

Der Bay

The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter

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Harold Black o'h First IAYC Prsident

Yiddish and IAYC have lost a champion.

Harold was more than a personal dear friend—he was a leader. The first IAYC Conference at the University of Maryland was his idea, and he co-chaired the event. Then he was co-chair again at the conference in Chevy Chase located at the 4H International Headquarters.

As the first IAYC president he saw it grow and become incorporated as a 503c organization. In the early years Harold was part of the team that visited the prospective conference sites. It was at these times that we became very close and shared wonderful stories about our families—especially the grandchildren.

His area of expertise was in working on the proposed budget. His ability to crunch numbers was uncanny. This last year he was very helpful to us even though he was not well enough to attend the Teaneck Conference.

When Harold and Ann moved to Michigan, he planned to chair a third conference and already had contacted a prospective committee.

His love of Yiddish and strong leadership ability was shown at the Yiddish of Greater Washington. President Jonathan Sunshine related Harold's contribution to YGW and said that the move to Michigan left a void in the group.

Then there was the writer's group and a talent for writing short stories, plays and poetry and translating Yiddish. I recall a story he wrote about my years in New Jersey as a temple

president and the many unusual and funny situations that arose.

His interest in community went beyond Yiddish. The love of Judaism was further shown in Ann and his interest and work for (Mekhar) MACHAR/The Washington Congregation for Secular Humanistic Judaism. He served several terms as its president.

Jules Abrams, who was the first Mekhar president, and a close friend, said that Harold had published three books of poetry.

Harold was born in Goniacz, Poland, but when he was only a year old his family moved to Veracruz, Mexico. Nine yeas later they immigrated to Detroit.

During college (1930s), he participated in the Detroit sit-ins in the auto plants that helped in the unionization of the auto industry. At Wayne University a Ph.D. was earned in City Planning.

In his career Harold was a planner with special interest in transportation. It started in Detroit with Southeast Michigan Transportation and later going on to Maryland where he retired in 1985 as City Planner for Montgomery County.

Harold left a wonderful family. All were listed in the Detroit and Washington papers.

Here we wanted to pay tribute to his activities on behalf of Judaism and his broad interest and achievements on behalf of Yiddish. We all shall miss him.

My Partnership with Yiddish

By Philip Fishl Kutner

Every partnership has a relationship component.

One day, in retrospect, it occurred to me that each of us has many partnerships. Some are legal and binding like marriages and mortgages while others are loose and more fragile—like friendships.

What actually is my partnership with Yiddish? There is no contractual agreement. There is no binding clause. No one will lower my pay, remove food, or shelter from me because of Yiddish.

Then what is this partnership we have? As a child, it was important to please my parents—especially mama. Could it be possible that I am trying to please *mame-loshn*? But who is *mame-loshn*? She is not a human being.

To me *mame-loshn* is the totality of my Eastern European heritage. She is all of the tribulations that my folks and their folks experienced. It is an important part of who and what I am.

So what is my role in this partnership, and what is the role that Yiddish plays? For a partnership to be successful, each party must personally handle a fair share of the burdens and likewise receive a fair share of the rewards.

Yiddish has already done its share. *Mame-loshn* has created a literature, poetry, theater and music to fulfill demands and needs of the most discriminating connoisseur. However, what has been, is, and what will be my personal contribution to this partnership?

To each of us the answer is a personal matter. This concept is thrown out as venue for each of us to look deep into our minds and scrutinize our own feelings, activities, and desires.

What is your personal relationship with Yiddish? Is it a one-night-stand? Is she a vacation companion? Does *mame-loshn* accompany you only at *the* monthly Yiddish *vinkl* meeting? Does your partnership consist merely of sending that check to *Der Bay*, NYBC, YIVO, WC, JPPO, or any of the other acronym organizations?

All partnerships are fragile at times. How do you handle the times that *mame* is not the kind, loving, gentle soul? Are you forgiving? It is not always easy to accept criticism—especially from someone whom you believe is less knowledgeable than you.

