

FOUR CORNERS

Light the Darkness

purim

Purim costumes from around Scotland's Jewish communities.



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Scottish Council
of Jewish
Communities

www.SCoJeC.org

REPRESENTING, CONNECTING, AND SUPPORTING
JEWISH PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND

Holocaust survivor Henry Wuga MBE at Interfaith Scotland's Faces of Faith Exhibition in Glasgow University Chapel; Glasgow Jewish Representative Council Yom haShoah event; Kirsty Robson at Scottish commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda; Holocaust Education Trust Ambassadors with survivor Kathy Hagler in Inverness; Yom haShoah service in Edinburgh's Peace Park in Princes Street Gardens; Education Secretary Jenny Gilruth speaking at Holocaust Education Trust reception in Scottish Parliament; Rabbi Rubin and then First Minister Nicola Sturgeon at Holocaust Memorial Day event in Scottish Parliament; Memorial tree-planting at Glasgow University; Vision schools presentation with political leaders in Scottish Parliament.



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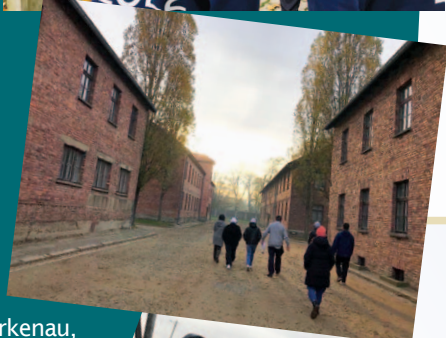
Visiting Poland

Participants in the UJIA Scotland Poland Trip spent five days under the leadership of Rabbi Gideon Sylvester from the United Synagogue, and Sydney Switzer and Lee Lobel from UJIA, learning about the diversity and richness of Jewish life in pre-War Poland, and its subsequent devastation in the Holocaust.

The tour began in the Jewish Cemetery in Warsaw, visiting graves of famous rabbis, intellectuals, artists, and community leaders. We visited the celebrated Yeshiva of Lublin, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the barracks, gas chambers, and crematoria of the concentration camp of Majdanek. We sang songs and ate kugel at the the grave of Elimelech of Lezensk, one of the founders of Chassidism, and later stood in silence and darkness beside a mass grave. We saw the piles of shoes and hair at Auschwitz-Birkenau and read testimony from survivors. There was a chill in the air as we walked through the expanse of Birkenau, and participants struggled with the enormity of the loss and destruction which took place there.

Now we're back, our journey has only just begun as we process what we've seen, begin to integrate these lessons into our daily life, and become involved with various community activities, including speaking to younger teens, and participating in other memorial events.

FROM TOP LEFT: AT AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU; SEARCHING LISTS OF SHOAH VICTIMS; THE JEWISH CEMETERY IN WARSAW; WALKING IN AUSCHWITZ; READING SURVIVOR TESTIMONY AT BIRKENAU



FESTIVAL CALENDAR

- LaG b'Omer** Tues 9 May
- Shavuot** Thu 25 May (evening) to Shabbat 27 May (night)
- Fast of Tammuz** Dawn till nightfall Thu 6 July
The 'Three Weeks' between the Fasts of Tammuz and Av are a time of mourning for the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586BCE and by the Romans in 70CE.
- Fast of Av (Tisha b'Av)** Dusk on Wed 26 July till nightfall Thu 27 July
- Festival of Av (the 'Jewish Valentine's Day')** Wed 2 Aug
- Rosh HaShanah** Dusk on Fri 15 Sept till nightfall Sun 17 Sept
- Yom Kippur** Dusk on Sun 24 Sept till nightfall Mon 25 Sept

ROYAL AUDIENCE

SCoJeC Director Ephraim Borowski became the first representative of the UK Jewish Community to meet King Charles at a reception in the Lobby of Scottish Parliament following the Service of Reflection and Thanksgiving for Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in St Giles' Cathedral, and a Motion of Condolence in Parliament.



