



Cheshvan — Tevet 5783  
November — December 2022



## Etrog

The Newsletter of Sukkat  
Shalom Edinburgh

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## Word From the Sofa

Maurice Naftalin

A few times in my life I've felt such sympathy for a book that reading the very first page could convince me that it was addressed specifically to me, if only the author knew anything about me personally. That was how I felt about *Four Thousand Weeks*, a book by Oliver Burkeman. It recently reached the *Sunday Times* bestseller list, so clearly I'm not the only person to feel that way. But if you aren't, in the words of the cover blurb, afflicted with "lengthening to-do lists, overfilled inboxes, the struggle against distraction, and the sense of a shrivelling attention span", and if you aren't spending too much time on social media, then this WFTS isn't for you.



Four thousand weeks is around eighty years—a realistic estimate of the modern lifespan—and the book's subtitle is "Time and How to Use it". One question that Burkeman addresses is how it can be that with all the productivity and timesaving aids that modern life provides, our overwhelming sense is still that we don't have enough time. In 1930 the economist John Maynard Keynes famously predicted that within a century, humanity's crucial problem would be how to use all the leisure time given us by timesaving domestic appliances, and—though he didn't foresee this—the immense timesaving potential of digital technology. The obvious explanation for why Keynes was so dramatically wrong is Parkinson's Law, that work expands to fill the time available. Or rather, what expands is the definition of "what needs doing". Email is a good example: speaking for myself, when I first encountered it I was delighted at the time-saving prospect of being able to communicate without either envelope and stamp, or repeated telephone calls to catch someone at home. I had absolutely no sense then of the torment that email would become, when anyone in the world can send you a message, and the more efficiently you answer this myriad of messages, the more of them you'll get, until entire days go by on the treadmill of answering them.

The worst aspect of this "efficiency trap" is that the longer you retain the illusion that it's possible to get through everything that "needs to be done", the more time you'll spend on unimportant things. And the sense that we're prepared to accept an unlimited number of unimportant things into "what needs to be done" brings Burkeman to his central theme: that sense is one consequence of our inability to accept that our time is limited—not just in every hour or day, but in our entire lives. Obviously, at one level we know that we won't live for ever. But in practice we behave, almost all the time, as though we're in control of a reserve of infinite time. He traces many of our problems to this same cause: how much we hate boredom, for example, and how easily distracted we have become, are both consequences of our unwillingness to live in the present moment, acknowledging that the experience of each instant is forever; it can't be replaced or repeated. There is nothing more to our lives than a very limited number of these moments. That is a hard truth to face, and it's no wonder that we shy away from it.

Although this isn't a book about religion, its arguments often intersect with religious thought—sometimes negatively, for example the criticism levelled at

the Protestant work ethic for its intolerance of relaxation, or the argument that belief in an eternal afterlife undermines our ability to appreciate the finite nature of our time on Earth. But the section on Shabbat is not negative. Burkeman interprets the absurdity of the Orthodox rules prohibiting operating a light switch or tearing toilet paper as being tailored to an equally absurd human reality: that we need this kind of pressure in order to get ourselves to rest. He quotes Judith Shulevitz: "Most people mistakenly believe that all you have to do to stop working is not work... [the rules] were meant to communicate... that interrupting the ceaseless round of striving requires a surprisingly strenuous act of will... bolstered by habit as well as social sanction". Of course, I'm not suggesting that we adopt Orthodox rules for observing Shabbat! But there is useful advice in the book about how to genuinely rest, including one piece that surprised and challenged me: don't expect it to feel good, at least at first.

I've left many of the book's ideas out of this piece, but I hope I've encouraged you to read it in the original. It's a very easy read, because Burkeman's style is entirely conversational; you never feel you're being preached at. And, although not explicit, there's a refreshingly subversive theme running through it: a sense of rebellion against the way in which we have allowed ourselves to become part of a giant machine that runs the world for quite other purposes than our well-being. An explicit subtext of the current political turmoil is the deification of "The Economy". One of Burkeman's best quotes is from an organisation called Take Back Your Time: "Why should we have to justify *life* in terms of the *economy*?"

