



March – April 2020

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Shalom**

Edinburgh Liberal  
Jewish Community

**Scottish Charity  
Number  
SC 035678**

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# Diary

On your mobile: check the diary on our [web page](#) rather than here.

<b>March 2020</b>			
Fri 6	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St. Giles</a>
Mon 9	6:00 pm	Purim service mmegillah reading and Purimspiel	<a href="#">Christ Church Morningside</a>
Fri 13	7:00 pm	Erev Shabbat service, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Marchmont St. Giles</a>
Sat 14	3:00 pm	Tea and Talmud	<a href="#">Marchmont St. Giles</a>
Sun 15	4:00 pm	Discussion Group	<a href="#">St Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Fri 20	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St. Giles</a>
Sat 28	11:00 am	Shabbat service	<a href="#">St Marks Unitarian Church</a>
<b>April 2020</b>			
Fri 3	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St. Giles</a>
Wed 8	6:30 pm	Passover seder, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Marchmont St. Giles</a>
Fri 10	7:00 pm	Erev Shabbat service	<a href="#">St Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Fri 17	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St. Giles</a>
Sat 25	11:00 am	Shabbat service, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">St Marks Unitarian Church</a>
Sun 26	4:00 pm	Discussion Group	<a href="#">St Marks Unitarian Church</a>

## Word from the Sofa

Wait, what, 'The Sofa'? What on earth is that, and what happened to that chair? Has Nick become so fat he now needs an entire sofa? Well, fortunately, that's not what's happened. Instead, at the AGM last month, he arose from the chair – which now stands empty – and joined another three of us as co-chairs; only a sofa could be wide enough for a collective leadership of four.



This is the first time in Sukkat Shalom's history that we find ourselves without a chairperson. In the past a successor has always been pressed into service, usually at the last minute and sometimes using physical force, as the day of decision – aka the AGM – approached. Not so this time: even physical force failed to persuade anyone. So, since the community can't be left without leadership, four members of council have volunteered to work together to provide a collective leadership. They are Sue Bard (newsletter editor), Gillian Raab (secretary), Nick Silk (immediate past chair), and me (Maurice Naftalin, religious affairs organiser).

How will this work? A gloomy view is that without a single figurehead, neither members nor outsiders will know who to talk to or who can make decisions on behalf of the community. But I don't expect that gloomy expectation to be fulfilled: on the contrary, I believe there's every chance that the four of us, working together, will be able to provide great service: all the more so because the workload of chairing the community can now be distributed among us, instead of bearing down on one person. We are always talking in Sukkat Shalom about the need to involve more people and to reduce the concentration of work on single individuals: this is a golden opportunity to do exactly that.

What will it mean in practice? We intend that things will work very much as before, except that e-mails to [chair@eljic.org](mailto:chair@eljic.org) will be answered by one of us. We'll be sharing information unless your conversation needs to be confidential, but once it's started your conversation will continue with the same person. Let's give it a go, then! And of course, if you feel very strongly that the community just has to fill that single chair, you know what to do...

### **Maurice Naftalin**

(on behalf of The Sofa: Sue Bard, Gillian Raab, Nick Silk, and Maurice Naftalin)

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## Dave Cohen's font

Sitting in services at St Mark's, have you ever wondered about where the beautiful ceramic font and the entrancing tapestry that hangs behind it came from? You may be surprised to learn that the potter who made the font was Dave Cohen; the tapestry was made by his wife, weaver Frances Gardiner Cohen.

Dave, who was from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was an apprenticed carpenter at 15 and after that served in the US Navy where he worked as a welder. He used his G.I. Bill benefits to go to art college, where he was told that to become a sculptor, he should go to Europe. He set off with no particular destination in mind, but on board ship he was befriended by a Canadian Mountie on a visit home to Scotland to see his granny in Pilton, which is how Dave ended up in Edinburgh, coming to describe himself as 'American by birth, Scottish by choice.'

Dave went to Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) where he studied sculpture with ceramics as a secondary subject that rapidly claimed him. He would arrive at the ceramics department at 5 am to throw pots, returning there in the evening after a day of sculpture classes and it was at one of these evening classes that he met his future wife, Frances Gardiner, from Juniper Green in Edinburgh. Frances belonged to the Church of Scotland, but her minister refused to marry the young couple. However, George Findlow, the inspirational Australian Unitarian minister then at St Mark's had no such qualms and designed a mixed Jewish and Presbyterian service specially for them.



