



how has BEING JEWISH IN SCOTLAND changed?



This summer's huge increase in antisemitic incidents – more than 50 in 3 months, exceeding the previous 3 years – caused an unprecedented level of anxiety in the Jewish Community, with people from all parts of the country contacting us to say that they felt threatened and vulnerable. As reported in the previous issue of *Four Corners*, the First Minister, the Lord Advocate, and the Chief Constable were quick to condemn the outbreak in unambiguous terms.

We are now pleased to report that the Scottish Government has listened to SCoJeC's representations that the situation was so serious that it required more than words, and has agreed to fund a short-term study of how wide-spread these negative experiences have been, and how deep has been the effect on the attitudes of Jewish people to living in Scotland.

We will do this primarily by asking the people who contributed to our 2012 study of *Being Jewish in Scotland* whether their experiences and opinions have changed, and if so how and why, and will also seek to reach an even wider range of contributors. The study will again be led by our very experienced Projects and Outreach Manager, Fiona Frank, and we hope to report at the end of March, and to disseminate the findings widely to public bodies. As before, there will be a combination of online and paper surveys, focus groups, and informal discussion at events in locations throughout Scotland, which we know from experience themselves provide support and reassurance, and build a sense of community and engagement.

We recognise that this grant, particularly at a time of very tight budgetary constraints, is an indication of how seriously the Scottish Government is taking the current situation. Commenting on the grant, Rosanna Cunningham MSP, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs said:

"I am delighted to be able to support further work on the 'Being Jewish in Scotland' project allow us to better understand the experiences of the Jewish community. Our vision is to build a Scotland where people of all faiths and backgrounds can live together without fear, prejudice or harassment. There is no place in Scotland for such behaviour and we are committed to building safe and strong communities to allow everyone in all of our communities to flourish."

● Whether or not you have experienced any antisemitism, and whether or not you have changed your view of Jewish life in Scotland, we would urge you to contribute to our project by completing the survey at

www.scojec.org/bjis2/survey.html

● Please also get in touch with us if you would be prepared to host a 'parlour conversation' for a small group of local Jewish people to get together to discuss these issues.

first ever Jewish Gathering ON THE ISLE OF ARRAN

For most of the year, the Shenhavs live just outside Jerusalem, where Sharon is a well-known Human Rights lawyer, but after they came on holiday to Scotland many years ago, they decided they preferred the temperate climate of Scottish summers, bought a house on Arran, and come back each year to spend a few months on the island. As a retired surgeon, Eli now finds himself the first response team in Lamlash!

SCoJeC scored another first when Eli and Sharon Shenhav hosted a heartwarming and convivial "SCoJeC goes to the Isles" event in Lamlash.



Sixteen people attended the party, including Lev Atlas, the Glasgow-based Russian-born violinist, who had given a concert on Arran the previous night. He gave an impromptu virtuoso concert of klezmer music as well as some of his own arrangements of Russian and Jewish folk tunes, and fascinated everyone with his explanation of the history of klezmer and his fascinating stories about his experience of immigrating to Scotland from Russia.

Everyone had a chance to chat and get to know one another over a delicious kosher buffet, to meet neighbours and new friends, and share their experiences as Jews on the island. As very recognisable Israelis, Sharon and Eli said they are often asked questions about the Middle East, but that the tone has always been polite and respectful. However, some local people told us they experienced some difficulties growing up as "the only people on the island who were slightly different", sometimes on the receiving end of ignorance and insults.

Without exception everyone said how important this evening had been to them, and talked about the feeling of belonging and connection that they had enjoyed from this unique opportunity to spend time with other Jewish people.

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

www.scojec.org

THE UMBRELLA REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION OF ALL THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN SCOTLAND



SCOTTISH JEWISH Arts & Life

SCoJeC is delighted to have co-sponsored, in partnership with the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, an excellent conference on *Scottish Jewish Arts and Life 1914-2014*, which took place during the recent *Cultural Connections* Festival of Jewish Arts and Culture in Ayr. The festival centred on a major exhibition of art by four 20th century Jewish artists, Josef Herman, Benno Schotz, Jankel Adler, and Hannah Frank, and Judah Passow's photographic study of Jews in Scotland. SCoJeC supported several other events at the festival which attracted many Jewish visitors.

