork. Any time I worried about my future, all I had to do was walk out my front door and open my eyes to all that glory about me.

People were cautiously friendly, and nobody poked their nose into my past, present, future and private business. Today, aged 61 and retired, I still have my batteries recharged every day with beautiful music and glorious scenery, but I do go back to Israel for a visit every year – not for the heat of the climate but for the warmth of all my old friends.

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## Scottish in Israel

TALYA GRANAT

Rain trickles down my neck as I plod down the street on my way to class. Grey clouds hover broodingly above the buildings and the pavement gleams. Absorbed in picking my way between the puddles, if I hadn't glanced up to look at the view, I might almost have thought I was walking along a road in Scotland. It was a typical winter scene. The only difference is, in Israel I don't generally plod through the rain. I skip.

My entire attitude towards rain has changed since I came to Israel. In Scotland I regarded it as an unavoidable inconvenience; I was told as a child that ducks enjoy the rain, and "it's necessary for the crops to grow," but I didn't see why I and the ducks couldn't take turns. Here in Israel the rains are eagerly anticipated throughout autumn (which doesn't really happen here, leaves stay obstinately green on the trees throughout October and November and then disappear overnight in December). The water level of the Kinneret, Israel's only freshwater lake, is anxiously followed, and when it finally starts to rain, taxi drivers will relay you the latest details on how many centimetres it has risen, with a hearty "Thank G-d!"

Rain, the gift of heaven to earth, is regarded as a measure of G-d's blessing to the world. Any farmer knows how important rain is, both the amount and the timing. Storms at harvest season can be almost as disastrous as drought in the spring. When we do what G-d wants of us, He sends us exactly the right amount of rain at the optimal times, even going so far as to make it rain at night, so as not to inconvenience those, like my childhood self, who wanted to be outdoors.

Of course, it's not easy to remember how much we need the rain when my shoes have a hole in and all I want is a pair of dry socks. But when I glance up at the view (and though I do not claim to be unbiased, I maintain that my area has the best views in all Jerusalem) and see the hills around, none of them approaching the wild majesty of the Highlands, but with a peaceful domestic beauty all of their own, I can't help smiling, despite my wet feet.



### WELCOME

to the first issue of Four Corners, the newsletter for the scattered Jews of Scotland!

As you may know, the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities was set up five years ago at the same time as the Scottish Parliament in order to be a single representative voice of all the Jewish Communities of Scotland. That means that Argyll, Aberdeen, and Dundee have a voice, just as much as Glasgow and Edinburgh – and we are also aware that the Jewish students probably make up the largest of the smaller communities, so perhaps "Six Corners" would have been a better title!

Last November SCOJEC held a superb event in Dundee, which was attended by 29 people from all our communities, and in December the Jewish Network of Argyll and the Highlands held a Chanukah party in Lochgilphead which brought together more than 25 people from outside the more formal communities. We are grateful to the Ethnic Minorities Grant Fund and the Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure Scotland for their support for these events and this newsletter.

"Four Corners" recalls not just the *Arba Kanfot*, or small tallit worn under the clothes by orthodox Jewish men, but also the rabbinic prayers for the "ingathering of the exiles from the four corners of the earth", so it is particularly fitting that the newsletter is being produced by our own ingathered exile, Jacqueline Speyer who has run the Argyll group for the last seven years and has now made Aliyah to Jerusalem. She goes with our gratitude and best wishes.

EPHRAIM BOROWSKI, DIRECTOR SCOJEC

Four Corners is your newsletter,  
to share events, insights, stories, photos, poems, cartoons,  
memories, history, mazeltovs, or anything else  
with those in other Corners!

Your contributions are welcomed for the next edition.... Please send to Leah Granat at [leah.granat@onetel.net](mailto:leah.granat@onetel.net) or 222 Fenwick Road, Glasgow, G46 6UE

## What does the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities do?

Amongst other things, the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities responds to requests for consultation by the Scottish Parliament. It has recently written a response on the subject of Civil Partnership Registration, and is currently preparing responses on the subjects of Post-Mortem Examination in Hospital, Organ Retention, the Anatomy Act, and the proposed Sexual Wellbeing and Relationships Strategy. The Scottish Council liaises with other bodies, within and without the Jewish Community on these and other issues, and works to develop interfaith relationships, and relationships with other minority communities. In this way it hopes to enable the Jewish Community throughout Scotland to keep up-to-date with issues that affect us all, and also aims to increase awareness of the needs of Jewish people among other groups. With this in mind, the Scottish Council has been active in helping to develop Spiritual Health policies in several Health Board areas.