Dave established his first studio in Juniper Green and taught ceramics at ECA. In 1975, Dave, Frances and their (by then) four children, moved to North Berwick where Dave and Frances founded the Tantallon Studios. It seems that for Dave, teaching and practice were inextricable, feeding each other. After his years at ECA, he became Head of Ceramics at Glasgow School of Art, always continuing to make his own work and specialising in raku, a traditional type of Japanese hand-shaped ware. He also spent a sabbatical at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, helping establish a Ceramics Department and making strong connections with Palestinian as well as Jewish artists.

Dave contributed to many major national art exhibitions and collections as well as selling through private commissions and in commercial galleries. In 2016-17, he was one of 13 ceramicists featured in The Jewish Museum in London's exhibition 'Shaping Ceramics' that looked at the influence of Jewish émigré ceramicists on British studio pottery in the 20th century. Nearer home, there are examples of Dave Cohen's work and others of this group on permanent display at Paisley Museum and Art Galleries. The font and the tapestry that for me cement the relationship between St Mark's and Sukkat Shalom were commissioned by a congregant, Mr Bob Sinclair, in memory of his wife.

Dave Cohen died in 2018. I was sorry never to have met him, despite having heard a lot about him. This February, I visited the Tantallon Studios that look out on the Bass Rock and the ruined Tantallon Castle. Here I had the great privilege of meeting Frances and her daughter, Esther, and learning more about Dave than can be gleaned from obituaries.

**Sue Bard**

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## **International Jewish Women's Day 2020**

**Sunday 8 March 2020 1.00 to 4.00 pm**

**Royal College of Surgeons, Nicholson St, Edinburgh EH8 9DW**

The Edinburgh Jewish Cultural Centre will be holding a special event to mark International Jewish Women's Day and will be awarding its first International Jewish Woman of the Year Award to Dr Gertrude Herzfeld.

Dr Gertrude Herzfeld (1890 – 1981) was a pioneering Jewish female paediatric surgeon and one of the first female surgeons to work in Scotland in the city of Edinburgh. Dr Herzfeld will be honoured posthumously in being awarded the inaugural International Jewish Woman of the Year Award at this event. The programme will include guest speakers, opportunities for discussion, music and kosher refreshments. Further details to follow.

The event is free, however, reservations are required:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/92564724583>

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# Yiddish Song and Klezmer Music Concert and a Yiddish Song Workshop

SCoJeC, the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, has organised a Yiddish Song and Klezmer Music Concert and a Yiddish Song Workshop in Edinburgh, part of a tour of Scotland by internationally acclaimed performers.

**Saturday 14th March** 8 pm at the Edinburgh Jewish Community Centre, EHC, 4 Salisbury Road, Edinburgh EH16 5AB.

Klezmer Music/Yiddish Song Spring Concert  
with Michael Alpert, Sasha Lurje and Craig Judelman.

Cost £10/£8 in advance, £12/£10 on the door. Book at [www.trybooking.co.uk/PWD](http://www.trybooking.co.uk/PWD)

**Sunday 15th March** 1pm – 3pm at the same venue

A Yiddish Song Workshop with Sasha Lurje.

Cost £15/£12. Book at [www.trybooking.co.uk/PWF](http://www.trybooking.co.uk/PWF)

Reduced price at the Workshop for people attending the previous night's concert - book for both events at [www.trybooking.co.uk/PWD](http://www.trybooking.co.uk/PWD))

**Michael Alpert** is a Klezmer musician, Yiddish singer, multi-instrumentalist, scholar and educator and is a key figure in the klezmer revival of the 1970s and 1980s. Originally from the US, he is now based in Scotland. Drawn from his family heritage and his own travels through the cultures and terrain of Europe and the Americas, his performances are sojourns through inner and outer landscapes, sagas of immigrant journey and epics of the universal search for home.

