

SUKKAT SHALOM

EDINBURGH LIBERAL JEWISH COMMUNITY

February 2006

Chairman: Maurice Naftalin, chair@eljc.org
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www.eljc.org

וּפְרוּס עֲלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמֵךְ
sukkat shalom - shelter of peace



Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

EVENTS & SERVICES

Date Friday 3 February
Event Erev Shabbat Service & Family Supper
Venue Columcille Centre,
2 Newbattle Terrace, Edinburgh
Time 7pm

Rabbi Mark Solomon will be taking the service which will be followed by a family supper. Please bring along a non-meat contribution for supper. We can reheat food at Columcille. We're trying to co-ordinate contributions this month: please go to <http://eljc.backpackit.com/> (when you are asked for a password, use "eljc", without the quotes) to see what other people are bringing, or ring Maureen on 441 6400.

Date Saturday 4 February
Event Introduction to Judaism Class
Venue Phil & Catherine's house,
Time 9.30am-11am

Date Saturday 4 February
Event Cheder
Venue Stewart & Gina's house,
Time 2pm- 4pm

The Cheder will be led by Rabbi Mark

Date Saturday 4 February
Event Talmud reading group
Venue Josh & Stephanie's house,
Time 7.30pm

Date Saturday 11 February
Event Barmitzvah of Joe Naftalin
Venue Columcille Centre,
2 Newbattle Terrace, Edinburgh
Time 11am

This service will be followed by kiddush and buffet lunch. If you would like to attend, please can you email chair@eljc.org to advise. There will also be a party in the evening, starting at 7.30pm, at the Braid Centre, 1 Nile Grove.

Date Saturday 18 February
Event Shabbat Service
Venue St Mark's Unitarian Church,
Castle Terrace, Edinburgh
Time 11am

This service, while being a 'regular' service, has been advertised in the brochure of the International Festival of Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace, so we may have visitors to the service.

Date Friday 3 March
Event Erev Shabbat Service
Venue Columcille Centre,
2 Newbattle Terrace, Edinburgh
Time 7pm

Again, while being a 'regular' service, this has been advertised in the brochure of the IFMESP

More dates for the diary

Monday 13th March is erev Purim and we'll be having an early service (probably starting around 5pm) so that the children can attend

Wed 12th April is first night seder

Sat 29th April is David Silk's bar mitzvah

Welfare - Help Required!

Our community has made a lot of progress over the last year in getting organised to provide help to members who need support because of illness, limited mobility, or other reasons. Being able to provide help in this way is one of the things that lets us think of ourselves as being truly a community. Although a lot of progress has been made, more help is needed. Two of the key people in the welfare group have to reduce their commitments for personal reasons. If you could help -- all that is needed is a little of your time -- please get in touch with **Stewart on 0131 228 4140.**

Parent Toddler Group

All welcome at our meeting on
Sunday, February 19th 2005

At

**Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation Centre
Salisbury Road
10 am - 12 am**

For more details, phone
Shari on 0131 667 3047



Limmud Scotland & the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre

invite you to travel on a

Glasgow Jewish Journey – Garnethill, the Gorbals, Giffnock

Another chance to take our trip back in time –
be entertained & informed!

Sunday 12th March 2006 from 2 - 4.30pm
(leaves from Giffnock)

Tickets: £10, concessions £5

Boarding by pre-booked ticket only

Phone Fiona Brodie on **0141 638 2023**

Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

Feb 5 Ross Bradshaw, Nottinghamshire County Council, *Jews in the Spanish Civil War*. Ross Bradshaw is the literature development officer for Nottinghamshire County Council. He is also the publisher behind the imprint *Five Leaves* which has in its eclectic list a small range of Jewish titles. He was offered the manuscript of *The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon*, but generously referred the author to a larger American publisher who could deal with a large print run. This year is the 70th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War.

