

# Sukkat Shalom SEPTEMBER 2012

Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

Scottish Charity No SC035678

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## Events and Services

**Date** Friday 7 September 2012

Event Kabbalat Shabbat Service  
Venue Marchmont St Giles, 1a Kilgraston Road  
Time 6:15pm

**Annual Barbecue and EGM**  
**Sunday 9 September**  
**Linlithgow**  
**from 12:30pm onwards**  
**for details see p.3**

**Date** Friday 14 September 2012

Event Erev Shabbat Service  
Venue Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace  
Time 7pm

**Date** Sunday 16 September 2012

Event Erev Rosh Hashanah Service  
Venue for details, please see p.2  
Time 7pm

**Date** Monday 17 September 2012

Event Rosh Hashanah Service, followed by  
lunch and Tashlich at the Water of Leith  
Venue for details, please see p.2  
Time 11am

**Date** Friday 21 September 2012

Event Kabbalat Shabbat Shuva Service  
Venue Marchmont St Giles, 1a Kilgraston Road  
Time 6:15pm

**Date** Tuesday 25 September 2012

Event Kol Nidrei  
Venue for details, please see p.2  
Time 7pm

**Date** Wednesday 26 September 2012

Event Yom Kippur, including a communal  
break-fast meal after Neilah  
Venue for details, please see p.2  
Time 11am

**Date** Saturday 29 September 2012

Event Shabbat Service  
Venue Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace  
Time 11am

**Date** Saturday 6 October 2012

Event Shabbat Sukkot Service  
Venue Morningside United Church,  
15 Chamberlain Road  
Time 9:30am for Sukkah building, 11am for service

**Deadline for copy for  
October 2012 newsletter:  
23 September 2012**

ELJC support line

**0131 208 1447**



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 *Liberal Judaism, High Holyday arrangements*  
Page 3 *BBQ, EGM and break-fast meal booking*  
Page 4 *Chariman's word*  
Page 5 *Crypto-Jews in Santa Fe*  
Page 6 *Community matters*  
page 7 *Events and announcements*  
Page 8 *Report from first night of Bathsheva dance troupe at the Edinburgh festival "You may be Jewish in your genes, but you're a Goy, you're a Nazi, you're treif!"*

## Future Dates

Our regular schedule is as follows:

Our **Erev Shabbat service** will be on the **SECOND** Friday of each calendar month and our **Shabbat morning service** on the Saturday after the **FOURTH** Friday.

These services take place in the **Columcille Centre, 2 Newbattle Terrace.**

## Jewish Calendar

Festivals begin on the evening before the day listed.

Rosh Hashanah 5774	17.9.-18.9.2012
Yom Kippur	26.9.2012
Sukkot	1.-8.10.2012
Simchat Torah	9.10.2012
Chanukah	9.-17.12.2011
Tu B'Shevat	26.1.2013
Purim	24.2.2013
Pesach	26.3.-2.4.2013
Shavuot	16.-16.5.2013
9 Av	16.7.2013



## A Liberal view on the age of austerity

**Nigel Bowness on whether our community is ready to meet the challenge posed by the age of austerity**

As Progressive Jews we often have differences of opinion with Lord Sacks, but it is hard to find fault with his views on what future Jewish leaders should be doing.

He wrote: "The right way is to make friends within and beyond the Jewish Community to emphasise the ethical and spiritual dimensions of Judaism, to find social action projects we can work on across other divides and to find ways of making Jews feel proud to be Jews."

The current economic climate, this age of austerity, increasing inequality and contentious ideological debates about the future role of the state provides an opportunity for Liberal Jews and certainly demands an ethical response.

To read the full article go to:

<http://www.liberaljudaism.org/news/639-a-liberal-view-on-the-age-of-austerity.html>

## High Holyday Arrangements

**Services are at St Mark's, 7 Castle Terrace Tickets**

Everyone who plans to join us over the High Holydays should have received their tickets, or instructions in how to get them. If you still need to arrange this please email [info@eljc.org](mailto:info@eljc.org). Machzorim will be available for visitors, and we also have copies for sale if you would like to have your own.

### **Music**

If you would like to become familiar with some of the music we will be using over the Holydays, you can listen to Rabbi Mark singing some of the melodies at [http://www.eljc.org/index.php?com\\_content&view=article&id=92](http://www.eljc.org/index.php?com_content&view=article&id=92)

### **Rosh Hashanah Morning Service**

This will be followed by a buffet lunch, at St Mark's, sponsored by Gillian and Charlie Raab, to which everyone is invited. Contact Gillian at [chair@eljc.org](mailto:chair@eljc.org) or leave a message on the community phone if you are able to help set out the lunch.