## Rabbi Mark Solomon's Rosh Hashanah Message 5783

Dear friends,

. As we approach Rosh Hashanah, having just bid farewell to Queen Elizabeth, I have in mind the words of the poem by Minnie Louise Haskins, written in 1908 but memorably used by King George VI in his Christmas broadcast in 1939:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

*"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."*

And he replied:

*"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.  
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."*

This is inscribed on the gates of the chapel in Windsor where the Queen was laid to rest last Monday, and it seems apt as we stand at the gate of our New Year. Facing an autumn of rising inflation, soaring fuel bills, and a reckless tyrant threatening further destruction, we may feel at times as though we are going out into the darkness. The Days of Awe bring us the message that we can reach out and find the Hand of God reaching out towards us: "Return to Me and I will return to you, say the Eternal One" (Malachi 3:7). We reach out to God not just in prayer and repentance but above all by reaching out to our fellow humans in acts of kindness and generosity. We find the Hand of God in community.

Two years ago we couldn't gather physically for the High Holy Days, and learnt to reach out through Zoom to sustain a sense of community. Last year we could gather, but in limited numbers. This year we can, and should, gather again in strength, and rediscover the joy and excitement of a whole community coming together to usher in the year with song and shofar blast. Covid-19 is still with us, and Zoom will still be there for those who cannot reach the synagogue through distance, disability or illness, but we can take hope from the return to normality.

On a personal note, it's a great relief that I can be with you for these Days of Awe. My heart bypass surgery was originally scheduled for August, so I would still have been convalescing at home. Fortunately, the operation was brought forward to May, so I'm now well enough (please God!) to officiate. It might not be literally "a new heart and a new spirit," but certainly a rejuvenated heart and a re-energised spirit that I hope to bring to this year's services. I'm delighted that Rabbi Daniel Smith, who brings a wealth of experience and a very special sense of spirituality, will be in Edinburgh for Rosh Hashanah and Leicester for Yom Kippur.

As we continue to recover from the pandemic, may 5783 be a year of rebuilding the strength and cohesion of our communities, so that we feel held in the Hand of God and supported by one another's friendly hands.

I wish you and your dear ones a sweet and healthy New Year

*Shanah tovah um'tukah*

We celebrated Rabbi Mark's return to us after his surgery and obeyed his request — as we always do — to 'gather again in strength and rediscover the joy and excitement of a whole community coming together to usher in the year with song and shofar blasts'. A big thank you to Rabbi Danny Smith, now retired from his post as Senior Rabbi at Hendon and Edgware Reform Synagogue, who joined us for the first time to lead our Rosh Hashanah services. We enjoyed his warm and thoughtful style and hope to see him again at next year's High Holy Days.



Rabbi Danny Smith

Thanks also to our four lead singers — Maurice, Marlo es, Sue Lieberman and Rebecca Wober — and to Gillian and Charlie for sponsoring our wonderful lunch. Tashlich resumed in its full non-socially-distanced glory at St Bernard's Well on the Water of Leith.



Rosh Hashanah Lunch



Three of our singers at Tashlich



The rain stopped and the sun came out so we could cast our sins into the river

## Welcome to Ruth Friedman

### Sue Bard

Ruth Friedman has recently joined Sukkat Shalom, following her move to Edinburgh in June this year. Many of you will already have seen and heard her blowing the shofar at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Her arrival was timely, as our usual shofar-blower was not available. Not only that, she's a veteran with her own shofar that originally belonged to another Sukkat Shalom member Stephanie Mitchell. Stephanie couldn't blow it so gave it to Ruth, who as an ex-saxophonist could, and has been doing so for the last 10 years.

Ruth and Stephanie (who moved to Edinburgh in 2019) met when they both lived and worked in Brussels, where they were members of the International Jewish Centre, the English-speaking Liberal Jewish community in Belgium. After some years in Brussels Ruth wanted to return to an English-speaking environment but with Brexit, decided to become Belgian first. Initially unsure of where to move to, she's very happy with her choice of Edinburgh. Originally from London, she's lived in Scotland before, when she did a Master's in Environmental Planning at Aberdeen University and then later living briefly in Edinburgh in the 90s. Childhood family holidays in Scotland gave her an enduring love of walking and cycling, which she can indulge here to the full.