If you would like any more information about these or other activities of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, then please contact Leah Granat as above details.

## Jewish Books at Ottakars

EXHIBITION THROUGHOUT J-FEST AT  
THE AVENUE, GIFFNOCK, GLASGOW  
TBA = TO BE ARRANGED.

\* = TICKETED EVENT

SEE WWW.J-SCOT.ORG FOR MORE INFO

PLEASE PHONE THE NUMBERS LISTED FOR FINAL DETAILS

### Friday 27th February

➔ Giffnock Shul Supper 7.00pm  
at Giffnock Shul, 0141 638 1214

### Saturday 28th February

- ➔ GNS Open Shabbat & Special Kiddush  
Q & A session, 11.00am at Glasgow New Synagogue 0141 639 4083
- ➔ Film: Broken Wings, 8.00pm at UJIA TBA \*0141 577 8220
- ➔ 60s Disco - Cosgrove Friends Reunited 8.15pm at Maccabi \*0141 577 8220
- ➔ Glasgow Jewish Youth Forum Ball (S5+) Dancing in the Moonlight  
8.30pm at Newton Mearns Shul \*0141 586 6325/ 07763 607 962

### Sunday 29th February

- ➔ Lubavitch Cheder Classes - open day 10.30 - 12 noon at The Glen 0141 638 6116
- ➔ Arts, Crafts & Books 11.00 - 2.00pm at Newton Mearns Shul 0141 639 4000
- ➔ Scottish Jewish Archives: Memories & Reminiscences Ralph Isaacs OBE  
3.00pm at Garnethill Shul 0141 577 8200
- ➔ From strength to strength, 100 years of JLB in Glasgow, Playlet & Book Launch  
7.45pm at Garnethill Shul 0141 637 2229
- ➔ Shul Supper & Entertainment 8.00pm at Edinburgh Shul \*01324 612 126

### Monday 1st March

- ➔ Lubavitch Business Lunch & Discussion 12.30 - 2.00pm TBA 0141 638 6116
- ➔ Friends of Yiddish Monday Club 2.00 - 3.00pm at Barrland Ct 0141 423 6083
- ➔ Musical Afternoon 2.00 - 2.30pm at Calderwood Lodge 0141 637 5654
- ➔ Brownies' & Guides' Uniforms thru' the ages 6.45pm at Giffnock Shul 0141 638 0040
- ➔ Glasgow-Israel Committee A celebration of Israeli Culture and Tourism  
7.45pm @ Giffnock Shul 0141 577 8200

### Tuesday 2nd March

- ➔ Lubavitch Nursery Open Day from 9.30am at The Glen 0141 638 6116
- ➔ Friendship Club 2.00pm at Giffnock Shul 0141 638 4350
- ➔ Jewish Self Defence (Krav Maga) for women 7.30pm at Maccabi 0141 616 2915
- ➔ UJIA Campaign - Yehuda Avner 8.00pm @ Waterside Inn 0141 577 8200
- ➔ Jewish Self Defence (Krav Maga) for men 8.30pm @ Maccabi 0141 616 2915

### Wednesday 3rd March

- ➔ Maccabi Cards and Lunch 12 noon @ Maccabi 0141 639 1724
- ➔ Purim Performance 2.00 - 2.30pm at Calderwood Lodge 0141 637 5654
- ➔ Limmud Scotland - Mini Limmud 7.00pm at Eastwood House \*0141 577 6729  
Moral Maze with Jeremy Rosen, Nancy Morris, Steve Greenberg & Colin Grant
- ➔ Ladies' Purim Shiur with Sora Jacobs 8.00pm TBA 0141 638 6116

### Thursday 4th March

- ➔ Purim Activities Nursery 9.30 - 11.30am at Calderwood Lodge 0141 637 5654
- ➔ Lunch and 'An Aspect of Yiddish' 12noon - 3.30pm GNS 0141 637 2568
- ➔ Thistle Club (Jewish Care) & Cosgrove Care Open Afternoon  
1.30pm at Walton Community Centre 0141 620 1800
- ➔ From Solomon to Swing 7.30pm at Fotheringay Lecture Theatre \*0141 577 8200  
A Celebration of Jewish Music: Howard Cohen with Lynne & Allan Lewis