KIRK IN SHUL

When the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Rt Rev Dr Iain Greenshields, asked if he could attend a shul service, SCoJeC was delighted to arrange for him and his wife, together with Principal Clerk Rev Fiona Smith and her husband, to attend a Friday night service and dinner in Giffnock and Newton Mearns Shul.



Scottish Labour Leader AT SHUL BURNS SUPPER

Giffnock Newton Mearns Shul celebrated the end of Covid restrictions with its first live Burns Supper after three years of flirting with virtual and hybrid events. This was the first major event of the new merged community, and the toast to the Immortal Memory was delivered by Scottish Labour Leader Anas Sarwar MSP.



FAITH IN GOVERNMENT

SCoJeC Chair Nicola Livingston and Director Ephraim Borowski represented the Jewish Community at the launch of the Scottish Government's new Faith and Belief Engagement Strategy by the Minister for Equalities, Christina McKelvie (fourth from right). The new strategy recognises the need for better knowledge and understanding around faith to support community cohesion.



Scots-Yiddish

A DIALECT RE-IMAGINED



David Daiches in his 1957 autobiography, *Two Worlds: An Edinburgh Jewish Childhood*, tells of Jewish immigrants who, not yet knowing any English, could chat with Scots speakers, with mutual intelligibility. Yiddish speakers found Scots easy to absorb into their patter, as Scots and Yiddish share a common sound world, including the rasping *ch* which comes from the back of the throat in words like *loch*.

Daiches regretted that the opportunity had been missed to record the speech of Scots-Yiddish speakers in the 1920s and 1930s, *the golden years of Scots-Yiddish*.

Yet even today readers may remember a snatch of Scots-Yiddish heard in the childhood *haim*. And the Scots-Yiddish Poems of Avrom Greenbaum published in Glasgow's *Jewish Echo* in the 1960s are not forgotten. Fiona Brodie often recites his *Address to the Fress*, a pastiche of the *Address to the Haggis*, at Glasgow Reform Synagogue's Burns supper. The poem begins in praise of another culinary delight:

*Lives there a man sae thrawn and frugal
Wad turn up his neb at lokshen kugel?*

A.C.Jacobs toiled with Scots-Jewish identity. In *Dear Mr Leonard (Collected Poems & Selected Translations*, Menard Press, 1996), Jacobs cites a remark of an aunt:

*Ah'm no from
Bit whan Ah see them
Ee'in the trayfi meat
It scunners me.*

The late David Kaye recalled hearing a conversation on a Gorbals street in the 1950s. In response to a neighbour's question, *Ach, are you weel?*, came the response: *Oy, vay'z mir, ich hob ayn gey sair heid*. This fragment of Scots-Yiddish played in my head, and *The Trebblers's Tale* which resulted is around 5% found Scots-Yiddish, the rest being reimagined from the component languages.

Does Scots-Yiddish have a future? Recreating the lost dialect is a playful endeavour in which the melding melodies of two lovely languages can be enjoyed. For fun, and yet with a certain sadness, and a fond remembrance of those who spoke it. With an ear open for any traces which may remain.

Speaking of remnants and recalling that word *loch*, Ephraim Borowski told me of a house in Giffnock which had the name *Lochinvant*. There is, of course, no such *loch*. But *loch* is one of those happy homophones: Yiddish for hole. And *vant* is wall. The house had been given the Scots-Yiddish name: *Hole in the Wall*. So, if I ever write about that imaginary Scots-Yiddish shtetl of my dreams, perhaps the name of the place will be *Lochinvant*?

DAVID BLEIMAN

www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poet/david-bleiman
Booklets available at: www.poetrykilt.bigcartel.com



Following the successful merger of Newton Mearns and Giffnock shuls to form the united Giffnock Newton Mearns Synagogue, the closure of the Newton Mearns site was marked by a parade of Torah scrolls at a valedictory service, a stirring address by the Chief Rabbi, and an emotional farewell dinner.



