



[www.ssedin.org](http://www.ssedin.org)

Chairman: Maurice Naftalin

Administrator: Ricky Hogg

Newsletter: Hannah Kenner

[sukkatshalom@xemaps.com](mailto:sukkatshalom@xemaps.com)

[sukkatshalomsec@aol.com](mailto:sukkatshalomsec@aol.com)

[ssedin\\_news@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ssedin_news@yahoo.co.uk)



## SUKKAT SHALOM EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY: AUG 2004

Shalom! By the time you get this newsletter the ULPS presentation will have taken place and the Edinburgh Festivals will be upon us. There's plenty here to keep you occupied and to provide a "Kosher Culture" background while you mull over affiliation issues. There is a brief report of the Liberal Judaism visit in this issue; a fuller report and discussion will be available soon.

A big todah for everyone who has donated towards the scroll, be it funds or by gifting their time and skills towards the logistics of the ceremony etc; if you've been intending to make a donation but haven't quite got around to it yet, do feel free to get in touch!

Please note the new email address for Sukkat Shalom administration I'm sure Ricky will appreciate your admin emails to be directed to this dedicated account.

Thanks to all who have contributed to this newsletter. Contributions to the September newsletter are welcomed at [ssedin\\_news@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ssedin_news@yahoo.co.uk) by **23 August** (earlier submissions also accepted!).

*Regards, Hannah*

### **THURS 5 AUG - Steering Group, 7.30pm 5 Derby Street, Edinburgh**

This is the group - open to all members - set up at the AGM to consider all the options for how we can proceed as a community. A summary of the meetings as well as detailed notes (password-protected) are available on the website: [www.ssedin.org](http://www.ssedin.org)

### **FRI 6 AUG – Erev Shabbat Service, 7pm Homeroyal House, 2 Chalmers Crescent, Marchmont, Edinburgh**

Please arrive in good time; if you are early press "5" then "4" then "call". Please see "Security Update" notice for details of new security phone for latecomers.

### **FRI 3 SEPT – Erev Shabbat Service, 7pm Venue to be announced. Please note, the service will NOT be at Homeroyal House**

Advance notice of:

### **SUN 5 SEPT – Siyyum Hatorah Ceremony**

### **SUN 12 SEPT – Extraordinary General Meeting**

Community meeting to decide affiliation, name, burial, subscription levels, constitution and officers.

### **15-16 SEPT/24-25 SEPT – Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur**

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

Sukkat Shalom wish Jason Hogg a very Happy **6<sup>th</sup>** Birthday on 9<sup>th</sup> August

*Look for the good, not the evil, in the conduct of others*

## REPORTS

### **Liberal Judaism visit – preliminary report**

On Friday 30th and Saturday 31st July, we welcomed members from Liberal Judaism (LJ) to our erev shabbat and shabbat services. On erev shabbat, the service was taken by Rabbi Aaron Goldstein, the LJ Outreach Director. Rabbi Aaron introduced it as a 'different' service and I think the style can be best described by the words reflective and inclusive. Rather than just recite the prayers, we were invited to stop and think about their meaning at various points in the service. Together with the guitar music, it made for a very nice service and one that did indeed make you think. Both the erev shabbat service and the shabbat service the following morning used the Liberal Judaism prayer book 'Lev Chadash'

The shabbat morning service was lead by Rabbi Mark Goldsmith, who is the chairman of the LJ Rabbinic conference, and was introduced as a more traditional Liberal service. I think it's fair to say that both the erev shabbat and shabbat services were familiar to us in their general format. While some of the readings were different, the central parts of the service were the same. We all coped very well with the gender-neutral language and the use of the matriarchs as well as the patriarchs in the amidah!

After both services, we had a discussion session. On Friday night this was led by Rabbi Aaron, covering some of the religious/doctrinal aspects of LJ. On Saturday the discussion was led by Nigel Cole, the LJ vice-chairman, and covered some of the more practical aspects of affiliation. While a full write-up of the discussions will be posted on the website, the thing that really struck me was that in terms of the difference between Liberal and Reform Judaism, what was said at the RSGB meeting was repeated at these discussions, namely that Reform Judaism is more pragmatic while Liberal is more principled. In terms of doctrine, Liberal Judaism accepts patrilinearity whereas Reform doesn't, and while same-sex and mixed faith blessings are more likely to be given by Liberal congregations, it was clear that this is very much an individual choice by both rabbis and congregations.

To conclude, let me mention the core issue - food. The shabbat lunch was one of the best, if not the best, that we've ever done. If the quality of our food is a sign that we are progressing as a community, then I'm sure both the Reform and Liberal movements would be glad for us to affiliate with them!

