

Sukkat Shalom February 2010

Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

Scottish Charity No SC035678

Chair: Gillian Raab, chair@eljc.org
Secretary: Nancy Warren, secretary@eljc.org
Newsletter: Editorial team, newsletter@eljc.org
Treasurer: Jonathan Broadie, treasurer@eljc.org
Membership: Joe Goldblatt, membership@eljc.org

Community Phone: 0131 777 8024 Email info@eljc.org Web www.eljc.org

Events and Services

Date Friday 5th February 2010

Event Erev Shabbat service

Venue 7pm at Columcille Centre, 3 Newbattle Terrace.

Date Friday 12th February 2010

Event Kabbalat Shabbat service

Venue Shabbat service, 6.15pm at Marchmont St Giles Centre, 1a Kilgraston Road

Event Limmud dinner -see page 5

Date Sunday 14th February 2010

Event Limmud in Glasgow - see page 5

Date Friday 19th February 2010

Event Chavurah supper

Venue 7pm, St Marks.

Please bring a non-meat dish to share. Rabbi Mark is visiting us this weekend so he will be leading the singing at the supper.

Date Saturday 20th February 2010

Event Shabbat service

Venue 11am at St Marks, led by Rabbi Mark.

Event Tea & Talmud session

Venue 3pm at St Marks.

Date Sunday 21st February 2010

Event Choosing Judaism class

Venue 10.30am at usual venue

Event Cantillation class

Venue 2.30pm – 3.30pm at St Marks.

Event Spinoza discussion group

Venue 4pm – 5.30pm at St Marks.

Date Friday 26th February 2010

Event Kabbalat Shabbat service

Venue 6.15pm at Marchmont St Giles

Date Saturday 27th March 2010

Event Megillah reading and Purim entertainment

Venue 6.30pm Synagogue, Salisbury Road

A second joint celebration with Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation. See page 2 for details.

Date Friday 5th March 2010

Event Erev Shabbat service

Venue 7pm at Columcille Centre.

Date Sunday 7th March 2010

Event AGM with refreshments

Time 3 - 6pm Venue to be announced.

Jewish Calendar February 2010

14/15 Rosh Chodesh Adar

25 Fast of Esther

27/28 Erev Purim and Purim

ELJC support line

07904 813162



Use this number if you have an emergency and really need to speak to someone. It goes to one of our members. Otherwise please leave a message on the community phone and we will respond as soon as possible.

Contents

Page 2 Future dates, Purim, Communal Seder

Page 3 From the chairman, Israel survey

Page 4 Liberal Judaism, including Haiti Appeal and LJ's New Haggadah

Page 5 Limmud dinner, Literary Society, Jewish Edinburgh Trekkers

Page 6 Community news, Inter-faith, Inaugural Lecture

Page 7 Abraham Sutzkever

Page 8 Tu b'Shevat Seder, Films of Interest, Rosh Chodesh

Future Dates

Our regular schedule is as follows:

First Friday of each Calendar month

Erev shabbat service

The shabbat morning 2 weeks after this

Shabbat morning service

Weekends when no other service

Short kabbalat shabbat service

Note that the regular schedule has been changed for February, March and April this year to fit in with other events.

March 2010

Fri 5 Erev Shabbat
W/end 26/28 Rabbi visiting Shabbat morning
Mon 29 Communal Seder

April 2010

Fri 2 Erev Shabbat
Sat 17 Shabbat morning service
16th-18 LJ Biennial Conference (see p 4)
W/end 23/25 Rabbi visiting
Fri 24 Erev Shabbat service and meal
Sun 25 pm Induction of Rabbi Mark Solomon

May 2010

Fri 7 Erev Shabbat
W/end 21/22 Rabbi visiting Shabbat morning service to be held in the village of Newstead near Melrose in the Scottish Borders

June 2010

Fri 4 Erev Shabbat
W/end 19/20 Rabbi visiting

July 2010

Fri 2 Erev Shabbat
W/end 16/18 Rabbi visiting (to be confirmed)

August 2010

Fri 6 Erev Shabbat
W/end 20/23 Rabbi visiting

Cheder dates

February 6th and 27th
March 13th and 27th
April 24th
May 8th and 29th
June 12th and 26th

Further details will be circulated to parents via the cheder mailing list.