Ruth says 'it's important for me to be a part of a community and connected with my heritage.' Her mother was a child refugee, sent by her parents to the UK from Vienna in 1938. Ruth's father was also originally from Vienna.

Ruth has done many things in her professional life which have included corporate IT, Recycling Officer for a District Council in Norfolk, running a European level religious diversity training program. She currently works (mostly online) as an Executive Coach supporting leaders to get better at managing their time and to be more impactful in what they do. She is hoping to build an in-person practice as well now that she is back in the UK.

Ruth was brought up in progressive Judaism; as an adult she has also been involved in Jewish Renewal. She was an active member of the Norwich Liberal Jewish Community when she lived in Norwich some years ago. In Sukkat Shalom, she enjoys the amount of Hebrew in our services and appreciated Rabbi Danny Smith's Rosh Hashanah sermons, which 'nourished something in me'.

Thank you, Ruth for what you've already contributed to our community — we hope you'll be very happy here.

## Our Visitor: Dan Biber

Sue Bard

Dan arrived in Edinburgh from Charlotte, North Carolina in April this year. We've had the great pleasure of his exuberant presence in our community and are missing him since his departure in October. For Dan, this was a significant journey — a return to the birthplace he'd left in 1948, aged two.



*Dan with Miriam and Gillian taking part in Taschlich*

Dan visited Scotland for the first time in 2015 and again in 2017 with his wife Judy.

While these visits were interesting and enjoyable holidays, the hiatus in Dan's life after Judy's death in 2020 offered him the opportunity to find out what it would be like to live here and to connect to his own past. With what he describes as his 'double — Scottish and Jewish — diasporas' he says, 'I wanted to know if I had any roots still available to grow.'

There's been a lot to find out about. Dan's mother, Minnie was born and brought up in Edinburgh, the daughter of immigrants from Lithuania. Dan visited the Jewish burial site in Piershill Cemetery where his maternal grandparents are buried, and where his older sister, who died in babyhood the year before he was born, lies in an unmarked grave. He visited as well the neglected Echo Bank (Newington) Cemetery on Dalkeith Road where his aunt Sarah Goldstone is buried also in an unmarked grave after her death at two weeks of age in 1905. He's consulted archives at New Register House and the Central Library in Edinburgh and at The Scottish Jewish Archives Centre in Glasgow and he's embarked on finding out more about his father Lajb (anglicized as Leon), a Polish

Jew who came to Scotland as a private in the Polish Army. In 1943 he married Minnie at the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation's synagogue in Salisbury Road. Minnie grew up in this synagogue and was age-mate to the Rabbi's (Salis Daiches) three children.

Living in Scotland, in a place where his roots go back two generations, gave Dan a personal and emotional sense of being Scottish that he hadn't felt before. Being here has also confirmed for him what kind of a Jew he is — 'the Orthodox synagogue of my childhood is not where I belong'. Dan describes his marriage to Judy, who was not Jewish, as 'a dual-faith, not a mixed marriage'. Dan and Judy married at the Ethical Culture Society in New York City. After a long spell in the Unitarian Church first in Atlanta, Georgia, and then in Charlotte, North Carolina, which was the only place that would 'have' them, but 'where neither of us felt at home,' Dan and Judy found a way to give expression to their individual religious identities. Judy joined a progressive Baptist Church and Dan became a member of Temple Israel, a Conservative Masorti synagogue.

Dan appreciates the warm welcome he's found at Sukkat Shalom, which he describes as 'comfortable and user-friendly' and knows that 'the non-Jewish members of my family could come in and feel part of it'. He has found the services meaningful, and the amount of Hebrew and congregational singing (similar to his home synagogue) has been important to him; like many of us, he finds spiritual connection there, particularly in the chanting of the Torah.

Dan's family (he has 4 children ranging in age from 53 to 42 and 7 grandchildren ranging in age from 20 to 4) were supportive about him coming to Scotland and have visited him here; he's enjoyed their different responses to Edinburgh's beauty and the different perspectives they've opened up for him — 'each one of them sees different things and sees the same things differently'. Also, they have shared his own sense of finding roots, a feeling enhanced by their entitlement to UK citizenship by virtue of their father's and grandmother's birth here. These days — or maybe all days — it's good to have a Plan B.

