

March - April 2019

# Contents UDD Sukkat Shalom Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

Scottish Charity Number SC 035678

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Welcome to Etrog for March/April 2019: news, notices of future events, and pictures of past ones. Social action, art, food, and even beer—Etrog has it all!

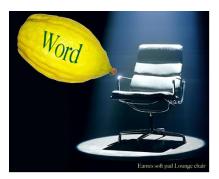
### Diary

You can also check the diary on our web page

March 2019								
Fri 1	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	habbat service <u>Marchmont St Giles</u>					
Fri 8	7:00 pm	Erev Shabbat service	St. Marks Unitarian Church					
Fri 15	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	Marchmont St Giles					
Thu 21	6:00 pm	Purim party and service, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	Christ Church Morningside					
Sat 23	11:00 am	Shabbat service, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	St. Marks Unitarian Church					
Sat 23	3:00 pm	Tea and Talmud	St. Marks Unitarian Church					
Sun 24	4:00 pm	Becky and Fraser wedding (RSVP to <u>gilhooleybecky@gmail.com</u> )	St. Marks Unitarian Church					
Fri 29	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	Marchmont St Giles					
April 2019								
Fri 5	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat service	Marchmont St Giles					
Fri 12	7:00 pm	Erev Shabbat service	St. Marks Unitarian Church					
Fri 19	6:30 pm	Passover seder, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	Marchmont St Giles					
Sat 27	11:00 am	Shabbat service, led by Rabbi Mark Solomon	St. Marks Unitarian Church					
Sat 27	3:00 pm	Tea and Talmud	St. Marks Unitarian Church					
Sun 28	4:00 pm	Discussion Group	St. Marks Unitarian Church					

#### Word from the Chair

In previous 'Words from the Chair' I've asked various questions about things such as the nature of our services, how well we all support each other and how important it is to help others. I suspect you've probably noticed that much of the time I'll ask the questions but not necessarily give an answer, deliberately so, but this time I want to talk about an event which I think encapsulates many of the great attributes of our community, and



that's the Tu B'shvat seder we held at the end of January. In no particular order, here are some of the things that struck me.

Firstly, we didn't have the seder on the correct date. It should have been on the evening of Sunday 20th January but we held it several days later. Why is that good? Well, the message of the seder, certainly these days, is an environmental one. We are reminded of our stewardship of the earth, and our responsibility to look after it. It goes without saying that this is something that we should be reminding ourselves of, and by holding our seder on a Friday evening when Rabbi Mark was up meant we had many more people than we would have done had we held it on the Sunday evening. It's not as if the seder is a major—or even minor—festival, and the message is more important than having to have the seder on a fixed day.



Our ability to be 'sensibly flexible' is definitely a good thing, and on this occasion, it meant that we held our seder on Burns Night thereby including Rabbi Mark's beautiful singing of 'Ye Banks and Braes', Michael Elam's powerful rendition of the poem 'The Tree of Liberty' written in response to the French Revolution and attributed to Robert Burns, Marjory Broadie's reading of a passage from a letter of Burns in which he spoke of his love of nature and plants as an expression of the divine and last but not least, a special and delicious Tu B'shvat haggis invented by Gillian Raab.

As we have done for the past few years, we invited

members of other faith groups to our Tu B'shvat seder. There are many reasons why it's important that we foster relationships with other faith communities—I don't really think you'd want me to go through them all—but the main point is that it was a great success. We had many people attending from other faith groups, and the feedback we had both on the day and afterwards was really positive. It's great when you receive many e-mails from non-members saying how much they appreciate,d being able to attend.

There was also the organisation of the event. The overall co-ordination was done by Sue Bard, thanks Sue, it was organised brilliantly, as ever. but the bit that really struck me was the way everyone joined in. This was from many members arriving early to help set up, bringing all the different fruits and nuts (albeit there was one exception; Kate and I really struggled to find nuts with shells on. We went to loads of shops to try and



get some, and the best we ended up with was peanuts—and they're not even proper nuts!) and helping to tidy up afterwards. I reckon there were maybe 40 or 50 people at the seder and yet we had lots of people—members and non-members alike—helping to tidy up.