Dear reader stop for a moment, ponder your situation, and perhaps share your thoughts with us.

Der Bay's Website Listings

If you turn to the back of any issue of *Der Bay*, there you will find:

Networking is having others help you get what **YOU** want. *Der Bay* is a great networking tool.

Co-operation is the basis of success. Few of us do not rely on someone else for information or advice. While location, location, location is the mantra for the real estate broker, networking, networking, networking, is the best and cheapest form of advertising. Do you wish more gigs for a klezmer group? Do you a translator, Yiddish teacher, Yiddish club or a performer? Check the listings.

On *Der Bay's* homepage there is a box to search for a word or phrase in the hundreds of pages in the website. It is a Google search of this site. If you google at Google with your name, you also may find your listing/s on *Der Bay's* website.

If you wish to check *Der Bay's* listings, go to <http://www.derbay.org>. This takes you to the homepage, click on *presenters*. Here is the alphabetical listing by last name. It is divided by last names into A-L and M-Z.

Would you like to:

- Add your listing.
If you are not listed and wish to be, send the information you wish to include. Check the listings to see the format used.
- Update it.
Have you moved? Do you have a new phone number or a new e-mail address?
- Add new information.
Do you now have e-mail or a website?
- Remove part of the information.
Do you prefer to have your phone number or e-mail address removed?
- Remove an entire listing.
Are you no longer involved in the activity and wish your listing removed? Did you notice someone who is no longer with us?

While *der internatsyonaler kalendar* is updated regularly, the presenter list is done mainly upon request.

Ideally, you would check not only your listing, but for a teacher, a club, a lecturer, translator, etc. There is a separate page for klezmer groups with over 160 U.S. listings. For an even more detailed listing see Ari Davidow's Klezmer Shack at: <http://www.klezmershack.com/index.html>

Jewish Radio Shows on the Internet

Source: Ari Davidow, Excerpted from his site

Israel National Radio: The Beat with Benyamin Bresky, Weekly, music Israel; klezmer, jazz, rock. <http://www.IsraelNationalRadio.com>. In Israel—1-800-270-428; in United States and in Canada—1-800-270-4288; in England—00-800-3-700-7000; in Australia—00-11-800-3-700-7000. E-mail Benyamin Bresky.

B'nai B'rith Radio: The first 24-hour, all-Jewish music radio station outside of Israel. Traditional Yiddish, secular Israeli, Jewish American, Instrumental, and Chasidic music. On the Internet at: <http://www.bnaibrithradio.org>.

Five Towns Radio: FiveTownsRadio.com, the best of Jewish music 24/6, now playing worldwide over the Internet, <http://www.FiveTownsRadio.com>
E-mail: mail@FiveTownsRadio.com

Radio Free Klezmer: An internet-only, 24hr/day broadcast of new wave Klezmer and other Jewish music. home.comcast.net/~radiofreeklezmer/ links to music and the current playlist. E-mail Radio Free Klezmer. (Eric Levine)

YidishMusic: broadcasting live 24/7 from São Paulo, Brazil. Automated radio, allows continuous broadcasting even on Shabes. Made to meet the different time zones in the planet. YidishMusic WebRadio is heard in over 60 countries. Average of 15000 visitors each month, It has no sponsorship. <http://www.YidishMusic.com.br>

INTERNATIONAL

Argentina: Buenos Aires: Jewish music; Jasidic, Klezmer, Israeli, Yiddish and Ladino, in a 24/7 radio station. <http://www.radiojai.com.ar>. E-mail Radio Jai. (Danny Saltzman)

Canada

British Columbia: Vancouver: Ethan Minovitz. and Alan Tapper co-host Anthology of Jewish Music on CFRO-FM 102.7 (Vancouver Cooperative Radio). Every Sunday 10 to 11 a.m." Telephone messages can be left at, (604) 684-8494. Web: <http://www.coopradio.org>. E-mail: eminovitz@canoemail.com

Ontario: Ottawa: on CKCU-FM, Klezmer music. Dave Dalle's show, Thursday's 1-4 p.m., CKCU 93.1 FM. <http://www.dalle.ca/david>. With Realaudio at: <http://www.ckcufm.com/listenlive.html>. E-mail David Dalle.