At the conference, Harvey Kaplan, the Director of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, spoke about the history of the Ayr Jewish Community, and Archives volunteer Dianna Wolfson spoke about her genealogical research, which focused on the life of her maternal grandmother.

SCoJeC Projects and Outreach Manager Fiona Frank led a discussion about how the experience of *Being Jewish in Scotland* had changed since SCoJeC's 2012 inquiry.

Speaking about the reliability of census data, one participant said she had not identified herself as Jewish because "that way they can come for you". That reflects a straw poll by SCoJeC that found that 1 in 3 of those who could remember how they answered the religion question had not identified themselves as Jewish.

The conference continued with a fascinating talk from Deborah Haase, curator of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, on the life of artist and Holocaust survivor Hilda Goldwag. The children of Joe Frischer spoke about their memories of escaping from Germany before the war; their mother had packed a small suitcase for them, but in her panic had filled it with socks – "only socks!"

"It was a fascinating opportunity to discover the very significant artistic contribution of Scotland's Jewish Community, against the background of both its history and its contemporary concerns," said one participant. "The Maclaurin Gallery and SCoJeC are to be hugely commended for putting these *Cultural Connections* together."

The Jug of Punch, a folk group made up of former Glaswegians now living in Israel, rehearsing for *Jacobs Ladder* festival next month at Nof Ginossar where they will be singing a full set of Scottish songs.



Board of Deputies visits SCoJeC

The day after Yom Kippur, SCoJeC Council members were joined by more than a dozen members of the local community at their quarterly meeting in Edinburgh, where, in addition to

the regular business, the meeting was addressed by two guest speakers – Gillian Merron, the new Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and Superintendent Ross Aitken, the new head of the national Safer Communities Department of Police Scotland.

Supt Aitken told the meeting that it is important for Police Scotland "to look the community in the eye and hear their concerns". He acknowledged that the Community had suffered an unprecedented number of antisemitic incidents in the previous two months and felt under attack, and stressed the importance of reporting all incidents, even if they seem insignificant, because that may help the police to identify patterns.

Gillian Merron, who is a former MP and Cabinet Minister, explained that, as a representative body, the Board has to balance a vast range of opinions and interests. She spoke about the 'Jewish Manifesto' that the Board has produced to brief candidates in the 2015 UK General Election; she acknowledged that most of the issues it discusses are devolved, so do not apply in Scotland, and undertook that the Board will work with SCoJeC to produce a Scottish version in advance of the 2016 Scottish elections. She concluded that "the Board can't do everything, and SCoJeC can't do everything – we are, to coin a phrase, better together".

Interfaith Fellowship Award

MAUREEN SIER, DIRECTOR,
INTERFAITH SCOTLAND

At the recent AGM of Interfaith Scotland, Dianna Wolfson was awarded one of the first 'Honorary Interfaith Fellowship Awards', along with Sr Isabel Smyth of the Roman Catholic Church, and Dr Salah Beltagui of the Muslim Council of Scotland. This award has been created by Interfaith Scotland to recognise outstanding service in the field of Interfaith dialogue and engagement in Scotland.

For more than 40 years Dianna has been involved in interfaith activity, and has worked hard to encourage others to also engage. She has been an active member of Glasgow Sharing of Faiths, the Council of Christians and Jews, and the Scottish Interfaith Council, and still actively supports Interfaith Scotland of which she was Convener until 3 years ago.





Dianna, Isabel, and Salah were founding members of Scotland's first national organisation for interfaith dialogue. She is well known in many of the diverse faith communities of Scotland, and has always been a mentor and friend to those she works alongside.

IAN GLOVER OF THE
EQUALITY UNIT OF THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT
PRESENTING THE AWARD TO DIANNA.

The well-attended AJEX Armistice Day Parade in Newton Mearns was followed by a service at Newton Mearns Synagogue, at which members of the Guides and JGLB read the names of those who made the supreme sacrifice in both World Wars.



