



Nissan — Tammuz 5782

May — June 2022



Etrog

The Newsletter of
Sukkat Shalom
Edinburgh

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Word From the Sofa

Sue Bard



Most readers will know that last November, a damaging and hurtful conflagration broke out on the ELJC Care and Support WhatsApp group that has resulted in almost six months of reflection, talking, writing and actions. This has included a **sermon** delivered verbally shortly after the original event by Rabbi Mark Solomon and summarised by Maurice Naftalin in his article 'A Challenging Time for Sukkat Shalom' published in **Etrog in January**.

In (the sermon) Rabbi Mark describes how a single quoted remark, drawing on racist assumptions, ignited a fierce controversy between those who felt that they should publicly 'reprove their fellow' (as Leviticus (19:17) commands), and those whose priority was to follow Rabbinic teachings in preventing the shaming or humiliating of another. A further issue, even deeper and more serious, was revealed in the pain felt by people of colour in our community who understood some of what was said as a defence of racism and as a result felt uncertain of their place in our community.

In January, Nick Silk's **Word From The Sofa** explored the concept of 'unconscious bias' and its relevance to the situation in which we found ourselves.

Maurice's and Nick's article laid out proposed actions that I'm reporting back on here.

We co-chairs made ourselves available – as a group, and as individuals – to anyone who wanted to speak to us about what had happened, in order to get a better understanding of people's concerns and ideas about what to do next.

The WhatsApp group is now clearly the responsibility of Sukkat Shalom. At the time of the November events, it had 32 members. It now has 28, all of whom have signed up to a code of conduct, which will be re-posted quarterly. Signing up to the code is a requirement for new group members. The group is now administered /moderated by four members of Sukkat Shalom, following [Moderation Guidelines](#), and we are very appreciative of the individuals who've volunteered to do this.

In a not unrelated matter, Maurice's Word from The Sofa in March was '**Ouch!**' drawing attention to our tendency as co-chairs to centralise decision-making and action to ourselves and our failure both to involve the rest of the council and the wider membership as fully as we could. Reflecting on this, we have come to recognise that the community that's emerging from the pandemic isn't the same community that went into it.

Our full membership has increased from 99 to 125 over the last two years. At the beginning of this period, Sukkat Shalom created a new category of associate membership (that in itself has created a new defined sub-group with its own weight, demands and entitlement as members). All but one of our associate members belong to the Exploring Judaism Group – that is, they are people who are seriously thinking about or are in the process of converting. Our membership (including associate membership) has therefore increased by 64% during the two years of co-chairing. This has led to a community that's not only bigger, but also more complex and diverse than it was.

Of course, it is positive and stimulating to be part of a growing and changing community – but it seems the way we run ourselves has some catching up to do. To this end, council members are participating in a facilitated away half-day at the end of May to start looking at this. At the same time, we're following up what people said after the unconscious bias workshops, about wanting opportunities to meet and talk – to carry forward conversations that began in the workshops and to explore other topics. I see these as parallel and potentially interlocking processes – look out for more on both!

Admissions to Judaism



Warmest congratulations and welcome to Ash Alexander, Mina Baird and Shinwoo Kim on their admission to Judaism at our Shabbat service on 26 March. Ash and Mina spoke movingly about what this means to them, including their reasons for choosing their new Jewish names. Both paid tribute to the guidance and support they'd had throughout the process of conversion from Rabbi Mark – especially valuable during the long period of lockdown.

Here are Ash's own words:

It is with great joy that I'm writing about my admission to Judaism, which took place last month, following two years of active study and practice in my community, though it has really been a much longer journey. I have chosen the Hebrew name Adam Yosef Elisha ben Eliyahu. It's a name full of meaning for me as a transgender Jew, and as someone for whom chosen family is important.

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to Rabbi Mark Solomon for sponsoring my conversion, and to everyone who welcomed, guided, and supported me on my path. Your kindness and generosity were instrumental to my reaching this point. I feel a great sense of belonging and happiness to be formally a member of the Jewish people, and I look forward to contributing to Sukkat Shalom and the broader Jewish community.



A special guest was Marloes Schoonheim, stepping out of the Zoom screen to join us for the weekend from the Netherlands. Thank you Marloes for your beautiful leyning of parasha shemini and for the festive kiddush that followed the service.



Welcome to the World!



Congratulations on the birth of Robyn Fox-McLoughlan

Lauren, Lou and Ida welcomed Robyn Fox-McLoughlan to their family on Saturday 16 April. Ida is a very proud big sister and everyone is doing well.

Hello to Heidi Kuehne

Sue Bard

Heidi arrived in Edinburgh from the USA in 2007 when, as she says, 'the world was still humming along'. 14 years on, and 18 months into the pandemic, Heidi applied to become a member of Sukkat Shalom, brought to this point by a period of life-changing illness that has caused her to reassess many aspects of her life.