Mar 5 Colin Shindler *The Triumph of Military Zionism: Nationalism and the Origins of the Israeli Right*.

Both of these events will be held at 8pm sharp in the Marian Oppenheim Hall, Salisbury Road, Edinburgh.



Biennial Weekend Update

“Judaism without Borders?” Cheltenham, 5th – 7th May

Around the London Underground at the moment, there are posters designed to attract people who have pursued other careers into the teaching profession. My favourite of these is one that portrays some young teens giving free reign to their imagination. The legend under the photo says, “Think outside the box? They didn’t even know there *was* a box.” Anyone who has regular contact with children can verify the truth of this. They can be fearless in questioning the boundaries, in pushing the limits. This is what makes dealing with young people such a challenge – and such a joy! I often wish that a bit more of this questioning energy remained in all of us as we grow older.

We readily accept labels and categorisation. Are you an atheist or a believer? Are you secular or a religious Jew? Are you a Liberal Jew or observant? All of these are arguably false dichotomies. I think we spend a lot of our time *asking the wrong questions*, which is one of the reasons I am so looking forward to our Biennial Weekend, “*Judaism Without Borders?*”, in Cheltenham 5th – 7th May. I am particularly keen that we should have the opportunity to discuss the rising trend in what I would call “religious humanism.” This is just one of the many subjects we will explore, through discussion, study, and creative workshops. Personally, I am looking forward to some of the opportunities to make music together, and to try my hand at calligraphy. There will be something for everyone.

There is still time to register for the weekend, but you need to do so soon. For more details, please see our website:

www.liberaljudaism.org/biennial, or call the weekend office on 01923 855367.

For more information about the weekend, visit:
www.liberaljudaism.org/biennial.

See you at the Biennial! - *Rabbi Janet Burden*

Letters

Friday 6th January 2006

Dear Liberal Judaism Member,
Settling In

This is the first of a planned regular 'From the Chief Executive's Desk' which it is hoped will be published in all Liberal Judaism constituent synagogue newsletters with the intention that it might be read by the vast majority of Jews in England, Scotland and Ireland who choose to associate themselves with Liberal Judaism. It is intended to be with you in the months when the glossier, larger and more thought provoking *LJ Today* is not published.

This first edition is unshockingly titled 'Settling In'. It is now just over a year since I was granted the opportunity to play a role in the development of Liberal Judaism as its Chief Executive. The appointment of the 'new boy' to the 'new title' followed a review undertaken at the instigation of the Liberal Judaism Officer group and endorsed by the Liberal Judaism Council, to which all constituent communities may send representatives.

Not unsurprisingly it has taken me some time to review the staffing and activities of the Montagu Centre, to lay out a clear vision of where I would like Liberal Judaism to play its unique role in British and Irish Jewry, and to begin to put in place the staff, cash and voluntary resources necessary to fulfil the potential of Liberal Judaism.

The second part of settling in has been the delight in visiting so many Liberal Judaism communities. Of the thirty three of them from Edinburgh in the North to Eastbourne in the South and from Luxembourg in the East to Dublin in the West, I have now visited twenty constituents, six have indicated they wish to see me, and of the remaining seven I earnestly trust my appointment did not cause offence! If it did please invite me anyway.

After 'Settling In' the theme of the next 'From the Chief Executive's Desk' will be 'Partnership. May I close by wishing you well for the coming Spring and reminding you that you may contact me directly on 020 7631 9835 or by e-mailing to d.rich@liberaljudaism.

As ever,

Rabbi Danny Rich
Chief Executive

Press Release from Rabbi Danny Rich Chief Executive of Liberal Judaism

Liberal Judaism Chief Executive, Rabbi Danny Rich, has written to His Excellency The Ambassador of the State of Israel, Zvi Hafetz, associating his movement's thoughts with the people of Israel at this moment. In addition to personal wishes to the Sharon family, Rabbi Rich expressed the hope that the period of uncertainty would soon be ended, and, that following the elections due in March, men and women of good will both Israelis and Palestinians resume their search and efforts to secure a just and lasting peaceful resolution to the tragic conflict which has engulfed both peoples.

