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etrog

עֵטְרוֹג

November 2016 – January 2017  
Cheshvan – Shevat 5777

Let us know what you think of Etrog or send us your contributions by contacting the newsletter team at [newsletter@eljc.org](mailto:newsletter@eljc.org)

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## Contents



**Sukkat  
Shalom**  
Edinburgh Liberal  
Jewish Community

**Scottish Charity  
Number  
SC 035678**

- [Happy 2017 from Etrog!](#)
- [Diary](#)
- [Shana Tovah from Etrog to all our readers](#)
- [Kol Nidre appeal 2016](#)
- [Fulfil Your Mitzvah – Volunteer on Mitzvah Day](#)
- [Zelda Alexander – a brief biographical note](#)
- [Rabbi Mark Solomon joins the Church of Scotland's steering group on Zionism](#)
- [Edinburgh Interfaith Association News](#)
- [Peace Vigil following Arson Attack on Central Mosque](#)
- [Members' News](#)
- [Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society](#)
- [Croatia – a country with just one Rabbi](#)
- [Limmud Conference](#)
- [Has Being Jewish in Scotland changed?](#)
- [Sukkat Shalom Contacts](#)

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## Happy 2017 from Etrog!

According to Etrog's bimonthly schedule, the next issue should be published on January 1st. But we're planning such lively Hogmanay celebrations that we won't be

## Diary



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

<b>November 2016 / Cheshvan 5777</b>				
Fri 4	Cheshvan 4	6pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
Fri 11	Cheshvan 11	7pm	Erev Shabbat service	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>
Fri 18	Cheshvan 18	6pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
Fri 25	Cheshvan 25	7pm	Rabbi Mark Solomon will be helping us to welcome Shabbat with a communal supper & songs. Please bring a non-meat dish to share.	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>
Sat 26	Cheshvan 25	11am	Shabbat service led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>
Sat 26	Cheshvan 25	3pm	Tea & Talmud with Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>
Sun 27	Cheshvan 26	4pm	Philosophy discussion group with Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>
<b>December 2016 / Kislev – Tevet 5777</b>				
Fri 2	Kislev 3	6pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
Fri 9	Kislev 10	7pm	Erev Shabbat service led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>
Sat 10	Kislev 10	3pm	Tea and Talmud led by Rabbi Mark Solomon <b>Note change from usual venue</b>	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles</a>
Sun 11	Kislev 11	4pm	Philosophy discussion group, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>

Sat 24	Kislev 24	11am	Shabbat service	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>
Fri 30	Tevet 2	4pm – 8pm	Chanukah Party and Erev Shabbat service (details to be confirmed)	<a href="#">Columcille Centre</a>
<b>January 2017 / Tevet – Shevat 5777</b>				
Fri 6	Tevet 9	6pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles*</a>
Fri 13	Tevet 16	7pm	Erev Shabbat service	<a href="#">Columcille Centre*</a>
Fri 20	Tevet 23	6pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	<a href="#">Marchmont St Giles*</a>
Sat 28	Shevat 1	11am	Shabbat service led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Columcille Centre*</a>
Sat 28	Shevat 1	3pm	Tea & Talmud with Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Columcille Centre*</a>
Sun 29	Shevat 2	4pm	Philosophy discussion group with Rabbi Mark Solomon	<a href="#">Columcille Centre*</a>

\*January venues are subject to confirmation.

## Shana Tovah from Etrog to all our readers

Along with our existing members and friends, this year we welcomed newcomers to Scotland and many visitors from all over the UK and beyond, to our Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. Rosh Hashanah with Rabbi Mark was memorable and inspirational, including the ceremony of Tashlich (casting away of sins) by the Water of Leith.

To lead our Kol Nidrei and Yom Kippur services, we welcomed Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, Emeritus Rabbi at Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue and President of Liberal Judaism. He conducted the services beautifully, and led us in a memorable study session, on the Book of Amos—dubbed by our own Norman Crane as ‘the first Reform Jew’. Sharon Goldstein, led the singing, with both new and familiar tunes, and provided much appreciated support to our fledgling singing group. Twenty-five of us enjoyed breaking the fast together at the very warm and welcoming La Piazza Restaurant.