**Sasha Lurje** is one of the leading voices in the contemporary Yiddish scene, and has performed and taught at numerous festivals in Europe and America. Growing up speaking Slavic and Baltic languages, she has a unique old-world perspective on this repertoire, which perhaps is part of why she has become one of the only specialists in Yiddish lyric songs and ballads. She was born in Riga, Latvia and has been singing since she was three years old. She coordinates the song programme at the Yiddish Summer Weimar, the world-leading Yiddish and Klezmer festival.

**Craig Judelman** grew up in Seattle, studying violin and folk music from around the world. He currently performs with Litvakus, one of the few klezmer bands devoted to Litvak music, music from the northern European region of Jewish settlement. He has studied with David Krakauer of the Klezmatics and Yale Strom, and learned "on the bandstand" from some of the best Klezmer musicians including Michael Alpert, Mark Rubin, and Pete Rushefsky

**Other Scottish dates:** 12 March, St Andrews; 15 March, Glasgow; 17 March, Arran (further details will be on the SCoJeC website soon at [www.scojec.org/events.html](http://www.scojec.org/events.html) or contact [fiona@scojec.org](mailto:fiona@scojec.org))

# Edinburgh Interfaith Association (EIFA)

**'Forgotten Women' with guest speakers on strong, historical, religious women**

**Monday 9 March 6pm – 8pm, with refreshments**

Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, EH1 2JL

(Unfortunately this event clashes with our Purim celebrations.)

Free but please book via Eventbrite [here](#).



**Edinburgh Coexistence Initiative**

**'Conflict and Peacebuilding', an inaugural conference**

**Sunday 15 March 2.30pm – 6pm**

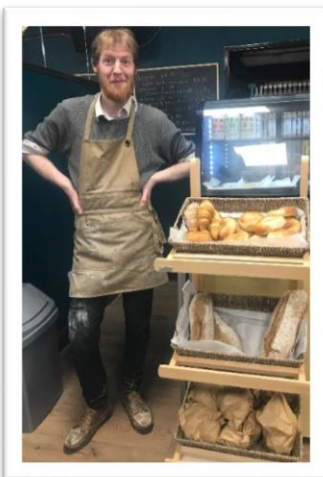
The Chaplaincy, University of Edinburgh, 1 Bristo Pl, Edinburgh EH8 9AL

Tickets are FREE and include Dinner, but please do register [here](#) to reserve your place

## Babka – new bakery on the block

If you're from New York City and craving babka and skinny 'old style' bagels, you're in luck. You're also in luck if you're from anywhere else and have never sampled these delights before.

Babka (meaning old lady or grandmother) originated in the Jewish community in Poland and is a delectable loaf shaped cake made from a twisted length of yeast dough with, traditionally, a chocolate, cinnamon or poppy seed filling. Contemporary Israeli versions experiment with many different and sometimes weird fillings, which so far have not reached our Edinburgh Babka.



Formerly a well-loved Sicilian bakery and café, the shop had been standing empty following the death of its owner Angelo a year ago. It was at his funeral that a group of friends who'd been regulars at the café started to hatch plans to keep it going. Now, Alasdair Thanisch, experienced baker and associate member of Sukkat Shalom, has opened with an array of bread (including challah on Fridays), bagels, cakes, and of course babka – so give it a try!

**Babka is at 20 Brougham Pl, EH3 9JU and is open from 10 am - 6.00pm every day except Saturday.**

**Sue Bard**

## Quiz Night

Thank you to Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation for organising a fantastic quiz night and supper on Sunday, 26th January. Despite the intense competition, relatively few fights broke out and there was hardly any cheating. Look out for familiar faces in the winning team.



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## Tu B'Shevat Seder

We're pleased that our Tu B'Shevat Seder seems to have become an established interfaith event, and we were delighted to welcome many guests who threw themselves into the spirit of the evening on 7th February. Here's Gillian Raab's 'improved' Tu B'Shevat haggis recipe – a paean to veganism. Don't complain about the lack of information on quantities or method – liberate your own creativity.

At a Tu biShevat seder we should eat 15 different types of fruits or nuts. Tu biShevat falls close to Burns night, where we celebrate our national dish with this haggis with 15 different fruits and nuts.