Coming alone to live in Edinburgh at this time of his life was brave and must have felt risky. But Dan says he feels fortunate to have been able to do it and describes it as an 'unfailingly positive experience and a good expenditure of time and money.' Dan became a full member of Sukkat Shalom while he was here and anticipates staying in touch — so easy to do now via Zoom. We look forward to

meeting again on screen, and even in-person on possible future visits. He and his family will always be welcome.

## **Gabriel Potts' Bar Mitzvah**

Mazel tov to Gail, Stephen, Emily and most importantly of course Gabriel, on the occasion of his bar mitzvah. His sister Emily's bat-mitzvah — our first such in-person occasion for nearly two years — took place almost exactly a year ago. Both have been joyful occasions, with our hybrid in-person and Zoom services allowing far-flung friends and family to be present. Gabriel's tuneful voice was a pleasure to listen to as was his d'var tora, which you can read here. His unique contribution to the service was to accompany Adon Olam on his pipes.

### **Gabriel's D'var Torah**

Shabbat Shalom everybody and welcome to my bar mitzvah! Today's portion is Parashat Ki Tetze from the book of Deuteronomy. The portion that I will be chanting for you today is actually quite unusual in the fact that it is split between 2 chapters with the first aliya being from chapter 22 and the second and third from chapter 24. This is because some of the bits in between were not quite fitting with modern times.

The parasha today is about some rules and laws from Moses' farewell speech to the Israelites, with themes around kindness and respect to all living beings. This includes a law about shooing the mother bird off of the nest before taking the chicks or eggs. Some Rabbis explain that the Torah is concerned about the feelings of animals, and the mother bird shouldn't feel too much distress. Another explanation is to remind us that we should never eliminate a whole family, or a whole living species, but make sure there are enough to continue the family.

When it comes to human beings, the Torah says that if you take a poor person's cloak as a pledge for a loan you must take it back to them every evening, so they have something to sleep in.



Another verse on the theme of protecting life states that when building a new house, you should put up a sort of fence around the roof to prevent anyone from falling off the edge. Even in the Bible people had to comply with health and safety regulations! It also helps if a piper is marching back and forth on your roof.

My parasha also states that parents should not be put to death for their children's crimes, which I quite agree with, because the only person that should be convicted is the person that committed the crime and they should be held responsible – so Mum and Dad, you're safe! One of the most ancient bar-mitzvah customs we read about is that parents would say a blessing when their child reached the age of legal responsibility: *Baruch she-p'tarani me-onsho shel zeh* — which basically means: Thank God I'm no longer responsible for your bad behaviour.

In the third Aliya it talks a lot about the stranger ((גר), the orphan (יתום) and the widow (אלמנה) mostly saying that when you harvest your crops you should leave some for them. Personally, I think the reason it says you should leave the forgotten crops out in the field for them to collect themselves, rather than just giving it to them, is to let them feel more like they have earned it. For me, this links back to the overall theme of my portion, because I think that if you put kindness into the world you will get kindness back and if you respect others they will respect you back. These are principles that I would like to live by as I come of age today.

## Sukkah Building 5783



This year's sukkah-building in Christ Church Morningside's secluded garden was the best-attended ever. As well as our community friends and members, we were joined by one of the households from

Tiphereth Camphill Community in Colinton, who every year contribute evergreens for our succah roof.



## News From Edinburgh Interfaith Association

Professor Joe Goldblatt, EIFA Chair

The Edinburgh Interfaith Association (EIFA) conducted its 32nd Annual General Meeting at Edinburgh City Chambers with a record attendance of over 80 persons. The keynote speaker was Reverend Bonnie Evans-Hills, who explored freedom of religion. The Lord Provost welcomed EIFA and said he was happy to serve on the board and committed to helping EIFA find permanent premises in the city.

EIFA has been invited into five local primary schools to bring our Faith Road to share different beliefs with pupils. I shall be visiting six schools in Orkney in November to educate pupils about Jewish beliefs and customs.

On 14 November 25 local religious leaders will convene at the City Chambers to promote collaboration to more effectively serve the residents of our city.