World War I Centenary

HARVEY KAPLAN, DIRECTOR, SCOTTISH ARCHIVES CENTRE

The Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, supported by SCoJeC, marked the centenary of the start of the First World War with a multimedia presentation that highlighted the impact of the war on Jews in Scotland, many of whom were from recent immigrant backgrounds.

Community leaders at the time had stressed the importance of Scottish Jews showing their loyalty to their new homeland by supporting the call for volunteers. An estimated 1,500 rallied to the call or were conscripted and the Roll of Honour held by the Archives Centre now lists 126 Jewish casualties. Many Jewish soldiers were honoured for their bravery, including Jack White from Edinburgh, one of only 5 British Jews to be awarded the Victoria Cross, and Julius Diamond, who received the Military Cross and was killed in October 1917.

Extracts were read from letters home sent by Benny Eppel of Edinburgh and Joe Greenberg of Glasgow, as well as poetry by Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg, and Laurence Binyon, and the audience joined in with some of the memorable songs of the war, such as *It's a long way to Tipperary* and *Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag*. Reading from a poem by Emmanuel Saul, a German Jewish poet, Fiona Brodie reminded us that Jews served in the armies of Germany and Austria, as well as of Britain and its allies, and the Archives Centre has Iron Crosses won in the First World War by the father and grandfather of Kindertransport refugee Dorrith Oppenheim (Sim).

The Archives Centre would like more war correspondence to be donated to its collection, and is particularly interested to find out about the role of women in the Jewish community during the war. Did most stay at home to look after their families or businesses in the absence of the menfolk? Or were any of them involved in munitions work, tram conductresses, or nurses?

If you have anything to share, please contact info@sjac.org.uk.




A Holocaust Study Centre for Scotland?

DEBORAH HAASE

The Scottish Jewish Archives Centre has amassed a large collection of documents, photographs, and memorabilia relating to the experience of Jews from Nazi Europe who fled to Scotland in the Kindertransport in the 1930s, or as refugees or survivors in the 1940s. In order to make this collection – an important national resource – more accessible to researchers and others, the Archives Centre aims to establish a Scottish Holocaust-era Study Centre as an adjunct. This would examine the role Scotland played in assisting Jewish refugees to rebuild their lives here, set against the unfolding horrors of Nazi Europe as well as Jewish history in Scotland at the time.

There is a fascinating story to tell of how many hundreds made a new life in Scotland, and of the contribution they made to Scottish society. Hundreds of refugee physicians obtained their British qualifications at the Royal Colleges of Medicine and Surgery in Scotland. Refugee artists and architects such as Josef Herman, Hilda Goldwag, Paul Zunterstein, and Isi Metzstein enriched the local scene.

Scottish Jews and others – including individual donors, families, trades unions, and churches – raised funds to help Jews in Europe through the 1930s, and set up refugee hostels for children and young people. These included the Boys Hostel at Garnethill, the Quaker-run women's hostel in Renfrew Street, Birkenward in Skelmorlie, Whittingehame Farm School, and Polmont House. A number of Jewish and Christian families throughout Scotland offered a new home to child refugees who came here on the Kindertransport in 1938-39.

The Archives Centre has recently completed a consultation and feasibility study, funded by the Scottish Government, and is now seeking the funds to make this a reality. Please contact info@sjac.org.uk for further information or if you would like to support this venture, whether as a donor of material, a volunteer, a financial donor, or a fundraiser.




GLASGOW REFORM SYNAGOGUE Welcomes a New Rabbi

More than 200 people, including politicians, representatives of East Renfrewshire and Glasgow Councils, representatives of Jewish organisations and other faith communities, and leaders of the Movement for Reform Judaism, joined Glasgow Reform Synagogue for the induction of their new Rabbi, Dr Kate Briggs, on Sunday 2 November.