Ontario: Toronto area: Monday - Friday, 10:00am - 11:00am. CHIN Stereo FM Radio 100.7 "SHALOM with Zelda Young". Sunday, 8:30am - 10:00am, simulcast on FM101.3 and AM1540. "SHALOM with Zelda Young". Broadcast Station: Telephone: (416) 531-9991. Fax: (416) 531-5274. Web: <http://www.zeldayoung.com> E-mail Zelda Young.

Quebec: Montreal: "Jewish Digest" weekly half hour broadcast on Radio Centre-ville, 102.3FM Saturday 8:30 am. RCV is a multi-ethnic broadcasting in seven languages. English programming starts Friday evening until Saturday afternoon. Jewish Digest features interviews and a variety of Jewish music, Sephardic, Mizrachi, Klezmer. Web: <http://www.radiocentreville.com>. E-mail Leslie Lutsky. (Leslie Lutsky)

Italy: Milan: The Italian Center for the Study of Jewish Music (the only Jewish radio program in Italy). Radio Popolare Milano, FM 101.5 or 107.6. E-mail YUVAL Italia. (Francesco Spagnolo)

United Kingdom: London: The "SomethingJewish" show covers Jewish rap to Klezmer. Sundays 3.30pm to 4.30pm on 104.4fm. Web: <http://www.somethingjewish.co.uk>. E-mail Something Jewish. (Leslie Bunder)

UNITED STATES

California: Berkeley: Oy Mendele! <http://www.jewishmediaconspiracy.com.com>. Subscribe to our podcast from iTunes, or directly from the website. Eric Fixler.

Connecticut: Middletown: N'Shoma Sunday 11 a.m. to noon on WMRD-AM 1150 simulcast on WLIS-AM 1420 Old Saybrook, CT. Contemporary Klezmer & Jewish music with older material and original Jewish music. E-mail Richard B. Kamins. (Richard B. Kamins)

Florida: Ft. Lauderdale: Shalom South Florida—host, RONI, Jewish music. Sundays 9:00-10:00 am, throughout South Florida on WLVJ (1040-). Web: <http://www.shalomsouthflorida.com>.

Florida: Tampa: The Sunday Simcha eclectic mix, Klezmer, Chassidic, Israeli, Yiddish, Ladino, Mizrachi, and contemporary. Sundays in the Tampa Bay area and beyond on WMNF - 88.5 FM 12-2 PM. On the Internet at <http://www.wmnf.org>, Hosts Kevin Frye & Marc Rosenwasser. It was Mike Eisenstadt, E-mail Kevin Frye. (Kevin Frye)

Illinois: Carbondale, IL: "Cyril's Cabaret," hosted by Cyril Robinson, Jewish music, interviews and commentary. Broadcasts over a WDBX, community radio station, 91.1 FM, 9:30-10:AM Wednesdays. Radio Station, WDBX, 224 N. Washington St, Carbondale, IL, 62901. Tel: 618-529-5900. <http://www.wdbx.org>.

Maine: Portland: Gail Wartell hosts "Sunday Simcha," Sundays 6:30 to 8:30 am on WMPG, Greater Portland Community Radio, 90.9 and 104.1 FM, also at <http://www.wmpg.org>. Traditional, sacred, Sephardic, Eastern European, folk, rock and klezmer. News and announcements for the Maine Jewish community. tel: 207-780-4943.

