



BEING Jewish IN Scotland

SCoJeC hopes to hear the thoughts and stories of as many Jewish

people as possible during our government-funded project to discover the range of people's experiences of being Jewish in Scotland.

We have now appointed a project worker, and circulated leaflets about the project throughout Scotland – see page 6 for details of how to contact us to take part in the project.

If you receive Four Corners by post, you should find a questionnaire enclosed; please complete and return it to us by post.

Alternatively, you can complete the online questionnaire at www.scojec.org/jewishinScotland.html.

We'd really appreciate it if you would complete this questionnaire as early as possible, so that we can hear your views. There's a space for you to add your contact details if you'd like to take part in a follow-up focus group, face-to-face interview, or phone interview as part of the project.

All responses to the questionnaire received by the end of January will be entered into a draw to win one of a number of fascinating prizes, including the catalogue of the recent exhibition at the Ben Uri Gallery of the works of Josef Herman, whose Glasgow period was one of his most prolific; Nathan Abrams' book, Caledonian Jews, about the smaller Jewish communities of Scotland; Uncle Roland's Flying Machine, a CD of jazz-inflected Klezmer and Balkan music by Scottish band, Moishe's Bagel; or hot salt beef sandwiches from Mark's Deli.

Interfaith Diversity Day

Maccabi Scotland played host to ninety children at their recent Interfaith Day. They enjoyed an afternoon of fun and cultural activities including Indian stick dancing, Israeli folk dancing, mug painting, rope knotting, and team games run by East Renfrewshire Active Schools. Team spirit was evident during the finale when everyone joined in the tug-o-war competition!

The event was organised jointly by Maccabi, Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, the Faith Forum, Orchardhill Church, Woodfarm Education Centre, SCoJeC, and Active School East Renfrewshire.

Maccabi Director Sue Faber said, "It was a pleasure working together with different communities. We were particularly impressed by the youth leaders who were amazing on the day."

Ken Macintosh MSP joined us and spoke about the importance of events like this. He said we should not be complacent about interfaith relations.

Everyone agreed that the event was a great success and there are plans to repeat it in November 2012.



ABOVE: SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT MACCABI'S INTERFAITH DIVERSITY DAY

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The
Scottish Council
of Jewish
Communities
www.scojec.org

THE UMBRELLA REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION
OF ALL THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN SCOTLAND

Mitzvah Day



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:
TEENAGERS GARDENING AT COSGROVE CARE
IN GLASGOW; COLLECTING GROCERIES FOR
CHARITY; TIDYING SANDYMOUNT CEMETERY;
SUKKAT SHALOM AND EDINBURGH
SYNAGOGUE CLEARING GORSE BUSHES TO
PREVENT BUSH FIRES IN HOLYROOD PARK

We Are All Jews Now

EDGAR PRAIS



Show me the Jew without a personal album of holocaust images and I won't recognise a Jew. "Arbeit macht frei", a child in a red coat, a mountain of spectacles, skeletons bulldozed into a pit, a sepia print of a lost relative – horrors never cease.

For myself, I wrestle with pictures of a dad on all fours on the floor of a cattle wagon en route to Buchenwald, of a mum-in-law at the doorway of an Auschwitz gas chamber, of an aunt confined to

an Israeli mental institution because of wartime exile to Siberia, of a tiny Henry Wuga – the rarest ray of hope glinting through the dark clouds of disaster – huddled on to the kindertransport. And always steaming across the ocean of tears is the doomed 'St. Louis' on its voyage of the damned. The year 1939, the vessel German, with a captain ultimately honoured by Israel as a "righteous gentile", the passengers predominantly Jewish refugees desperate for a safe haven, the transatlantic ports (from Cuba to the United States) virtually sealed to disembarkation, an enforced return to Europe where more than 250 of those on board perished in the flames of war and genocide – no to asylum, yes to murder.

These days I am to be found twice weekly volunteering with the Scottish Refugee Council in its endeavour to ease the burden of frustration, discrimination and rejection all too often borne by current asylum seekers.

How history repeats itself. I do not imagine that I am alone in seeing those who flee for their lives from Iraq, Afghanistan or Somalia as Jews by any other name. I am embarrassed to learn that legislation frequently specifies "destitution" as an essential prerequisite before paltry state support can be doled out to asylum seekers. My Jewish heart and head recoil from the cruelties of an immigration policy that has learned nothing from the past about folding arms when they should be open.