Rabbi Rich added that a number of Liberal Judaism constituents would be offering prayers for stability and peace in Israel and the whole region.

"The Launch" of The British Friends of the Leo Baeck Education Center On 2nd April 2006

Patrons:

Lord Janner of Braunstone QC, Mrs. Jackie Gryn, Rabbi Dr. David J. Goldberg OBE

Reception to be held at:

The Liberal Jewish Synagogue
28 St. John's Wood Road
London NW8

Sunday, 2nd April 2006, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

The British Friends of the Leo Baeck Education Center, Haifa is a subsidiary of FPJ (Friends of Progressive Judaism in Israel and Europe)

For information contact:

harriet@karshconsultancy.com
carol@leobaeck.org.il

Items for publication are welcomed as are responses to items published.

The deadline for the next newsletter will be Wednesday 22 February 2006.

Please email any contributions to newsletter@eljic.org or post to Clare Hogg, 4 Meadowpark Court, Haddington, EH41 4HT

HELP!!

Historian seeks public help with research into Scotland's Jewish community.

Dr Nathan Abrams, Lecturer in History at Aberdeen University, is appealing to the public for help with his research for his forthcoming book, which explores the Jewish community in Scotland from the late 1800s until the present day.

Dr Abrams has already collected useful information, but is keen to uncover more. He said: *"Despite the information I have already been able to glean, I believe there is still much to discover. Jewish communities in Scotland remain somewhat of a mystery as we currently don't know too much about them. I would very much like to hear from people who may have memories or memorabilia, no matter how trivial, which could help with my book."*

Aberdeen's Jewish community dates back to the 1880s, but was formally established on September 7, 1893, when a synagogue was consecrated. Today, the Jewish population in Aberdeen is 200-strong, although only around 50 – 60 actively participate in communal events.

Elsewhere in Scotland, the first mention of a Jew in Ayr was in 1890, while the Dundee community dates from the early 1840s and, for a time, was the largest Jewish community outside of Glasgow and Edinburgh. There were also small Jewish communities in Dunfermline, Falkirk, Greenock and Inverness, not to mention those Jews scattered and isolated throughout the islands of Scotland – even as far north as Lerwick in Shetland.

However, the one place in Scotland which Dr Abrams would particularly like to find out more about is the Highland capital of Inverness. Dr Abrams has so far established that at least two Jewish families were living in Inverness in 1881, according to the census, as well as some Jewish travellers.

Anyone who has information, memories, or memorabilia on any small Jewish community in Scotland, should contact Dr Abrams via email at: n.abrams@abdn.ac.uk or write to: **History Department, University of Aberdeen, Crombie Annexe, Meston Walk, Aberdeen, AB24 3UB.**

Something lighthearted

It's Saturday and Lionel is in synagogue listening to the rabbi's sermon.

As the minister drones on, Lionel begins to doze off and starts to snore starts snoring. Suddenly he's awoken by a tap on the shoulder. He looks up and sees the shammas. "Please Mr Cohen", says the shammas, "you're disturbing everyone with your snoring." "I'm sorry", says Lionel indignantly, "but I pay my shul fees. If I want to sleep, I'll sleep." "I'm not disputing that" says the shammas, "but your snoring is keeping everybody else awake."