In 1971 Heidi and her family spent the best part of a year in Jerusalem, living in the suburb of Talpiot. Here, 13-year-old Heidi felt liberated by the feeling of being surrounded by Jewish people and entranced by the beauty of Jerusalem, walking often in one direction to the Old City and in the other on weekly visits to Bethlehem. It was an interlude that left a lasting impression.

Heidi describes herself as having had a 'series of careers'. After a 10-year stint as a professional musician and a 5-year period in the Indiana (USA) civil service as an environmental regulator, she came to Edinburgh to take up a post-doctoral research position in evolutionary biology, following which, she helped manage a research lab. Now, she says she's 'a happily semi-retired violinist and whisky sales expert', teaching violin to people of all ages and skill levels and working two days a week at Royal Mile Whiskies. Many Sukkat Shalom members, including our rabbi, will prick up their ears at that.

At the beginning of the pandemic, Heidi became seriously ill, with urgent surgery delayed, and recovery has been slow and difficult. But Heidi has nothing but praise for the NHS: 'If I'd had my illnesses in the US, I'd be bankrupt by now'. And she has had the love and support of wonderful friends who looked after her and became her 'bubble family' during lockdown. But she knows that the whole experience has changed her – 'I'm not the same person as I was going in'.

Heidi is looking forward to becoming an active member of our community. We look forward to greeting her arriving on her awesome and eye-catching recumbent trike:

You feel like a jet fighter pilot, close to the ground, going faster than the wind it's more fun than should be legal.



Remembering Audrey Barcan

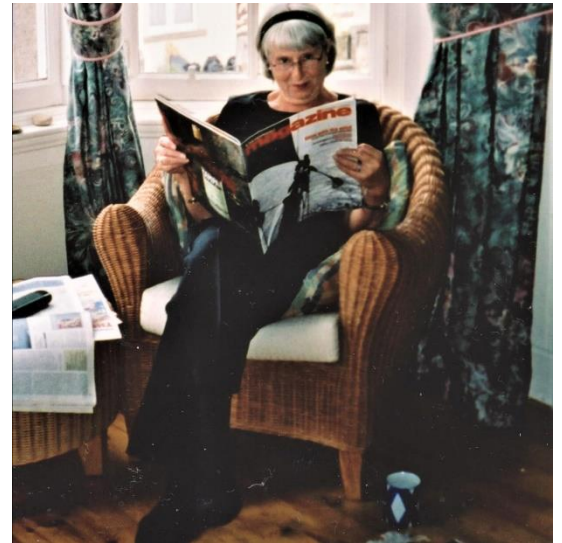
In memory of Audrey Barcan 14 August 1928 – 10 March 2022

Lisa Barcan

My mother Audrey Barcan was incredibly strong after losing my father Jeff last July (link to Etrog 33 Sept, Oct 2021, Jeff Barcan). She decided to stay in Southend and the house she'd enjoyed with the family for most of her adult life. Although her sight and hearing were failing she retained her love of life and her faculties, and lived with the help of carers. She was very much in control and determined to maintain her independence. She still enjoyed the garden and

occasional outings to the seafront. Her passing was a shock but my brothers and I were so grateful she was spared extended suffering and that her death was peaceful and in her own home.

Audrey Gotliebovich was born in Clapton on 14th August 1928 and grew up in the Lea Bridge Road area of East London. Her parents, Daniel and Dorothy were both born in London, but the family originated from Poland. Her great grandfather was born in Skulsk in 1866 and he and his wife, Dora were naturalized in London in 1930. Audrey had two sisters, Enid and Sheila, and when the youngest sister was born the family name was anglicized to Gotlieb.



Audrey went to the Skinner Company School for Girls (Skinners) and often talked about happy schooldays and being evacuated. She was 11 when war broke out and the family were on holiday in Margate in Kent (an area we often went to later for family holidays). The school was evacuated to Welwyn Garden City and the girls went directly there from their holiday. Initially, Audrey was placed alone, as the host family could only take two children but later the three sisters were reunited. Later, the whole family relocated to Welwyn until after the war, when my grandparents were concerned that their girls needed to be part of a Jewish community and the move to Southend was made.

My mother was always very sporty, very good at hockey and tennis, and a strong swimmer – invariably winning the Mums' race at school sports days. She had wanted to train as a P E teacher, but I think her father had very traditional views regarding women's education. Later she did run a keep fit class in the synagogue hall and was influenced by the teacher Eileen Fowler. She also loved long walks, always with a sense of adventure, known by the family as 'hope you don't get lost walks'. And we often did!