Top Twenty Treasures

To mark the twentieth anniversary of the Scottish Council on Archives, archive services and organisations from across Scotland were invited to nominate a special item from their collection. From the many nominations they received, a small panel chose 20 items which were "of national or local significance with an interesting story to tell". The Scottish Jewish Archives Centre's nomination - Dorrit Oppenheim's Kindertransport admission card from 1939 - made the top twenty Treasures.

Archives Centre Director Harvey Kaplan attended the SCA 20th anniversary reception at the Scottish Parliament, accompanied by two of the daughters of Dorrit Oppenheim (Sim), Ruth McFarlane and Libby Sim. The twenty selected archival 'treasures' were shown in an exhibition and Harvey spoke briefly about the Archives Centre and why it had chosen this particular document.



Briefing SNP

AT WESTMINSTER & IN SCOTLAND

As well as meeting with individual SNP politicians, SCoJeC Director Ephraim Borowski and External Engagement Manager Kirsty Robson were invited by the SNP Equalities Spokesperson, Kirsten Oswald MP, to brief the Party's Westminster group about issues that affect and concern Jewish people in Scotland. The meeting was chaired by then Westminster Leader, Ian Blackford MP, and attended by 17 MPs, and was also joined by CST Director of External Relations, Jonny Newton. Following a change in the SNP's Westminster leadership the following week, we then met the new Leader, Stephen Flynn MP and Deputy Leader Mhairi Black MP in our office, and were joined by Rabbi Ruben who gave the visitors a tour of the shul.



WELCOMING THE NEW FIRST MINISTER

SCoJeC Chair Nicola Livingston wrote on behalf of the Jewish Community to congratulate Humza Yousaf MSP on his election as First Minister. She expressed appreciation of his "understanding of the issues of facing our community, in particular around religious freedoms, anti-Jewish racism, and security" in his previous Ministerial roles, and quoted the Shabbat prayer for our leaders to "uphold the peace of the realm, advance the welfare of the nation and deal kindly and truly with all the House of Israel".



HOW WE WORK



Inaugural Jewish Student Summit

Formal dialogue between Jewish students and the Jewish Community seems such an obvious idea that we were surprised that it had never happened before, so SCoJeC was delighted to arrange the first Scotland-wide summit for representatives of Scotland's Jewish Student Societies, Student Chaplaincy, the Union of Jewish Students (UJS), the Community Security Trust (CST), and other communal organisations, to network, brainstorm, and explore opportunities of working together.

After Glasgow Jewish Rep Council President Tim Lovat had welcomed everyone to the event, SCoJeC Director Ephraim Borowski spoke about the structure and demography of the Scottish Jewish community, SCoJeC's engagement with the Scottish Government, which has included several opportunities for Jewish students to meet the First Minister and other Ministers, and some of the ways Scotland differs from other parts of the UK with regard to legislation, governance, and even antisemitism.

These issues generated a very lively discussion over lunch, which was also an opportunity for the Jewish Chaplains and the student representatives to get to know one another. This was the first national event for Eliran and Ayalah Shabo, who are now offering chaplaincy support to Jewish students on all the East Coast campuses, to meet students from the rest of Scotland, while Aharon and Hodayah Lemberger, who used to cover the whole country, are now based in the west.

There were also contributions from the CST National Student Security Coordinator on how to run events on campus safely, and how to report antisemitism, and the UJS Sabbatical Officers spoke about their work, and encouraged students to get involved.

Bella Nathanson-Tanner, a Mathematics student at St Andrews, was elected student representative to SCoJeC Council, said "I am really excited to help promote dialogue between Jewish students and the wider Jewish community in Scotland!"



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◆ **Help SCoJeC help your community:**
◆ **DONATE AT: www.scojec.org/donate.html**

- ◆ **SCoJeC is grateful to:**
- ◆ Glasgow Jewish Community Trust
- ◆ Netherlee & Clarkston Charitable Trust
- ◆ Eloise Bishop (photos p1 and 4)
- ◆ Gary Winston (photos Newton Mearns p3)

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