Originally from Hampshire, Rabbi Kate is a trained psychologist and qualified hospital chaplain who has spent around 20 years working with elderly people, and she has also been appointed a Chaplain at Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

The induction ceremony was conducted by the senior Rabbi of the Movement for Reform Judaism, Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, and the UK's first female Rabbi, Jackie Tabick, also took part. Rabbi Janner-Klausner said: "Rabbi Kate cares so much for the people here as well as in the hospital. She enables good to happen. She is straightforward and passionate and just being with her, you feel challenged and appreciated. Kate is here to seek goodness and to enable us to turn in the right direction."

Rabbi Dr Briggs, who has been working as a Student Rabbi with GRS since the start of the year, said: "Change is a scary thing. It is a journey into the unknown. Journeys lead to unforeseen consequences, but also to great rewards. We have already journeyed together for the past 10 months and you have shown me how much you want to regenerate the community. By joining together we will build a Jewish community that will enrich our lives".



THE 7TH
SCOTLAND DAY LIMMUD
Sunday 8th March 2015
Holyrood School, Glasgow.

An adventurous taste
of Jewish learning.

The finale is a
SCoJeC-sponsored
klezmer ceilidh!

We can help with fares
if you're coming from
outwith Glasgow.

For info contact:

scotlandlimmud@gmail.com

Nadia: 07909 904979

Suzanne: 07947 157971

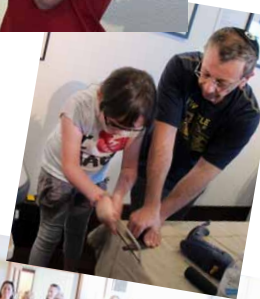
PRE-ROSH HASHANAH Family Festival

SCoJeC collaborated with Enjoy, the youth wing of the Glasgow Council of Synagogues, to organise a pre-Rosh HaShanah *Family Festival Experience* in Ayr. More than 50 people enjoyed the day's activities, which began with the serious business of eating a delicious lunch of fish balls, sandwiches, and cakes, while the duo *Mysterious Minds* performed magic tricks and illusions.

This was followed by a live demonstration of shofar-making, ably abetted by the stars of the show – a pair of local rams with impressive sets of horns. The children then all had the opportunity to blow their own shofar – although no-one could match the endurance of Enjoy's Rabbi Eli Wolfson, who managed to keep up a continuous blast for almost a minute!

Attention then turned to honey, and the children were able to observe a beehive under the supervision of a local beekeeper, before enjoying a tasty treat!

No insects, animals, or children were harmed during this event, but one of the rams has now been renamed 'The Rabbi'!



Celebrate Chanukah with SCoJeC

Candle lighting, potato latkes, and our renowned kosher buffet.

An opportunity to meet others living in the area, and to find out more about SCoJeC's volunteer training and other projects.

- ◆ **TUE 16 DEC, 5.00-7.00**
Fort William (venue information from Linda)
- ◆ **WED 17 DEC, 6.30-8.30**
Alloa Theatre Bar, Town Hall
- ◆ **THU 18 DEC, 4.30-6.30**
Inverness (venue information from Linda)
- ◆ **THU 18 DEC, 6.30-8.30**
Dalbeattie, Nail Factory

Info from: Linda@scojec.org / 7527 040 501



Winter Calendar

Chanukah:

evening of TUE 16 until
WED 24 DECEMBER

Fast of 10th Tevet:

THU 1 JANUARY

Tu b'Shvat

(New Year for Trees):
WED 4 FEBRUARY

The Magic of Chanukah

ZOE JACOBS

As a child, my friends all celebrated Christmas. I don't think I was jealous. You see, my parents' ethos was that being Jewish was a blessing and something to be enjoyed. There would be plenty of time for me to grapple with being a minority and standing up for being different. As a child, they wanted to fill me up with happy memories and positive associations with my religion.

So, despite Chanukah being quite a minor festival, it became a big deal in our house. Not a big monetary deal, but a big experiential deal. At first we each got a little gift every night, be it chocolate coins (gelt), a pair of socks, or a toy. Then we decided we'd build up the excitement by hiding the gifts. And then we began giving rhyming clues ('Want a prezzie for Chanukah? Well since I'm feeling kind, I'll tell you where I've hidden it: With clothes for your behind!'). As a child this was nigh-on magical. I didn't get a rhyming clue on my birthday (which was of course the most exciting day of the year), so Chanukah must be super special to deserve such honour.