### Ingredients

#### Fruits and Nuts

1. Lemon zest and juice
2. Orange juice
3. Apple
4. Olive oil





5. Figs
6. Dates
7. Grapes / raisins
8. Cashew nuts
9. Pistachios
10. Walnuts
11. Pine nuts
12. Hazelnuts
13. Creamed coconut
14. Pomegranate molasses
15. Prunes



### Other ingredients

Garlic, Onion, Vegetable stock, Pin-head oatmeal, Black Quinoa, Turtle beans, Spices (cumin, coriander, black pepper).

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## News from our cheder

The youngest class, Kita Aleph, tries to cater for a range of activities including writing and movement. Here the children were preparing a Mitzvah diary to take home and others set up their own aleph bet yoga game. Story time in recent sessions has involved the matriarchs and the patriarchs. We are always glad to see familiar faces and new ones.



Rebecca Wober

## Learning for All

**Wednesday 25th March 7.30pm -9.15pm**

Edinburgh Virtual Jewish Cultural Centre

52 Granby Road, Edinburgh EH16 5PZ

**What do the sources really say about women reading the Torah, and what does it mean today?**

Presented by **Eve Sacks**

Free to attend , but please book via <https://learning-for-all-march-may-2020.eventbrite.co.uk>

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## Holocaust Memorial Day in Edinburgh

It was moving to stand with the orthodox rabbis of Edinburgh, the Lord Provost, civic dignitaries and survivors, to chant the memorial prayer for the martyrs of the Shoah, on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, and also for the victims of the Bosnian genocide 25 years ago.

While there was a good crowd, there wasn't quite a minyan (quorum of Jewish men) by orthodox standards, so I was very grateful that the orthodox rabbis, who couldn't therefore recite Kaddish, assented to my doing so (as Liberals we count women in as well). A true sign of unity and blessing as we mourn the victims of hatred and commit ourselves to creating a better world.



**Rabbi Mark Solomon**

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## News and Thanks from World Jewish Relief

Last year, World Jewish Relief (WJR) was one of our chosen Kol Nidre charities. It is the British Jewish community's international humanitarian agency, supporting a vital project that changes the lives of the most vulnerable older Jews across Eastern Europe, many of whom are impoverished and living in dilapidated and dangerous homes without the means to pay for repairs. They've sent us a link to their latest short film featuring a World Jewish Relief supporter who goes to Ukraine to meet three of the people they help – a fascinating insight into their work

<https://www.facebook.com/WorldJewishRelief/videos/2772010846228574/>.

Thanks to your generosity we were able to send them, and each of our other three charities a donation of £1,162. In their thank-you letter they said "...it's not just physical conditions your donation will transform. Replacing broken windows, fitting new kitchens and installing indoor toilets enables these older Jewish people to regain their dignity".

Thanks to everyone who donated to the Kol Nidre appeal.

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## LJ Biennial 2020 – attention new members!

Ask anyone who has attended the Liberal Judaism Biennial and you will hear what a stimulating and worthwhile event it is, bringing different communities together and providing the opportunity to mix with Liberal Jews with interesting and different ideas from ours. This year it is on the weekend of 23rd/24th May, and LJ is running a track specifically for newer members of LJ communities.

This track will offer three sessions focused on reinforcing existing relationships, and building new ones. There, newer members of the Liberal Judaism family can get to know one another, share their Jewish stories, and work together to tease out what it means to be a part of a Liberal Judaism community, in partnership with other people in their community, and with other communities.

LJ is looking for us to nominate a new member – ideally someone who has joined in the last two years. The track is heavily subsidised, and places are just £50 (to be paid by the participant or by Sukkat Shalom). LJ has 25 spaces available, which will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Sukkat Shalom will assist with travel expenses, so the weekend should come at minimal cost to you personally.

**If you have joined Sukkat Shalom within the last couple of years and are looking to find out more about Liberal Judaism, this is the ideal opportunity! E-mail [contact@eljic.org](mailto:contact@eljic.org) for more information.**

**Maurice Naftalin**

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## Lehrhaus in the Clouds

Leo Baeck College has sent out the list of its online courses for Spring 2020. You would need to hurry to sign up to Melissa Raphael's course, which starts this week, but the others don't start until late April or May. (We shall also see Melissa Raphael in person when she speaks at the Lit later this year.)