As teenagers the Gotlieb girls became very popular in the vibrant social scene. Many other Jewish families had made the move from the East End to Southend. She met my father at a dance and always boasted she had the pick of the bunch! They were married in 1950 at Great Portland Street synagogue and my brother Richard was born a year later, followed by me in 1955. My younger brother Eddie was born in 1964 and has always embraced being told he was a little accident!

While my father was busy with AJEX (The Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women) voluntary work, my mother was pivotal in the local WIZO branch

(Women's International Zionist Organisation) and later on the committee of Raymond House, the Jewish Care home and day centre in Southend. She was much more comfortable helping others there rather than seeing herself as someone in need of care. In the late 70's she joined Jeff at their menswear shop where she was a good organiser and businesswoman.

My parents were well-travelled, and both loved being in the sun. They had been part of a thriving community as we grew up but living to a great age, they lost many friends and saw changes at the shul and in the town. Audrey was devoted to Jeff and took on the role of his carer after his stroke, as she had cared for her parents at the end of their lives.

She became very supportive of the life choices her children made and loved the fact that I was now part of a Jewish community myself (a favourite photo of hers was taken on a visit to us in Edinburgh). I shall miss her very much, especially our telephone conversations and relating news from Edinburgh. Audrey loved life and was fortunate to have a long and fulfilling one. Now, sadly, all too soon, she is reunited with Jeff.

A Tale of Two Libraries

Nick Silk

Last year, we received a donation of over 70 books from a former schoolteacher who was moving out of his house and wanted them to go to a good home. These books have been added to our library which is currently upstairs on the balcony at St Mark's, and while the books are available to borrow (we have an honesty system – you just write down the books you borrow in a notebook) I suspect that not many people know of our library's existence. We would like to change that, and while we have to leave the books upstairs at St Marks, we would like to show off some of these new books, together with some of our existing ones, to encourage members to use our library. We're having a 'book showing' social event – it will be a chance to look at some of the books and also have a tea or coffee, a bit of cake and a chance to chat with other members at the same time; be that about the books we have or anything else for that matter!

You can see our books at librarything.com/catalog/eljc. If you click on the books tab drop-down menus will appear in the line below. The one on the left lets you select one or both of our two collections. You can also use the tags drop-down menu to select particular types of book, e.g. novels, history.



This is what you will see if you click the tag “humour”.

Our adult books are in the bookcases on the St Marks balcony - come and see them on booklovers day (below). Children's books are in a stand in our cupboard at Marchmont St Giles. We have previously made these available to the cheder children. **If any cheder parents, or anyone else, would like to help with this, please reply to this email.**

BOOK LOVERS' SOCIAL with tea, coffee and cake, Sunday 5 June 3pm – 5pm St Mark's Unitarian Church, 7 Castle Terrace EH1 2DP

Coincidentally, I recently received an email from David Grant, who is a member of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, about their library. David wrote an article for the EHC magazine and has asked if we would like to publish it in Etrog as we are invited to make use of the EHC library. David's article is below:

To access the Cosgrove Library please email contact@eljc.org and we will pass your details to David who can then give you the door code, or arrange to meet you there and show you the collection in person.

The Cosgrove Library

David Grant

The Succah at Salisbury Road is home to something of a hidden treasure. The Cosgrove Library is a collection of over a thousand books which originally formed part of the comprehensive library of Judaica of the late Rev. Dr. I. Kenneth Cosgrove, minister of Gartnethill Synagogue, Glasgow and Senior Jewish Chaplain to the Armed Forces in Scotland during the Second World War. He died in 1973 and his library was maintained and added to by his widow Dorothy Cosgrove MBE until her death in 1983, when it was presented to EHC by their sons Malcolm and John with the hope that additional books of Jewish interest would be added. This is indeed the case; whilst over the course of time some of the collection has been lost many new additions have been acquired.

The first catalogue of the Library was compiled by Debbie Sinclair (and subsequently maintained by the late Mr. Ian Shein), on a manual typewriter before the days of home computers, word processing and spreadsheets. What a labour of love that must have been! Over the years, partly as a consequence of building projects on the site, the collection fell into some disarray. I have always had a love of books and after the High Holy Days last year took on the task of rehabilitating the Library. This involved clearing and cleaning the shelves, checking each volume against the old catalogue and noting a publication date, condemning some books in poor condition, simplifying the category structure and recategorizing some items, adding the new acquisitions to the catalogue, writing the updated catalogue onto Excel spreadsheets, creating a master index of the whole collection, reshelving the books in order and relabelling the shelves. For the time being you can access the [new catalogue](#) online.

My hope is that some forty years on from its donation the Library will have a new lease of life and that the wider community both Jewish and non – Jewish will make use of it. As well as books on Judaism itself there are sections on Jewish history and British Jewry, biographies, literature and fiction, Israel and Zionism, the Holocaust, philosophy, art and much more besides.

