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IAYC Conference Report #8: The Countdown

By Paul Melrood MAJPAULWW2@aol.com

This is the last report before the IAYC Conference in my hometown of Milwaukee. We are all so proud of the hard work and attention to details that members of our Planning Committee have done. Their effort surely is paying off in seeing that our guests will not only have a great Yiddish experience, but a truly mid-western welcome. We still have room for a few more Yiddish-loving families or singles who wish to attend a wonderful and unique Yiddish conference.

The large number in our greeting committee will see to it that your arrival will be handled with the least amount of effort, and the home baked goods in our hospitality room will get us off to a great start.

Come up and tell me from where you hale. Your editor says you can easily spot me because I look like a British Colonel with my white mustache and erect posture. Actually, I was only a major in the U.S. Army. Marlene, my wife, and I have had a very busy and sometimes hectic time in all of the preparations. However, as it all comes together—it truly has been a very remarkable experience.

The theme combines Mame-loshn and the Shoah. Sunday afternoon will be one of the highlights of the conference when we attend the event with many second and third generation Holocaust survivors.

It reminds me of a publication by the Education Department of the Arbeter Ring entitled *The Holocaust in Yiddish Literature*. Jews wrote in all the literary forms of the great tragedy. Especially noteworthy mention is made of the works of Chaim Grade, Itskhak Katselnelson (written while in the ghetto), Yankev Glatshiteyn, Mordkhe Gebirtig, H. Leyvik, Hirsh Glik, Avrom Sutskever, Sholem Ash, Joseph Opatoshu, Mordkhe Shtrigler (of the Forverts), Rakhmil Briks, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Chava Rosenfarb, Aron Tseytlin, Itsik Manger and of course Elie Wiesel. This is only a partial list.

There is an entire chapter about the great Soviet-Yiddish writers. We all are aware of their massacre by Stalin in 1952. What we may not know is that when Hitler invaded Russia, 60 Yiddish writers joined the Soviet Army, and half of them perished in battle.

By our continuing the survival of Yiddish we help to keep alive the promises made to Never Forget!

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Make checks for chai (\$18) payable to *Der Bay*. If you've been blessed, won't you send a LITTLE extra—please.

Our New Yiddish Contact in Norway Celvin Niklas Jojakin Ruisdael celvin@c2i.net

I will research language and cultural associations of Yiddish in Norway. The community of Jewish people is not large here, approximately 2000 people in total; less than 1/4 of them would be Yiddish speaking. The major centres for Jews in Norway are Oslo and Trondheim. (I live in Stavanger, s.w. coast; in Rogaland). Will the contact person be reporting events to you via e-mail? If so, and if I can obtain information from the Yiddish associations, it will be a pleasure to be a contact person.

The recognized national minorities in Norway : Sámi (L= Davvi-Sámi, Julevsáme, Áarjelsaemien), Kveeni, Skogfinner (in Finnskog) (L= Finnish dialects), Jews (L= Yiddish, Iwrit), Rom/Gypsy, and the Romani (Tatere/Reisende) (L= Romani).

Editor's note The Yiddish Network (TYN) is a network of Der Bay readers who are in every state in the U. S. and in 35 other countries. They send in information for listings in der internatsyonaler kalendar in hardcopy and on the web site. Many readers have been in touch with these contacts and have received excellent advice. The next time you travel, let your editor know and he will send you the name of the contact in that city, state or country.

Yiddish Activities in St. Louis, Missouri by St. Louis TYN Contact, Ida Stack

This is what is happening "Yiddish-wise" in St. Louis. Up until this year I have taught two Yiddish classes—beginning and intermediate. This year I just have one intermediate class. I look forward to having the beginning class in the Fall. These classes are held at the Central Agency for Jewish Education.

This past September I participated in the second Annual Jewish Folk Festival under the able direction of Rabbi James Stone Goodman at the Central Reform Congregation. Throughout the year I have been invited by organizations to perform Yiddish storytelling and singing.

During the summer I am the cultural arts director at Camp Ben Frankel in Southern Illinois where, among other things, I teach Yiddish.