We welcomed Rabbi Mark back for Erev Succoth when he conducted a beautiful and meditative service at Christ Church, Morningside whose secluded garden shelters our succah.



Rosh Hashanah lunch table



Building the succah



Tashlich at the Water of Leith

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## Kol Nidre appeal 2016

What we raise from your contributions each year is a crucial part of how we embody our collective commitment to social justice and well-being in the world. Each year our Appeal brings in around £4,000 to distribute, and this is an achievement we dearly wish to maintain.

This year, factors that influenced our choices of charities included both the global refugee crisis and local severe funding cuts. As we are a small community, we also like where possible to choose small charities, because we know the difference that relatively small amounts of money make. Three of our four charities this year fall into this category.

Our choices this year are: the **Scottish Refugee Council**; **EIFA**; **Médecins Sans Frontières**; and **Neve Shalom/Wahat al' Salaam**

### Scottish Refugee Council

The Glasgow-based SRC works with refugees and asylum seekers across Scotland. It provides advice and community support to individual refugees and asylum seekers, as well as conducting research, working to influence public policy, and raising the profile of asylum in the public mind. SRC'S vision is for a Scotland in which all people seeking refugee protection are welcome, and where human rights

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and on the organisations supporting them. Government funding for independent advice and support for refugees has drastically diminished, while need has increased. Refugees encounter a growing barrage of problems, such as indefinite detention, enforced destitution and poverty, and poor quality decision-making. The work of organisations like the SRC is increasingly needed and increasingly under strain.

## **Edinburgh Inter–Faith Association**

We received a specific request for help from EIFA, a charity with which we have a close association and which is suffering from a serious funding cut.

EIFA was formed in 1989 to promote and facilitate positive engagement between the faith communities of Edinburgh and is now considered one of the most experienced and developed Inter-Faith bodies in the UK. EIFA runs many interfaith activities throughout the year. It organises public talks, dialogues, panel events, film screenings, exhibitions, Inter-Faith ‘pilgrimages’, and conferences on subjects such as Science and Religion. It also co-ordinates a programme of activities in Edinburgh during Inter-Faith Week.

EIFA is a significant partner and source of mutual support for Sukkat Shalom in our wider community relations. Because of the closeness and regularity of our relationship with them, greatly enabled by our own member Stew Green, it is extremely important that this year we give priority to them in their time of funding need.

## **Médecins Sans Frontières**

MSF (Doctors Without Borders) is one of the foremost medical aid and humanitarian charities in the world. Founded in 1971 in response to the Biafra crisis, for the past 45 years MSF has been prominent in all the main conflicts and catastrophes in the world. It is an international crisis rather than a development charity, but in view of its extensive work with refugees, we are including it in this year’s appeal.

Since the late 1990s, MSF has been assisting asylum seekers and undocumented migrants to Europe. 2015 saw the biggest displacement of people worldwide since the Second World War. Besides providing medical care to people in refugee camps in parts of Africa, since the EC discontinued its Mare Nostrum rescue mission in the Mediterranean, MSF responded by setting up its own. It runs three boats in the Mediterranean, and in 2015 its vessels assisted over 23,000 people with medical care including basic resuscitation following near drowning. MSF also works in refugee settlements and mobile clinics at the entry points in various parts of Europe, offering shelter and medical care.

## **Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salaam**

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that it is possible for both sides to live together in peace. The village is located midway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

The community has an active programme of outreach and education, and where possible provides humanitarian aid for medical services. Every year, it runs a one-week summer camp for disadvantaged Palestinian children from the Occupied Territories; the children come from refugee camps, villages or towns. Past projects have included: the treatment of Palestinian children with serious or life-threatening medical conditions in Israeli hospitals; and the provision of treatment days in Palestinian villages, organised on a voluntary basis by WAS-NS members or friends.

NS/WAS was one of several organisations visited by Sukkat Shalom members on our Human Rights educational tour in Israel and the West Bank in 2013. It is a beautiful settlement, set on a hillside above the coastal plains, and we were impressed by their commitment to continue living according to their vision of peaceful and egalitarian co-existence in an increasingly belligerent environment.