Since the Rosh Hashanah service is quite a long one, families with young children might consider bringing them for the second half of the

service (starting at 12 noon), so they can fulfil the mitzvah of hearing the Shofarot and then join everyone for lunch. There are also some toys and books for kids in the back room.

Tashlich: will take place as usual at 3:30pm at St Bernard's Well on the Water of Leith.

### **Break-fast meal after Yom Kippur**

Thanks to the modernisation of the back room at St Mark's there is now access for caterers through the back of the building. We have been able to organize a caterer to supply us with a community meal there after the Neilah service. We think this will be a great improvement on having to find our way to a restaurant.

Everyone is welcome to stay for kiddush, but to join us for the meal you must book and pay in advance. See details on page 3.

**Wishing all our members Shanah Tova, G'mar Chatimah Tova and well over the fast**

## Summer Barbecue Sunday 9th September



Our 'annual summer BBQ' will be at Kate & Nick's, 18 Grange Knowe Linlithgow. Tel. (01506) 845325 on Sunday 9th September.

Arrive any time from 12.30pm. Any contributions of food and drink welcome but no pork or shellfish, thanks! All welcome – kids, adults, friends, relatives.

If anyone wants a lift from Linlithgow station, just call (but ideally let us know beforehand so we've not drunk too much...). It is also possible to walk from the station by the scenic route round the back of the loch, estimated time around 45 minutes.

By car, come off the M9 at junction 3, turn left towards Linlithgow. As you go past the 'Oracle Factory', there is a turning for Grange View on the left. Turn in there, then left at the roundabout into Grange Knowe. We're in the first cul-de-sac on the right.

## Extraordinary General Meeting - EGM- (also 9/9/2012)

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIOs) are a new kind of legal entity that allow charities to have some of the protection of Limited Companies without the associated expense (see <http://www.oscr.org.uk/about-scottish-charities/scio/> ). Over the last few months we have submitted an application to change from an unincorporated organization to a SCIO. This involved redrafting our constitution to make it compatible with what was required of a SCIO. Fortunately our constitution was not too different from what was required, but we still had to put in quite a few changes of wording and several exchanges were needed to satisfy the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. You can access our new and revised constitutions from the Organisation pages of our Web site. There is one final hoop we need to jump through. In order to reconstitute ourselves as a SCIO we need to have an EGM. A formal announcement of the EGM is being sent to all members. It will take place at 2.30pm on 9th September at 18 Grange Knowe, Linlithgow, to take advantage of many of our members already being there for the barbecue. We will only have the single item, re incorporation as a SCIO, on the agenda so it is not anticipated that the meeting will last long. We believe we are the first Jewish Community in Scotland to have succeeded in taking this step, though others are in the process of doing so.

## Arrangements for break-fast meal after Yom Kippur

Butterflies catering will be providing a vegetarian buffet meal for us to break our fast after Yom Kippur. The menu will include, soup, a hot vegetarian dish with a selection of salads followed by fruit, and with tea and coffee. Soft drinks will be provided and you can bring your own wine which you are welcome to leave in the back room. The cost will be £12.50 per person.

Please book in advance by sending a cheque, payable to **Sukkat Shalom, Edinburgh** to cover the cost of the number of meals you wish to book . Final booking date Friday 21st September.

Dr Maureen Mackinnon, 12 Woodfield Park, Edinburgh , EH13 0RB.

If you cannot post us a sterling cheque for any reason, please email Maureen at [catering@eljc.org](mailto:catering@eljc.org) to discuss details of other methods.

## St Mark's Unitarian Church

are holding a special service on Sunday 23rd September at 11am to celebrate the re-furbishment and modernisation of their building. It will be followed by a lunch where everyone is welcome to bring a dish to share. They have invited any members of Sukkat Shalom to join them, along with members of other groups who use their building.