British, Scottish Jews owe it to their collective experience of living here to do their utmost to advance the cause of those now seeking asylum. Each of us belongs, in one generation or another, to a refugee family (the Jews had to wait for Oliver Cromwell to give out visas after centuries of exclusion). If I may be permitted to paraphrase the Haggadah, we must never forget, now that we are free, that once we too were fugitives. It is exactly sixty years since the UN created a Refugee Convention precisely because of what happened during the Second World War. Jews know even better than Christians that there's always room at the inn. Whatever else Israel may have to show for itself, the one lesson it can undoubtedly give to the rest of the world is that the power to absorb population is unlimited. Just ask one million Russians.

The Scottish Refugee Council is entitled to expect wholesale backing from the Jewish community across the entire spectrum of its activities. "I'm alright, Hymie" just won't do. Show me the Jew, from Michael Howard up, without the commitment to welcome asylum seekers, and I won't recognise a Jew.

ALL TOGETHER FOR CHANUKAH

A Chanukah Carnival for ages 8 to 18 is being planned by a coalition of youth groups for the first night of Chanukah, Tuesday 20th December.

Maccabi Director Sue Faber says "As our community gets smaller it makes sense for us all to work together and maximise our resources."

Over the last two years Maccabi has worked alongside other youth groups to organise parties for the 14-18 age group, and encouraged the various Jewish youth organisations to work together to produce fresh and innovative social gatherings, especially at festival times.

Sue says, "This has worked well but now we want to include as many organisations as possible. It would also be wonderful for our friends in Edinburgh and around Scotland to come through for this or any other events we will put on in the future. They are always welcome."



LAST YEAR'S CHANUKAH CARNIVAL

Chai Cancer Care in Scotland

MAXINE ALLON

Chai Cancer Care provides comprehensive, professional, and expert services to any member of the Scottish Jewish community affected by cancer – patients, their families, and friends. As Chai's reputation grows, so has the demand for the services offered by Chai.

Jewish cancer patients and their families have specific issues that need to be addressed; this is why the Jewish community's cancer support organisation launched its eighth local service in Scotland last year.

Nicole (not her real name), 34, from Giffnock has been using Chai's services for five months and sees the real difference Chai is making to people's lives. She tells her friends, "I fell to pieces when my Dad told me he had cancer. I go to Chai for support and counselling. Chai gives me back the strength I need to carry on."

Chai offers a wide range of services including physiotherapy, aromatherapy, reiki, and acupuncture, to all members of the community. All of Chai's staff are qualified and experienced in working with cancer patients and their families. Chai's team of experienced counsellors provide a strictly confidential and safe environment for clients to talk about their fears and anxieties or any other concern they may have.

Chai's services are offered one day a week from rooms at Jewish Care Scotland in Giffnock. Chai also works in partnership with the Jewish Blind Society Scotland.

Chai's counsellors and therapists are also happy to do home visits.

For more information call the Chai freephone helpline: 0808 808 4567 or visit www.chaicancercare.org

chai cancer care
together we can cope

“Scotland’s Shame”



SCoJeC continually emphasises that Scotland is generally a welcoming and hospitable place for Jewish people to live – compared with England, there are fewer antisemitic incidents relative to the population, and in general they are less serious. However, recent research has suggested that this may be unduly complacent.

In October, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research published

a survey of Jewish students throughout the UK. Scotland was only singled out for one comment: “Regionally, respondents in Scotland are the most likely to report having experienced some form of antisemitism – over half (52%) have witnessed and/or been subjected to antisemitism. By contrast, a third (33%) of respondents studying in London has experienced antisemitism.”

More recently, an analysis by the Scottish Government of prosecutions aggravated by religious hatred has attracted a lot of comment in the media because it found that 400 charges were for behaviour directed against Catholics, but only 253 against Protestants. By comparison, only 16 charges for antisemitism looks reassuring.

However, that takes no account of the relative sizes of the communities. Using the published findings of the last census:

	SIZE OF COMMUNITY	NO OF PROSECUTIONS	RATIO
Church of Scotland	2,392,601	253	1 in 9,457
Roman Catholic	859,503	400	1 in 2,149
Muslim	42,264	15	1 in 2,818
Jewish	7,446	16	1 in 465

Even although these figures need to be qualified, because what was recorded was not the religion of the victim but the religion against which hostility was manifested, so that the final column is not the likelihood of an individual having been a victim, it is nonetheless concerning that the disparities are so large.

That is why the community does have an interest in the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications Bill, currently before Parliament. The second part of the Bill directly addresses the kind of abusive phone messages and e-mails that communal organisations are subjected to. But the first part matters to us too, because antisemitic abuse often features at football matches that have no connection with the community.