*Nick*

### **Steering Group**

We have a slow month for activities in August, to allow us to rest up in preparation for September (the Siyyum, the General Meeting, and the High Holy Days, closely followed by Succot and Simchat Torah) Much of the work of the Steering Group will come to a focus and conclusion this month, as the group will be wound up at the General Meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup>, to be replaced by an elected community council. Important questions still need to be resolved as part of that change, and the September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting will decide most of them: our **affiliation**, the final form of our **constitution**, the **English name** of our community, **subscription** levels, our preferred choice of **burial ground**, and our chosen officers.

The steering group wants to ensure that everyone is sufficiently prepared for these decisions. Members should have already received a copy of the constitution; please look at it carefully and decide whether you want to make any written contribution to the discussion by August 27<sup>th</sup>. On affiliation, the affiliation group is currently writing a full report on the two meetings that we have had with the synagogue federations, and this report will be on the website soon and circulated to all members. On the question of the burial ground, it seems we are likely to have a choice between the Dean cemetery and Corstorphine Hill. We consider ourselves very fortunate to have such a choice; either would be very acceptable. Within the next few days I will put a description with photographs of each on to the website, but if you would like to see the proposed sections of the two cemeteries for yourself, please contact Gordon (07767 343248 or [gordon@barclaygoring.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:gordon@barclaygoring.fsnet.co.uk) who will arrange a guided tour if there is any interest).

*Maurice*

## REPORTS (continued)

### Security Update

Now that we are fully-fledged independent community, Gordon, who is security co-ordinator, has been upgrading our contacts with the Manchester office of the Community Security Trust (CST) and with the Community Safety Branch of Lothian and Borders Police. Both organisations have been very helpful, providing realistic advice for our situation (living in a very safe city, but needing to be sensibly vigilant); as a result we have amended some of our policies: for example, on making venue information available on the website to people who have not made prior contact. The Police have been particularly helpful in advising on security and ticketing arrangements for the siyyum. CST are offering free training.

One new feature we have recently introduced is a 'security phone' which will be held by whoever is on security duty at a venue, and can be used for latecomers to alert security staff – please don't abuse this! The number is 0789 143 9646. Fortunately, there is little anti-Semitic activity in Edinburgh, although there has been an isolated incident of graffiti in north Edinburgh. The Police and Council have a policy of removing racist graffiti immediately; therefore, if you see anything of this kind, report it (via Gordon if you prefer, on 07767 343248 or by e-mail [gordon@barclaygoring.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:gordon@barclaygoring.fsnet.co.uk)).

Gordon would like to hear from fellow-members who would be willing to take a turn doing security duty.

### Siyyum

Work is proceeding on the organisation for the *siyyum* on 5 September. Tickets are going quickly, with two MSPs signed up by mid-July!

There is no set order for a *siyyum* so Rebekah is designing a service to suit our needs; one necessary feature is the blowing of the *shofar*. We also intend to have the scroll passed through the hands of every member of the community after it is piped into the venue. The scroll will be 'completed' as part of the ceremony.

The repair work on the scroll has finished – it will arrive with the scribe late on 4 September, before the service. The scribe, Marc, will be giving the D'var Torah. Marc writes:

*"This has probably been my biggest and most time consuming repair job to date but very worthwhile and you have a really lovely light, manageable torah (I am working on one at the moment I can barely lift! and actually have another that is absolutely packed with errors to follow on) written by one scribe (though at some points his writing does get a bit bigger, which I originally mistook for a different hand) which is rare for a second hand torah, in very nice legible writing for a scroll so small and light. I am certainly very happy to have been able to restore this one for congregational use and I'm very grateful to you and your congregation for another chance to perform the 613th commandment."*

**We need volunteers from the community to help with security, with guiding guests from the door to the room, and with catering (offers of home baking would be particularly welcome).** Could volunteers contact Gordon on 07767 343248 or [gordon@barclaygoring.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:gordon@barclaygoring.fsnet.co.uk)

## KOSHER KULTURE AT THE EDINBURGH FESTIVALS

### Stephanie singing in the Edinburgh Festival!

#### The Ellington Set - A tribute to the great Duke Ellington

*Sung by Stephanie Brickman (the artist formally known as Stephanie Noblett)*

*Aug 12 & 13, Apex Metro, Grassmarket*

The concert starts at 10.30pm, doors open at 9.30pm and I'm on first. On 12th I am performing with Jess Abrams, on the 13th with Elaine Clark. It's part of a series of festival concerts by female singers called *The Sophisticated Ladies*. In deference to the title I am hoping to appear without baby sick on my shoulder! You can get more info from <http://toddgordon.com/fringe2004/#> and you also get to see a picture of me looking like a gargoyle about to eat a microphone. Tickets are available in advance at a discount (£6) from myself or Josh, otherwise it's £8 on the night."