There is a new Jewish Theater at the Jewish Community Center. Although the plays are presented in English, when there is dialogue in Yiddish, I serve as the consultant. The last presentation was *G-d of Vengeance* by Sholem Asch and *The People Versus The G-d of Vengeance* by Rebecca Taichman.

I recently learned that a group meets every other Wednesday at the Crown Center in University city to speak Yiddish. There is no instructor, but the group is led by Thelma Edelstein.

Star of David Meeting "Marsha Raleigh" <marshar@jps.net>

I attended the lunchtime meeting of the Jewish Club at George Washington High School here in San Francisco. Déjà vu—that's where my children went. There were no Jewish Clubs in those days—all civil rights! The time frame was limited. There was 20 minutes of dialogue. The students wanted to know something about Yiddish. I gave

an abbreviated talk, and had my "aleph-bet" poster from NYBC and a printed Yiddish: Forward and Paken Treger. Also made up a word list they could take with them. The list demonstrated the mix of languages that make up Yiddish. I had the words in Yiddish, transliteration and English translation. Greg Eichler, the teacher, was most gracious and interested. About ten youngsters were present, mostly children of Russian émigrés.

Programs in Michigan Bette Schein hschein2@cs.com

The Sholem Aleichem Institute in Michigan has two programs that all Yiddish lovers would appreciate. The first is our Tamarack Weekend taking place April 19-21. This is like a mini-elderhostel. Our speakers this year will be Drs. Norma and Bernard Goldman. Both are professors at Wayne State University and will be presenting some wonderful lectures. The weekend includes six meals [kosher], two cocktail parties, a special oneg shabbat written and compiled by our own members, and a special entertainment program on Saturday evening. Call Florence at our office for more information 248-423-4406.

On May 19th we are presenting our annual cultural event. We are bringing the wonderful Yiddish actor Bernard Mendelovich from London, England. He will present a one-man performance with excerpts from many Yiddish plays...parts that he has made famous during his career. There is no charge for this presentation.

News from Boulder, Colorado

Take a look at our latest newsletter (we're proud!) <http://rtt.colorado.edu/~biasca/vinkl.html> click on the links for the Newsletter: The Vinkl's Voice (we have links for the English and Yiddish portions, though subscribers receive both on a single publication).

Our Boulder Yiddish Vinkl will present Yiddish for You (First Annual weekend-long Yiddish Teach-in will feature Dorothy & Reuben Silver, Cleveland's favorite theatre couple). They will have performances, interactive, workshops and Yiddish conversation lessons for all levels, Klezmer music, dancing and a weekend of shmoozing and fun! Friday evening, May 31, and Saturday and Sunday, June 1 and 2, 2002. Call Lolly Gold 303-444-6887 or Debra Biasca 303-494-3817, or email biasca_d@yahoo.com Funded by the Weaver Family Foundation & co-sponsored by Boulder Menorah Adult Education.

Excellent Advice From Hersh Hartman

Based on several recent experiences, I'd suggest you consider adding to your guidelines on translations something along these lines:

"Scholars in the field have noted that, even in commercially published translations of major Yiddish writers, when a translator didn't understand a particular word or phrase, it was simply left out, often distorting the meaning. There are no standard requirements for Yiddish translators and no certifying institution. It is a good idea to ask a potential translator for a summary of her/his educational background (in both English and Yiddish), a list of previous assignments, as well as references."

Amol iz geven.....
Fradle Freidenreich at

It's hard to imagine that there were Yiddish secular schools in cities such as Shreveport, Louisiana; Macon, Georgia; South Bend Indiana; and Rock Island, Illinois, to name but a few of the 121 communities where such educational facilities existed? There were also at least 32 Yiddish educational summer camps for children and adults with names like Hemsheykh, Nit Gedayget, Gan Eden, Yungvelt, Kindervelt, Mehia, Kinder Ring, Boiberik, Naivelt, Kinderland, etc.

There were literally hundreds of schools and camps all over Canada and the United States., teaching language, literature, holidays, history, customs and the arts, all in Yiddish, and, depending on the ideology of sponsoring organizations, Hebrew and Zionism.

The heyday of these institutions began in the 1920s and carried through to the 1960s. A number of these schools still exist, in Canada as day schools, and in the United States as part-time supplementary schools.