When visiting you will see the new catalogue in a red folder. I am human, there will be errors! Please do feel welcome to contact me about anything to do with the Library – particularly if you can't find what you are looking for. I don't yet have a formal system for borrowing so if you do want to borrow a book please do just let me know by email.

Jewish Edinburgh and Walking Tour

Gillian Raab



Edinburgh was the city where the first Jewish Community in Scotland was established over 200 years ago. As part of the 200th anniversary (celebrated in 2016-17), I contributed some work based on genealogical data compiled by Michael Tobias, Scotland's leading Jewish genealogist. An article based on some of this work was published recently and I have made it available on the Jewish Edinburgh Section of the [Sukkat Shalom web site](#). The article looks at Jewish marriages in Edinburgh from 1850 to 1911 and covers some of the history of the three Jewish Congregations that existed in Edinburgh during this period.

Another initiative that was part of the 200th anniversary was a walking tour of Jewish Edinburgh that was devised by four of us (Hannah Holtschneider, Elaine Samuel, Mike Adler and me). You can follow it in detail [here](#) and you can [download an app](#) for your mobile that will take you round the tour. The places visited on the walking tour are not in chronological order. The earliest character referred to by the tour was Herman Lyons – a lively character you can read about [here](#) who lived in the Canongate in the 1790s. He built a mausoleum for himself and his wife on Calton Hill that was buried when they built the Observatory. It was rediscovered in 2013 during drainage work. Towards the end of the tour you can visit the [earliest Community Cemetery](#) in Braid Place, off Causewayside. If you plan to go we can arrange to lend you a key to go in to examine the graves and perhaps do a little maintenance while you are there.

Triple Purim Celebrations

Purim was celebrated this year in person and on Zoom. First off was a great in-person cheder purim party, followed by a community purim party complete with a rotating one-minute megillah – a speed-dating version of the traditional Megillah reading.



Finally, once again, thanks to Nancy Lynner, who wrote her second purimspiel for Zoom, and to director Michael Elam, we had a

wonderful and topical virtual performance, complete with the murderous Omnicron and Delta characters.

Cheder Report

Mor Kandlik Eltanani

Cheder keeps operating in a hybrid mode – one monthly online meeting and one monthly in-person meeting. This seems to be working well for the variety of families we have, as some find online sessions are hard for children to engage with, while others find in-person sessions hard to travel to.

We had a fun and engaging Purim party with 12 families (21 kids) who participated, enjoyed a Purim show, and exchanged mishlochei manot. We were careful with Covid regulations, and indeed one adult (who didn't stay for the activity due to the regulations) later tested positive. To our knowledge, this was the only case, and we notified all participants of it. It was a good reminder that Covid is still with us and we were happy we were so careful.

We had to postpone our Cheder-focused Shabbat service scheduled for early April because many of the Cheder families were already on their Easter leave and are away. We are looking forward to the **in-person Cheder and community service on May 28**.

Would you like to be a Cheder teacher?

We are looking for a teacher for 2023/24 for our Kita Alef – the youngest age group, pre-school – P2 (though help in other age groups would be great too). Alef children learn Hebrew letters, discuss Jewish holidays, hear stories, and enjoy crafts and games, but you don't need to have any special knowledge and we work as a team to think through the syllabus and session structure. We have a session every fortnight, on Saturday afternoons, and alternate between in-person and Zoom sessions. If you might be interested, please get in touch for a chat with [Mor](#) or [Gila](#).

Interfaith News

Nick Silk

In the past month, the Edinburgh Interfaith Association (EIFA) has conducted several on-line interfaith programmes, including the Future of Faith and Interfaith Insights. EIFA also continues to air a monthly programme entitled Faith Full Fridays featuring members of faith communities and a mindfulness

facilitator to promote deeper understanding of different beliefs and appreciation of mindfulness practices. These programmes air on the final Friday of each month at 1pm and are also available on replay.

Joe Goldblatt, the chair of EIFA (as well as a member of Sukkat Shalom), continues to attend the weekly Scottish Government Faith and Communities task force meetings. Key information from these meetings is passed to the co-chairs.

EIFA has engaged a fundraising consultancy to help find new resources to support their volunteer-led programmes and over two dozen grant proposals and applications have been distributed in the past three months.

Liberal Judaism Day of Celebration

'Where Liberal & Judaism Meet'

In-person and online: Sunday 22 May 9:30am-4:30pm

The Day of Celebration is a festival of people, knowledge and culture. It is a space for all Liberal Jewish communities to meet and celebrate each other. The diverse programme will include sessions, workshops and discussions led by Liberal Judaism rabbis and outside experts.