### Friday 5th March

- ➔ Kabbalat Shabbat 2.30 - 3.15pm at Calderwood Lodge 0141 637 5654
- ➔ Community Dinner 7.00pm at NC & QP Shul 0141 638 9967

### Saturday 6th March

- ➔ Open Shabbos & Special Kiddush 10.30am at Shul in the Park 0141 639 0245
- ➔ Evening Purim Celebrations See Jewish Press, Glasgow & Edinburgh Shuls

### Sunday 7th March

- ➔ Megillah Reading, Lunch and Fancy Dress 10.00am at Edinburgh Shul 01324 612 126
- ➔ WIZO Coffee Morning 10.30am at 'Towerwood', Patterton 0141 639 4386
- ➔ Enjoy the Megillah Reading & Seuda 11.30am at Giffnock Shul 0141 577 8251
- ➔ Positively Persian Purim UJIA Youth (P4 - S2) 2.00pm at Maccabi 0141 577 8220
- ➔ Student Purim Seuda 4.00pm 2 Woodfarm Rd, Giffnock 0141 586 6555
- ➔ Melody and Mirth Entertainment for all 7.30pm Fotheringay Theatre \*0141 577 8200

### Monday 8th March

- ➔ Emunah Coffee with Speaker 10.30am at Crookfur Pavilion, Ayr Road 0141 639 1564
- ➔ UJIA - Book Launch & Sandwich Supper, Lev Raphael - The German Money  
6.00pm at Chaim Bermant Library, JCC 0141 577 8220/8232
- ➔ Question Time with the Rep Council: GJRC 8.00pm Giffnock Shul 0141 577 8200



## It's all going on in Scotland

STEPHEN KLINER  
PRESIDENT OF GLASGOW  
JEWISH REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

As reported at the last SCoJeC meeting in Dundee the Glasgow community has planned a community week of coordinated events from 27th February till 8th March, under the banner *J-Fest 2004*.

Some forty plus events are to be hosted by the synagogues, care organisations, charities, youth organisations and movements. It will show that while the community may be getting smaller it is certainly no less active. *J-Fest 2004* will open the doors to all the richly varied elements that go to making up this vibrant community.

Eleven days of events for the entire community – a ball, a book launch, a bus tour, a card brunch, coffee mornings, discos, a fashion show, Limmud “Moral Maze”, open days, Purim events, Question Time, Self Defence, Shul Suppers, lunches, and speakers a-plenty.

Something for everyone - come and join in.

## Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

LEWIS STEVENS

The 'Lit' as it is familiarly known as to its members was founded in 1888 and has functioned continuously since then. It holds 8-10 meetings per year usually between Rosh Hashannah and Pesach. These generally take the form of talks given on Sunday evenings. In addition there are occasional concerts performed by local musicians, and occasional debates. Although meetings are held in the Community Centre which is part of the synagogue complex, they are open to all. The term 'literary' is quite loosely applied as can be seen from the titles of some examples of recent talks:- "The Current Status of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process", "The Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain", "The Venetian Ghetto in the Renaissance", "History on Trial? Observing Irving v. Penguin Books", "Jews in Popular American Music and Jazz". The speakers do not have to be Jewish although the subjects always have some relevance for Jews. Speakers are drawn from a mixture of "local talent" and others, mainly from the UK. We have often been able to get visitors from abroad, who are either visiting the UK or are on sabbatical in the UK to speak. Examples of recent speakers are: Eva Hoffman, Clive Lawton, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, Claudia Roden and Bernard Wasserstein.

The Edinburgh Jewish Community is relatively small. A recent analysis by Professor Gillian Raab, published in the Edinburgh Star (the Magazine for the Edinburgh Jewish Community) based on the 2001 census returns gave a figure of 6448 Jews in Scotland on whom 774 were resident in the City of Edinburgh. Although most of the 'Lit' members live in Edinburgh, a few come through from Glasgow for the talks, and there are others like myself living even further a field. I have been a 'Lit' member for about 10 years and last year agreed to become Honorary Secretary. I might have found this difficult, living as I do at Sheriffmuir 45 miles from Edinburgh, but I have received much help from members living in Edinburgh.

**1st learning curve  
of a Scot now Israeli...**

A "Scotch" can mean a scotchbrite cleaning cloth, or a velcro fastening, both in Ivrit or in English-spoken-by-an-Israeli, but any case probably does not mean uisge beatha.