Purim celebrations

We look forward to another successful joint celebration with Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

Saturday 27th February

Synagogue and Community Centre,
4 Salisbury Road. Bring your groggers

7 pm Megillah Reading

followed by Hamantashen

and entertainment including Talent Show and this year's Purim Panto by Nan Lynner, performed by young people from Sukkat Shalom and EHC.

If you have a talent to display or might play a role in the Purimspiel please contact Phil Wadler (wadler@inf.ed.ac.uk, 07976 507 543, 0131 447 4276). Rehearsals are planned for
7.00 pm Wed 10 Feb.
6.00 pm Wed 17 Feb.
3.00 pm Sun 21 Feb.
6.00 pm Wed 24 Feb.,
all at 4 Salisbury Road.

Communal seder

First night of Pesach Monday 29 March 2010

We are very pleased to be able to let you know that this year we will be holding our communal seder at Marchmont St Giles Church Centre.

It will be led for the first time by our Rabbi Mark Solomon. We plan to use the new Liberal Judaism Haggadah (see page 4).

The event will be fully catered and served by Butterflies Catering who are based at Marchmont St Giles, but we will need volunteers to help with setting out and preparing the seder plates etc.

There will be a fish meal with a vegetarian option. **A booking form will be circulated in approximately two weeks time.** Expected prices are as follows:

Adult members: £15

Adult non-members: £17

Little ones sharing adults' meals - free

Other children and students half-price.

Reduced prices can be negotiated for anyone who cannot meet the cost.

From the Chairman

There are two things that I have had to think hardest about in recent years as someone who became a Jew as an adult. The first is the Shoah and how to relate to it when my experience of it was so much less immediate than that of other Jews. The second is concern for developments in the State of Israel where my status as a Reform convert would not recognize me as fully Jewish. I have had occasion to consider both of these in the past week.

Currie Community High School hosted the commemoration of Holocaust Memorial day this year, most of which was presented with great eloquence by the pupils. The first half was entirely about the Shoah including a film made and introduced by two pupils who had visited Auschwitz on a trip sponsored by the Holocaust Memorial Trust. In the second half the young people stressed the universalism of the experience of holocausts including a moving reading of a piece by a young man whose family had been claimed by the genocide in Rwanda. I was pleased to be among several members of our community who were represented at this event.

The State of Israel was founded, against all odds, from the ashes of the Shoah. My first views on Israel were formed at the time of the 1967 war, when I was in the process of converting to Judaism. I joined wholeheartedly in the rejoicing of that victory, expecting it would herald a time when Israel's position in the Middle East would become secure. But over 40 years later this hope has not been fulfilled and there are many policies of the current Israeli government that I find difficult to defend.

These matters have been in the forefront of my thoughts in the last week because of discussions we have been having in the shul council about agreeing "Purpose and Value" statements to appear on our new web site due to be launched soon. Everything

else has been agreed to, not without much discussion of course, but we are still in the process of deciding on how to produce a statement of our views on Israel that will encompass all shades of opinion. We plan to have the final document ready to be circulated with the papers for the AGM which will be circulated in mid-February and hope that the AGM will ratify what we have produced.

There are many different aspects to a diaspora

Jew's relationship with Israel, and as we discovered at the Council meeting, many different views on them. This is no surprise to us. But the British press and perhaps UK public opinion may think differently. The *Independent* recently carried an article

complaining that two members of the Iraq enquiry were Jewish.

To put the record straight and to have your voice heard I strongly urge you to respond to a survey about Israel being run by Jewish Policy Research on behalf of the Pears Foundation <http://www.pearsfoundation.org.uk>.

