



Sukkat Shalom

Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

Scottish Charity SC035678

www.eljc.org

October 2013

Tishrei – Cheshvan 5774

issue 58

October

4	Kabbalat Shabbat MSG	6.15
5	Cheder MSG	3.30
11	Erev Shabbat CC	7.00
12	Cheder MSG	3.30
18	Kabbalat Shabbat MSG	6.15
25	Supper and Songs ... <i>bring a non-meat dish to share</i> and Human Rights Trip <i>presentation and discussion</i> CC	7.00
26	Shabbat Morning Service CC Tea and Talmud CC	11.00 3.00
27	Philosophy Reading Group CC	4.00

November

1	Kabbalat Shabbat MSG	6.15
2	Cheder MSG	3.30

Venues

CC Columcille Centre
2 Newbattle Terrace

MSG Marchmont St Giles
1a Kilgraston Road

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Community Phone

This phone number sends voicemail to members the Contact Team

0131 777 8024

Urgent Support

Only for use in emergency. This number alerts all members of the Welfare Team simultaneously

0131 208 1447

Email Contact

You can email the Contact Team and the Newsletter Team by using the web page at contact.eljc.org.

Chair Norman Crane

Administrator Catherine Lyons

Treasurer Gillian Raab

Equalities Rebekah Gronowski

Membership Eva Wiseman

Word from the Chair

Items in *The Times* and *The Jewish Chronicle* have raised my ire recently.

In a leading article in ***The Times*** of Monday 23 September, in which Libby Purves says that 'Legalistic, literal authoritarian fundamentalism has always been a ... drag on religion, drowning spirituality and turning loving kindness to spite and abusive power. The greatness of basic Gospel Christianity is that it has nothing to do with any of that.'

She refers to Francis Spufford's recent book *Unapologetic*, and derives from Spufford the view that the 'other' two great monotheistic religions — Judaism and Islam — developed a dependence on literal rules of daily behaviour: dietary laws, prescribed times of prayers, rules about clothes. But an accretion of literal rules means that fellow human beings can be dismissed as goyim/kuffar/infidels. Alone among the major monotheisms, Christianity has at its core no detailed rules. The Gospel merely proclaims universally available salvation and forgiveness, and demands enormous things: give all you have to the poor do not lay up treasure, turn the other cheek, love your neighbour as much as yourself (See Leviticus 19:18).

The book is a counter-blast to Richard Dawkins and the New Atheism, in support of a notion of religion that is synonymous with Christianity. The picture of Judaism given in *The Times* belongs in the nineteenth century, with its rank ordering of religions, and Judaism very much in second place. Spufford's, and Purves's, attitude is based on an ignorance and prejudice that ought to be confined to the pages of history. If only Libby Purves had attended my sessions on the Book of Ruth, which stressed the role of *hesed*, often translated as loving kindness, or benevolence beyond the call of duty!

My second target is the front page of ***The Jewish Chronicle*** of the 27 September. There is a picture of a young man sitting in a makeshift hut in Regent Street, London. The accompanying article is entitled 'Spending Succot in street means ex-JFS boy is first to new handset.' The 17-year-old spent four nights in his 'Succah' guarding his laptop from passing drunks, as he queued outside Apple's flagship store. He called the police to get rid of the drunks as he had a lot of expensive things on him. Greggs and Dominoes supplied free food, while Apple staff gave him coffee from Starbucks and umbrellas. He went to the local LA Fitness Gym for toilet and shower facilities. Noah said that living in a hut during Succot was purely

coincidental. He would have sold his place in the queue for £10,000 but had taken a sponsorship deal from an app company instead.

The picture and article made me feel deeply ashamed. Such crass materialism is simply the opposite of the spirit of Succot. There were no doubt homeless people not far away, being supported with food by church members, who would have made more worthy recipients of handouts than the tech fanatics in the queue. What I found disgusting was the tacit approval of this display by *The Jewish Chronicle*, which plastered it uncritically over the front page.