And then there is the food: homemade latkes with sausages and apple sauce, homemade doughnuts (we once tried to make a different kind of doughnut for each night of Chanukah – the level of oil intake means I remember very little of the outcome), all eaten off our special Chanukah tablecloth (alright, pedants, off plates that were on our special Chanukah tablecloth).

So it bore very little similarity to a well-known Christian festival around the same time. I loved inviting my friends, Jews and non-Jews alike, to share the joy, the warmth, and the fun. My flatmate at university still proudly boasts that she beat a family of Jews at dreidel. I haven't the heart to tell her it's a game of chance not skill!

My parents worked hard to make Chanukah enjoyable. They made sure it was special, fun, magical. They knew that it was important for me to be proud of my Jewish heritage. They also taught me that I was lucky to enjoy it all. We weren't fighting persecution; we weren't being told we couldn't practise Judaism, or being judged for doing so. But by lighting a Chanukiah and rejoicing in Chanukah, we were remembering all the people who have lit the Chanukiah in danger and in fear. The light and warmth of the dancing flames offers little help to the persecuted, the lonely, the refugees, the unloved. Each year, as I see the flames, I remember that my darkest times are nothing compared to what has happened to others. It is the duty of us, as the lucky ones, to share it, in the hope that one day people across the world can light a Chanukiah in complete safety and peace.

Shabbat UK Scotland

"where does one start?"

RABBI A MOSHE RUBIN

- How can one describe in words the buzz and excitement at the Great Challah Bake that took place at Giffnock Shul with over 100 participants?
- How can I visualise to you the beauty of seeing a 90-year-old lady standing beside a 10-year-old girl and braiding Challah?
- How can I make you hear the sound of singing at the Friday night service of Giffnock Shul when 50 men and ladies crammed into the Beit Midrash to join Kabbalat Shabbat?
- How can I share the feeling of community when the two main orthodox communities in Glasgow got together for a dinner hosted by Newton Mearns Shul?
- What words do I use to explain the tears of joy that were flowing at the musical Havdalah service after Shabbat?

So many questions and one answer: Shabbat.

Shabbat UK Scotland was one of the thousands of proofs from many communities around the world that Shabbat is a unifying force. It was an amazing feeling to know that on this weekend we were joining hundreds of communities around the world and we were proclaiming loudly *Am Yisrael Chai* - "The Nation of Israel Lives". Everyone walked away feeling inspired and begging for the next Shabbat UK to come around quickly.

Shabbat UK in Scotland was a joint effort between the Rabbis and the Lay Leadership.

Full credit to Scotland!

10 Years of Sukkat Shalom

CATHERINE LYONS

It felt as if Rosh Hashanah had come early! Sukkat Shalom, the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community, was gathered at its usual Yom Tov venue. But the crowd on this particular Shabbat, 13 September, included a microcosm of civic Edinburgh: guests were arriving to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Community and the dedication of its new Ark.

The Lord Provost was represented by a Baillie, resplendent in gold chain. The Bishop of Edinburgh came; Conveners of Edinburgh's dialogue project from the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation were also there; Jews were joined by Muslim and Christian friends from the Edinburgh Interfaith Association and other shared social endeavours, and by the local community policeman.

In 2004, the community resolved to acquire a scroll which arrived that September to the sound of bagpipes. Ten years on and repaired, it was placed in an ark for the first time. This was created by ELJC members, sculptor Lauren Fox, who has designed a set of aluminium panels through which a tree grows up and out, and textile artist Katy Bromberg, who has created a hand-embroidered silk curtain depicting a tree bearing etrogim.

Generously supported by the NLPs Trust, the ark was dedicated by Rabbi Mark Solomon, before a warm address by Rabbi Danny Rich, CEO of Liberal Judaism. Celebrations continued in the evening with a klezmer ceilidh, an ELJC tradition, at which a raffle raised £160 for the Scottish Refugee Council.

Once completed, the ark will take up residence in the congregation's usual venue, but will travel across Edinburgh, as required, for as long as the Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community wanders through the city.