The 'involvement theme' didn't just extend to the setting up and tidying up either. The actual service itself was a great example of involving everyone who wanted to be involved. Rabbi Mark led the seder but he gave everyone a chance to be involved too. It really was a good evening; one of those where you go home afterwards and you're on a high from, well, everything.

I'm actually writing this 'Word from the Chair' the morning before our AGM. We have a few vacancies for roles within our community. Here's hoping that this theme of involvement continues this afternoon. By the time you read this, those of you who attended the AGM—and if previous AGMs are anything to go by, there will have been a good number of us there—will know whether or not this was the case.

#### Nick Silk

#### Welcome to our new members

We're delighted to introduce new members, Barrie Levine and Gila Holliman. They're both long established in Scotland, but now find themselves drawn to Sukkat Shalom for its sense of community. We warmly welcome both of them and wish them all the best.



**Barrie** was born and brought up in Glasgow, where his family were members of Giffnock and Newlands Hebrew Congregation. Barrie was Bar Mitzvah there and continued to attend Talmud Torah, acquiring a solid Jewish grounding. At the same time, he was strongly drawn to the socialist Zionist youth movement Habonim where he was active and made lifelong friends. Through Habonim's shnat hachshara programme, Barrie spent 1973/74 in Israel on Kibbutz Beit HaEmek, being there during the Yom Kippur War.

Returning to Scotland, Barrie studied in Aberdeen and then in Bristol where he qualified as a social worker, working for the then pioneering and often inspired Strathclyde Region and later for

Glasgow City Council. He worked in various fields including drug use, HIV, homelessness and young people in care. Latterly, he lectured at Glasgow Caledonian University, teaching on the Social Work BA and MSc degree programmes. At this period he was involved in developing the radical social work action group, Social Work Action Network (SWAN), that aimed to counter the prevailing target-driven and managerial social work culture. Barrie retired from GCU 2017 in after 13 vears there. Barrie's retirement reflects both long-standing and new interests. He is chair of the Legal Services Agency, a charity and law centre with offices in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Greenock and is the Convenor of Scottish Jews for a Just Peace (SJJP), a diverse group of Jews committed to peace, social justice, and human rights in the Middle East. His appetite for study is undiminished and he is into his second year of an Ancient Near East and Egyptology course at Glasgow University.

Barrie is attracted to Sukkat Shalom by what he sees as its diversity, tolerance and outwardlooking character. Its openness to his daughter Rachel is also a major factor. He recognises his own need, at this stage of his life, to belong to a community, saying 'as you get older, you're looking for a community.' We in turn warmly welcome what he has to bring to Sukkat Shalom.

Gila is another American who's fallen in love with Edinburgh. When they first came to Scotland in 2006, she and her husband Mark expected to stay for three years, but here they are, thirteen years and two children on. It's been the arrival of Maya (six) and Liam (two) that has prompted Gila to join Sukkat Shalom and it's through our cheder in particular that she and her family are experiencing a sense of warm friendship and community, interesting discussions about how different faiths, beliefs and combined in one family. cultures can be

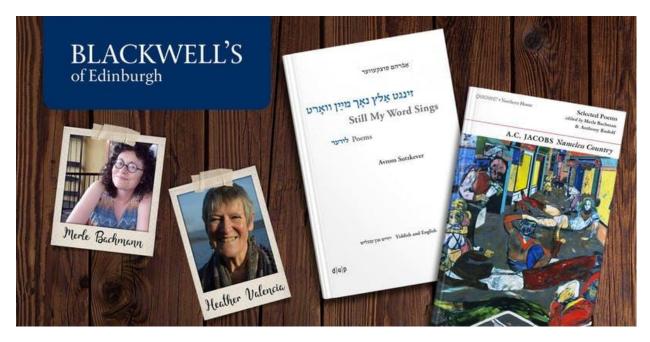
Gila was born in Israel but brought up initially in California and then New York (she has triple citizenship: Israeli, American and British). Her family



were members of a large, established Conservative Jewish congregation, Huntington Jewish Center, in New York and her family remains active in their various Jewish communities – her mother is the Director of Education at Temple Beth Shalom in Santa Fe, NM and her brother, an invested Cantor, is the music teacher at Posnack Jewish Day School in Davie, FL. As much as her own family, it was growing up in the community, with all it had to offer, that gave her a sense of Jewish identity. Mark's family is not Jewish but he is committed to supporting Gila in bringing up Maya and Liam as Jews.