# J-WEB LIST

SIMON PHILLIPS

*Some months ago while surfing the internet, I discovered there was an Argyll Jewish community. Having a Jewish father, I have always been attracted to Judaism. It didn't take much more thought to make contact. I met some of the Argyll community and wanted to find out more about Judaism, after all, it's a part of my heritage, but where to find out?*

*First look on the internet! Surprise, surprise, hundreds of thousands of hits...I became more selective - many sites are merely advertising platforms and just not worth the time (from my point of view.) Others however, are packed with history, Torah information, rules and regulations etc.*

*Below are some of the sites I found most useful. They are not in any particular order: some are merely pointers to other sites but they might prove of interest to others in my position or a similar one.*

<http://www.jewfaq.org/> This is entitled Judaism 101 – an elementary reference guide to just about everything. It's easily referenced with place markers and covers Ideas, People, Places, Things, Words, Deeds, Times, LifeCycle, Reference and Links. Each section is subdivided and simple to follow, a brief discussion and further links to more detailed sites. A great starting point, answers to everything can be found although nothing very "deep".

<http://www.us-israel.org/> A library of Jewish history, both ancient and modern with a bias towards Israel-US issues and history.

<http://www.beingjewish.com/> another general site, rather more a question and answer site but again, easy to navigate and informative.

<http://www.inner.org/> Jewish mysticism, probably not for the faint hearted. If your interests lie in the Kabbalah then this is for you. Whole sections devoted to the meaning of the Hebrew letters, meditation, etc. Much of it beyond me so I can't pass judgement – yet!

<http://www.jewishbooksonline.co.uk/home.cfm> On-line bookstore based in Britain. Good prices.

<http://www.artscroll.com/> On-line bookstore based in the US but distribution in the UK is from a distributor in Gateshead. Quick, reliable and good prices.

<http://www.torah.org/> subdivided into beginner, intermediate and advanced. Articles on just about everything. Even has its own knowledgebase. Includes areas where you can ask questions and/or join discussion groups. I'm still working my way through this one.

<http://convert.org/> General information on Conversion for those pursuing this path. Like most of the sites, US based, so discard the "find a Rabbi" sections, but otherwise the info seems to be much the same as UK.

<http://www.panix.com/~jjbaker/rambam.html> Says it all, everything you ever wanted to know about Maimonides.

<http://www.panix.com/~jjbaker/> leads to the general pages, a personal web site, some interesting stuff.

<http://www.aish.com/> A web portal. Numerous links to items of interest to Jewish folk – religion: practise and spirituality, Israeli politics, current affairs etc.

## Jewish chaplaincy in Northern Region

RABBI DOVID COHEN

I have served as chaplain in Scotland and NE England for close to 10 years. The Scottish universities I cover includes those in Glasgow(4), Edinburgh(3), Dundee(2), St. Andrews, Aberdeen(2), and Stirling.

The nature of chaplaincy work is multi faceted. It is best broken down into the following categories of the services Jewish Chaplaincy provides...

### ... a Jewish experience

this is based on the ethic that every Jewish student deserves an equal opportunity to be involved with other Jewish students on all levels, regardless of the place they have chosen to study. The chaplain helps to publicise and encourage local and regional events where students meet, eat, socialise, debate, and study. These include Friday night meals, pub nights, shabbatons, speaker events, and others.

### ... Hospitality

The chaplain's home is a centre for Shabbat and Festival meals, as well as a place to stay for students from outside of (the south side of)Glasgow. The family atmosphere with the chaplains wife and family is one of the most important, and best remembered provisions for students away from home. The chaplain also often transports kosher meat and other foods to students out-of-town; several universities have a dedicated Kosher freezer for storage.

### ... University liaison

the chaplain is recognised by each university authority as the representative of Jewish students on campus. on a proactive basis, the chaplain meets regularly with the main University chaplain in the various universities, ensuring that the best interest of Jewish students are served. On a reactive basis- the chaplain can arrange alternative exam dates for those that clash with Shabbat and Festival, and also monitors negative activity(anti Zionist, Israel, and Missionary) on campus. In many cases he is the first port of call when problems occur.

### ... Education

The chaplain offers shiurim and one-to-one learning opportunities across the region.

### ... Confidential listening

When a student is in crisis, or when he/she is concerned about a personal issue of any nature, the chaplain in confidence to listen discuss, and explore the relevant issues. In some cases there be a need to refer the student on to a specifically trained professional.