## How to donate

You can donate by sending a cheque made out to Sukkat Shalom Edinburgh to our treasurer Philip Wadler, 15 Lochrin Place, Flat 3F3, Edinburgh EH3 9QT, or by bank transfer to Sort Code 30 13 01, A/C Sukkat Shalom Edinburgh, A/C No. 00974077. In either case, please reference your donations clearly as for our Kol Nidrei Appeal (e.g., on the back of the cheque).

Thank you so much for your generosity.

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## Fulfil Your Mitzvah – Volunteer on Mitzvah Day

**For Mitzvah Day 2016** members of the Edinburgh Jewish communities will be giving a few hours of their time to help Re-Act – a local refugee support organisation – to receive and sort urgently needed items for refugees living in camps across Europe.

As the seasons change and we start to feel a chill in the air, please consider how giving your time could help to keep a refugee family a bit warmer whilst living in the most basic conditions at camps in Calais and across other parts of Europe.

## What can you do?

### Volunteer

We are looking for as many people as possible to volunteer at Re-Act's headquarters at Studio 24, 24 Calton Road, Edinburgh, EH8 8DP on **Mitzvah Day, Sunday 27th November**. Volunteers will be helping to receive, sort and pack items donated by the public.

- Helen Zollinger via our contact page (<http://eljc.org/contact>, or leave a message on the ELJC phone: 0131 777 8024
- Janet Mundy, [mundy.janet@gmail.com](mailto:mundy.janet@gmail.com) (preferably), or phone or text 07970 029293

Please say which shift you would prefer. **And please let us know by Friday 18th November—we can't include you otherwise.**

### Donate urgently needed items

If you are unable to volunteer, please consider donating items to the collection. Items needed are listed here: <http://www.re-act.scot/what-we-need/>. Donations can be dropped off as follows:

At Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, 4 Salisbury Road, EH16 5AB on:

- Sunday 20th November between 9 am and 2 pm
- Sunday 27th November between 9 am and 11.30 am

At Studio 24, 24 Calton Road, Edinburgh, EH8 8DP on:

- Sunday 27th November between 12 noon and 7 pm



RE-ACT  
REFUGEE ACTION SCOTLAND

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## Zelda Alexander – a brief biographical note



My late wife, Zelda was born in Capetown, South Africa in 1939 and died in London in 2014. She is survived by two daughters, a stepson, four grandchildren and three step-grandchildren.

Zelda, like many others, left South Africa following Sharpeville and eventually settled in the UK. Following a family tradition of teaching, she initially taught mathematics in schools and subsequently took up a post as a lecturer, training student teachers at what is now London Metropolitan University. Mindful of how girls in South Africa had not been encouraged to follow a career in maths or science, she became a founder member of a group that called itself, 'Girls into Maths Will Go'.

After taking early retirement in the nineties she requalified as a psychotherapist. In

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to find their own way forward, to become independent. Nothing gave her greater pleasure than encountering the student who proved to be more competent than she was or the client who was now ready to leave.

Zelda wrote articles for the professional journals from time to time; later on taking up creative writing, both prose and poetry, of which the example displayed here is unfortunately topical.

**Philip Michaelson**

## All the Children

My child, your child, what difference?

All the children of the world  
One flow of life, new life,  
Hopeful. Not for long.

How comprehend, how quantify  
The pain of children bereft  
Afghanistan, Bosnia, Manhattan,  
Gaza, Baghdad, Jerusalem  
All one in their bewilderment?

Barefoot children, hungry children,  
Children ill and children maimed,  
Brother killed, father gone, mother disappeared.  
Breathe into the pain, into your belly.  
Sit with the pain, endure  
What else is there to do?

Has the world gone mad? Is it a collective psychosis?

We know so much of what it takes to grow a child. How long it takes, what love, what care, what work.

We know how slow it is to cure deep early trauma. Often it can't be healed, just lived with and endured.