The Pears Foundation supports many charitable causes, not just Jewish or Israeli ones and it is interesting to look at their statement of values:

"The Foundation's values and philosophy are formed around three core questions:

What are Jewish values?

What does it mean to be a responsible British citizen?

What does it mean to be a responsible global citizen?

The Foundation seeks to answer these questions through its actions. "

If we manage to agree our "Purpose and Values" we need to heed the last sentence. They should be something we act on, not just argue about.

Please do this survey!

If you are Jewish, over 18 and live in the UK you should make your voice heard by responding to the survey about attitudes to Israel among British Jews.

To take part you need to follow the link to <http://surveys.globalepanel.com/wix/p570365130.aspx> and you will be sent an email with your personal link into the survey questions.

The survey is being run by a highly reputable firm and you can be assured that they will adhere to codes of practice and treat any information you give them confidentially and with due care. Any queries about it can be emailed to israelsurvey@ipsos-mori.com.

URGENT SUPPORT NEEDED:

Haiti Earthquake Emergency Appeal



Lucian Hudson, Amanda Grant and Danny Rich, respectively Chair, Deputy Chair and Chief Executive of Liberal Judaism, urge us to help some of the thousands who need urgent assistance following the Haiti earthquake by supporting the work of World Jewish Relief (WJR).

WJR recognises the enormity of this disaster and has hence launched one of its largest disaster appeals in recent years. WJR is liaising with partners already on the ground in Haiti who had been working with vulnerable communities even before the earthquake struck. Our priority has been to enable the purchase, transport and distribution of 700 tarpaulins as shelter materials, over 250 family food packages (sufficient for a two week period) and 145 family water kits which will immediately assist over 11,000 individuals. Much of this material is already in country or can be purchased locally, though our partners are facing huge logistical challenges simply travelling around the affected areas.

We are monitoring further emergency and medium term recovery needs yet the scale of our intervention will be determined by the resources we are able to raise. The response so far from the Jewish Community of the UK has been remarkable yet so much more assistance is required as is clearly apparent from the news. I'm grateful if you can continue to spread the news of WJR's appeal. A hard copy of the appeal leaflet is enclosed with the print versions of the newsletter or you can get it at and donate at: <http://www.wjr.org.uk>

Liberal Judaism Biennial Weekend

16th to 18th April 2010 [Preview of events](#)

In "Daddy's Jewish and Mummy's not - so what does that make me?" Kingston Liberal Synagogue's Rabbi Charley Baginsky will lead a session examining the realities of family life in the 21st century.

Another reality of 21st Century life is that people are living longer and healthier lives. In a powerful combination, the father and son team of Rabbis Andrew and Aaron Goldstein will be looking at how we can benefit from all the experience and wisdom of our older members whilst at the same time not frustrating the desire for development and innovation that our younger members express.

For full programme details, and to book, go to the website at www.liberaljudaism.org/biennial

Rabbi Mark Solomon writes about the Pope in the JC

"The papacy of Benedict XVI has not been short on controversy, so whenever Joseph Ratzinger opens his mouth there is no lack of people ready to jump down his throat. It is almost disappointing, then, when the Pope says just the right thing, as he did in his speech last Sunday. His well-crafted speech ticked all the important boxes, and even though the papacy is a political office where every utterance is spun with care, his address had the ring of sincerity and spiritual depth." The article is available online at <http://www.thejc.com/comment/analysis/26301/analysis-say-two-cheers-pontiff>

New LJ Haggadah

Liberal Judaism will publish a new haggadah, Haggadah b'Chol Dor va-Dor, edited by Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein and Rabbi Pete Tobias in time for Pesach. The new Liberal Judaism Haggadah is two haggadot in one, and offers several options for conducting a Seder, both at home or in a communal setting. There are all the traditional elements of the service, and the opportunity to supplement these with additional study passages, poems, songs and readings. For families with younger children, a shorter, child-centred version of the Seder can be found at the other end of the Haggadah, ensuring that this new book will fulfill the biblical requirement to transmit the story of Pesach from generation to generation. We will be putting in a bulk order for the community which will be available at a price of **only £6 per copy, plus any postage charges**. Details will follow soon.