*Aug 12-13, 10.30pm (doors open 9.30pm); £8 (£6 in advance) Stephanie: 07739 184 480*

### Edinburgh International Book Festival

*14-30 August, Charlotte Square Gardens*

The Book Festival goes from strength to strength, and the programme of authors is first-rate again this year. Events of Jewish interest that have caught my eye are:

- **Howard Jacobson**, talking about his recent book *The Making of Henry*, at 11.30 am on 17 August
- **Jeremy Bowen** (appearing with John Keay) on the Six Day War, at 3.00 pm on 20 August
- Saturday 21 August is particularly rich in Jewish interest, with **Eva Hoffman** (12 noon) on *After Such Knowledge*, dealing with the legacy of the Holocaust, **David Cesarani** (3.30 pm) on his biography of Adolf Eichmann, architect of the Final Solution, and **Frédéric Brenner** (6.30 pm), on 25 years of photographically recording the Jewish communities of the Diaspora.
- **Amos Oz** appears three times, talking about his latest book *A Tale of Love and Darkness*, at 11.30 am on 25 August and at 8.00 pm on 26 August. He is also answering questions about *My Michael* for a World Book Club recording at 4.30 pm on 26 August
- **Bernice Rubens** (appearing with Rachel Billington), is talking about her story of two British soldiers held hostage in Israel in 1947 at 2.30 pm on 25 August

Two strong strands of the Book Festival this year are 'Exile and Diaspora' and 'East and West'. There is much on the Middle East, Islam and Palestine. Of particular interest is likely to be the Scottish playwright David Greig and the Palestinian author and human rights lawyer Raja Shehadeh talking about Grieg's dramatisation of Shehadeh's *When the Bulbul Stopped Singing*. This memoir of Ramallah under curfew is being staged at the Traverse during the Festival. Joyce Macmillan will be chairing this event at 8.00 pm on 24 August.

There's plenty more, as well as a strong children's programme which includes the wonderful Michael Rosen. Pick up a programme or have a look at [www.edbookfest.co.uk](http://www.edbookfest.co.uk)

*Liz Goring*

KOSHER KULTURE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE.....

## KOSHER KULTURE (kontinued)

### COMEDY

#### **Arnold Brown – Life Taps**

*The Stand Comedy Club, York Place 0131 558 7272*  
“Arnold Brown is still breaking boundaries with wry, dry, surreal observations and pointed one-liners. His new show delves into his own upbringing as one of the early immigrants in Glasgow. Also featuring a Q&A session.”  
*Aug 6-29 (not Mondays), 7.45pm; £8 (£7). Preview 5 Aug, 7.30pm; £6 (£5)*

#### **Sol Berstein – Almost Alive II**

*Metro Guided Balloon Teviot, Bristo Square 0131 668 1633*  
Winner of Spirit of the Fringe Award 2003. “The all round entertainer and ex Borsht Belt comic is back and he’s hotter than ever. Go see him while he can still stand.”  
*Aug 6-30 (not 16<sup>th</sup>), 8.15pm; Mon-Thurs £9 (£8), Fri-Sun £10 (£9)*

#### **Rainer Hersch - Borge Again!**

*Assembly Rooms, George St 0131 226 2428*  
“Guy Masterson directs Rainer Hersch, bringing ‘the funniest man in the world’ (*NY Times*) back to the stage. Victor Borge’s extraordinary life and antics compressed into an hour of comic mayhem by Borge’s natural successor.”  
*Aug 6-28, 2.50pm; Mon-Thurs £9 (£8), Fri-Sun £10 (£9)*

#### **Adam Bloom – Entertaining the Thought**

*Pleasance Courtyard, The Pleasance 0131 556 6550*  
“Multi award winning, intensely inventive & uniquely neurotic. ‘5 stars (*Scotsman*)”  
*Aug 7-30 (not 10<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>), 8.20pm; prices vary, contact venue (£8-£10.50)*  
*Previews Aug 4-7, £5*

#### **Lisa Levy - Psychotherapy Live!**

*Co2, Oxygen Bar, Infirmary St 0870 701 5105*  
“A self-proclaimed psychotherapist from New York performs on audience volunteers in this funny, unique improvisational entertainment for the mentally maladjusted. “  
*Aug 4-30 (not 17<sup>th</sup>), 5.40pm; £8.50 (£7.50)*