This was emphasised to us by both Lord Advocate Frank Mulholland QC and the Solicitor General Lesley Thomson QC, when we met them recently. The Lord Advocate also asked us to arrange a public meeting in order to reassure the Jewish community that, as head of the prosecution service, he is determined to tackle all hate crime in Scotland. He spoke of his own experience of sectarianism as a child, commenting that “things get better for a while, but then it pops up again”, and added that the same is true of antisemitism. He said, “I am a great believer that people have right to celebrate their own culture, religion, and heritage, but a line is crossed when doing that pours hatred on anyone else’s culture, religion, and heritage. That is unacceptable in society, and should be addressed where at all possible.”

During the subsequent discussion, Paul Morron of the Jewish Student Chaplaincy Board, drew attention to an emerging pattern of attacks on Jewish students in several universities. Abuse has also been directed at the Jewish student Chaplain, and in the recent St Andrews case the defence sought to redefine what Judaism is. He suggested that Scotland’s reputation had been damaged, as students, parents, and even universities are contacting the Chaplaincy Board to ask whether Scotland is a safe place for Jewish students to study. The Lord Advocate responded that that was why it had been in the public interest to prosecute; he had been very impressed by independence of the Sheriff, who convicted the attacker on basis of the evidence, and was not swayed by his supporters in court, and he hoped that the verdict would send a reassuring message to current and prospective Jewish students.

Asked about a Facebook page attacking the Giffnock community in explicitly antisemitic terms, and an article in the Herald that contained antisemitic innuendo, Mr Mulholland emphasised that the media have a responsibility not be a conduit for hatred, but acknowledged that it can be difficult to moderate comment pages, and the law can be difficult to enforce, since many internet providers are in the US where the law on freedom of speech is different.

He concluded by reiterating that “I want to give the Jewish community the reassurance that, with action from the government, police, prosecutors, and the people of Scotland, I hope to make this a place where everyone is respected for their culture, background, and religion.”

TOP: THE LORD ADVOCATE ADDRESSING A COMMUNAL MEETING CHAIRED BY NICOLA LIVINGSTON OF THE CHAPLAINCY BOARD

LEFT: THE LORD ADVOCATE WITH STUDENT CHAPLAIN, RABBI GARRY WAYLAND

Armistice Day

MONTY COWEN



The weather was good, and on parade we had veterans, JGLB members, Girl Guides, and the JGLB pipe band, numbering more than 100 in total. The march commenced at Fairweather Hall and made its way to the cenotaph in Newton Mearns, where, at 11 am, wreaths were laid on behalf of the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women and the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, before marching to Newton Mearns Synagogue for a memorial service.

Present in the shul for the service were local dignitaries, including the Provost and Council Leader of East Renfrewshire, the local MP and MSP, and Rep Council President Edward Isaacs. We were also joined by two gentlemen from a Stirling Christian group.

After a memorial address and prayer, the Roll of Honour was read by members of the JGLB and Girl Guides, Kaddish was said by Monty Cowen, and an oration delivered by Tony Faber, after which we went for a welcome breakfast kiddush sponsored by Newton Mearns shul and prepared by their Ladies Guild.



Lightening the DARKNESS

EMILY MICHELSON

Few religions think about sunset as often as Judaism does, with our practice of counting every day as starting in the evening. And few inhabited regions of the world face as early and prominent a sundown as Scotland does in wintertime. These two truths suggest that Scottish Jews ought to have a special relationship with Chanukah – the Jewish festival that falls during the shortest, darkest days of the year, and which decrees that candles be lit as soon as possible after sundown. Why light candles? To fulfill one of Chanukah's most important commandments: making its miracle public (*"pirsuma d'nisa"*).

Chanukah needs the extra publicity because it has always faced competition. Even the Talmud describes the prevalence of non-Jewish winter festivals. A famous passage (Avodah Zarah 8a) imagines the world's first wintertime, and the fear and despair it must have brought to Adam, the world's first man. In the Talmudic imagination, Adam assumed that the growing darkness was permanent, a return to the chaos

that had preceded creation. To some extent, we all share this feeling, when the clocks change in October and somebody invariably says, "it seems as though it will never get light again." Only after the winter solstice, when the days began to lengthen, did Adam realize that the light waxed and waned in regular cycles. In response, he established two festivals of eight days each: one of penitential fasting before the solstice, and one of celebration after it.

This sounds like Chanukah, but in fact, it isn't. Adam's two festivals, in the Talmudic interpretation, later became the pagan festivals of *Kalendae* and *Starnura* (the Roman Calends and Saturnalia). But the passage is often cited nonetheless in later discussions of Chanukah. Chanukah has always sat alongside other winter festivals addressing similar themes: lighting up the darkness; miracles; the renewal of the world.