We know that psychic scars remain to haunt the children's children's children. We've seen it in second and third generation holocaust survivors' tales. the Chumash knew - '...even unto the third and fourth generation...'



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I feel such dread for the children, dread for all the children everywhere.

Think of those whose lives are blighted,  
Born with HIV, slaves on cocoa farms, in factories,  
Caught up in war, in famine, in flight.

But remember - there are happy children, healthy children,  
Children with rosebloom on their cheeks,  
Yellow wellies on their feet,  
Children with a mother and a father  
Who splash in puddles, feed the ducks,  
Read story books and play on swings.

And remember: each day of conflict, each day of bombs, each day without adequate  
medicine, each day of lack of food, brings more children into the arena of pain.

When will we stop?

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## Rabbi Mark Solomon joins the Church of Scotland's steering group on Zionism

Over the last 13 years the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has received four reports which have led to the Church rejecting Christian and Jewish Zionism both on contemporary political/social and on scriptural/theological grounds.

The four reports were: *Theology of Land and Covenant*, 2003; *What Hope for the Middle East*, 2007; *Kairos Palestine: a moment of truth, offered as a word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian Suffering*, 2009; *The Inheritance of Abraham? A Report on 'the promised land'*, 2013.

*The Inheritance of Abraham* provoked a strong challenge from the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) and, after discussions with SCoJeC representatives, a revised version of the original report was issued.

The Church of Scotland has now established a "Joint Theological Initiative" to engage in discussions with the Jewish Community. Rabbi Mark Solomon will be one of the Jewish members of its steering group which is holding meetings over the next few months. We await its outcomes with interest.

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that all who attended were fully involved and moved by the various contributions. These included Rabbi Rose completing his offering with a blowing of the shofar—surely a first for any mosque in Scotland?!—and a beautiful reading by Sue Bard of the poem ‘Break of Day in the Trenches’ by Isaac Rosenberg (reproduced below), chosen by Sue in recognition of the 2016 centenary of the Battle of the Somme.

## Upcoming events

The November community meal will be on Monday 7th November at the Hindu Mandir in Leith where we will be celebrating and finding out about Diwali with discussion, dances and a shared meal. The timing is yet to be finalised, but is likely to be 6.30pm.

The focus of this year’s Interfaith Week is "Religion and the Media" and it will run from November 13th to 20th. The Edinburgh programme is currently being assembled and promises to include the usual rich diversity of interesting and stimulating events. Further details to follow but meantime, please put the dates in your diary now.

**Stew Green**

**EIFA Jewish Community Board Rep**

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## *Break of Day in the Trenches, by Isaac Rosenberg*

Isaac Rosenberg (1890–2018) was a Jewish poet and painter whose parents were immigrants to the UK from Lithuania. Brought up in poverty in the East End of London, Rosenberg managed to gain a place at the Slade School of Art. He fought in the First World War from 1915 until he was killed on 1 April 1918 on the Western Front. His poem *Break of Day in the Trenches* was first published a hundred years ago in 1916.

### Break of Day in the Trenches

The darkness crumbles away.  
It is the same old druid Time as ever,  
only a live thing leaps my hand,  
a queer sardonic rat,  
as I pull the parapet’s poppy  
to stick behind my ear.

Droll rat, they would shoot you if they knew  
your cosmopolitan sympathies.  
Now you have touched this English hand

to cross the sleeping green between.  
It seems you inwardly grin as you pass  
strong eyes, fine limbs, haughty athletes,  
less chanced than you for life,  
bonds to the whims of murder,  
sprawled in the bowels of the earth,  
the torn fields of France.

What do you see in our eyes  
at the shrieking iron and flame  
hurled through still heavens?  
What quaver—what heart aghast?  
Poppies whose roots are in man's veins  
drop, and are ever dropping;  
but mine in my ear is safe—  
Just a little white with the dust.

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## Peace Vigil following Arson Attack on Central Mosque



More than 200 people, including some members of Sukkat Shalom, gathered at a peace vigil to show their support for Edinburgh's Muslim community following an arson attack on the Central Mosque in September. Speakers included local politicians and members of the Muslim Women's Association of Edinburgh.