Life is both rich and demanding with Gila and Mark combining full-time work at the University of Edinburgh with the care of their children. Gila is the Administrative Officer of the School of Social and Political Science, while Mark is a Software and Data Specialist at the Royal Observatory. They are supported by good friends as well as all the American grandparents who time their visits to help out during school holidays. They are also looking forward to strengthening their involvement with Sukkat Shalom.

#### Sue Bard



## Jewish Poetry—Yiddish and Scottish

#### 20<sup>th</sup> Century Jewish Journeys – Avrom Sutzkever and AC Jacobs

At Blackwell's Bookshop, South Bridge, Edinburgh.

Thursday 7 March, 6.30 - 8.00pm

Heather Valencia, Yiddishist, academic and friend of Sukkat Shalom, and Merle Bachman, US poet and academic will be speaking, respectively, about the lives and work of Yiddish writer Avrom Sutzkever and Scottish poet AC Jacobs, with readings from their recently published books of poetry.

Admission is free, but booking is advised: https://bit.ly/2NxAII0

### Uprooted

# Lyn Julius is touring Scotland, speaking about her book Uprooted: How 3000 Years of Jewish Civilisation in the Arab World Vanished Overnight

Lyn Julius is co-founder of Harif, the UK Association of Jews from the Middle East and North Africa. She will be talking in various locations about her recently published book, *'Uprooted: How 3000 Years of Jewish Civilisation in the Arab World Vanished Overnight'* 

.Glasgow	Sunday	3	March	6.30	_	8.30pm
Inverness	Monday	4	March	7.00	_	9.00pm
Edinburgh	Tuesday	5	March	7.00	_	9.00pm
Dumfries	Thursday	7	March	7.00	_	9.00pm

These events are FREE and include a kosher buffet. Venue details available on booking. Book through SCOJEC: <u>www.scojec.org/uprooted.html</u>

### Balfour Project events—Edinburgh and Glasgow

Mindful of centuries of European persecution of the Jewish people and the continuing plight of the Palestinian people, the Balfour Project aims to contribute to justice, peace and reconciliation in the Middle East. It is holding two major events in Scotland, concentrating on Britain's role in, and historical responsibility for, the current state of affairs in Palestine and



Israel and particularly Gaza/

### **Interfaith News**

Sunday 3 March, 2 – 5pm: International Women's Day. Food for mind, body and soul.

At St John's Church Hall on the corner of Princes Street and Lothian Road EH2 4BJ.

Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group (EWIG) is hosting an event that includes workshops,

complementary therapies, arts and crafts, information stalls and delicious food. This is a FREE event for all ages

# Tuesday 2 April, 6 – 8pm: Annual Interfaith Lecture 'Mental Health of Scotland—how far have we come?' Julie Cameron of the Mental Health Foundation.

At St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art, 2 Castle Street, Glasgow, G4 0RH

The programme includes registration and refreshments (vegetarian and kosher buffet), lecture, discussion and launch of the Interfaith Scotland Youth Network.

## Miriam Vickers at the Artists' Invitation Exhibition

Sukkat Shalom member and acclaimed artist, Miriam Vickers, is exhibiting at the Artists' Invitation Exhibition of Scottish Arts Club award winners.

Scottish Arts Club, 24 Rutland Square, Edinburgh 6–30 March; open to the public Tuesday – Saturday 11am – 5pm **Preview Wednesday 6 March 6 – 8pm** 



### Limmud Scotland—Save the Date

We're delighted to let you know that Limmud Scotland 2019 will held in Edinburgh on **Sunday 24 November**. SAVE THE DATE!