EIFA is sponsoring a new listening service and volunteers (including yours truly) are being trained to provide a telephone service to help others.

*(Look out for Joe's report on his visit to Orkney in the next Etrog)*

## Reflections on *Being Jewish in Scotland: the Documentary*

Sue Bard

Getting involved in the making of a documentary about Jews in Scotland raised some trepidation in our community. We worried about stereotyping, about whether justice would be done to the diversity of Jewish life in Scotland and about whether we could or should allow one of our own Shabbat services to be filmed. Some other examples of the filming of Jewish life, many of them crude, sensationalist or just plain embarrassing, didn't inspire confidence.

In this case, BBC Scotland had commissioned Red Sky, a small independent TV production company, to make a one-hour documentary about being Jewish in Scotland. Sarah Howitt, the Director of Red Sky won our trust working with us at the research and information-gathering stage and this trust was borne out when it came to filming. Even so, the prospect of seeing your own people and your own community being broadcast on prime-time television, with continued access for a further year, is somewhat nerve-wracking. So it was with growing relief as well as with great interest and enjoyment that I watched *Being Jewish in Scotland*.

Although a theme of the documentary was inevitably decline — numbers down from around 20,000 in the 1930s and 40s to around 6,000 now; synagogues down from 20 to 6 — this was not a portrayal of terminal, ageing communities, their members mired in loss and nostalgia. Nor was it a story of anti-semitism and conflict. More than anything, it was a story — much of it new to me — of diversity, vigour and creativity, with people being and feeling Jewish in many different ways.

Individuals told their stories, the unobtrusive interviewing and filming allowing vivid and contrasting personalities to emerge and the structure of the documentary contextualising and connecting their accounts to create a fast-paced, intricate and moving picture of Jewish life in Scotland, past and present.



*Doreen and Mark Cohen*

In Glasgow, turbo-charged mother-and-son team Doreen and Mark Cohen run Mark's Deli, the last kosher food shop in Scotland, where they're on the front-line producing latkes, gefilte fish, kneidlach and such like, plus the ultimate fusion food — kosher haggis.

In the same city, we meet Rabbi Moshe Rubin, Senior Rabbi of Giffnock Newton Mearns Synagogue, his wife Hadassah and their children at shul, at home and in the community — a vibrant, committed and outward-looking Chasidic family. I was intrigued and surprised (from my own outdated and out-of-touch experience of United Synagogues/Hebrew Congregations) that a Chasidic rabbi was leading this congregation. However, Rabbi Rubin explained to me that while



it was common for Lubavitch rabbis to take up such positions, it was very unusual for members of his own Jerusalem-based Gur Chasidic sect to do so. Leaving me with more questions for another time.

*Rabbi Moshe and Hadassah Rubin*

Over at St Andrews, Emily Michaelson offered an alternative and heart-felt feminist perspective on Orthodox Judaism, and also talked about the challenges and anxieties of being an observant Orthodox Jewish family without a Jewish community.

In Inverness, where Kathy Hagler, who'd — improbably — not only landed, but also taken root, talked about her extraordinary life. At 18 months, Kathy was smuggled out of the Munkács Ghetto in Hungary and taken to live with her aunt and grandmother in Budapest. Not long afterwards the entire population of the ghetto, which included her own immediate family, was deported to Auschwitz. None of her family survived. At 16, Kathy moved to Israel before coming to Scotland in her 30s.



*Kathy Hagler*

She says 'I fell in love with Scotland. I felt I may just fit in .....and then I grew old here. I got used to Inverness and I suppose Inverness got used to me.'

Back in Glasgow, another unconventional and energetic rabbi, Pete Tobias, has quite recently returned from the US to Glasgow Reform Synagogue to 'help them find their way into the future'. Explaining the difference in approach to conversion between Orthodox and Progressive Judaism, he says (for Progressive Judaism) 'if you're daft enough to want to become Jewish, we'll have you.'



*Deborah Haase*

Key narrators, Ephraim Borowski, Director of The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities and Deborah Haase, Honorary Curator of the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre — both born and bred in Glasgow provided the warp around which other stories are woven, combining their broad and professional knowledge of Jewish life in Scotland with their own personal and family histories.