## Chairman's word – September 2012/ Ellul 5772

Last week a series of linked events made me reflect on what it means to belong and to be at home. On Monday afternoon I attended the first performance of Vanessa Rosenthal's play *A Kindertransport Life* in the church hall of Old St Paul's church in Jeffrey Street. It tells the story of Karen Gershon, her life in Germany, travels to the UK and subsequent life in several places in the UK, including Edinburgh, in Israel and then back to England. She became a well-known and widely published poet whose themes included her feelings of guilt as a survivor and a sense of being a stranger, not at home anywhere. These extracts from her poems illustrate:

### **from I WAS NOT THERE**

*The morning they set out from home  
I was not there to comfort them  
The dawn was innocent with snow  
In mockery – it is not true  
the dawn was neutral was immune  
their shadows threaded it too soon  
they were relieved that it had come  
I was not there to comfort them*

### **from HOME**

*Because she knows what has been done  
to children who were like her own  
she cannot think their future safe  
her parents must have felt at home  
where none cared what became of them  
and as a child she must have played  
with people who later in life  
would have killed her had she stayed.*

It was a very moving and well acted play. Its two actors and supporting staff, like all Fringe performers, were a bit like refugees themselves. I spoke to Vanessa, author and actress, after the show as they were packing everything from the production into the two suitcases that were props for the production. I had not been aware of Karen Gershon's poems before so, after the show, I made my way to the Scottish Poetry Library in the High Street and looked her up in the catalogue. As well as her collected poems and entries in anthologies I found there a *Guardian* article from 1990 in which she had been interviewed by Rabbi Julia Neuberger in connection with a TV programme about her life: her journey back to Germany to make this programme had been the starting point of the play.

On Wednesday I attended another interview by Rabbi Neuberger, who was interviewing former bishop Richard Holloway about his recently published memoir *Leaving Alexandria*. He said in the interview that he prefers the term "memoir" to "autobiography" since these are only written by politicians in self-justification. Richard Holloway also talked of seeking a home and how his move to a theological seminary from a very poor background was a sort of cultural emigration. An even further link came when I saw the Romanian national theatre's production of *Gulliver's Travels* a few days later – and who should be doing the voice-over, but Richard Holloway.

All of these events have made me think about what it means to be exiled or to feel the need of a home. This state of mind can come about even for those of us who have not strayed far from the land of their birth. And for some, like Gulliver and perhaps Richard Holloway, a return to one's origins may even result in a feeling of alienation if our journeying has changed who we are. Home can be a place, but it can also be the people who surround us. As we come into the penitential month of Elul it could be a good time for us to make sure that the way we relate to others makes them feel welcome, accepted and at home.

Wishing all Sukkat Shalom members and friends a sweet New Year and well over the fast.

Gillian Raab

## Crypto-Jews in Santa Fe

By Joy Ellen Rosenberg

Having recently moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico (US), I have become fascinated with the mystery of the crypto-Jews. Miraculously, for over 500 years – 20 generations! – Jews whispered their secret identity, often on their death beds, from eldest daughter to eldest daughter. How is this possible? And who are the crypto-Jews?

This story begins in 1492, when King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella brought a brutal end to the Golden Age of Spain with their decree that Jews could either convert to Christianity, leave the kingdom, or be killed. Many Jews, both on the peninsula and in other parts of Europe, considered their brethren to be forced converts, referring to them as *anusim* (literally “forced ones”). Some of the *conversos* (converts) or *cristianos nuevos* (“New Christians”) accepted baptism sincerely, but others converted in name only, continuing to practice their ancestral faith in secret.

Among Christians, a new label was devised to describe those converts to Christianity suspected of maintaining their former Jewish practices: *marrano*, the Spanish word for swine. Life became very difficult for these crypto-Jews, or secret Jews, as there developed within the Spanish Catholic Church an institution known as the Holy Office of the Inquisition. The Inquisition had no jurisdiction over Jews, but as Catholics, these crypto-Jews were accused of “judaizing” and were often burned at the stake.

That same momentous year, Christopher Columbus uncovered an entire “New World” for the Europeans (bringing with him at least one confirmed secret Jew). Among the thousands of immigrants to settle in Spain’s and Portugal’s American colonies were Iberian crypto-Jews. There they could remain subjects of their monarchs, living nominally as Catholics, but able to practice Judaism secretly, at least for a while.

Ultimately, however, the Inquisition crossed the ocean to *Nueva Espana*, establishing their largest court in Mexico City. Their campaigns against crypto-Jews stimulated a migration to the far northern frontier of Mexico, into what now is Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Inquisition trial records show clearly that crypto-Jews were found among the New Mexican colonists of the late 1500s.