### Pizza, Beer-and Song

If you'd like to learn—or learn better!—the songs in our Erev Shabbat or Kabbalat Shabbat services, come to our new Friday night practice sessions. These are for everyone, both confident singers and (especially) others. On the evenings below, the Kabbalat Shabbat services will be followed, after an essential interlude of free pizza and beer (or non-beer), by an hour or so of practice.

Friday 29 March Friday 17 May Friday 21 June

For details of Kabbalat Shabbat services, see the diary at the start of this newsletter. They run from 6pm to around 7.00pm; on the dates above the added beer, pizza and singing will all finish around 8.30pm.

## Tu B'Shvat Haggis Recipe

All quantities below are approximate and other ingredients, apart from those starred, can be added or removed for variation. This should make one large haggis. I made four times this quantity for our Tu B'Shevat seder. This version has 15 different fruits or nuts contributing to the recipe. To make it haggis-like you will need to ask a butcher to supply you with a skin that is used for vegetarian haggis and some butcher's string to tie it up.

#### Method

Cook the lentils in salted water until they are soft (about 20 minutes) and drain. Finely chop or grate the onion and fry gently in the olive oil without letting it brown, add the oatmeal, garlic, stock (just enough to make the mixture into a fairly thick paste) and chopped apple and pear, and cook, while stirring, for around 10 minutes. The oatmeal should be cooked but still retain its texture. Then stir in the lentils and everything else. Put the grated coconut cream in last (it is standing in for the suet in traditional haggis) and mix in well. Taste to adjust seasoning.

You are now ready to stuff your haggis skin. Tie it up well. It will keep well like this until you are ready to serve. It is then best reheated by bringing slowly to the boil in a pan of cold water and simmering for about 10 minutes. I usually wrap it in silver foil in the pan to avoid it turning to porridge if the skin leaks.

Alternatively, the mixture makes a nice filling for stuffed peppers and I am sure you can think of other possibilities.

#### Ingredients

200 g black (Beluga?) lentils\* 1 onion\* Olive oil\* 1 crushed garlic clove\* 100g coarse pin-head oatmeal\* Vegetable stock\* 1 apple (cored and chopped) 1 pear (cored and chopped) Zest of 1 orange Dried fruits (total about 80 g) Raisins, figs, dates, apricots, prunes Chopped nuts (about 50g)Walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds Pistachios and/or pine nut-a spoonful of each-I left them whole Pomegranate molasses, 1 tablespoonful 2tsp ground coriander 1/2 tsp ground cumin About 1/4 of a block (25g) of creamed coconut, grated Salt and pepper to taste

### The Tree of Liberty

(attributed to Robert Burns)

Heard ye o' the tree o' France, I watna what's the name o't; Around it a' the patriots dance, Weel Europe kens the fame o't. It stands where ance the Bastile stood,

A prison built by kings, man, When Superstition's hellish brood Kept France in leading strings, man.

Upo' this tree there grows sic fruit, Its virtues a' can tell, man; It raises man aboon the brute, It maks him ken himsel, man. Gif ance the peasant taste a bit, He's greater than a lord, man, An' wi' the beggar shares a mite O' a' he can afford, man. Let Britain boast her hardy oak, Her poplar and her pine, man, Auld Britain ance could crack her joke,

And o'er her neighbours shine, man. But seek the forest round and round, And soon 'twill be agreed, man. That sic a tree can not be found 'Twixt London and the Tweed, man.

Wi' plenty o' sic trees, I trow, This warld would live in peace, man; The sword would help to mak a plough, The din o' war wad cease, man. Like brethren in a common cause, We'd on each other smile, man; And equal rights and equal laws Wad gladden every isle, man.

With his powerful reading of the full text of this poem (see <a href="http://www.rbwf.org.uk/the-tree-of-liberty/">http://www.rbwf.org.uk/the-tree-of-liberty/</a>) Michael Elam added to the Burns flavour of our Tu B'Shvat seder.

### Gica on Samos

In our last edition of Etrog, we wrote that Gica Loening, musician and Sukkat Shalom member, was about to spend a month with the organisation 'Samos Volunteers' working with refugees on the Greek island of Samos. Gica is now back in Edinburgh and here she reports back.