## Why Jews are not Weather-men

## CHANUKAH in ARGYLL

JANE SERTER, JNAH

Our Chanukah party was held on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December at the Arms Centre, Lochgilphead. This venue has been used for previous gatherings and marked a "coming of age" for the network – no longer a private party, but now a true community group.

27 people turned up, the largest ever gathering, despite atrocious weather conditions, including snowstorms and gales. People came from as far away as Gairloch (a journey of 6 hours, one way), Glasgow and Airdrie. Their determination once again proved the need for our organisation.

The Arms Centre is a modern building with great facilities. It provided a light, airy and warm meeting place with kitchen facilities. This was just as well, as the provision of food was generous to say the least and it would have been easy to cater for a much greater number of people! Everyone came bearing the most delicious and varied fare. Smoked salmon, beigels and wonderful home-made cheesecake are some examples of the delicacies that were much enjoyed. Most welcome on a cold day was the plentiful supply of hot latkes.

To add to the atmosphere of a joyous festival, there were many vases of flowers and appropriate music was played during the celebrations. The volume of the music, however, was never so loud that it interfered with the flow of conversation, which everyone seemed to be thoroughly enjoying. The participants were of all ages and it was good that so many children were included.

Five Chanukiot were lit and Ephraim Borowski spoke briefly about the festival of Chanukah. Everybody joined in singing "Ma'oz tzur". Jacqueline Speyer spoke about the group and handed out questionnaires about what subjects we would like to include in this newsletter.

A "thank you" is extended to all the people who helped make the evening such a success and to everyone who turned up to share a memorable event.



**God's guiding hand...** Have you ever felt God clearly in your life? A time when you felt a force greater than yourself shaping events? Judaism posits that God's direct supervision governs all 'chance'. Our circumstances are not coincidences as everything happens for a reason. We have an illusion of being under our own control.

**The Purim Sory: Antithesis of Chance...** Each event in the Megillah is natural, possible, and seems to be orchestrated entirely by human beings and their choices...

# PURIM

We eat our fill and drink until the difference between 'cursed is Haman' and 'blessed is Mordechai' - until we don't know good from bad.

Fancy dress and masks also let our defenses down to open up to a deeper reality of ourselves and our world. Problems blend into hope and faith.

Purim teaches us that life's challenges work out for the best, apparent obstacles are really opportunities to develop ourselves for the better.

**Purim falls on Sunday 7th March... all over the world, Jews will**

- ~ Read the Megillah
- ~ Be Festive and rejoice
- ~ Send food to friends
- ~ Give gifts to the poor

- A king gets drunk and decides to call for his wife to appear before the guests...
  - The wife, Vashti, refuses to appear before the king...
  - Haman persuades the king to kill her...
  - Esther is chosen queen...
  - Haman chooses to kill Mordechai and ask permission from king...
  - The king has insomnia one night and remembers an old favor not repaid...
  - Haman is forced to pay over the king's favour to Mordechai...
  - Haman convinces the king that the Jews should be eliminated...
  - Esther intervenes and saves us...
- ...all events feasible on their own.**
- But when they all coincide, and the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle come together in one huge "coincidence," they form nothing short of a miracle. Each event which Haman thought he controlled turned out to bring about his downfall. His suggestion to kill Vashti, the queen, caused the positioning of Esther as redeemer. By sentencing Vashti without a legal hearing he sets the precedent that gives the king ability to kill him likewise. His suggestion to use the king's robes and horse - born of his desire to honour himself - became the perfect reward for Mordechai's deed. And the hand-built gallows he intended for Mordechai were those used for his own hanging.

**The Era of Hiddenness...** Throughout the entire story of Purim, the name of God isn't mentioned. It is an era of hiddenness of God's face (hester panim). But more than ever, it is clear how God is running the show. There are simply too many "coincidences." It may be hidden, but a directing force becomes obvious all the same.

The Megillah spans nine years. Compressed into one book and read aloud in half an hour, we see with perspective and hindsight how every painful event works towards a purposeful end. When we're in the midst of a situation ourselves we see only the darkness and confusion. Purim's message is to see God's guiding hand in the mundane affairs of this world. *Olam*, "world," comes from *ne'elam*, "hidden." He is not concealed, only appears to be. It is up to us to find Him in every event of our lives if we can read between the lines and see events in perspective.

At the time 2,000+ years ago, Jews in Persia were doing well. It was the end of 70 years of exile, after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem but the majority of the Jews chose to remain in exile. Prospect were good, and their social standing was so high that they had even been invited to the king's banquet at the "White House" in the capital Shushan!