Stew Green, Sukkat Shalom's representative on the Edinburgh Interfaith Association sent a letter of support from our community to Imam Yahya Barry .

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## Members' News

We are delighted to welcome Blandine Connor and Gareth Owen as members of Sukkat Shalom. They were accepted by the Liberal Judaism Beth Din in September and had their formal admission ceremony at our Shabbat morning service shortly afterwards. We plan to include interviews with each of them in the next issue of Etrog.

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The Lit programme for 2016/7 is now arranged and here are details of the first few meetings. You can join at your first meeting (subscription £12 for the whole season of 10 talks or £3 for individual meetings). Unless stated otherwise, all meetings start at 8.00pm with tea served at the end of the meeting. The venue is the Marian Oppenheim Hall, Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, 4 Salisbury Road.

**13 November 6pm: Daniel Lines, “German” versus “Jewish” Mathematics in Nazi Germany.** How a philosophical debate about Cantor's discoveries concerning the infinite was perverted by the Nazis to promote Nazi ideology and purge German universities of Jewish mathematicians. No specialised knowledge of mathematics is required to follow this talk.

**27 November Double Bill,** including a buffet dinner:

**3pm Michael Harris, *Role of Women in Judaism: A Modern Orthodox Perspective***  
(Buffet dinner: £6 non-members, free for members—donations very welcome)

**6pm Ellen Galford, Ellen on her book *Yiddish lost and found: eavesdropping on the ancestors*,** which explores the fragmentary but tenacious Yiddish that survived three generations of one family's journey from the Russian Pale to the fleshpots of the Bronx and the wilds of New Jersey.

**11 December: Philip Spencer, *Antisemitism and the left today: the return of the “Jewish Question”.*** An exploration of how and why the ‘Jewish Question’ has returned and the role it plays in the politics of antisemitism today.

**22 January 2017: Patrick Elliott, *Jankel Adler 1895-1949: A Polish artist in Glasgow and London***

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## Croatia – a country with just one Rabbi.

The cities of Split and Dubrovnik have, respectively, the second and third oldest Sephardi synagogues in the world. Each is a jewel, tucked away up the narrow alleys of these ancient cities. The old city of Split is built inside the walls of the palace of the Roman emperor Diocletian. Diocletian was noted as a persecutor of early Christians and, ironically, the mausoleum he built for himself within the palace has been transformed into Split's cathedral. The ark of the tiny synagogue is built into what was originally the East wall of the palace. The synagogue was founded in 1510 in what was a private home in the part of the city designated as the Jewish Ghetto, but its interior was remodeled in the 18th Century. We were shown round by a member of the Split community (seen here on the left) who explained that it was almost never used for services now, as they have no-one who can lead services, though they have occasional Friday night meals.



museum in Dubrovnik was on a late Friday afternoon after the end of the conference I had attended. I rushed to get there in time and checked with the custodian that it really would be open on Shabbat. His answer was : “Yes, we are open tonight and tomorrow” and with a shrug of the shoulders “no Rabbi, no minyan, no Shabbat”. The synagogue dates from 1652 and retains its original features. A large central bimah occupies much of the space and features holders for the torah scrolls ornamented with crowns and spice boxes. The scrolls themselves,

along with other items are displayed in the adjacent museum. The synagogue is in the narrow street that was once the Jewish Ghetto. Situated on the first and second floors, the original access to the synagogue was via a kosher butcher’s shop on the other side of the street. The entrance was via a bridge across the narrow alley and a welcoming Hebrew inscription can just be discerned high upon the wall. The synagogue roof was hit twice and badly damaged during the shellings of Dubrovnik in 1991 as part of the Homeland war with Serbia. Its restoration was completed with funds from a donor in the USA.