Keynote speakers Sara Nathan, co-founder of Refugees at Home and Paul Anticoni CEO of World Jewish Relief will lead a session dedicated to what role we can play to assist in refugee crises. Bring your questions.

Seven tracks distinct session tracks:

- Judaism & Social Responsibility
- Inclusion in Action
- Art & Culture
- Hot Potatoes
- Communities & COVID
- 'What does Liberal Judaism Think?'
- Spiritual Possibilities of Judaism Today

Ask the Rabbi – a space to ask LJ rabbis those burning questions. Tea/coffee not essential but highly recommended!

A full day of LJY-Netzer programming for young people.

A 'grab-and-go' lunch – catch up with old friends or attend one of the Lunch & Learn sessions.

Venue The Liberal Jewish Synagogue, 28 St Johns Wood Road, London, NW8 7HA

Register to join in person

Register to join online

For subsidies for group travel from outside London, contact t.rich@liberaljudaism.org

Become an Ambassador for Liberal Judaism

This year, Liberal Judaism is celebrating 120 years of existence. To mark this, and to raise funds, LJ is asking Ambassadors to come forward from every community to tell their stories of how they have come to Liberal Judaism, and what it means to them.

Ambassadors can be individuals, or groups of people working together. Each individual or group will have their own dedicated page on the campaign website to tell their story – why is Liberal Judaism important to them? what has it done for them? why is it so important for that work to continue and grow? Don't worry if you've never done anything like this before. LJ will provide you with all the information you need to build and personalise your own campaign page – whether it's making videos, taking photos, writing your story.

Fundraising will take place for 36 hours, beginning on Sunday 19 June, when you can direct your page to friends and family to donate and help Liberal Judaism become the home for the next generation of Jewish stories.

LJ aims to raise £500,000 half of which has already been pledged as matchfunding.

To find out more, or to register to be an Ambassador go to bringingjudaismhome.org

The funding will be used to:

- Create a new online hub for Liberal Judaism – supporting communities and individuals with resources, music, rabbinic teachings and more
- Write new curricula – for both chederim and proselytes
- Fund time for rabbis and others to centrally create resources
- Create a new social action department to deliver centralised and resourced projects
- Expand LJY-Netzer bursary capabilities and inclusion provision for young people
- Create Community Connections – provide seed money for smaller communities to work on projects together

LJ will be holding information evenings in the run up to the campaign – look out for them.

Pesach/Passover 2022

We were sad to have to cancel our community seder for the third year, but very grateful for our Zoom seder conducted by Rabbi Mark with his usual zeal and feeling. Have a look at these photos to see what people were doing in their own



homes. And see Joe and Nancy's unimaginably well-supplied shop in Greenwich Village, NYC.

Including baking their own matzos, growing their own horseradish and practising lesser-known customs, such as the Ashkenazi one of ending pesach with a lucky key-shaped shlissel challah (see below before and after baking).



