



Chairman: Maurice Naftalin
Administrator: Ricky Hogg
Newsletter: Hannah Kenner

sukkatshalom@xemaps.com
RickyHogg7@aol.com
ssedin_news@yahoo.co.uk



SUKKAT SHALOM EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY: JUNE 2004

Shalom! June is a busy month for Sukkat Shalom – feast your eyes on the list of events taking place. We're delighted to be celebrating several weddings and a birthday. I for one am looking forward to the summer BBQ, once again generously hosted by the Silks; hopefully the weather will be as glorious as last year. This month also brings us the last cheder of the term and plans are afoot for an exciting expansion.

There are some important meetings approaching regarding the direction we wish our community to take; a progress report is enclosed and notice of affiliation presentations and vote. Please do come along and take the opportunity to shape Sukkat Shalom.

Thanks to all who have contributed to this newsletter. I now have a dedicated newsletter email address and would welcome all future contributions at ssedin_news@yahoo.co.uk

Regards, Hannah

FRI 4 JUNE 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" and ask for Blanche. Unfortunately we can't let you in after 7.10pm without prior arrangement.

SUN 6 JUNE Steering Group, 7.30pm 5 Derby Street, Edinburgh

This is the group – open to **all** members – set up at the AGM to consider how we can proceed as a community. A summarised progress report is enclosed; keep an eye on www.ssedin.org for developments between newsletters. Your thoughts, opinions and feedback on your preferences are welcome.

WED 16 JUNE RSGB Presentation St Columba's Church, Johnstone Terrace, Edinburgh

David Jacobs and Rabbi Amanda Goldby from the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain are coming to speak to us about the Reform movement and to answer any questions we have on the practical and religious issues of affiliation. The following month we will have a similar visit from representatives of the ULPS (time and venue to be announced in the next newsletter).

It is important that as many people as possible attend these sessions

When we have heard both presentations we will have a shiur to discuss their pros and cons before taking a vote on which branch of progressive Judaism we should affiliate to.

Affiliation is probably the most important decision we will take as a group, so please come to the meetings.

SAT 19 JUNE Cheder, 3.30pm * last one this term * 48 Comiston Road, Edinburgh

As you will see elsewhere in the newsletter, we are planning to expand the cheder and put it on a more regular footing after the summer. This means being we have to plan for the number and ages of the children we are likely to see. If your child is of cheder age (5-13) please get in touch with Rachel (rbgsavage@hotmail.com) to discuss your requirements, whether you would be able to commit to reasonably regular attendance, and what time and day would suit you best.

SUN 20 JUNE – SUMMER BBQ!

Barbeque at Linlithgow - a repeat of last year's highly successful social event. Full details enclosed.

FRI 2 JULY Erev Shabbat Service, 7pm Venue t.b.c.

OTHER EVENTS

FRI 11 JUNE Invitation to Shabbat Dinner

Members of the CCJ have been invited to a Shabbat service on 11 June at the Orthodox synagogue in Salisbury Road. Although the event is mainly for the benefit of non-Jewish CCJ members, it would be a good opportunity for the Reform community to meet with the Orthodox community. There will be a charge of £12.50 to cover catering costs. *Please note:* this was a late notice and originally circulated by email – tickets may no longer be available (and, being an Orthodox synagogue, payment will not be accepted on the door). Please contact Andrew Cross on 0131-467 0442 if you are interested.

SUN 13 JUNE Cancer Research UK, Race for Life Hopetoun House, South Queensferry

Our very own Rebekah will be taking part in the Race for Life. Please support Rebekah, either by sponsoring or by turning up to cheer her on. Race starts at 11am.

DATES FOR THE DIARY 2004

Early notice of important dates. Details to be confirmed nearer the time.

SUN 5 SEPT, 2pm	Siyyum Hatorah, ceremony of completion of our new Sefer
SUN 12 SEPT	General Meeting of the community to decide affiliation and subscription levels
WED 15 SEPT	Erev Rosh Hashanah
THURS 16 SEPT	Rosh Hashanah
FRI 24 SEP	Kol Nidre
SUN 25 SEP	Yom Kippur

Erev Shabbat services 2 July, 6 August and 3 September

TALKS AND CONCERTS

SAT 29 MAY – MON 3 JUNE His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit to Scotland

This was in the last newsletter but seems a significant and unusual event so merits another mention; details at www.dalailamascotland.org.uk

Edinburgh International Centre for World Spiritualities (EICWS) events
Contact Neill Walker, 0131-3314469, njwalk4005@hotmail.com

SAT 12 JUNE One World Peace and Justice Concert, 5.45pm for 6.30–10pm St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Palmerston Place, Edinburgh

Celebrating Unity in Diversity of Spiritual & Cultural Traditions in Scotland's Capital

First come, first served; no tickets in advance. Refreshments by Suruchi Indian Restaurant, 5.45pm-6.30pm

TUES 15 JUNE Women's Spirituality for Peace, 6.30pm for 7 – 9.30pm

St John's Church Hall, Princes Street, Edinburgh Admission free, everyone welcome