The history of the Jewish community of Croatia has not been an easy one. After the expulsion from Spain in 1492 many Jewish merchants settled on what is now the Croatian coast and, over the following centuries, they suffered restrictions of different sorts under the various rulers of the region. It was not until 1873 that they were fully emancipated. On the eve of world war II the community numbered around 24 thousand. From 1941 and 1945 the Ustashe regime ruled the so-called Independent State of Croatia and exterminated the larger part of the Jewish community along with even larger numbers of ethnic Serbs and Roma. The name of the Jasenovac and other concentration camps in Croatia are not known in the same way as those in Eastern Europe and, I understand, this holocaust is seldom mentioned or acknowledged by Croatians today.

The current Jewish community numbers fewer than two thousand. Neither Split nor Dubrovnik has more than a handful of Jewish residents although, since both cities are major tourist attractions, the synagogues have many Jewish visitors. When I asked the community member who showed us round the synagogue in Split about when they could hold services he explained that Croatia has only one Rabbi based in Zagreb and his visits to them are less than annual. In fact I believe that there is

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thought this was wrong since the hatred of the Serbs felt by Croats today left little room for other enmity.

This visit made me realise how lucky we are to live in Scotland with no history of persecuting its Jewish citizens and, of course, that we have regular visits from our Rabbi and that we have members who can lead our services when he is not with us.

**Gillian Raab**

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## Limmud Conference

Book now for Limmud's flagship winter conference, taking place from **Sunday 25 to Thursday 29 December 2016** and preceded by **Limmud Shabbat** from Friday 23 to Saturday 24 December at Pendigo Lake, just outside Birmingham

Limmud (from the Hebrew 'to learn') is not affiliated to any particular strand of Judaism and its winter conference, attended by people from all over the world, is a feast of cultural, religious, political and social opportunities on Jewish themes.

To find out more, see <http://limmud.org/conference/>

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## Has Being Jewish in Scotland changed?

Following a rise in the number of reported antisemitic incidents in the summer of 2014, the Scottish Government funded the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) to carry out a small-scale inquiry into what has changed since their 2012 inquiry into the experience of 'Being Jewish in Scotland'. SCoJeC has now published the findings of its study, and the full report can be read at



<http://scojec.org/jewish-in-scotland-2015.html>.

SCoJeC's report, based on a small and self-selected sample of just over 100 respondents, appears to find markedly increased levels of insecurity among Jews in Scotland, particularly since events in Gaza during the summer of 2014.

Etrog asked two members of Sukkat Shalom to comment, keeping to a strict word limit. As you'll see, their views differ. We're interested to hear your views—tell us what you think by contacting [newsletter@eljc.org](mailto:newsletter@eljc.org).

### **Joe Goldblatt says:**

“The rise in hate crimes against Jews has directly negatively impacted my ability to participate openly in Jewish life. In 2014 I did not attend high holy day services for the first time in 60 years due to my concerns about the lack of security in my religious community. Due to increased terrorism throughout Europe since that time my concerns have increased significantly. On a positive note, I launched the Jewish



school children. As a result of many generous donors 400 Jewish objects have been donated from the USA, Canada, and Scotland and 32 Scottish local authorities are now using these boxes to educate future generations to respect the Jewish people."

### **Maurice Naftalin says:**



"There's a big gap between the feelings of many of the respondents and the feelings—as far as I understand them—of our Edinburgh community. Since the 2014 Gaza attack I've not heard, directly or indirectly, anyone in our community say that they feel insecure because of their own experiences in Scotland.

Nearly all the actual incidents leading to this insecurity of the report are connected with Israel (not all of them; without question, 'old' antisemitism persists). But the insecurity feels very general for many Jews. Our thinking seems confused: it seems that when things are going well, we are happy to be seen as prominent and enthusiastic allies of Israel—but when there's anger at Israel's actions, we label people who associate us with Israel as antisemitic.

Finally, many of the survey respondents seem unable to imagine that Scottish people could have any reason, other than antisemitism, for anger over the 2014 Gaza attack. But it's not all about us! There is strong popular opposition in Scotland to Israel's policies, and the cranks and haters are just outliers of it. Focussing on them may be comfortable, but it stops us from understanding the real problems and helping to solve them."

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## **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: Norman Crane

Treasurer: Phil Wadler

Membership: Sharon Goldwater

**Scottish Charity SC035678**

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