In Edinburgh, there are more stories to tell. It's a pity that the documentary makes little mention of the long-standing Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, where pioneering Rabbi Dr Salis Daiches arrived in 1919 and brought Modern Orthodoxy to Edinburgh. At its core was a belief in the compatibility of Orthodox practice and values and participation in the secular life of one's country: in this case, Scotland. Salis Daiches, the informal 'Chief Rabbi' of Scotland at the time, practised such participation, undoubtedly influencing the quality of Jewish/Scottish relationships. He also managed to unite the then

disparate Edinburgh communities under one roof, that of the continuing and listed-building synagogue in Salisbury Road.

Today in Edinburgh, there are more religious communities, if not more synagogues than there were, with the founding in 2003 of Sukkat Shalom, the only Liberal Jewish community in Scotland, and the arrival of Chabad, the Chasidic Lubavitch organization that in Edinburgh works largely with students. Sukkat Shalom's congregation is unusual in that its numbers are increasing, including many young people and young families. On Radio Scotland's *Sunday Morning* pre-broadcast discussion of *Being Jewish in Scotland*, Rabbi Mark Solomon commented on the number of people interested in converting, saying 'Liberal Judaism is very open to and embraces those who sincerely wish to be Jewish. In most cases now this is because of something in Judaism that attracts them – maybe its openness to questioning and debate. Many are LGBTQ people not just here in Edinburgh but in many Liberal Jewish communities .... perhaps it's the intersection of identities that are not mainstream.'



Ash Alexander, a member of Sukkat Shalom who has recently been admitted to Judaism, spoke movingly and with insight of his experience as a trans person looking for a Jewish community where he would feel safe: 'I feel very at peace when I'm with these people. I felt I was part of it the first day I went.'

*Ash Alexander*

Talking about the decline of the Jewish population in Scotland, Ephraim Borowski commented sadly that 'as people move, the synagogue that's no longer in walking distance gets left behind.' Ash Alexander lives in Dundee and has joined our growing Jewish community in Edinburgh that has no synagogue of its own but, post-pandemic, meets both online and in shared rented physical space. Ash is one of many such members living all over Scotland and beyond. And in communities that are able and are allowed to operate at least partly online, moving away need no longer mean leaving their Jewish community.

To watch it again, or for the first time, you can do so [here](#). And listen out for Rabbi Mark singing Adon Olam to the tune of Robert Burns' 'My Love is like a red red rose'.

## The Only Jewish Grave in Tiree

Joanne Soroka

I love doing family history, and I am in possession of a database my niece calls the family forest. Among the people I recently wanted to research further was Mortimer (Morty) Regenstrief, a distant relative. My father's first cousin, Miriam Issenman (pronounced eye-zen-man), married Albert Regensteif. Morty was their nephew. All I knew about him was that he had been in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) during World War II and had died and been buried on the island of Tiree.

Tiree is a beautiful island with long, white-sand beaches. Before the war, it had a population of about 4500. Today the population is only about 700, and it is known as a site for wind surfing because of its sunny weather and high winds. Since it is a four-hour ferry trip from Oban, this low-lying island is remote and not much visited.

During World War II, 2000 military personnel were posted to Tiree. Because it is so far west of mainland Great Britain, it was a suitable place to send out missions to collect information about the weather. From the tiny airstrip, specially adapted Halifax aircraft flew 9- to 11-hour sorties in all weathers, each with an eight-man crew. It was they who sent information to the generals in London for the planning of troop movements and battles, including when D-Day should be scheduled. As *Tiree, War Among the Barley and Brine* states, 'These crews had to make arduous flights at specific heights, keeping to pre-arranged routes. They ensured that the constantly varying weather patterns were recorded and notified by code at set half-hourly intervals...'

Morty Regenstreif was a wireless operator/air gunner from Montreal, originally with the RCAF, and now with 518 Squadron of the RAF. They all began their tours of duty with two months in Stornoway, on the Isle of Lewis; then in September 1943, they were moved to Tiree for the duration of the war. Many young men from Commonwealth countries were included in that posting.