On Sunday November 16, Jewish communities worldwide participated in Mitzvah Day, a day of volunteering, to help their local communities.

Young people in Glasgow joined Positive Action in Housing to pack food baskets for asylum seekers, worked with the local Council to beautify the grounds of Sandymount cemetery, and, together with a group of elderly people, made Chanukah decorations for the Jewish Care Chanukah party.



The Scottish Jewish Events Calendar, set up by our SCOJeC CoNNeCT project, is now up and running on the new Glasgow Jewish Representative Council website www.jewishglasgow.org.

Any Jewish organisation in Scotland can list its events and activities by following the instructions on the page, and also embed the calendar on its own website. The CoNNeCT project also includes directories of communal organisations, jobs, and volunteering opportunities - contact Sharon@scojec.org if you would like your organisation to be listed.

Klezmer, Baroque, Tartan: a Jewish Musical Odyssey

*"Friendly people, good music...
what more need I say?"*

Arranging 'jew-ish' events throughout Scotland has always been central to SCoJeC's work, and some of our most successful have been tours of remote locations, that have brought together people each of whom thought he or she was the only Jewish person for many miles around. The latest of these was a round-Scotland 'Odyssey' by a quartet led by Adrienne Greenbaum, which also featured Glasgow violinist Lev Atlas, and Michael Alpert, who has just moved to Fife, on percussion, accordion, and violin, with their very special programme of Baroque flute music, Hebrew and Yiddish song, and foot-stomping Klezmer.

The tour began in Dundee and took in Inverness, Glasgow University Chapel, and Aberdeen, where the musicians visited the beautiful local synagogue. On Referendum Night we hosted a dinner and concert in Edinburgh, and on the last day of the tour the quartet played outdoors at the Maclaurin Gallery, Ayr, after a lunch celebrating the closing day of the *Cultural Connections* festival of Jewish arts and culture (see page 2). The final evening was a sell-out concert at Giffnock Shul with whom we collaborated to bring Adrienne to Scotland. At each venue we also put on a kosher buffet and heard about the experiences of local Jewish people.

The tour was part of the European Days of Jewish Culture and Heritage, and we are grateful for financial support provided by BEMIS as part of the 'Homecoming Scotland 2014' celebration of Scotland's diverse communities.

*"A very relaxed atmosphere ...
The humour gave it an added touch."*

*"As well as being
able to listen to the
beautiful music, it
was so interesting
to hear about its
history and its
composers."*

ANTICLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
GLASGOW UNIVERSITY CHAPEL;
INVERNESS; KALPNA RESTAURANT
IN EDINBURGH (TWO PICTURES);
GIFFNOCK SYNAGOGUE;
MERKINCH COMMUNITY CHOIR
IN INVERNESS;
ABERDEEN ART GALLERY.

★ Calling all volunteers!

As part of SCoJeC's ongoing *Expanding Jewish Volunteering in Scotland* project supported by the Voluntary Action Fund, we have been working with the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council to support volunteers talking to school and adult groups all over the country about Judaism, and helping to increase the pool of people doing interfaith work.

Our Projects Manager, Fiona Frank, and intern, Zoe Jacobs, have been planning a training programme involving experienced volunteers. This free training will be held on four Sundays in January and February, and will include tips on improving presentational skills and interfaith work, as well as a chance to brush up knowledge of different Jewish festivals, and discussions on working with different age groups, dealing with tricky questions, etc. We will cover travel and accommodation expenses, and there will be a video link to enable people who can't attend in person to participate.

For those who are interested, we can provide shadowing opportunities so that new volunteers can observe more experienced speakers all over the country, and after the training, monthly get-togethers will provide an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences.

SCoJeC is also working with Sukkat Shalom, Edinburgh's Liberal Jewish community, to support Jewish people working with refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers, and with the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre to provide training for their volunteers to do their important work of collecting and maintaining the history of Jewish people in Scotland.

We'd love you to take part in any of these volunteering activities: contact Zoe@scojec.org or call her on 07504 081219 to find out more.

SCoJeC

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