I have long thought a once excellent paper has been dumbed down, and this is the last straw. *The JC* has lost its moral compass, and I shall cancel my regular order from my newsagent. I only hope that critics of Jews and Judaism such as Libby Purves have not seen the article.

We are now entering the month of Cheshvan, sometimes labelled as MarChesvan, or empty or spoiled Cheshvan, because it is the only Hebrew month that does not have any special days. Some of us think that is a relief from the rich fare of the early Autumn festivals.

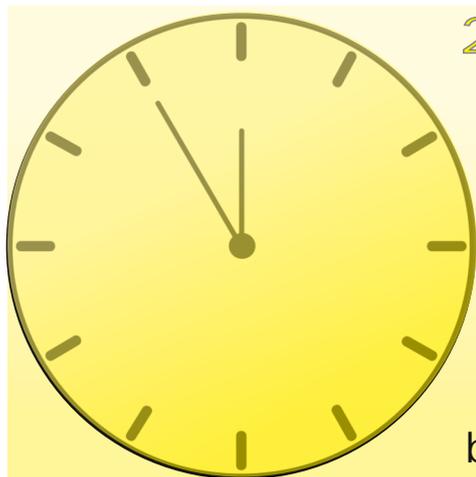
It is also traditionally the season for planting seed for next year. I must say members of the congregation have been taking this seriously, and we have had a number of births recently, which is tremendously encouraging. I hesitate to say how many children we have on roll in Cheder at the moment because at each session this term we have gained new students, a great feeling. Of course, we have lost one or two, in particular Benjamin Staal, who celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in such splendid fashion last Shabbat. I am reliably informed that the Community has had 10 B'nei Mitzvah over the last 9 years, and that we now have 94 members. When Wendy and I joined a bit over five years ago there were 63. We shall soon reach our century and then we shall have a celebration. Watch this space!

I would like to urge as many people as possible to come the **Human Rights Presentation and Supper** on Erev Shabbat 25 October, at which members of the Community's Human Rights trip to Israel/Palestine will be speaking about their experience. Members will have the opportunity to put questions, and of course bring and share food.

Norman Crane

A lavish and crowded sukkah

Our sukkah this year overflowed with children as vigorous as the luxuriant s'chach. Our thanks go to all those who brought s'chach and fruit and helped with set-up, and especially to Claudette and Robbert for designing and construction. [Your editor was honoured to celebrate a special birthday in the Sukkah this year.]



26 October: turn back the clocks!

For you – one hour ... For Maurice – 23 years!

Come to a Flat-Warming Party and see Maurice off on his journey through time

7:30pm, 2F1 18 Buccleuch Place

RSVP to clocksback@xemaps.com

by 18 October (but come anyway!)

BYOF (Bring your own furniture)

A new year, and we have much to celebrate



We are pleased to celebrate several new babies in our community. We congratulate Hannah and Andrew Brodie on the birth of **Lucas Joseph** (17 September), a brother for Blake and Zak. We also congratulate Anna and Tim Dover, and grandparents Gillian and Charlie Raab, on the birth of **Sadie Josephine** (24 September), a sister for



Lucas Joseph and Sadie Josephine

Connie. We congratulate Rebekah Gronowski on the birth of a new great-grandson, **Jax** (21 August). We are also very pleased indeed to report that **Ruzena Wood** will soon be out of hospital. We welcome new members **Mor** and **Yakir Kandlik Eltanani**, and their daughter **Tamara**, and **Leon Chernin** and **Margi Vilnay**, and their children **Jonathan** and **Michelle**.

It was a pleasure this year to have our rabbi, Mark Solomon, with us for Simchat Torah. We are accustomed to the gutsy singing of Nick Silk on these occasions, and we all make up in enthusiasm what we lack in vocal polish. This year we lacked for neither. And we performed in addition a Simchat Torah ritual that we might not dare undertake without expert help. After an accomplished Chatan Torah, **Sue Lieberman** (kol hakavod!), brought us to the end of Moses' life and that tantalising glimpse of what was to come, we unrolled the whole scroll. And Mark led the children in a

stroll round the room and back in time, from the death of Moses back to Sinai, and then to Egypt, and on through the patriarchs and matriarchs to the beginning of time. Then our Kallat Bereshit, **Nick Silk**, with faultless diction (kol hakavod!) brought into being a new cycle of the Reading of the Torah.