Painting For My Life – A Review

The Holocaust artworks of Marianne Grant

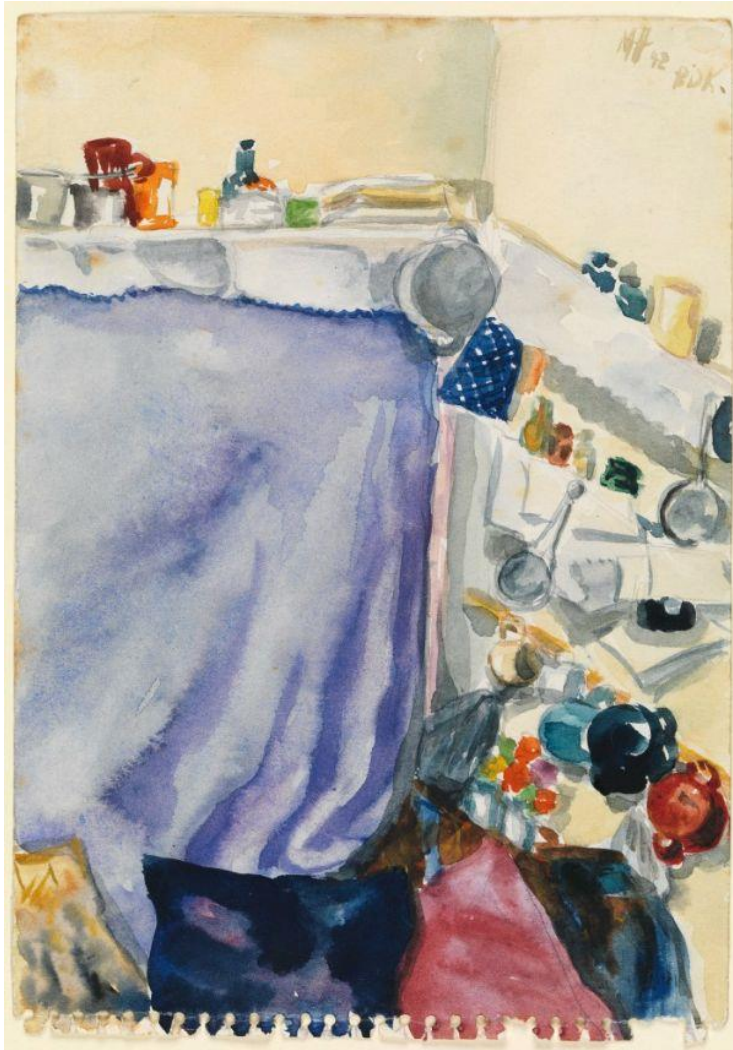
Sue Bard



Marianne Hermann's artworks chronicled the Holocaust as she experienced it in Theresienstadt and Auschwitz-Birkenau, as a slave labourer in Northern Germany, and finally in Bergen-Belsen. In 1951 Marianne married Jack Grant, who, as a teenager had come to Scotland from Germany on a Yeshiva Kindertransport. Marianne and Jack settled in Glasgow, first in Battlefield and then Newton Mearns, where they brought up their three children and where Jack became the minister of Newton Mearns Hebrew Congregation. Marianne's paintings, drawings and memorabilia were kept locked in a trunk in the attic, and while their children knew that their mother and grandmother had been in the camps and that their father had lost family, these were matters that were not much talked about.

After Jack's death in 1987, Marianne began to show her Holocaust artworks and to speak in public about her experiences. In 2002, Rex Bloomstein filmed an interview with Marianne recording her story, and in the same year her work was

exhibited at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, accompanied by the catalogue *I Knew I was Painting for My Life*. Since then, Glasgow Museums has acquired the Marianne Grant Holocaust Artworks and the Scottish Government has funded an education pack for schools based on Marianne's artworks and testimony. Since 2006 a permanent rotating exhibit of Marianne's Holocaust artworks collection has been on display in Kelvingrove's Conflict and Consequences Gallery.



Painting for My Life is a new edition of the 2002 catalogue, celebrating the centenary of Marianne's birth. It's beautifully produced, includes previously unpublished material and introduces some new and significant perspectives through contact with Marianne's friends from the camps and links with international Jewish museums and heritage centres. The catalogue of the artworks themselves is prefaced by substantial, separately authored essays that lend interest, context and depth. These include: 'My Story', her life until she came to Glasgow in 1951 (from her own testimony); 'Marianne's Story from 1951 Onwards', describing her life in Glasgow;

'Art as Witness Statement and Survival', considering her work in the context of the Holocaust and war artists; 'Stars in Place of Butterflies', looking at the significance of her collective and friendship bonds within the Zionist Movement both before and during her deportation; and finally 'Marianne's Legacy', discussing her contribution to Holocaust education in Scotland. Parallel timelines of Marianne's life and of Holocaust history further contextualise her life and work.

The actual catalogue of Marianne's artworks is divided into sections, whose titles and dates hauntingly chronicle her life: Prague 1937 – 1942; Theresienstadt April 1942 – December 1943; Auschwitz Death Camp December 1943 – July 1944; Slave Labour in Germany July 1944 – April 1945; Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp April 1945 – July 1945; Sweden July 1945 – September 1951. As well as descriptions of the artworks, the catalogue includes up-to-date contextual and historical material about each of these settings as well as detail of Marianne's day to day life there. *Painting for My Life* is thus both a fascinating catalogue of an artist's work and life, and a real and original contribution to Holocaust history.

Marianne was born and grew up in Prague and as far back as she could remember had drawn and painted. In 1937, aged 16, she enrolled at Prague's renowned modernist Rotter Studio of fashion and graphic design. In 1939 the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia brought about the Studio's closure and the enactment of the Nuremberg Race Laws meant that Marianne had to continue her art education in secret, acquiring skills in ceramics and needlework and teaching fashion design to young Jewish girls in preparation for the work camps to which the Jewish community in Prague had expected to be sent. All of these skills would stand her in good stead.