Then everything changed. Haman came to power, and fear filled the hearts of the Jews. Only at their darkest, most dangerous hour, on the verge of complete physical destruction, did the Jews do their own "about-face," returning to their Eternal King rather than to the fickle Achashverosh. And by a seemingly natural process, the entire configuration once again "turned around."

**Then as Now...** In 2000 we saw another "natural" Purim miracle in contemporary Persia. The Gulf War ended a day before Purim. 39 scud missiles fell on the Holy Land, missing their targets time and time again. Israelis emerged from their sealed security rooms, ripped off miles of masking tape from their windows and doors, and put away their gas masks. No one had known how that war would end, and once it was over everything was explainable as perfectly natural events. Or one could see the hand of God in history.

Today the world and Israel can seem dark: solutions are nowhere for this dangerous world with its political, military, economic and spiritual problems. We are in dire need of practical guidelines in these depressing, what-can-we-do days. Purim and hope are just what the doctor ordered, reminding us that nothing is static, prayers are heard and that God is guiding history. We are not imprisoned by erring human plans or governments.

## OLAH CHADASHA B'LI BAYIT (A NEW IMMIGRANT WITHOUT A HOME) JACQUELINE SPEYER

The story of my homefinding in Israel is impossible in space available... Although many of the events were not so remarkable on their own, each seems entwined with the next ... altogether it was quite a saga.

Many visitors here say "WOW" and I'm surely too British to be one of them, but on day2, home-hunting with a tight agenda in Nachlaot (my chosen area of Jerusalem) my "wow"'s echoed around a bare white cavern of space with high arched "arab ceilings." Walk thru these doors into a big room then an inner room with same ceiling, and through that to a large rectangular room with small kitchen area, and bathroom beyond. And a tiny private yard with wall and locked door. My new home will be like a cool cave in the hot summer, and it's got two levels of flat roof-space too which get all the afternoon sun. It's in the heart of a crowded city, yet so quiet you can hear a pin drop.

It belongs to a Yeshiva [men's religious college] around the corner, used to be their overflow hall and hasn't been lived in for a long time. It was completely bare and freezing cold. I looked at 11 other places in the next week or so, all the time praying that this one would be possible. Some renovations were necessary before it would be habitable and the first job was to convince the Ba'al Ha-bayit [landlord] a Rosh Yeshiva ['Head' Rabbi] that these

were necessary... but with many ups and downs, all was negotiated, arranged and almost completed within the next 17 days, with the invaluable help of my family and friends acting as interpreters whenever necessary. I was also aided by a wee bit of experience in cheap building methods, the ability to 'live rough' and a philosophy where trust is possible: all skills learned in Argyll, not Golders Green.

Some notable events: I heard of this house to rent in a 2<sup>nd</sup>-hand clothes shop in the next street, from the employee therein.



The Ba'alat Hachanoot [owner] is now my next-door neighbour. One of my translators has known my Kabbalan [handy-man] all his life. My new 2<sup>nd</sup> hand furniture (found on a web message board) all came from a boys' yeshiva... it was stored just 5mins walk from my new home... the Rabbi who owned it lives 2 doors from my Midrasha (women's college) in a large suburb half an hour bus-ride from Nachlaot... my Ba'al Ha-bayit is their upstairs neighbour. The furniture was transported by a crew contacted via a friend of a friend. However when they turned up it turned out I already knew them from my other delivery earlier the same day. I'd arranged that job via the phonebook, choosing the firm that gave me the cheapest quote, why should it occur to me to compare the phone numbers? Communication was extremely limited, and with my terrible understanding of Ivrit the last thing I would notice was the character of the guy's voice at the end of the telephone!

Gradually the "wow, that's a coincidence" subsides and I can only appreciate the many different phrases available in Hebrew for "the will of G-d"... As one of my new friends put it, Hashem "booked me in" to this house as easily as a receptionist might reserve a room in a hotel.

Many folk ask me if I miss home. Yes, a photo of Cowans Croft and Kilchrenan taken from the hill is on the wall above my new desk, and with much pride and love I show it to my visitors. I don't regret a moment of my 19 years in Argyll: in it's own way the place has been an ideal training-ground, and it remains a wonderful and well-loved contrast to Israel... here I'm still very much a stranger but already more native than ever there. In Argyll I seemed to have a direct but lonely line to my goals, here I must share them with my brethren.