Where Nick left off (day four of creation), and with equal aplomb, **Benjamin Staal** took up the creation story, the following Shabbat, for his Bar Mitzvah. Benjamin read from the scroll with skillful ease, and his father, Jonathan, rose to the occasion in the manner our community has come to expect of its b'nei mitzvah parents. (Though Jonathan blamed it on hay fever!) Thanks to the Staal family for a lavish kiddush. [This editor has never seen five challot together before outside a bakery!]



Beaming with pride: (left to right) Norman Crane, Benjamin Staal, and Rabbi Mark Solomon

Tzedakah for Kol Nidrei

It is our minchag to donate money to a range of causes at this time of year: two local charities, one Jewish and one not; a non-profit organisation working for peace and justice in Israel and Palestine, and another one working for international development. We like to select projects that embody Jewish values of justice and dignity, projects that our community has some connection with, and small-scale grassroots projects where, as a small community ourselves, we know our donation will make a difference.

This year, the Council has selected Cosgrove Care, the Pastoral Foundation, Rabbis for Human Rights, and the Jabulani Project. In the *Newsletter*, here and in the next few months, we find out more about each one.

Cosgrove Care

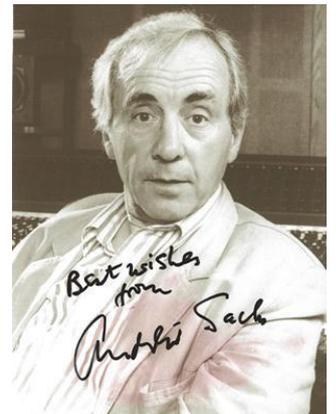
Cosgrove Care is a Jewish charity based in the south side of Glasgow which provides vital services for children and adults who have learning disabilities and mental health issues, though its services are not limited to the Jewish community. Cosgrove Care currently supports around 120 children and adults with an age range of 3 to 83 years. Although it is based in Glasgow, Cosgrove has in the past provided support to our community, and members can attest to their excellent work.

As a charity with a history of providing culturally sensitive services, Cosgrove Care encourages and provides a culturally diverse way of life for everyone who uses our services by honouring customs, practices and faiths particular to an individual's expressed religious/spiritual/cultural wishes. Cosgrove Care undertakes never turn anyone in need away, and will always ensure that it responds in some way to that call for help.

Jmind, a Jewish-based mental health service is offered by Cosgrove Care as an early intervention. It exemplifies the Cosgrove approach to culturally sensitive service provision. *Cosgrove Care writes:*

Although there were other mental health agencies within Glasgow and East Renfrewshire, Cosgrove Care had clearly demonstrated that where an ethnic specific service is offered, the community will access it in preference to or in conjunction with any others, and a specific professional service for people in the Jewish community with mental health issues was not otherwise available.

As Cosgrove Care had a track record of working with people with learning disabilities within the Scottish Jewish community, East Renfrewshire Council recognised the need for a culturally sensitive service across all client groups. Further to this, because of the strong family ethic of the Jewish faith, many non-Jewish families are now making Cosgrove Care their provider of choice. Jmind, as with all Cosgrove Care services, now welcomes individuals from all faiths and backgrounds.



Andrew Sachs, patron of Cosgrove's Jmind service



Cosgrove Care's charity shop not only raises funds, it provides a supportive environment for service users to experience employment

Yitzhak Frankenthal, founder of the Parents' Circle Families Forum, visits Edinburgh



'I gradually realised that the only hope for progress was to recognise the face of the conflict.'