Today in the American southwest vestiges of this crypto-Jewish heritage can still be found among the *Hispano* community. Some families retain practices whose meaning has been lost, such as lighting candles on Friday night, covering mirrors upon a family death, refraining from pork, slaughtering animals in a kosher manner, and male infant circumcision.

In Santa Fe, where I am the Director of Education at Temple Beth Shalom (a Reform congregation), we have offered a number of programs aimed at welcoming the crypto-Jews in our midst. By some estimates, over half of the *Hispano* families in New Mexico have Jewish roots! What was once called “New Mexican Spanish” turns out to have been *Ladino*. Some of these folks welcome the discovery of their Jewish heritage (“I always felt Jewish and didn’t know why!”), some embrace it fully, but others reject it (“We are Catholics. We have always been Catholics.”).

Following are some of their actual stories:

*An administrator on the University of Arizona campus recalled that when he grew up in Tucson “there was a kid who spoke a funny Spanish. We used to kid him. One day when I was in the University library I ran across a Ladino dictionary. I finally realized that kid had been speaking Ladino. Then I began to wonder why my family always had a menorah in our Catholic home!”*

*A minister in the Assembly of God in Florida one day found the birth certificate of his grandmother from Havana, Cuba dated 1901. He was stunned to find written on the official document, “descendiente Espanol Judio”. He has left his ministry, been circumcised and is joining a Jewish congregation.*

*A professor at the University of New Mexico tells this story: When his sister died, his mother announced she must share a secret that had been passed down through generations of their family, but only through women. Now that his sister was gone, the secret must go to him. “My mother whispered to me, ‘Somos Judios.’\_ I was stunned to learn that we were Jews, but then I remembered that in our house my mother never served pork or shellfish.”*

*A young man from a tiny community in northern New Mexico remembered seeing his grandfather carve menorahs and place them in the window of their house at Chanukah. “My grandmother,” he said,*

*"would take them out quickly and insist we have a Christmas tree." In the spring, his grandfather would hang a lamb, cut the jugular vein (according to Jewish tradition) and let the blood run into the ground. "I also remember my grandfather going to a secret house to pray. I think he prayed there in Hebrew, although we were raised Catholic."*

*A dentist in Denver joined a Jewish congregation, saying he did not have to convert because although his father was Catholic, his mother told him repeatedly that she was Jewish and therefore he was as well. "My mother had a store in the Hispanic area of northeast Denver," he recounted. "She always closed the store on Yom Kippur. I am sure we are descendants of Jews who fled the Inquisition in Spain." His family name is one that was called by the Inquisition not once, but many times.*

*Ruth Ruiz Reed, a Spanish translator at the University of Arizona, brought an amulet for identification, which she said had been passed down through the women of her family for generations. The amulet was in the shape of the tablets, with the Ten Commandments inscribed in Hebrew. Ruth Ruiz Reed recalled that her grandfather told her that his father used to take candles and "do certain ceremonies" at night in his room and also read the Old Testament. She added, "My mother never served pork or shellfish in our home."*

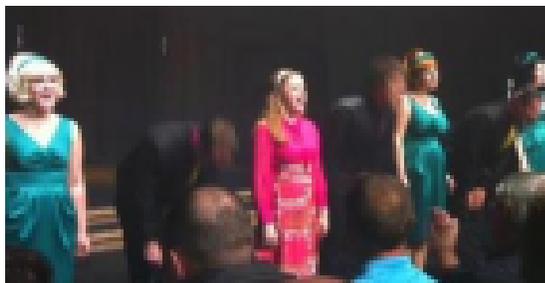
*And here is my favorite story: A young Hispanic man raised in Los Angeles, upon learning that he came from a converso background, converted to Judaism. "Not long after," he related, "I met a young Hispanic girl. We fell in love and decided to marry. I told my fiancée that we might have a problem. I had converted to Judaism, I said, and she would need to keep a kosher home. She looked at me with a smile, and said sweetly, 'That's no problem. I am from a hidden Jewish family.'"*

**NOTE:** Many thanks to Joy for this, following her talk after an Erev Shabbat service when she visited us earlier this summer. You can read more about the Crypto-Jews of New Mexico in the two books she has kindly donated to our library.