European Region Biennial Conference

4-7 March 2010 Paris, France

for details and booking form please email kathrynmichael@europeanregion.org

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER WITH GUEST SPEAKERS



There is still just time to book for Limmud in Glasgow on Sunday 14th February (to book go to <http://www.limmud.org/day/scotland> or 0141 419 0424). But it is even more urgent to book for the Limmud Friday Night Dinner on 12th February being hosted by the Events Committee of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation at the synagogue, Salisbury Road. Everyone is warmly invited, but phone or email to reserve your place. See details below.

Two Limmud presenters will be speaking at the dinner.

Maureen Kendler Head of Educational Programming at the London School of Jewish Studies and her talents as a Jewish educator are widely acclaimed.

Daniel Reisel a junior faculty member at the London School of Jewish Studies and draws very big crowds at Limmud.

Dinner will commence at 6.30pm. The charge is £14 for adults and £8 for children/students. If you would like to attend, please email Jackie Taylor at ray.taylor1@blueyonder.co.uk by **3 February 2010**. Please also let Jackie know whether you would like to eat chicken, salmon or a vegetarian main course. A cheque should then be sent to Jackie c/o Synagogue Chambers, Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, 4 Salisbury Rd, Edinburgh EH16 5AB.

Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

All meetings will be held on Sundays at the Synagogue, 4 Salisbury Road. Tea will be served from 7.15pm and talks begin at 7.30pm sharp. For more details of the talks below see http://www.eljs.org/prorgamme2009_2010.html

Feb 7 Bill Shakman, Kabbalistic Reflections on the Passover Story

Bill Shakman is a Jewish educator who has researched the Kabbala, and specifically the Christian influence on it, extensively.

Feb 21 Claudia Nocentini, Natalia Ginzburg and the construction of identity

Novelist, playwright, translator, editor, essayist, journalist and pamphleteer: between her birth in 1916 and her death in 1991, Natalia Ginzburg was known by four different surnames; married twice; had five children; lived in different regions in Italy; was persecuted as a Jew during the war and became a Catholic after it; took up, and later renounced, membership of the Communist party and became a Member of Parliament. This paper will investigate how her original and unique literary contribution is only now beginning to achieve the recognition it deserves.

Claudia Nocentini is Senior Lecturer in Italian at the University of Edinburgh.

Jewish Edinburgh Trekkers!

A group of us came up with a schedule of walks for the next few months. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for walks, or would like to suggest and/or organise a walk, please email me at brdorfman@yahoo.com.

21 February: Braid Hills	Arnold Rifkind
21 March: Pentlands, Currie	Tony Gilbert
4 April: Flotterstone (matzah ramble)	Betsy Dorfman
16 May: Eildon Hills	Tony Gilbert/Betsy Dorfman
13 June: Carlops	Carol Levstein

Community Matters

Mazal tov מזל טוב

Lots of congratulations due this month

to **Sarah Meek and Ami Bender** on their engagement! We wish them many happy years together.

to **Hannah Holtschneider and George Wilkes** on the birth of their daughter Noa Bendita on 12 January.



to **Anna and Tim Dover** on having their restaurant, the Roost in Bridge of Earn, (www.theroostrestaurant.co.uk) listed in the Sunday Herald as one of Joanna Blythman's top ten eating places in Scotland for 2009.

Girls' night out

Following last month's successful boy's evening it is time for the girls to have their turn. The provisional date is Saturday evening 20th March. This is a message to all girls to keep the date free, details next month.

Interfaith Activities

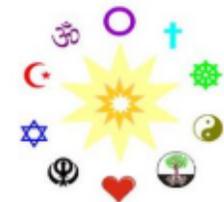
Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group (EWIG) <http://www.edinwig.org.uk>

3rd March - 7 p.m., Robertson Hall, Nicolson Square Methodist Church.

Meeting with Ms Hagiit Ranaan, Israeli Peace activist.