The overlap between Chanukah and other holidays does not have to be contentious, even for proud Jews, and even in Scotland where the tide of Christmas excitement can seem overwhelming. In his memoir of his Edinburgh childhood, David Daiches describes feeling that the warmth of Shabbat and Chanukah within his family home was echoed in the festive Christmas atmosphere of the shops outside; he calls it "repeating the theme in a different key", and concludes "Chanukah was Edinburgh in December." Likewise, one of my favorite children's books for Chanukah describes how each different families on one street has its own reasons for lighting candles in the winter, and how Chanukah joins the other holidays in celebration. My family often uses this book when visiting our children's school to teach about Judaism, and it has become a key entry point into fulfilling the commandment of *pirsuma d'nisa*, publicising the miracle of Chanukah. The perennial points of similarity between religions only help us to understand and celebrate our differences.

EMILY TEACHES HISTORY AT ST ANDREWS UNIVERSITY.

WE WISH HER AND HER HUSBAND, BILL SHACKMAN, MAZALTOV ON THE BIRTH OF THEIR THIRD CHILD, SAMUEL.

The Four Virtues

PHILIP MENDELSON

Last year, SCoJeC, the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, and the Roman Catholic Church held a very successful joint event to mark the 45th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, the ground-breaking declaration by the Vatican apologising for past hostility and recognising Judaism as the "older brother" of Christianity.

One of the outcomes of that event was an agreement to continue our dialogue, and so representatives of the Catholic and Jewish communities met in November in Giffnock Synagogue, to share their thoughts about the four virtues of Wisdom, Justice, Compassion, and Integrity. These are inscribed on the Mace presented to the Scottish Parliament by Her Majesty the Queen at its official opening in 1999.

Speakers were drawn from both communities, with Rabbi Garry Wayland speaking on Integrity; Mary Cullen, a former journalist

now studying theology, addressing the topic of Wisdom. Edward Isaacs, a lawyer in his "day job", who as President of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council and Vice-Chair of SCoJeC, chaired the event, considered the subject of Justice; and Father John Gannon, a parish priest and prison chaplain, looked at the topic of Compassion. Their reflections were diverse, including examining biblical uses of the words, considering their etymology, and then looking to examples in society today. I was struck by how large defining the words and interpreting their meanings loomed in all the presentations. This, of course, involved looking back at the roots of these words, which took us to Greek and Latin, and then to considering the translation of biblical Hebrew, and to how we interpret them today.

The speakers also joined the audience in a series of round table discussions at which these themes and ideas were explored further over tea and cakes. The evening concluded with the speakers giving brief feedback from the wide-ranging discussion at their tables, and general agreement that the event had been a success and should be repeated in the near future.



ABOVE: DISCUSSING THE "FOUR VIRTUES" INSCRIBED ON THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT MACE AT THE JOINT JEWISH-CATHOLIC EVENT

LEFT: RABBI RUBIN (THIRD FROM LEFT) WITH OTHER FAITH LEADERS AT AN INTERFAITH SERVICE TO MARK THE POPE'S "PILGRIMAGE FOR PEACE" TO ASSISI. (PHOTO PAUL MCSHERRY)



Winter Calendar

Chanukah

20th Dec (evening) till 28th Dec

Tu B'Shvat

8th Feb

Ta'anit Esther (Fast of Esther)

7th March (day)

Purim

7th (evening) and 8th March (day)



The Chief Rabbi VISITS Parliament AND People



The Chief Rabbi, Lord Sacks, visited Aberdeen University at the end of November to receive an honorary degree. While he was in Scotland, SCOJeC arranged for him to spend a day at the Parliament, where we introduced him to the First Minister and the leaders of the other political parties, as well as Cardinal Keith O'Brien, and the Moderator and Principal Clerk of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. He then led the Time for Reflection that opens the plenary meeting of the Scottish Parliament each Wednesday.

During our meeting with First Minister Alex Salmond, we discussed the Scottish Government's commitment to tackling religious hatred through the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications Bill, currently being considered by the Parliament. The Chief Rabbi also spoke about how faith communities can contribute to promoting community cohesion and integration.

After their meeting, the First Minister commented, "I am delighted to have met the Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks for the first time today. Our discussions have reflected the fact that Scotland's diversity of cultures and faiths has always been a source of great strength. Each culture and faith brings with it values, ideas and innovations that enrich our arts, science, language and national life, and Scotland's Jewish community is a valued part of that rich cultural fabric that makes up our nation."