## Community Matters

### Members' News

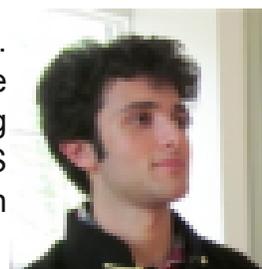
**Mazal Tov** to **Nancy Lynner** and **Joe Goldblatt** on the occasion of the wedding of their son Sam Goldblatt to Louise Knowles from Aberdeen.



**Mazal Tov** also to **Kat Angus** on her excellent performance in the show "Sweet Talking Guy" that received a four star review in the Edinburgh Fringe festival. That's Kat, in pink, playing the lead in the middle. Their rendering of sixties songs were terrific. As Rabbi Mark commented on our Facebook page "Move over Dionne Warwick, Kat has Burt Bacharach to a T, not to mention Dusty Springfield."

### New member

We are delighted to welcome Saul Aryeh-Kohn as a member of Sukkat Shalom. Most of you will recognize that Saul has been a very active member of the community during his time at Edinburgh University studying astrophysics, including leading Kabbalat Shabbat services. He has just returned from a summer in the US where he was working in an observatory in Arizona and taking part in an interfaith retreat. We are delighted that he has decided to formalise his role by joining up.



### Cheder

will be resuming this Saturday (1st September) 3.30pm to 5.30pm at Marchmont St Giles. At 5.30pm there will be a meeting of parents to include a discussion about arrangements for the Chanukah party. Parents of younger children will be very welcome to come along and join the meeting

## Events and Announcements

### 'Hello Deli' in Glasgow Re-Opens

200 Fenwick Road, Glasgow G46 6UE

0141 638 8267

hellodeli@hotmail.co.uk

Under strict Kosher Mehadrin Supervision of Rabbi Mendel & Tzirl Jacobs.

Home deliveries, including Kosher meat, can be arranged to anywhere in Scotland. Just call or email us to find out what we can offer.

### Hannah is running ...

5k in support of Neve Shalom - Wahat al Salam.

Please consider supporting my efforts on this modest distance by making a donation at <http://www.justgiving.com/Hannah-Holtschneider>



### Scotland Limmud Day 25th November



Where will your Jewish Journey take you this year? Let it take you the Scotland Day Limmud on Sunday November 25th 2012 at Holyrood Secondary School, Glasgow. As well as the Sunday event, events are being organised in Edinburgh. A bus will be going from here to take you to Glasgow for the Sunday event, and will bring you back safely in the evening.

Where else can you participate in Cooking for the Soul with Silvia Nacamulli, learn about Kabbalah and have a Klezmer music and dance session? Find out about Stalin's war on Yiddish, discuss attitudes to Israel or read between the lines of the Tanach with top educationalists such as Esther Lopian, Maureen Kendler and Clive Lawton. Our own Rabbi Mark Solomon will be running a session too. To book your place including bus travel from Edinburgh visit <http://www.limmud.org/day/scotland/> or pick up an application form at one of our services.

If you've not already liked us on Facebook, please do and tell all your friends. <http://www.facebook.com/ScotlandLimmud2012> .

### Batsheva Dance Troupe

Many of you will be aware that this Israeli dance troupe, who are currently performing as part of the Edinburgh Festival, have been the subject of protests outside the theatre. One protest group argues that their performance should be boycotted because of their support for *Brand Israel*, an Israeli government campaign "to show Israel's prettier face". Another group is protesting against the protestors. There are members of Sukkat Shalom who would support such a boycott and others who would oppose it. As most members know the issue of how we stand on current Israeli policy is one that made it impossible to achieve a consensus statement on the Middle East as part of our statement of Purpose and Values. But we state that we are committed to "building our community through mutual respect, regardless of our differences". Sadly this was not the case for members of the Zionist Federation (opposing the boycott) who were unable to enter a civilised discussion and who verbally abused Catherine Lyons, one of our members who was supporting the boycott, in the most disgusting terms. Catherine has submitted a piece to the newsletter, just as we went to press, describing what happened. If it were not so distressing it would be comic. Catherine's piece can be found on page 8.