A tragedy occurred on 16 August 1944 when two planes collided in cloud over the airstrip. All sixteen members of the two crews were killed. Among them was Morty Regenstreif, aged 22. The accident report found that no one was to blame,

but suggested that in cloudy weather, only one plane at a time should be airborne.

Morty and his comrades were buried at Soroby Burial Ground, a Commonwealth War Graves Commission site not far from the airport. The cemetery, and in particular the war graves, are well-tended and have shrubs and other plants surrounding them. Morty Regenstreif was



a wireless operator/air gunner from Montreal, originally with the RCAF, and now with 518 Squadron of the RAF. The Star of David is prominent on his gravestone, along with the inscription, 'In memory of our dear son and brother'. There is also a memorial at the airport with the names of all the deceased.

Morty was the son of Samuel Benny Regenstreif and his wife, the former Lottie



Rabbi Mark — which ensured singing, Gropper. It is sad to think that his parents must have considered that he was relatively safe, not flying sorties over France and Germany. However, Morty and his comrades helped to save perhaps thousands of

lives on D-Day. On 5 June 1944, the weather at the coast of France was so bad that many of the German generals, including Field Marshall Rommell, went home on leave, thinking an invasion was impossible. But the Allies knew from the reports from Tiree and elsewhere that 6 June would be the right day to strike.

Morty was posthumously promoted to Pilot Officer, a commissioned rank, and this appears on his headstone at the cemetery, near one of Tiree's beautiful beaches.

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## Sign Up For Mitzvah Day

### **Sunday 20 November at the Water of Leith**

A mitzvah, literally, is a commandment in Jewish law. However, it's often used to mean a good deed or an act of kindness, which is the basis for our international Jewish Mitzvah Day when Jewish communities all over the world take part in a huge range of social action projects.

Sukkat Shalom hasn't participated in Mitzvah Day since before the pandemic, but we're very happy to be doing so this year, thanks to our friends at EHC (Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation) who've invited us to join their Green Team at the beautiful Water of Leith, Edinburgh's original industrial heart, to do some litter picking and clearing up along the banks.

We'll all meet at the Water of Leith Visitor Centre at Slateford at 10.30 am where we'll get guidance and equipment from the Water of Leith Conservation Trust staff, returning to the café at the Visitor Centre by 12.45 for lunch. You can bring your own lunch or buy something at the café. Or a bit of both! This is a suitable activity for older children (just use your discretion) and teenagers — if it appeals to them.

### **Water of Leith Visitor Centre**

24 Lanark Road

Edinburgh

EH14 1TQ

[The Water of Leith Visitor Centre](#) is easily accessible 4 miles west of Edinburgh City Centre on the A70. Bus numbers 34 and 44 stop outside the Centre.

**Please let us know if you're coming, as the Water of Leith Conservation Trust needs to know approximate numbers email [suebard@eljc.com](mailto:suebard@eljc.com).**

## Simchat Torah

And now we come to the end of our autumnal festivals, with Simchat Torah, another wonderful celebration. We celebrated Simchat Torah joyfully with dancing and processing with our scroll. Thank you to our Chatan Torah, Rebecca Wober and B'reishit Torah, Charlie Raab. Contemporary festive food included edible pastry and sausage scrolls.



## Community Care and Support

In these difficult times, we are here for each other, so don't hesitate to ask for any help and support you may need, including simply the need to talk.

**OUR EXISTING CONFIDENTIAL CONTACT SYSTEM:** Phone [0131 777 8024](tel:01317778024) or email [contact@eljc.org](mailto:contact@eljc.org) and one of the small group of people who respond to calls and emails will get back to you quickly.

**RABBI MARK SOLOMON** would like you to know that he's available on [07766 141315](tel:07766141315) and by e-mail at [marksolomon@btinternet.com](mailto:marksolomon@btinternet.com) if you'd like to talk to him.

**OUR WHATSAPP GROUP** allows people to be in direct contact with each other very quickly where help is needed. If you're not already on it and would like to be, email your mobile number to [waadmins@eljc.org](mailto:waadmins@eljc.org) and ask to be part of the group.

In these difficult times, we are here for each other, so don't hesitate to ask for any help and support you may need, including simply the need to talk.

**Sukkat Shalom Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community (SCIO)**

**Scottish Charity Number SC035678**

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