The Chief Rabbi also addressed a well-attended lunch-time meeting of MSPs and representatives of other faith communities, and a meeting of Edinburgh's Jewish students. He then travelled to



Glasgow for a public meeting with the Jewish Community, before returning to the east coast to meet Jewish students in St Andrews, and community and students in Aberdeen, before receiving an honorary degree from Aberdeen University.

Reflecting on his visit, the Chief Rabbi said, "For many years, Scottish Jewry has managed to achieve the delicate balance of integration without assimilation, combining strong loyalty to our Jewish faith and way of life, with a deep attachment to Scottish culture and identity."

"It was such a privilege for me to visit Scotland again and meet with senior parliamentarians, local Jewish communities and Jewish students in Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrews and Aberdeen. I pay tribute to the tireless efforts of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities who do so much to represent and protect Jewish life in Scotland."

ABOVE, FROM TOP LEFT CLOCKWISE: THE CHIEF RABBI, LORD SACKS, WITH CARDINAL KEITH O'BRIEN; DELIVERING 'TIME FOR REFLECTION' IN PARLIAMENT; WITH FORMER CONSERVATIVE LEADER ANNABEL GOLDIE; DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, ELAINE SMITH; MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, THE RT REV DAVID ARNOTT; LABOUR LEADER IAIN GRAY; LIBDEM LEADER WILLIE RENNIE; FIRST MINISTER ALEX SALMOND (PHOTO ALAN MILLIGAN)

BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: WITH MSPs AND INTERFAITH GROUP; MEMBERS OF THE ABERDEEN COMMUNITY; MEMBERS OF ABERDEEN JEWISH STUDENT SOCIETY





BEING Jewish IN Scotland PROJECT WORKER

SCoJeC is delighted to welcome Fiona Frank, the new Project Worker for our 'Being Jewish in Scotland' project. Fiona is no stranger to Scottish Jewry – her father grew up in Glasgow, and her late aunt was the artist Hannah Frank, who studied at the Glasgow School of Art in the 1920s. She has just completed a PhD (pictured!) looking at the transmission of Jewish identity through five generations of one extended Scottish Jewish family.

She also has experience of working with small and scattered communities, having been secretary of the Lancaster and Lakes Jewish Community for the past ten years. She previously worked at Lancaster University in adult learning and learning for older people. In her spare time she plays English, Irish, European and Klezmer music on melodeon and concertina.

Fiona is very much looking forward to travelling all over Scotland, making contact with Jewish people, and hearing their stories and what they think about 'Being Jewish in Scotland'.

Being Jewish in Scotland

If you're
Jewish
(or even just
Jew-ish!)
in Scotland,
we'd like
to hear
from you

Whatever your Jewish identity
Whatever your Jewish experience
Whatever your Jewish heritage
... we're sure you'll have something to say

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC)
is looking Scotland-wide
at the experience of

Being Jewish in Scotland

We will be visiting your
area to hear your views

To take part in the project,

- ▶ call Fiona on 07779 206 522 or 0141 638 6411
- ▶ complete our online survey at:
www.scojec.org/JewishinScotland.html
- ▶ email us at JewishinScotland@scojec.org
- ▶ write to us at
222 Fenwick Road, Glasgow, G46 6UE

SCoJeC is here for Jewish people throughout Scotland. We provide information and support, represent the Jewish community to government and others, and promote equality and good relations.

www.scojec.org

Facebook: [www.scojec-facebook](https://www.facebook.com/scojec-facebook)
Twitter: twitter.com/scojec

SCOTTISH
CHARITY NO
SC029438

SCoJeC Inc.

On December 1st, SCoJeC became the first charity in the Jewish Community to be approved by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

This is a new form of legal entity that was created by the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act (2005), and has been available only since April to charities that are not also limited companies. Unless it has a separate legal identity, a club or other organisation is only a group of individuals, so cannot enter into contracts on its own behalf, employ staff, rent or buy premises, take out a loan or insurance, or sue or be sued in court, and all of these legal functions are carried out by the officers of the organisation as individuals. Being a SCIO overcomes all these difficulties, and therefore protects the charity's Trustees from personal liability for its debts.

SCoJeC Director Ephraim Borowski said, "For a charity that already complies with all the legal requirements, the process of converting to a SCIO is completely painless, involving only a very small number of changes to its constitution, and no significant additional administration. It removes a significant disincentive for people to become Trustees, so that more people will be prepared to get involved in charitable governance. "We have been recommending that all charities in the community go down this path, so we are particularly pleased to have been the first to reach the goal."

SCoJeC

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