[Liat Aharonovich: ULPAN - Modern Hebrew](#)

[Dr Jakub Kowalewski: Levinas and us: ethics, politics, religion and art](#)

[Professor Melissa Raphael: Reflections on the Holocaust and Modernity in Jewish Philosophy and Visual Art](#)

[Rabbi Robyn Ashworth-Steen: Wandering Jews](#)

[Dr Alinda Damsma: The Origins of Jewish Mysticism](#) – back by popular demand!!

[Rabbi Dr Frank Dabba Smith: The Warsaw and Łódz Ghettos: Archivists and Photographers as Witnesses and Recorders](#)

Please click on this link: [www.lbc.ac.uk/lehrhaus](http://www.lbc.ac.uk/lehrhaus) for details and information about all LBC courses.

If you have any questions, please contact: [Lehrhaus@lbc.ac.uk](mailto:Lehrhaus@lbc.ac.uk), +44 20 8349 5600.

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## The Longest Exodus:

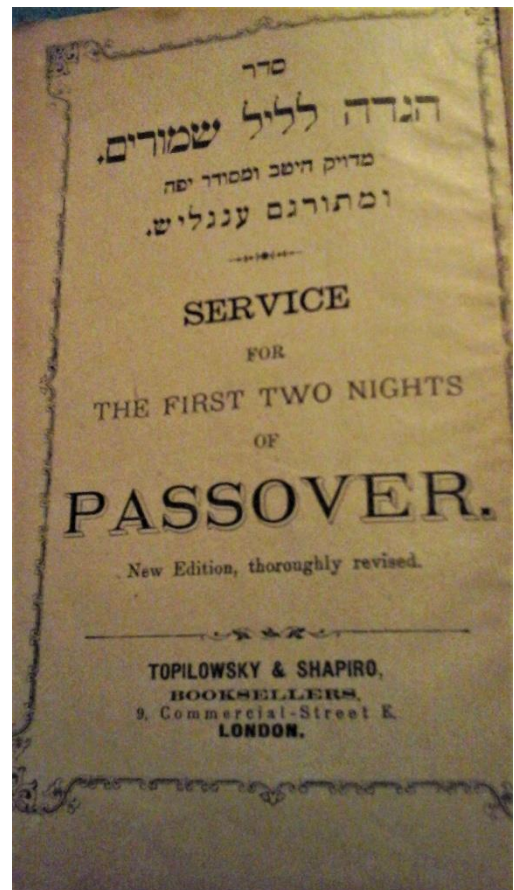
### The Journey of Return to the House of Israel from Radziejow, Poland *via* Hull, Manchester, Exeter & Edinburgh.

Shortly after I came up to Edinburgh to study at the Faculty of Divinity, University of Edinburgh (which has been part of my own long journey), I put an advertisement in the Jewish Telegraph. I was seeking information about my Great-Grandfather, Joseph Gronnowsky (I restored the correct spelling in 1997) and wondered if there was anyone out in the wider Jewish world who knew anything at all about him. For a while I heard nothing and then, one day I received a message from a gentleman in Devon who had an interesting story to tell. It turned out that when he was a young man, he used to do some odd jobs for two sisters in Manchester who were my great-aunts: one was the headmistress of a school and the other worked in Manchester Central Library. They were the sisters of my Jewish grandmother whom I remember very well from way back in the 1940s. There was also a brother who was a well-known teacher in Manchester. He and my grandmother retained the family name of Gronnowsky whilst the two sisters changed theirs to Gronow.

One day when the young man was doing some clearing out in the attic of the Gronow sisters, he came across various items of Judaica - much to his surprise. He didn't wish to be intrusive but asked them 'gently' (his words) if they were Jewish. I cannot recall what their reply was but they did say that if there was anything he wished to have he was to help himself. So he took a few items, I don't exactly know what, but amongst them was something which has recently been returned to me.

Mr. G and I lost touch for some time but, recently, he contacted me through the Ancestry website where I had built my family tree and he had also been doing some research. Not only had he found out more about my family but he had some photographs also – some of my great uncle and one of the great aunts. He also had a photo of a Haggadah which had obviously been used in the family. We are looking at a time of around 1860 onwards. (I cannot include these photos as they belong to him).