Yitzhak Frankenthal, (as quoted by Barack Obama)

After his son, Arik, was killed by Hamas in 1994, Yitzhak Frankenthal founded The Parents' Circle, a joint Israeli-Palestinian NGO that works with hundreds of bereaved families on both sides of the conflict. He is Executive Director of the Fund for Reconciliation, Tolerance and Peace, supported by the singer Leonard Cohen.

Yitzhak has been invited to Edinburgh by the Take One Action Film Festival, and is participating in several meetings. While he is here he will be hosted for Shabbat dinner by some of our members.

By happy coincidence, Yitzhak's visit coincides with a visit from Hamed Qawasmeh, and Yitzhak and Hamed are leading discussion together. Hamed Qawasmeh is Director of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) in the south of the West Bank (Bethlehem and Hebron).

There will be a meeting with Yitzhak at **St John's, Lothian Rd, 5th October, 2.30pm**, sponsored by Scottish Jews for a Just Peace.

Joy takes to the catwalk

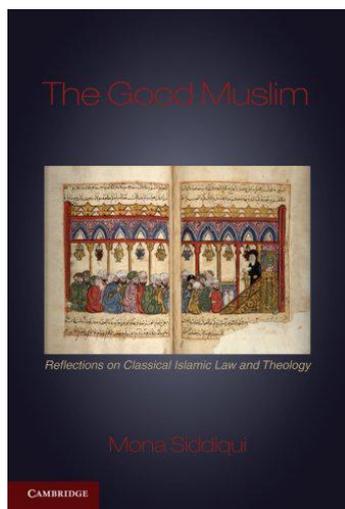
Readers many remember (from the [June issue](#)) that Joy Northcott was to take to the catwalk to raise money at the Breast Cancer Care Fashion Show.

It was a fabulous day. Two fashion shows, 900 guests, inspirational speeches, tears and laughter, press photos, fabulous outfits, glitz and glamour in abundance — the perfect antidote to the grimness of cancer treatment! A huge thank you to those who have sponsored me. I've raised over £2180 in sponsorship donations so far, with more still coming in, and this is all down to people's kindness and generosity. The www.justgiving.com/Joy-Northcott donation page will remain open until 26 Dec 2013.

Joy Northcott



Mona Siddiqui to present the inaugural lecture of the 2013–14 season of the 'Lit'



The Good Muslim: Reflections on Classical Islamic Law and Theology, Mona Siddiqui

The Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society is about to commence its 125th season. At the inaugural lecture of the season (20 October, 8pm, Salisbury Rd), Professor **Mona Siddiqui** will ask, *is Islamic law sacred law or juristic game?* Professor Siddiqui's primary area of research is classical Islamic law (fiqh) and its interface with contemporary ethical issues.

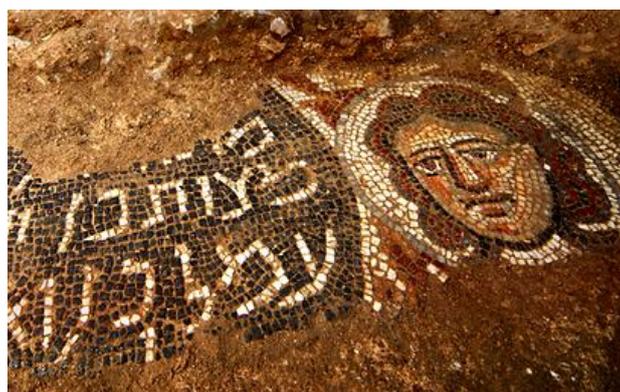
Timing for some events in the remainder of the season is still to be confirmed. Full details will be available in due course (try ejls.org).

Forthcoming Lit events are **David Bleiman** on Jewish Music (10 November, includes vintage vinyl) and **Shua Kisilevitz** (8 December), an archeologist from the Israel Antiquities Authority, on recent finds in Israel.

The first Lit event of 2014 (12 January) sees our own **Sue Lieberman** present her work on 'Ordinary Jews' and the Holocaust, exploring the complex feelings about the Holocaust of Jews without any immediate family connection to it.