- Chair: Rev Di Williams, Chaplain of Edinburgh University
- Dr Maire-Colette Wilkie, Iona Community
- Acharya Meenakshi Devi Ji, Hindu woman spiritual leader from India
- **Rebekah Gronowski, Edinburgh Reform Jewish Community - Sukkat Shalom**
- Ibtisam Al-Wardi, Edinburgh Central Mosque

WED 23 JUNE Public Talks by His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Various times & venues – contact Neill Walker for details

Theme of event: Spirituality and Health - a quest for today, some wisdom from tradition

LOVE IS ALL AROUND

Happy Chuppah to the happy couples

Stephanie Noblett & Josh Brickman
Gordon Barclay & Liz Goring renew their vows
following Gordon's recent conversion
Gabi Astill & Denise Isaacs

Wishing you a long, happy & healthy life together

Happy Birthday

Mazel Tov to Hannah Alice Hogg as she celebrates
her first birthday on 1 June. Ahhh!

The marriage of Gabi Astill & Denise Isaacs took place at Manchester Reform Synagogue, Jackson's Row, on 23rd May. I was very privileged to have attended the celebration which was a most moving and dignified Service. Denise has been a long-standing member of Jackson's Row; she sings in the choir, deputises for the Rabbi as Marriage Registrar and was the prime mover in the making of the Chuppah - she did much of the embroidery herself. Denise did not know at the time that she herself would be married under the very same Chuppah, which was an exquisite piece of workmanship. Gabi met Denise when he first moved down to Manchester 18 months ago - he is Director of Music at Jackson's Row & very much a part of their community. Gabi, as many of you will know, lived in Oban and went to GNS for much of the time; he also visited us in Edinburgh and came to one or two Services - he was very struck by the warmth of our welcome to him. We all send Gabi & Denise our very best wishes for a very happy life together.

Rebekah

NOTICES

Note from the Chairman: Community Development Report

Although we haven't had many public events since the start of the year – and you may think that it has been particularly quiet since the AGM in March – I would like to reassure you that things are not standing still and that we are making good progress towards our goal of a fully-functioning community. The focus for activity is the Steering Group, which is acting as a management committee for the community until we can have proper elections. Meetings of the Steering Group are open to all members of the community, and notes from the meetings are posted on the website (www.ssedin.org). But since not everyone can get to meetings, or to the website, I have given a brief run-down of what we are up to in the enclosed report.

...and a note on the Scroll

Plans for the scroll are progressing well. We have made a deposit to the scribe of £1500 from the £3000 that we have already raised, and we are about to send out fundraising letters which we hope will bring in the balance of £2750 (this sum includes costs for dressing the scroll and for making a portable ark). *A big thank you to all those who have already made pledges, your generosity is much appreciated.* We are planning the siyyum (completion) ceremony, which will introduce the scroll to our community, for Sunday 5th September.

Jewish students from the Former Soviet Union (FSU)

With the help of a London-based charitable trust one or two Jewish students from the FSU have been attending the Edinburgh International Summer School each year. The summer school brings together students from all over the world to study English literature together in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. Some of us have enjoyed meeting the FSU students in past years and found their accounts of some of the difficulties they have very moving.

This year there are three applicants, but only full funding for one of them. The other two are having difficulty raising the remaining funds themselves. They only need a few hundred pounds each, but on their teacher salaries this is not easy. If you would like to send a donation to help them to come to Edinburgh, perhaps mentioning that it comes via Sukkat Shalom, then please contact:

Ms Nan Mulder, Administrative Officer, Scottish Universities' International Summer School, 21 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9LN; 0131-6504369, suiss@ed.ac.uk, www.arts.ed.ac.uk/suiss

Bar-be-que

Sunday 10th June

Nick & Kates Silk's house
18 Grange Knowe
Linlithgow



- Time :** People can turn up from 12pm onwards - we'll try and start eating about 1pm.
- Food :** Any contributions of food (or drink) will be welcome. We'd suggest no pork sausages! There will be veggie food also.
- Weather :** If its wet, bring an umbrella as we're having it come what may!
- RSVP :** While people can turn up on the day, it would be helpful if people can let us know in advance if they are coming - 'phone, e-mail, tell us - so we have an idea how many we are catering for. [Tel :] 01506 845325

Directions : To get there, take junction 3 off the M9, turn left towards Linlithgow. After about half a mile, you need to take a left turn into Grange View - its just after - nearly opposite - the main entrance to the 'Sun' factory which is on the right. Turn left at the roundabout into Grange Knowe, then take the first on the right and we're at the bottom. Tel no is 01506 845325 if you get lost. Its about 15-20 mins walk from the train station - Nick can give directions if needed or we're sure we can arrange to pick people up.