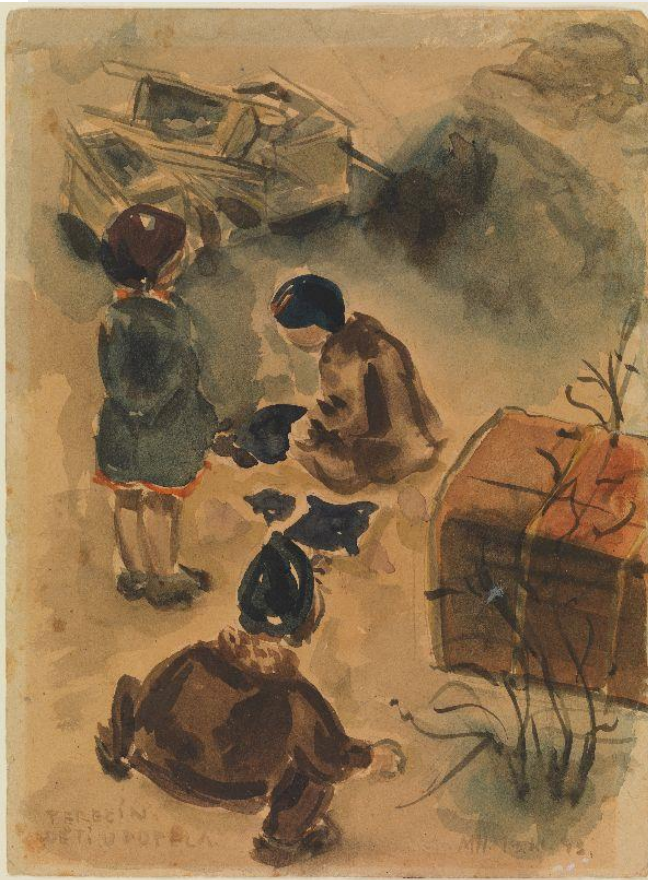
Marianne valued her own work, and at all stages took steps to hide and preserve it. Before her deportation with her mother, Anna from Prague to Theresienstadt, she left her student artworks (retrieved after the war) with neighbours and relatives in Prague. Before she was transported from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz, she left her drawings with her friend Petr Erben for safe keeping. Petr survived and ensured the survival of Marianne's work.

Much of the catalogued artwork is that produced by Marianne at Theresienstadt, not only because of the nature of that camp and the length of time that she was there, but also because of the agency that she was able to exercise through her individual and collective relationships. Portrayed by the Nazis as a model camp, and used to hide the truth about deportations, it was in fact a temporary stop on the way to concentration, slave labour and extermination.

Marianne had brought art materials with her from Prague and also used the materials that were at hand; many of the paintings and drawings are on pages torn from a spiral-bound notebook. Most of her work observes life in Theresienstadt, including 'Inside the Bodenbacher Barrack,' where she and Anna domesticated their own corner, and 'Children at the Ashes', depicting children playing with hot ashes from the stoves that heated the dwellings. In

'Singsong on the Shabbat in the Youth Room', Marianne shows her friends gathered on a Friday night, and this painting as well as life studies and portraits give us a glimpse of the importance to her of those friendships that pre-existed Theresienstadt and were formed in 'El Al', one of the multiplying Zionist youth movements of pre-war Czechoslovakia. El Al, founded in 1937 in Prague, grew rapidly, spreading across the country and offering an alternative lifeline of hope for young Jews as anti-semitism tightened its grip, closing off the possibilities of a normal life.

Children Playing at the Ashes Singsong at the Sabbath in the Youth Room



In 1941, Zionist movement activities were outlawed, but the relationships, the experience of collective organization and the skills that Marianne acquired in the movement contributed to her physical and psychological survival in the years that followed. Peter Tuka, in his chapter in the catalogue 'Stars in Place of Butterflies – Marianne and the Zionist Movement' describes aspects of Theresienstadt's internal affairs that were in the hands of the strongly Zionist movement-influenced Jewish Council. There was collective organisation of labour, sharing of resources, and the protection and education of the children in

Children's Houses, ameliorating and giving value to life within Theresienstadt's constraints and deprivations for as long as this was possible.

In preparation for an International Red Cross visit to Theresienstadt, the extreme overcrowding there was dealt with by seven deportations to Auschwitz–Birkenau. Of the 17,517 mainly Czech Jews deported in this way, only 1,294 survived the war. The transport that left on 18 December 1943 included Marianne and Anna, and like the other deportees from Theresienstadt, they were allocated to the homely-sounding 'Czech Family Camp'. Set up to deceive International Red Cross inspectors enquiring about the destination of deportees, once the inspections were completed, the residents of the Family Camp were despatched to the gas chambers or selected for slave labour in Germany.



Family Camp

There are only two artworks in the catalogue that relate to Auschwitz, neither of them made at the time. One is a desolate painting entitled 'View of Auschwitz-Birkenau Familienlager' (Family Camp) that Marianne painted from memory in 1952 in Glasgow, while pregnant with her first child. The other is a photographic print of 'Decorations for the Children's Block in Auschwitz', murals that Marianne had originally painted (along with fellow inmate and artist, Dina Gottliebowa) and then reproduced from memory for a 1997 exhibition at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

The 'Children's Block' in the title of the photographic print was Block 31 of the Family Camp, which Freddy Hirsch, former Zionist youth movement leader and athlete, then Family Camp inmate/children's supervisor, managed to secure for the 8-14-year-olds, along with better food, decent hygiene, education – and murals. Based on the Children's Houses at Theresienstadt, Hirsch organized an education system intended to preserve the children's morale. Children were awakened early for breakfast and calisthenics and had six hours of instruction daily in small groups, led by teachers recruited from the youth workers in the Family Camp. Subjects included history, music, and Judaism.