I worked for a month over the Christmas period as a volunteer at Samos Refugee Camp where nearly 5000 people, including families and young children, have been living in makeshift tents and tarpaulins in freezing temperatures. Samos is one of the EU frontline Greek islands nearest to Turkey, and the fact that it has been a hotspot for thousands of refugees escaping war-torn and impoverished countries has been under-reported in the



media. In the past six months, the refugee population has grown to between 4000 and 5000 people. The official capacity for the camp, set up by the Greek Army was for 750, but most live in 'the jungle' spillover, with no sanitation or running water, and with queues for food lasting five hours. With the asylum process taking from a few months to two years, people are desperate, in limbo, and with limited access to human rights and the freedom to move off the island.



My six-day-week timetable included helping out in the vital laundry service (you could expect to get your clothes and bedding washed every five months), being bouncer on the door of the community centre, where over 500 people a day flooded in to take shelter, play board games, learn a language or use a sewing machine. As a musician, I led music and song sessions for the camp children (including 300 unaccompanied minors) and at the Saturday women's sessions and guitar group. The

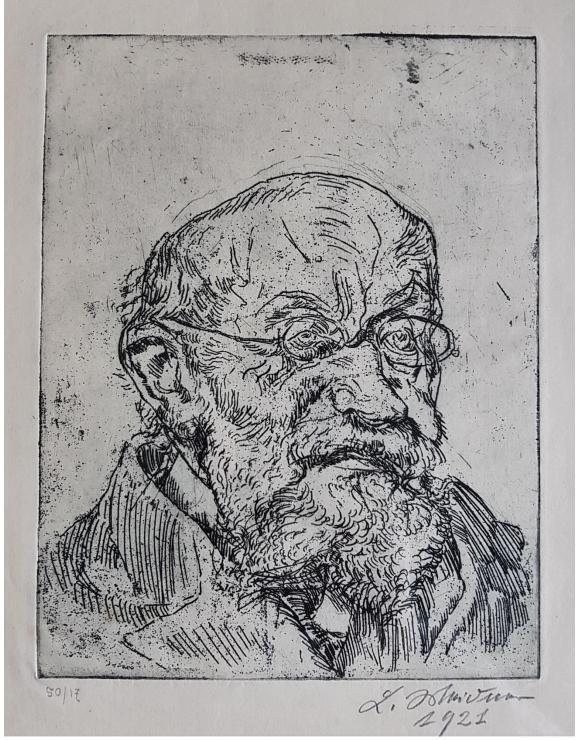
passion and skill for music-making and singing amongst many of the refugees was impressive and moving and was a reminder that music and the arts can have a powerful effect amongst all the hardship and injustice. It was an unforgettable and tough but amazing experience that will stay with me.

You can donate and also find out more about Samos Volunteers and the refugee situation at samosvolunteers.org and gicaloening.simplesite.com. through my blog: There's also a fabulous cook book-all proceeds to Samos Volunteers-created by fellow volunteer and great cook, Pam Gregory from Argyll: displaceddishes.com/

#### Gica Loening

## Degenerate Art Discovered in Edinburgh

On rare occasions, the salerooms and second-hand shops of Edinburgh turn up an item of Jewish interest. Etrog readers might be interested to hear about a picture found recently at an auction in Leith. It's an engraving, number 17 of an edition of 50, signed in pencil by the artist and dated 1921.



The sitter was Professor Eugen Goldstein. Wikipedia says:

"Eugen Goldstein (1850 – 1930) was a German physicist. He was an early investigator of discharge tubes, the discoverer of anode rays, and is sometimes credited with the discovery of the proton.

