A ‘Being Jewish in Scotland’ event

Sunday 26th February 2012
Dundee Synagogue, 9 St Mary Place, Dundee, DD1 5RB
At 1 p.m.

BUFFET LUNCH, SEMINAR AND DISCUSSION

The Jews and Irish in Modern Scotland: Anti-Semitism, Sectarianism and Social Mobility
Dr Billy Kenefick, Department of History, University of Dundee

And

Jewish Identity and Attitudes toward Militarism in Scotland c.1899 to 1939: Kirk Hansen, PhD student in the Department of History, University of Dundee

The seminar will be followed by a discussion as part of the ‘Being Jewish in Scotland’ project

For further information contact Fiona Frank, SCoJeC ‘Being Jewish in Scotland’ project worker,
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www.scojec.org/jewishinscotland.html

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation no. SC029438
The Jews and Irish in Modern Scotland: Anti-Semitism, Sectarianism and Social Mobility

Dr Billy Kenefick, University of Dundee

This presentation explores briefly the experience of Scotland’s largest Jewish community in Glasgow, as part of a larger comparison of the relationships between the Jews, the Catholic Irish and the Protestant host community in Scotland. More specifically, this study seeks to explain why the Jews of the Gorbals area of Glasgow by the mid-twentieth century ‘broke free’ of their ‘Glasgow Ghetto’ before the Irish who had settled in the district a full generation earlier than the Jews. This remarkably speedy integration suggests that the Jewish experience of settlement in Glasgow, and their relationship with the host community were more positive and certainly less problematic than those of the immigrant Irish. Above all, the paper will argue that there was a strong link between successful Jewish integration and social mobility and the limited anti-semitism evident across Scotland, in marked contrast with the Christian sectarianism that largely defined the relationship between the Protestant host community and the Catholic Irish in twentieth century Scotland.

* This paper is based on an article of the same title which is to be published in a special edition of *Immigrants and Minorities Journal* (likely 2013).

Jewish Identity and Attitudes toward Militarism in Scotland c.1899 to 1939
Kirk Hansen, PhD student in the Department of History, University of Dundee

After being largely overlooked by historians of British Jewry for many years, the Scottish Jewish community has recently received attention from scholars such as Kenneth Collins, Ben Braber, and Nathan Abrams. Although Scottish Jews have been smaller in number and have claim to a shorter history than their English counterparts, their roll in and contribution to Scottish society should not be ignored. The goal of this short research presentation is to project an understanding of the Jewish struggle to maintain a Jewish identity while simultaneously attempting to adapt to and integrate into Scottish society by studying various attitudes toward militarism within the Jewish community during the early twentieth century c.1899 to 1939.

Kirk Hansen attained a BA in History and Music in May 2007 and was awarded an MA in History and Church History in May 2009 from Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC. He is currently a History Post Graduate Research Student (PhD) within the School of Humanities at the University of Dundee.

Background: Before attending university, I grew up in the small town of Fremont, Michigan. My extracurricular activities involved spending much time outdoors, raising and breeding Labrador Retrievers with my father, golfing, and practicing music. My favorite subject in school was history, and I particularly enjoyed European history. My study of the Bible has also given me an interest in Jewish history as well. My family history has given me an interest in military history as well with both of my grandfathers serving and my father serving in the military. I have enjoyed studying languages, taking two years of Spanish and one year of French in high school. I also took two years of German and one year of Biblical Hebrew at university. I attended university in South Carolina at Bob Jones University. In 2006 I travelled on a university music team for ten weeks in Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Poland, and Lithuania. I received a B.A. in History in 2007 and an M.A. in History in 2009. One week after finishing my M.A. in History, I married the wonderful Caroline Miller.

Current Studies: I began attending the University of Dundee in September 2011, studying for a PhD in History. My research focuses on the Scottish-Jewish community around the time of the First World War. I am seeking to understand how militarism affected Jewish identity and Jewish integration into Scottish society. I am particularly interested in Jewish participation in military organization before, during, and after the Great War, and I am also interested in Jewish non-participation and anti-war efforts.