One member commented today "I think it's just as important, or even more important, to present ourselves as inclusive and tolerant of all opinions than how we present ourselves about Israel". This echoes our Purpose and Values Statement on the Middle East that we would urge you all to consider. See [http://www.eljc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=22&Itemid=55](http://www.eljc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22&Itemid=55)

## Report from the opening night of the Batsheva Dance Troupe's appearance at the Edinburgh Festival

“You may be Jewish in your genes, but you're a Goy, you're a Nazi, you're treif!”:

Among the Palestinian flags outside the Playhouse were banners from Scottish Jews for a Just Peace and Jews for a Boycott of Israeli Goods. Near the demonstration were a few people, apparently from the Zionist Federation, giving out leaflets in support of Batsheva's appearance on the grounds of dialogue and cultural exchange. One of our members had come to watch the show because she likes dance, likes Batsheva, and supports Israel. I did my best to explain that Batsheva is funded under a program designed specifically to make us complacent about the Occupation: to “show Israel's prettier face” (Arye Mekel of the Israeli Foreign ministry) and “promote the policy interests of the State of Israel (as stated in the template contract for cultural ‘service providers’ to the Israeli Foreign Ministry). We had a heated debate but at least weren't reduced to personal insults (see below).

There were some comic moments, where Jews recognised each other as Jews, but misunderstood each other's reasons for being there!

I saw one woman handing out ‘pro-cultural exchange’ leaflets from the Zionist Federation and went over. I handed out Scottish Jews for a Just Peace leaflets with the words ‘two Jews, three opinions’. She read my leaflet and told me she supported Israel but didn't agree with what Israel is doing. What Israel is actually doing is investing heavily in a sophisticated marketing campaign to suppress criticism of its human rights abuses. Most Jews don't know about Brand Israel. It's not too difficult to assemble a coherent picture from HaAretz, the New York Times, and Israeli government websites.

I'd been especially concerned to know who the Zionist Federation really were, given extensive web coverage linking them to the Jewish section of the English Defence League (I kid you not!), Despite their proud history, the ZF seems to be changing. I went over again to speak to their group to see if they wanted to give their side of the story. By this time there seemed only to be three men. I asked who was Gary Sakol, given his FaceBook post to our congregation. Apparently he had brought leaflets and then left. So I ask two kippah-wearing Glaswegians if they could explain why there was so much on the web about the ZF and the EDL. I was more than surprised when one of them told me quite earnestly that the EDL was against Islam because Islamic law, ‘Shira’ [sic; but I corrected him] would mean tyranny in Britain; that's what Tommy Robinson says. (Who? Turns out he's one of the EDL leaders.) I asked him how he would feel if people said Halachah would mean tyranny in Britain? If they said that Beit Dins were so that Jews could control Britain? The two men looked at me in stunned confusion and asked which group I was with, so I gave them a leaflet from Scottish Jews for a Just Peace.

Then the big guy with the Israeli Flag around him showed up (he'd been in a prolonged argument with a passerby at the pedestrian crossing) and the first two deferred to him. I explained that I wanted to know why there was so much fuss about Jonathan Hoffman, vice-chair of the Zionist Federation, and was he really an ally of the neo-Nazis? Could he please explain the ZF's version of the story? When Big Flag Guy saw my leaflet, he yelled at me ‘You're not a Jew! You may be Jewish in your genes, but you're [wait for it! ... ] a Goy! I looked at him in amazement. ‘And I'm a Rabbi, he said.’

I went back to the SJJJ group and took my turn holding the banner. I was intrigued by the behaviour of the EDL aficionado and Big Flag Rav, so two of us went over again to try and have a proper conversation. Big Flag Rav saw us coming and shouted ‘I don't talk to Self-haters. You are a Nazi!’ ‘Really?’, I said. ‘Tell me about the English Defence League. Genuinely. I want to know what you think.’ ‘You're treif!’ He replied.

Remember: Big Flag Rav is handing out leaflets advocating Brand Israel on grounds of dialogue and cultural exchange. But he hadn't a civil word for one Jew from another. ‘And are you really a rabbi?’ I asked, in disbelief. Yes, he said; I'm a rabbi. The abuse was so crude that we could barely take it seriously, and walked away giggling. Oink, oink!

By this time some people were emerging from the Playhouse, and I thought the performance must be over (so immersed I was in our surprise street theatre from the Zionist Federation). But it turned out to be protestors ejected from inside. One of the made a statement, but the microphone was distorted and I couldn't make it out. The SJJJ group decided it was time to go home. As the edge of the demonstration, some young women were holding a banner about 10 m long; it was huge. It was densely printed with the names of all the Gazan children killed in the Cast Lead war crimes. I wondered if it would still be there when the audience drifted out, thinking about what a great night they'd had.

Catherine Lyons

*See also comment at bottom of page 7*