The sponsoring organizations of these various schools, camps and parent activities, included the Arbe*ter Ring (Workmen's Circle), the Farband (Labor Zionist Order), The Sholem Aleichem Institute, the Borochov Schools, the IWO/UJPO (International Workers' Order/United Jewish People's Order) and the Non-Partisan Jewish Workers' Children's Schools.

A book is being written about this important phenomenon in North American Jewish history that included many thousands of students and parents, and that had a tremendous impact on their lives and their Jewish identity. Currently, research is underway to gather as much information as possible about each school and camp. Documentation about such institutions in smaller communities is particularly difficult to locate. National, state and provincial archives, both Jewish and secular, do not have much material, if any, about a number of cities where such facilities existed. Records have disappeared or were never kept, and the generation of founders, movers and shakers, and even their children, is fast becoming unavailable for memories and oral histories.

But such an important story should not remain untold and undocumented!

If you have any personal knowledge of such a school or camp in your current location or city of origin, or if you have access to a local Jewish community history that might describe such an institution, please get in touch with:

Fradle Freidenreich at
9 Harzfeld Street,
Herzlia Pituach, 46661
Israel
e-mail fradlef@aol.com.

Names of staff, dates of operation, addresses of schools, information about curriculum and specific programs, and especially memorabilia all will be of great help in putting together this wonderful story. Material will be returned upon request, and acknowledgement will be made. Networking suggestions will be gratefully received.

News from Our Reporter in Australia
Freydi Mrocki klezmer@netlink.com.au

Melbourne Australia is often referred to as 'The Shtetl on the Yarra. This is not just because we boast a township on the banks of a very murky brown trickle of a river, (the Yarra River being famous for seemingly floating upside down). Neither is it because of the ferocity of Jewish community politics or the way gossip spreads from one end of the city to the other with lightning speed.

We are called the 'Shtetl on the Yarra' because the vast majority of Jewish immigrants to this city came from the shtetlekh un shtet of Poland after World War II. After their arrival they continued to build upon the existing Jewish life along the social cultural and religious frameworks that they had known in the poylishe shtet. Sydney is a completely different kettle of fish. In fact very little sweet gefilte fish is to be found there at all, as post war Jewish migrants to the Harbour City came mainly from Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Western Europe. As a result, the community is very different.

In Melbourne gefint men zikh afile haynt oyf a yidishe gas. Melbourne Jews congregate in self-chosen Ghetos... suburbs like Caulfield, East St. Kilda, East Brighton...where one enclave spills onto the next. In Melbourne we have over 250 community organizations. We have over 35 Orthodox congregations from Adass, Lubavich to Mizrakhi, a newly emerging Conservative Shul and four Progressive kehiles, and many shtiblekh. We have three mikves, a few large Jewish Old Age Homes, a Jewish welfare organization, the Australian Jewish Museum, The Holocaust and Research Centre, The Kadimah Yiddish Cultural Centre and the Jewish National Library at Kadimah.

There are Kosher Meals on Wheels, sporting groups, Jewish TV, Yiddish and Hebrew radio, ten youth movements from SKIF (Bundist) to Zionist Socialist to Orthodox. We have all manner of social and business organizations: many women's interest groups (some with numerous chapters); gay groups, YOW (Yids on Wheels-motor cycle club), to 'Friends of —' type groups like Friends of the Hebrew University etc.

However, the jewels in the crown of Jewish Melbourne, which acts as a radiant display of its Jewish life, passion and activity are the Jewish Day schools. We have 9!! One of the biggest, Mt Scopus College, boasts a student population of well over 2,000 and is one of the largest schools in the Southern Hemisphere. One of the smallest, Sholem Aleichem College, is a secular Yiddish school with well over 250 students.

This may not seem a big deal, but consider that we have all of this and more, for a population of a mere 40,000 Jews. Visitors to our shtetele tell us how envious they are. To us, it's just Melbourne. But we've been told so often just how special it is here, that we've come to appreciate our broad and active community through the eyes of outsiders. For the most part we all get along quite well. There was, of course, the time that He (representing synagogue X) told Him (representing political group Y) that their ideas stink un s'iz a shande far di goyim—but that's another story.