24th March - 7 p.m., location to be decided - possibly Quaker Meeting House.

Theme of "Justice and Punishment" to be facilitated by Florence Grant.



For further events, in particular those relating to Palestine, please consult the EWIG website.

Women's Muslim-Jewish Dialogue

If there are any ladies who are interested in engaging in Muslim-Jewish Dialogue (women only), please contact me so that I can gauge the interest in this initiative.

rebekah.gronowski@googlemail.com

Exhibition opening

24th February - 6.30 p.m., Ms Hind El Arabi the Women's Programme Officer of UNRWA Gaza will speak on "Celebrating the Craft Heritage of Palestine" at the opening an exhibition of photographs by the celebrated Palestinian photographer Steve Sabella. The photographer travelled though the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as well as inside Israel to photograph producers. The exhibition will remain open throughout Fair Trade fortnight until 7th March.

Professor Donald Bloxham's Inaugural Lecture

'The Holocaust in European Perspective'

Tuesday 23rd February 2010, 5.15pm, Lecture Theatre B, David Hume Tower, George Square

Abraham Sutzkever

(15 July 1913- 19 January 2010)

The world of Yiddish literature has lost its greatest poet, Abraham Sutzkever, who died on Tuesday 19th January in Tel Aviv. Sutzkever can indeed be claimed to be one of the great poets of the twentieth century. He wrote lyric and epic poetry, prose and literary criticism, and was the editor of an important literary journal.

Sutzkever was born in Smorgon, a town to the south-east of Vilna (Vilnius), but the family fled to Omsk, Siberia, in 1915, from where his mother and her two remaining children returned to settle in Vilna in 1920 – Sutzkever's father and his sister having died in Siberia. These early childhood experiences are the subject of his long poem *Siberia* which was illustrated by Sutzkever's close friend Marc Chagall.

Sutzkever went to a Polish-language gymnasium, and was influenced by Polish poetry. Only in his teenage years did he become acquainted with Yiddish literature, and published his early poems in various journals, including the modernist American Yiddish journal "In zikh". He was associated with the literary group *Yung Vilne*, - though these left-wing, politically engaged poets were rather ambivalent about Sutzkever's individualist, romantically inspired early lyrics - and in 1937, with the help of Joseph Roth his first collection of poems was published in Warsaw.

During the war Sutzkever, his wife and his mother were incarcerated in the Vilna ghetto. His mother and his newborn baby were both murdered by the Nazis, and Sutzkever had to spend much time hiding from the SS and Lithuanian *chapuners* (the "catchers"). From 1942 on he had to work for the "Rosenberg-Stab", collecting valuable Jewish materials to be either destroyed or sent to Germany for a "Museum of Judaism without Jews" (!) Sutzkever and his colleagues hid great numbers of documents and treasures, which he rescued after the liberation of Vilna. He was an active organiser of the cultural life of the ghetto.

In September 1943 he and his wife escaped and spent several months in terrible conditions fighting with a partisan group in the Narocz Forest about 100 kilometres from Vilna. In March 1944 the Sutzkevers were airlifted to Moscow in a rescue organised by the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow under the leadership of Ilya Ehrenburg. He testified at the

Nuremberg Trials on behalf of the Jews of the Soviet Union in February 1946, after which he returned with his wife to Poland. They then lived for a while in France, and eventually reached Israel in September 1947, with the help of Golda Meir, whom he had met that year at the Zionist Congress in Basle.



In Israel, despite the extremely hostile attitude to Yiddish in the early years of the state, Sutzkever managed to found a literary journal, *Di goldene keyt* (The golden chain), which he edited for forty years. This was of immense importance in keeping Yiddish culture alive internationally after the Holocaust. He has won many literary prizes and was several times nominated for the Nobel Prize.