Nigella Lawson Recipe **Salmon Fishcakes**

For the fishcakes:

1 1/2-2 1/4 cold mashed potatoes
14-15 ounces of canned salmon, preferably organic
1 tablespoon of unsalted butter, melted (if the mashed potato hasn't got any butter in it)
Fat pinch of cayenne pepper
Grated zest of half a lemon
Salt and pepper
1 egg

For coating and frying:

2 eggs
1/2 cups of matzo meal, preferably medium
1/4 cups of unsalted butter
2 tablespoons of vegetable oil

In a large bowl, mix together all the fishcake ingredients. Cover a baking sheet with plastic wrap, plunge your hands back into the mixture and form fat, palm-sized patties. Place these on the baking sheet and put in the refrigerator to firm up for about 20 minutes to an hour--or considerably longer, if that helps. Beat the eggs in a shallow soup bowl and sprinkle the matzo meal onto a dinner plate. One by one, dip the fishcakes into the beaten egg and then into the matzo meal, sprinkling and dredging over, as you help coat them. When you're done, put the butter and oil in a large frying pan, heat till it begins to fizzle and then fry the fishcakes on each side, until the crusts are golden and speckled brown in parts, and the soothing centers are warmed through. Makes seven to nine three-inch diameter fishcakes.

**Talk given at the
World Disarmament Campaign
interfaith occasion 29 Jan 2006
on behalf of ELJC.**

This is the first time Judaism has been represented by our community at this annual event. Other faiths represented were Christianity, Baha'i tradition, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam. (The invited Sikhs were unable to attend).

'Swords into Ploughshares'

This Jewish prophetic image has come to symbolise Christian peace activism. I've been mulling over what it signifies in a Jewish context. Micah and Isaiah's vision of universal peace and justice for the future sits side by side with, and I believe arises from, their criticisms of social injustice and awareness of political instability in their own time.

We cannot imagine what peace and justice can really mean if we don't engage our full attention with the world as is it now, and recognise injustice when we see it. This contrast reminds me of Kaddish, a prayer of mourning in Aramaic, and how Jews use it. Bereaved Jews say Kaddish according to particular ritual procedures, and usually we say Kaddish for a particular person, a close family member. And yet the prayer itself doesn't mention death, or even encourage reflection about the person who has died. In the midst of their grief, it enables mourners to affirm to their community the greatness of God, with nothing less than exuberance, and it wills the coming of universal peace.

In the world we live in, lives are cheap; so may disempowered people have been killed in the last year, the collateral damage of territorial disputes and global power struggles, or they have simply failed to stay alive for lack of basic human resources, their extreme poverty the collateral damage of a violent global economy. They are mourned by their families, such families as remain, sometimes bruised again and again by relentless war and poverty. Here in comfortable Edinburgh, we cannot meaningfully say Kaddish for them. But I am going to read you a translation of Kaddish, by Rabbi Daniel Brenner, together with his introduction to his translation. Rabbi Brenner is director of the Center for Multifaith Education at

Auburn Theological Seminary in New York and a reconstructionist rabbi.

The translation that I am presenting here is an attempt to put the kaddish into plain English, colloquial, slang, street, to translate it the way it might be spoken. In translating it this way, I hope to capture the desperation and heartbreak, and the hopes for peace and restored order, that I see reflected in its words.

A Kaddish

Make the God-name big.
Big and holy.
Do it in this world,
This creation sprung from consciousness,
And bring some order to this.
Do it fast, soon, in our lives, in the days ahead,
in the life of the people we call home.
Everybody join with me: May the name be
blessed forever and ever!
Yes, blessed.
Blessed, whispered, sung out, shouted,
honored, this holy name.
The name is beyond any song, poem, or
comforting words we could ever speak.
Everybody say: That's the truth!
May a big peace descend from the heavens, a
life-giving peace for all of us, for our beloved
people,
Let everybody say: May it be true!
Make that peace in the heavens, great
peacemaker, great One who brings wholeness
to our people.
Stop.
Everybody pray: May it be true.

Catherine Lyons

**LJ Israel Activists' Mission
5 - 12 March 2006**

If anyone would like to attend, please make contact to confirm by 6th February. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with Gili Tzidkiyahu if you have any questions, either at the Montagu Centre or by email to shlich@liberaljudaism.org

**ELJC Welfare Support Line
07904 813162**