Next up will be a screening of ***The Gatekeepers*** (2 February), in which six former heads of the Shin Bet reflect publicly on their actions and decisions regarding the Occupation in the aftermath of the Six Day War. Gillian Raab reviewed *The Gatekeepers* in [the May edition of the Newsletter](#), describing it as 'a visually disturbing film, one that raises many difficult moral and political questions'.

The following week (9 February) the Lit will host a presentation from participants in the Human Rights Trip. Presenters at the Lit will be **Gillian Raab, Judy Sischy, and Maurice Naftalin**. Members of our own

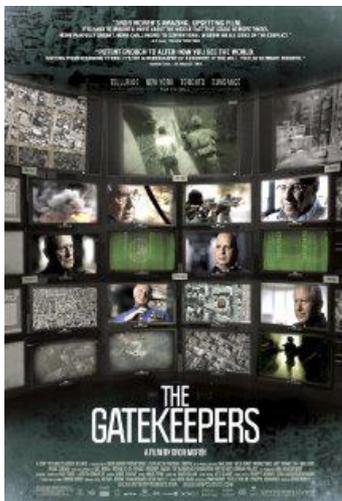


Mosaic from a recently excavated Galilee synagogue, from the late-Roman period, in work carried out by the Israel Antiquities Authority (Source: YNetNews)

community will have had a chance this month to hear from ELJC participants (a different configuration of presenters, [see p. 2](#)).

Arab Perspectives on Israel will be the subject of **Ewan Stein's** lecture (2 March). A political scientist at the University of Edinburgh, he specialises in political Islam and Middle East politics.

In late March, the Lit expects to host an event with the *Guardian* and *JC* journalist **Jonathan Freedland**. This event will precede the day symposium in celebration of the 125th year of the Lit, which will take place at Boroughmuir High School (30 March).



Thanks to Micheline Brannan of the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society for advance information.



Taking tea at Melrose

The trip to Abbotsford last month proved so popular that a people carrier was hired for the day.

After the fascination of Walter Scott's house, library, and gardens, the group spent a gloriously sunny afternoon in the garden of Isobel King's cottage in Melrose.

Edinburgh in search of happiness

Our former member [and founding newsletter editor], Hannah Kenner will be back in Edinburgh for a conference on Happiness, Wellbeing and Health. Hannah encourages us to attend as well.

On 11 – 12 October the Beshara Trust together with the Edinburgh International Centre for Spirituality and Peace will be organising a conference at The Sanctuary, George IV Bridge, entitled 'Happiness, health and wellbeing'. The subject matter takes up the theme of the first ever *World Happiness Report* published last year by the Earth Institute. This follows the UN General Assembly's suggestion to its member states that they should give more attention to the subject of happiness in their policy-making. The Report and the Scottish Happiness Index will provide the context for the event.

The conference will start on Friday evening with a keynote speaker and panellists. The Saturday will look at happiness, health and wellbeing from the perspectives of spirituality, psychotherapy and education. The event will also include cultural and artistic expressions of the same. More information can be found at www.beshara.org.

Hannah Kenner

Upcoming social events

We are arranging a Shabbat brunch: 9 or 16 November is most likely. Two ideas so far for location are Earthy in Canonmills (which does delicious organic and veggie options) or Loopy Lorna's in Churchill (where the cakes are out of this world!)

If anyone fancies coming along, please get in touch via contact.eljc.org with a preference of date. Everyone is welcome — just let us know so that Jennifer can book a table.

A ceilidh is being considered for January; get in touch if you'd like to get involved.

*Jen Underwood,
Anna Duncan,
and Helen Sherbourne*

Community Quiz at the Salisbury Rd JCC

Sunday 27th October 2013 at 7 p.m.
Minimum donation £12; Students/children £6
You can enter as a team, or, individually, be assigned to a team. A light supper will be served

For more information, email jcc@ehcong.com.