(Next time, a guide to the various Yiddish institutions in Melbourne—in the meantime, activities and dates)

* Remember to listen to Yiddish radio
SBS 1224AM Wed., 3pm Fri., 3pm Sun., 12.15pm
3ZZZ 92.3FM Sun., 11.30 am

Youth Organization Offers Stipends to Create "Yiddish-Language Communities"

Yugntruf Yugnt far Yidish lozt visn vegn dem "Yidish-kehiles-fond". Der fond vet bavitikn stipendyes fun 2,500 dolar a yor, kedey teylvayz tsu dekn di hoytsoes vos zaynen farbundn mitn aribertsien zikh lebn andere yidish-redndike yekhidim oder mishpokhes. Di dozike stipendyes zaynen getsilt afn shafn naye yidish-redndike gegntn.

Khotsh me vet batrakhtn aplikatsyes fun velkhn nisht iz nivo, vet men gebn preferents di, vos zaynen zikh mekhayev tsu redn yidish tog-teglekh mit zeyere skheydim, un tsu shafn un farshtarkn yidish-kehiles durkhn eygenem initsiativ. Plener vos nemen arayn kinder veln bazundersh noyse-kheyne zayn. Di aplikantn darfn shoyne hobn oysgeforst a gevise shtub/dire vos gefint zikh nisht vayt fun andere yidish-reders. Di aplikantn darfn lafdafke zayn studentn af an akademisher program.

Di aplikatsyes darf nen araynshikn bizn 1tn juni 2002. Di stipendyes vet men bavitikn harbst-vinter 2002 tsu dekn di aribertsy-hoytsoes fun 2002-2003. Me vet kenene oysnitn a stipendye kedey tsu dekn di hoytsoes fun an aribertsyung vos me hot zi adurkhgefirt farayorn.

Nokh aplikatsyes un tsugob-informatsye: www.yugntruf.org, dernokh a klik af "Datn-baze fun yidish-dires" oder "Yidish-kehiles-fond".

Dem yidish-kehiles-fond shtitsn Yugntruf Yugnt far Yidish un a breythartsiker bayshtayer fun der Arn un Sonye Fishman Fundatsye far Yidisher Kultur. Kontaktirn: Sholem Berger, 212 252-9765 oder: yugn@yugntruf.org

Yugntruf Youth for Yiddish announces the availability of its "Yiddish Community Stipends." The stipends, to total \$2,500 a year, will be offered to help qualified applicants partially defray the costs associated with moving closer to other Yiddish-speaking individuals or families. The stipends are meant to support the creation of Yiddish-language speech communities.

Although applicants of all levels of Yiddish proficiency are encouraged, preference will be given to those who are committed to speaking Yiddish on a daily basis with others in their community, and to creating and strengthening Yiddish-speaking communities through their own initiative. Involvement with children is especially encouraged. Applicants will be expected to have already researched a particular house or apartment located not far from other Yiddish speakers. Applicants need not be enrolled in any academic program.

Applications will be accepted until June 1st, 2002. Stipends will be awarded in fall-winter 2002 to defray the costs of moving in 2002-3. Stipends may be used to defray the costs of a move already completed in the past year.

Application materials are available on the Internet: www.yugntruf.org, click on "Database of Yiddish Apartments" or "Yiddish Communities Fund". The Yiddish Communities Fund is supported by Yugntruf Youth for Yiddish and by a grant from the Sonia and Aaron Fishman Foundation for Yiddish Culture. Contact: Sholem Berger, 212 252-9765 or yugn@yugntruf.org

Young and Interested in Yiddish

I am writing to thank the International Association of Yiddish Clubs for enabling me to participate in the April 2002 conference. I am so grateful to be able to participate in

this exciting opportunity to enhance my Yiddish activities. Below is information about my academic, musical, and community background.

I am a 25-year-old musician living in Minneapolis, MN who began studying Yiddish at the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA. In Minneapolis, I took Yiddish classes at the Talmud Torah, and have for the past two years participated in a weekly study group. I have also completed the Intermediate I and II levels of the Weinreich/YIVO Summer Yiddish Program at Columbia University in 2000 and 2001. My plan is to complete the advanced level in 2002. I also have taken Yiddish classes at KlezKamp for the past four years and at Klez Kanada in 2001. On an almost daily basis I study independently. A recent accomplishment is reading Sholem Aleichem's *n.0ovel, Blonzhene Shtern*, in the original. I am an active member of several local *vinklekh* and participate in and organize Yiddish events in the Twin Cities, including leading Yiddish classes.