Marianne and Anna remained at Auschwitz–Birkenau until July 1944, when they were selected for slave labour and sent to Neuengamme Camp, subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Hamburg. In the same month, the Family Camp, now devoid of inmates and having outlived its original purpose, was demolished.

On 5 April 1945, Marianne and Anna were evacuated from Neuengamme Camp to Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp, arriving 10 days before the liberation of the camp by British Forces. Originally a prisoner-of-war camp, it also held criminals, political prisoners, Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses and gay men. In the nine months leading up to its liberation, its numbers swelled from 7,300 to 60,000, with the evacuation on foot (the 'death marches') of thousands of Jewish prisoners to Bergen-Belsen from camps nearer the front line. By the time Marianne and Anna got there, organisation had completely broken down and gross overcrowding, insufficient food and water and no functioning sanitation had led to rampant infections, including typhus, typhoid fever and dysentery. Sick and dying people could not be cared for and the dead lay unburied. Marianne commented: 'My mother and I shared one beetroot per day between us. There were no rations, no bread, no soup. I went on painting dead bodies.' Marianne had been given paper and watercolours by the German guards at Neuengamme, and at Bergen-Belsen she did indeed set about documenting what she saw, producing an extraordinary body of work that while unflinching, never denies its subjects their humanity.

Marianne and Anna were among the 5000 Holocaust survivors that Sweden welcomed, supporting their rehabilitation and return to normal life. They spent six years there, Marianne eventually establishing her own design company in Gothenburg. Many of the Jewish refugees stayed in Sweden, but Marianne and Anna did not, travelling in 1951 to Scotland for Marianne's marriage to Jack Grant. For the rest of their lives, Glasgow was their home.

Glasgow Museums holds the Marianne Grant artworks collection, which can be [viewed online](#).

You can see Marianne's work in a rotating display at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum's Conflict and Consequences Gallery, where you can also hear her own voice describing her experiences, along with other Holocaust survivors who came to live in Scotland.

Normally (in non-pandemic times) it's possible to arrange a special viewing of the works that are not on display. Hopefully, this will soon become possible again.

Marianne herself is celebrated in an artwork displayed in the Scottish Parliament, 'Travelling the Distance', by Shauna McMullan.

Painting for My Life: The Holocaust artworks of Marianne Grant, by Jo Meacock, Peter Tuka, Paula Cowan and Deborah Haase is published by Glasgow Museums Publishing, 2021. You can buy it at [Glasgow Life Shop](#) or from [Waterstones](#).

Images © The family of Marianne Grant, courtesy of Glasgow Museums

Yom Ha'Shoah In Edinburgh

Sue Bard

Yom Ha'Shoah is the annual Holocaust and Ghetto Uprising Day, legislated in Israel in 1953, and marked in Jewish communities throughout the diaspora. It is a day for remembering the six million dead, and for remembering the resistance – active and passive – that so many communities and individuals practised during the holocaust.

The Hebrew date of 27 Nisan was chosen for Yom HaShoah. In 1943, it was the first night of Passover and was the date selected by the Nazis to storm the Warsaw Ghetto and deport its remaining inhabitants to Majdanek and Treblinka death camps. They were met with strong and united resistance, which had been in the planning since the massive deportations of summer 1942. Against enormous odds, the uprising continued for four weeks. The combatants knew they couldn't win. Marek Edelman, the one surviving commander of the ghetto's Jewish Combat Organisation said they fought 'not to allow the Germans alone to pick the time and place of our deaths.'

Here in Edinburgh, after a break of two years, many of us were able once again to commemorate Yom Ha'Shoah at the Peace Garden in Princes Street Gardens. Organised by Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, the event was addressed by Depute Lord Provost Councillor Joan Griffiths. Rabbi David Rose led singing and prayers, including El Malei Rachamim, a prayer for the souls of those who perished in the Holocaust. Poems were read and members of the Association of Jewish Refugees spoke about the AJR's '80 Trees for 80 Years (one of them in Edinburgh) and about the personal experience of their family, as refugees from Germany.

The peaceful setting, out of the Garden's public hours, in the Edinburgh evening light, among trees heavy with blossom was balm on this occasion. Thank you to Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and to City of Edinburgh Council.

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** or email contact@eljc.org and one of the small group of people who respond to calls and emails will get back to you quickly.

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, text your mobile number to Sue Lieberman on **07939 014720** and ask to be part of the group.



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