"Goldstein was born in 1850 at Gleiwitz Upper Silesia, now known as Gliwice, Poland, to a Jewish family. He studied at Breslau and later, under Helmholtz, in Berlin. Goldstein worked at the Berlin Observatory from 1878 to 1890, but spent most of his career at the Potsdam Observatory, where he became head of the astrophysical section in 1927. He died in 1930 and was buried in the Weißensee Cemetery in Berlin." The artist was Ludwig Meidner, a German Expressionist painter and printmaker, a Jew born in Bernstadt, Silesia (today Bierutów, Poland) in 1884. Meidner started out as an apprentice to a stonemason, but in 1903 left for Breslau (now Wroclaw) to study at the Royal School of Art. Two years later he relocated to Berlin, working as a draftsman and

fashion illustrator. In 1906 he was in Paris, returning to Berlin in 1907

According to notes published on Sotheby's website, "it was at this point that Meidner's signature style truly flourished; although not associated with a specific group, he produced portraits and landscapes in an Expressionist manner, with many of his landscapes later being categorized as 'apocalyptic' due to their catastrophic, chaotic tone and subjects of devastation. These uncanny compositions have been interpreted through both Meidner's interest in biblical prophecies, as well as through the deteriorating political and social climate of Germany in the years preceding World War I."



In 1916, Meidner was drafted into the German Army,



and in 1918 he had his first solo exhibition in Berlin. In the following years, he produced large numbers of etchings, including portraits of men of letters and other celebrities, and self-portraits. During this period, he became a socialist activist and a prolific writer of political manifestos, journalism, essays and lyrical expressionistic prose.

After Hitler came to power, Meidner understandably felt vulnerable as a high-profile Jewish socialist Expressionist artist. He moved to Cologne in 1935, and then in 1939 fled with his family to England, where he took menial jobs to support himself and his family. In 1951 he returned to Germany, and in the following years gained recognition and status. He died in Darmstadt in 1966. From a historical perspective, what has given Meidner's current reputation perhaps its greatest boost was the inclusion of a number of his pictures in the notorious Entartete Kunst (Degenerate Art) exhibition mounted by the Nazis in Munich in 1937. The exhibition comprised pictures and sculptures seized from German galleries, and was designed to display, deride and ridicule modern Expressionist and abstract art.

Ironically, for an exhibition which invited visitors to be appalled and horrified at the art on display, the show turned out to be a great success, with more than a million visitors. And although the declared objective was to show that degenerate art was produced by Jews and Bolsheviks, in fact only six of the 112 artists included were actually Jewish. Meidner was one of the six.

The etching of Professor Goldstein wasn't in the Degenerate Art exhibition, and, as far as I can ascertain, wasn't among the 16,000 works of art confiscated from galleries throughout Germany. But it is still possible that it might have been among the thousands—perhaps millions—of other artworks stolen and looted from Jews and other persecuted private owners during the period of Hitler's rule. Which is why, for pictures by German Expressionists, including Ludwig Meidner, it is always necessary to enquire



Ludwig Meidner, Apocalyptic Landscape, sold at Sotheby's, 12 November 2018

how and why any remaining examples of the artist's pre-1945 output have survived, and whether there is any case for them to be properly restituted to former owners (or their descendants).

Fortunately there are online databases listing lost and looted works of art, and I have consulted them just in case anyone has laid claim to number 17 in the edition of 50 copies of the 1921 portrait of Professor Eugen Goldstein. So far I haven't found it (or any other copy from the same edition) on any list, which is reassuring. But on the other hand, I know nothing about its ownership before 2015 when it last appeared on the market at an auction in London. I'm assuming that I own the picture, but if any person or institution has a better claim to ownership than mine, then it will give me the greatest pleasure to hand it back.

In Britain, Meidner is not a household name, but he's an important artist. One of his big apocalyptic oil paintings sold at Sotheby's New York recently for more than \$14 million. His work can be found in many major collections, and his archive and a large collection of his drawings, etchings and paintings are headline items in the Frankfurt Jewish Museum.

When I bought the picture, I was more attracted by the artist than by the image, but in the short time I have owned it, I have become rather attached to it. Although I occasionally re-sell my auction purchases, I think this one's a keeper. Hitler says it's degenerate, and that's a good enough recommendation for me to hang it proudly on my wall.

#### Roger Stewart

### 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 <u>care@eljc.org</u>

> Contact Team - <u>contact@eljc.org</u> Etrog Team - <u>newsletter@eljc.org</u>

Chair: Nick Silk Secretary: Gillian Raab Membership: Stefano Giossi

#### Scottish Charity SC035678