I am an active member of the Minneapolis Yiddish Vinkl led by Roz and Mike Baker, and have presented musical, literary, and theatrical performances. As an active member of Yiddish Buddies (a monthly Yiddish group in St. Paul), I attend the semi-monthly meeting of the Yiddish Club of Menorah Plaza (a residence with many Yiddish speakers from the former Soviet Union). I have served as a Yiddish-speaking outreach visitor to the elderly and as a volunteer musician. In the fall of 2001, I taught two Yiddish conversation classes and assisted with a third.

As a musician focusing exclusively on Yiddish song, my repertoire includes Yiddish songs from a variety of genres, and I write original Yiddish songs. I am a vocalist and founding member of the Yiddish musical group Mazl, and have performed in the Twin Cities for the past several years. I have attended musical workshops and performed at KlezKamp for the past four years, and was awarded a music scholarship to attend KlezKanada in 2001. Recently, I was selected to coordinate the musical aspect of *We Fools*, a theatrical presentation combining puppetry, storytelling, and music, at the Minneapolis JCC.

I am a financially independent 25-year-old, still paying for loans from college, while also devoting a substantial amount of my earnings to participate in the Weinreich/YIVO summer Yiddish program. I have been fortunate to receive several scholarships to attend the program, as well as holding successful benefit concerts. Besides working at a daytime job, I spend many hours each week studying and volunteering in conjunction with local Yiddish activities.

Amanda (Miriam-Khaye) Seigel
1924 Stevens Ave., #5
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-872-1168

SIMKHE
Troim@webtv.net (Frank Handler)

SIMKHE, is a new book, published by Troim Katz Handler. It is with pride and joy that I announce the publication of SIMKHE, my book of love-letter and poems-produced at the suggestion of Dr. Harold Black, president of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs. The book will be launched at the 7th IAYC conference in Milwaukee April 12-15. A free copy will be mailed to each club in good standing; others will be sold at the conference or by mail.

The book has been designed specifically to meet the needs of the clubs, from Yiddish for beginners to advanced levels. Each poem is presented three ways on each page:

- 1 the original Yiddish,
2. YIVO transliteration,
3. English translation.

Each poem is printed on one side of the page only, leaving the facing side blank for notes.

Out of more than 500 poems, I chose 73 which form a kind of loose story about two lovers who live on opposite coasts and express their love via telephone calls, answering machines, and letters. They discuss their love, Yiddish, being Jewish, and other subjects.

Five people worked on the book six months after Dr. Black suggested the project:

1. Pearl Krupit, a computer meyv'n who had been Joseph Mlotek's secretary for 35 years;

2. Shoshke-Rayzl Juni, who began her study of Yiddish only 5 1/2 years ago and has become a Yiddish/computer wizard;
3. Leah Robinson, a poet who did proof-reading;
4. Shimon Beyles, translator; and I.

My brother, Dr. Dovid Katz of the Vilnius Yiddish Institute, wrote the preface. I am grateful to all those who helped.

The first technical problem arose because Pearl Krupit's computer could not accommodate three columns per page and because her font was Hebrew, not Yiddish. I sent an e-mail to Morrie Feller, clubs' vice-president, and he informed me that Shoshke-Rayzl knew how to change a Hebrew font into Yiddish without spending money. Shoshke-Rayzl then drove from Manhattan to Manalapan, NJ, to do this with Pearl's machine. Shoshke-Rayzl offered to use her own computer when the time came to transfer the individual columns from Pearl's computer to her own. Shoshke-Rayzl, did the work on SIMKHE week-ends when she had time off from her job. We became a joyous, enthusiastic working team.

The book will sell for \$12 plus \$3 for shipping & handling and can be ordered from me, Troim Katz Handler, 34 Sussex B, West Palm Beach, Florida 33417 or 48-A Juniper Plaza, Monroe Township, NJ 08831. troim@webtv.net. Phones: (561) 684-8686 or (609) 655-8019