Sutzkever never stopped writing, even during the darkest days of the war. He remained productive until a few years ago; the Holocaust is a constant presence in his work, but he transcends the horror through his poetic word. He has raised Yiddish to a poetic language of great sophistication and complexity. Though a deeply Jewish poet, his themes are of universal significance. In this poem from 1974, several of his constant images occur, including the mysterious *fidlroyz* ("fiddle-rose") an image of poetry itself:

Who will remain, what will remain? A breath of wind
will stay.

And the blindness of the blind man, even though he
goes away.

A fleck of foam will stay as a reminder of the sea,
And a wisp of cloud, caught in the branches of a tree.

Who will remain, what will remain? A syllable remains,
Like Genesis, it will give life to grasses once again.

A fiddle-rose will proudly bloom, alone and in
command,
Her nature only seven of those grasses understand.

Of all the stars spread out between the farthest north
and here

There will remain only the star that falls into a tear.
A drop of wine will always be left within its cup.

Who will remain? God will remain. Is that not enough?

(1974: From *Lider fun togbukhl Poems from a Diary*)
(Translated by Heather Valencia)

*Thanks to Heather Valencia for this text and to Isabel
Sajdak for suggesting it.*

Tu b'Shevat Sederim

Admire our Tu b'Shevat seder table with three different kinds of fruit, from left to right in the picture and wine to make up the four cups - all fruit and wine fair trade - along with some of the participants. There were rather few of us to enjoy all this, well out-numbered by the 13 children and the 7 adults who took part in the cheder seder on the following afternoon. Suggestions for how we can encourage more people to come along next year, when Tu b'Shevat falls on a Saturday evening/Sunday would be most welcome.



Films of Interest

Middle Eastern Film Festival (12.2 - 1.3.2010)

Venue: Filmhouse.

Fri 12 Feb at 6.00pm

Pomegranates and Myrrh (Al-mor wa al rumman) Najwa Najjar, Palestine 2008, Arabic, English and Hebrew with English subtitles.

This absorbing drama candidly addresses the way a Palestinian woman might face the harsh realities of life in modern-day Palestine while refusing to be defined by them.

<http://www.filmhousecinema.com/showing/pomegranates-and-myrrh>

Mon 22 Feb at 6.30pm

Laila's Birthday (Eid milad Laila) Rashid Masharawi, Palestine/Tunisia/Netherlands 2008, Arabic with English subtitles.

Gaza-born director Rashid Masharawi captures the absurdity of the Palestinian situation in this comically deadpan, stop-and-start road trip through the land of checkpoints and barriers.

<http://www.filmhousecinema.com/showing/lailas-birthday>

Mon 1 Mar at 5.45pm

Knowledge is the Beginning (Wir können nur den Hass verringern) Paul Smaczny, Denmark 2005, English, Arabic and Hebrew with English subtitles.

World-renowned conductor Daniel Barenboim and the late Palestinian writer and activist Edward Said generated both controversy and admiration when they founded the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra in 1999. Bringing young Arabs and Jews from Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan and Syria together to perform and live side by side, it is a living expression of its aim to further peaceful co-existence in the Middle East.

<http://www.filmhousecinema.com/showing/knowledge-is-the-beginning>

Rosh Chodesh

You will notice on page 1 under the Jewish Calendar for February that this month we have two days for Rosh Chodesh. If I ever knew why this was I had forgotten. The answer from the web at http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/Rosh_Chodesh.html is as follows:

" Hebrew months alternate between 29 and 30 days in length, with the actually moment of the new moon falling in between. The 30-day month is called "malei" (full) and the 29-day month is called "chaser" (defective). In any given year, Nisan, Sivan, Av, Tishrei, Shevat and Adar I are malei; Iyar, Tammuz, Elul, Tevet, Adar, and Adar II are chaser. Cheshvan and Kislev are sometimes malei and sometimes chaser. When a month is 30 days in length, the following month Rosh Chodesh is celebrated for two days because the 30th day of the month past is counted as Rosh Chodesh and the first day of the subsequent month as the second day of Rosh Chodesh. This coming month, for example, 14/15th February will be Rosh Chodesh. February 14th will be 30 Shevat and February 15th will be 1 Adar." Gillian Raab