Joseph Gronnowsky had arrived in the UK around 1850 accompanied by a brother Simon Jacob and a sister Masha (exact name unknown as yet). Joseph went to work for Mandelberg's Waterproof Manufacturers (eventually becoming General Manager) and Simon went to London's East End and set up a tailoring business in Cable Street. We don't know what happened to Masha, apart from the fact that she married a German cousin.



From what I have read and from looking at the Haggadah it is obvious that it was bought in the UK as it is not written in Hebrew/Polish, it is written in Hebrew/English. I would surmise that it has been a family one used in the home for a family Pesach Seder – I don't know when the custom of a communal seder came about, but I doubt it goes back to the 1860s onwards. What is interesting is that the cover title is 'Passover' and not 'Pesach'. As it is old and has been well-used at a family table (signs of food & drink on the pages) it is extremely fragile and the end cover pages are missing. I have photographed the whole and it ends at 'Had Gadya' with no end pages.

Whilst this Haggadah is in poor condition and only a small item, I will treasure it as having been part of my great-grandfather's family life and it has indeed been 'returned to the House of Israel'. What is most important to me is that the whole story of this little book has validated the Jewish history of my family and I now know that my instincts have been right all along from an early age.

**Rebekah Gronowski**

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## The 2nd most Northerly Synagogue in the World.

(the first being in Fairbanks, Alaska)

It hadn't occurred to me that there would be a synagogue in Arctic Trondheim, but my Lonely Planet Guide to Norway said otherwise and there it was, a gracious, pale blue 1920s building just round the corner from the magnificent 11th Century Gothic Nidaros Cathedral. The synagogue wasn't open (it was February and definitely not the tourist season), but eventually a security officer appeared



who was also a synagogue member. I learned that the synagogue's membership hovered around 100, that they had no rabbi, but conducted their own services once a month, that the synagogue was technically Orthodox, but that most individual members were not, that the nearest kosher food was in Oslo, 500 kms away. Which is where Norway's only other Jewish community is. We think of ourselves as a small and marginal community that sometimes feels fragile, but this conversation made me reflect on what comparatively enormous resources of support and connections we have to draw on and to wonder what it would feel like to be such a tiny religious and cultural minority.

Like our *Jewish Edinburgh on Foot*, devised by members of Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society and now available as an [app](#), members of Trondheim synagogue have constructed a walking tour of Jewish Trondheim, also available as an app called '[Hjemme.Borte.](#)', narrated and written in Norwegian and English. But Trondheim's Jewish community was only around 50 years old and 180 members strong when the Nazis occupied Norway in April 1940 and their walking tour, unlike ours, is about the Holocaust with points of interest like the Methodist church that housed a secret synagogue when the actual synagogue was taken over, and where the congregants had to plead with the cantor, Josef Grabowski, a refugee from Germany, not to endanger them by singing so loudly.

When the Nazis occupied Norway, the Jewish population, although swollen by refugees from Germany, still only numbered around 2000 and at first was relatively untroubled. Things changed dramatically in 1942, when Vidkun Quisling became the leader of a collaborationist Norwegian government and Norwegian Jews were then an easy target, especially compared to the Danish Jews, whose deportation would have been resisted. 770 Norwegian Jews, including 90 from Trondheim were caught and deported and very few of these survived.

**Sue Bard**

## Sukkat Shalom Contacts

### Community Phone – 0131 777 8024

This phone number sends voicemail to members of the Contact Team

To reach the Care Team, call the Community Phone or email [care@eljc.org](mailto:care@eljc.org)

Contact Team – [contact@eljc.org](mailto:contact@eljc.org)

Etrog Team – [newsletter@eljc.org](mailto:newsletter@eljc.org)

Chair: Nick Silk ([chair@eljc.org](mailto:chair@eljc.org))

Treasurer: and Membership: Stefano Giossi ([membership@eljc.org](mailto:membership@eljc.org))

Secretary: Gillian Raab ([secretary@eljc.org](mailto:secretary@eljc.org))

**Scottish Charity SC035678**