### MUSIC

#### **Abraham and Isaac – Dinder Productions**

*St Mark’s Unitarian Church, Castle Terrace 0131 226 0000*  
“Benjamin Britten’s *Canticle II* is a disturbing, dramatic work illustrating the Biblical tale. Performed here as the composer intended with a boy singing Isaac’s part, staged alongside other Britten works”  
*Aug 9-11, 8pm; £6 (£4)*

**The Ellington Set - A tribute to the great Duke Ellington, featuring Stephanie Brickman, Apex Metro, Grassmarket. Stephanie: 07739 184 480**  
<http://toddgordon.com/fringe2004/#>

Part of a series of concerts by female singers called *The Sophisticated Ladies* – see the website for more info. Advance tickets available at a discount from Stephanie or Josh.  
*Aug 12-13, 10.30pm (doors open 9.30pm); £8 (£6 in advance)*

### THEATRE

#### **East – UCLU Encore**

*Smirnoff Underbelly, Cowgate 0870 745 3083*  
“Blending cockney slang and Shakespearian parody, Steven Berkoff’s play is an often shocking, poetically violent and yet touching portrayal of London’s East End.”  
*Aug 7-22, 4.10pm; Mon-Fri £8 (£7), Sat & Sun £9 (£8). Previews 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, £4*

#### **Finding my Mother’s Voice - Luckylady Productions**

*Carlton Hotel, North Bridge 0870 701 5105*  
“Naava Platka’s unforgettable journey of humour, haunting song and stirring narrative brings her remarkable Yiddish actress mother, Chayela Rosenthal, to life. A celebration of theatre, laughter and music – a triumph over tragedy that breaks the silence of the past.”  
*Aug 6-30, 5.45pm; £8.50/£7.50*

#### **Presenting Eloise Fleigel – Rite of Passage Theatre Company**

*ClubWEST @ Edinburgh Theosophical Society, Great King Street 07720 285 550*  
“Experience this extraordinary rite of passage story about a New York Jewish girl’s obsession with Diana Ross...it will have you dancing in the streets.” *Aug 8-14, 6pm; £8 (£6)*

## RETURN OF THE FUNNIES

### **In the backroom of a bar in downtown St Louis.....**

...a priest, a pastor and a rabbi were enjoying playing poker. Suddenly the door flew open. Three cops crouched in the doorway, waving handguns.

'Father O'Casey, have you been playing poker?'

The priest hesitated. 'Certainly not!'

'Pastor Johnson, were you playing poker?'

'Oh, no, I wasn't!'

'How about you, Rabbi Goldblatt? Have you been playing poker?'

The rabbi beamed. 'Who with?'

*With thanks to Ruzena Wood*

### **And it came to pass...**

It came to pass that a trader by the name of Abraham Com did take unto himself a young wife by the name of Dot.

And Dot Com was a comely woman, broad of shoulder and long of leg. Indeed, she had been called Amazon Dot Com.

And she said unto Abraham, her husband, "Why doth thou travel far from town to town with thy goods when thou can trade without ever leaving thy tent?"

And Abraham did look at her as though she were several saddle bags short of a camel load, but simply said, "How, Dear?" And Dot replied, "I will place drums in all the towns and drums in between to send messages saying what you have for sale and they will reply telling you which hath the best price. And the sale can be made on the drums and delivery made by Uriah's Pony Stable (UPS)."

Abraham thought long and decided he would let Dot have her way with the drums. And the drums rang out and were an immediate success. Abraham sold all the goods he had at the top price, without ever moving from his tent. But this success did arouse envy.

A man named Maccabia did secret himself inside Abraham's drum and was accused of insider trading. And the young man did take to Dot Com's trading as doth the greedy horsefly take to camel dung. They were called Nomadic Ecclesiastical Rich Dominican Siderites, or NERDS for short.

And lo, the land was so feverish with joy at the new riches and the deafening sound of drums, that no one noticed that the real riches were going to the drum maker, one Brother William of Gates, who bought up every drum company in the land. And indeed did insist on making drums that would work only with Brother Gates' drumheads and drumsticks.

And Dot did say, "Oh, Abraham, what we have started is being taken over by others." And as Abraham looked out over the Bay of Ezekiel, or as it came to be known "eBay" he said, "we need a name that reflects what we are," and Dot replied, "Young Ambitious Hebrew Owner Operators."

"YAHOO", said Abraham.

And that is how it all began, It wasn't Al Gore after all.