Community Development Report

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We are at work on the following major issues:

1. We have agreed a draft of a constitution, which we will send out to members during the next week or so for comment and approval at a meeting in July. We have to get this formality out of the way before we can set ourselves up formally, because it's required for us to have charitable status and a bank account of our own.
2. We have been discussing the issue of federation affiliation – we want to think seriously over whether we will be more at home in RSGB (as until now) or ULPS (the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues). We have asked the two federations to come and talk to us. The first of these meetings will be at 7.30 on **Wednesday June 16th**, at St. Columba's Church on Johnston Terrace, when David Jacobs and Rabbi Amanda Goldby will be discussing the question of our affiliation from the RSGB's point of view. Please do make a priority of this meeting, as it's important that the community make this big decision later from a well-informed position. The ULPS will be represented by Rabbi Aaron Goldstein, who we hope will be taking Erev Shabbat and Shabbat service on the **1st and 2nd of July**, though this is not confirmed yet. We may have the opportunity for further discussion on our own before we make the final decision at a meeting on **12th September**.
3. Plans for the scroll are progressing well. We have made a deposit to the scribe of £1500 from the £3000 that we have already raised, and we are about to send out fundraising letters which we hope will bring in the balance of £2750 (this sum includes costs for dressing the scroll and for making a portable ark). We are planning the *siyyum* (completion) ceremony, which will introduce the scroll to our community, for **Sunday 5th September**.
4. We are planning services for the High Holy Days this year – erev Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah, Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur. Rabbi Aaron Goldstein, of the ULPS, has kindly agreed to lead our services for a greatly reduced fee. We are hoping to organise a choir to improve somewhat on our usual musical performance (as if that were possible...)
5. We have been in discussion with various local authorities and cemetery companies about burial arrangements. Although we have not fully explored all the possibilities, we are hopeful that Corstorphine cemetery will prove to be right for our requirements. In a survey of community needs that we hope to conduct soon, we will be asking what arrangements you want to have made for funerals, though we understand that it's a subject that many people won't have thought about too much.

6. We have been discussing the options for the cheder. The current tentative proposals have us splitting the cheder into two classes, and meeting fortnightly as against the (theoretical) monthly meeting we have had until now. This will require a lot of planning and preparation, so the new programme will start in the autumn, around the High Holy Days.

If you can get to the web site (www.ssedin.org) there is more detail on all this work, and on yet other subjects (welfare, adult education, and communication) on which we haven't really got started yet. (You will need a password from me to get to the community-confidential information). If you can't get to the web site please talk to me or to any member of the steering committee: Rebekah Gronowski, Jonathan Brodie, Gordon Barclay, Liz Goring, Ricky Hogg, Gillian Raab, Josh Brickman, Ida Skubiejska, Rachel Savage, Stewart Green, Nick Silk, Colette Lamb, Lindsay Levy, Stephanie Noblett.

As you can see, a great deal of work is going on and everyone involved is very positive about our progress. There is a lot of positive energy in the community at the moment, and we are all looking forward to September, which will see

- the introduction of the scroll to our community
- the General Meeting which will set our community on a firm formal footing
- our first High Holy Day services

Although these are only the first steps towards the goal we have undertaken of building an independent progressive Jewish community, we can say with confidence that we have set out well.

Maurice Naftalin

THE FUNNIES – FOOD FOR THOUGHT?

These announcements were reportedly found in various synagogue newsletters and bulletins around the country. Enjoy:

Don't let worry kill you. Let your synagogue help. Join us for our Oneg after services. Prayer and medication to follow. Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our congregation.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

We are pleased to announce the birth of David Weiss, the son of Rabbi and Mrs Abe Weiss.

Thursday at 9, there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All women wishing to become Little Mothers please see the rabbi in his private study.

The ladies of Hadassah have cast off clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the basement on Tuesdays.

A bean supper will be held Wednesday evening in the community center. Music will follow.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the JCC. Please use the large double door at the side entrance.

Rabbi is on vacation. Massages can be given to his secretary.

Goldblum will be entering the hospital this week for testes.

The Men's Club is warmly invited to the Oneg hosted by Hadassah. Refreshments will be served for a nominal fee.

We are taking up a collection to defray the cost of the new carpet in the sanctuary. All those wishing to do something on the carpet will come forward and get a piece of paper.

If you enjoy sinning, the choir is looking for you!

The Associate Rabbi unveiled the synagogue's new fundraising campaign slogan this week: "I Upped My Pledge, Up Yours"

Some more Howlers....

The history of the Jewish people begins with Abraham, Issac and their twelve children. Judyism was the first monolithic religion. It had one big God named "Yahoo". Old Testament profits include Moses, Amy and Confucius, who believed in Fidel Piety. (One of the only reasons Confucius was born was because of a Chinese tradition.)

Moses was told by Jesus Christ to lead the people out of Egypt into the Sahaira Desert. The Book of Exodus describes this trip and the amazing things that happened on it, including the Ten Commandments, various special effects and the building of the Suez Canal.

Forty centuries later they arrived in Canada. This was the promise land of milk and chocolate. Noah's ark came to its end near Mt Arafat. David was a fictional character in the Bible who fought with Gilgamesh while wearing a sling. He pleased the people and saved them from attacks by the Philipines.

(From *Non Campus Mentis*, compiled by Professor Anders Henriksson)

With thanks to Joanne and Stephanie