Massachusetts: The Berkshires: "The Klezmer Hour," hosted by Seth Rogovoy from Williams College radio station WCFM (91.9 FM) in Williamstown, Internet, Mondays 9 to 10pm. Traditional Klezmer, neo-Klezmer and non-Klezmer-based New Jewish Music. Tuesdays a few minutes before 9pm Eastern Time and click on the word "Receive" if you have Real Audio. If you don't, there are instructions about how to get it. <http://wso.williams.edu/orgs/WCFM/realaudio.html>. Broadcast while school is in session.

Massachusetts: Boston: Mark David "The Yiddish Voice" Radio Show, WUNR 1600 AM/Brookline - Weds 7:30-8:30 p.m. Yiddish-language. Address: Yiddish Voice c/o WUNR, 160 N. Washington St., Boston, MA 02114. "Yiddish Voice" web page.

Missouri: Columbia, MO: On KOPN-FM 89.5 "Jewish Spectrum," hosted by Carol Greenspan early Sunday mornings. All types of Jewish music, for mid-Missouri. Mailing Address Carol Greenspan/Jewish Spectrum, KOPN Box 19, KOPN Radio, 915 E. Broadway, Columbia, MO 65201.

New Jersey: Southern New Jersey / Eastern Pennsylvania: Jacob Freedman, Host/Producer of "Sunday Morning Klezmer 2's Day," Jewish Music, Art and Culture, on WBZC-FM 88.9 FM (Chatsworth, NJ) / 95.1 FM (Burlington, NJ / Bristol, PA). Tuesdays, 6:00 to 9:00 a.m. EST (01:00 to 04:00 UTC), The Web pages <http://www.angelfire.com/nj/WBZCFMsndymrnngklzmr/> and the WBZC-FM's Real Audio Broadcast is at wbzc.bcc.edu:8080/ramgen/encoder/wbzc889.rm?usehostname.

New York: My radio segment "Muzikalische naves" on the "Forverts-sho" Saturday nights, 8-9pm, WMCA AM in New York City, 570 AM. E-mail Muzikalische naves. (Itzik Gottesman Associate Editor of the *Forverts*)

New York: Lorin Sklamberg, hosts a music segment on WBAI's show, Beyond the Pale, Sundays, 11-noon, 99.5FM. On RealAudio simulcast from <http://www.wbai.org>

New York: WSIA, 88.9FM, Staten Island, NY, live on the Internet, <http://www.wsia.fm>. The Kol Isha Show with the Rockin' Rebbetzin Michele Garner Fridays 8-10am and The Happy Chevra Show with Rabbi Eliezer Garner Sunday 11 am-1 pm. Contact: WSIA Michele Garner, 2800 Victory Blvd., Staten Island NY 10314. E-mail: OrPnimi@aol.com

Ohio: Cleveland: Jewish Community Radio is a weekly radio show featuring klezmer, hasidic music, Torah parsha, news from Israel and local happenings. Sundays 7:00AM-8:00AM hosted by Tzvi Turner and The Doc. Fridays 12noon - 1:00PM hosted by Yisroel Mendelson. Broadcast on 88.7FM WJCU in Cleveland, Ohio and on the Internet at ClevelandJewishRadio.tripod.com. E-mail Tzvi Turner. (Tzvi Turner).

Ohio: Cleveland: Shalom America on the air for over 38 years in Cleveland, Ohio. Sundays 7-9 AM on WELW 1330 AM in Cleveland. In English with news from Israel, Chassidic, Hebrew, Yiddish, Klezmer, Cantorial and Ladino music, call-in contests. Contact shalomamerica@netscape.com

Ohio: Oberlin: Sara Marcus is the DJ, "Diaspora Studies: Jewish fusion and klezmer music" Sundays, 11 AM - 1 PM on WOBC * 91.5 FM * Commercial-free radio in Oberlin, Ohio

Oregon: Portland: Jack Falk, hosts the Yiddish Hour (on the air since 1979), heard Sunday mornings on KBOO-FM, Portland, Oregon. E-mail Yankl Falk.

Pennsylvania: WNWR AM 1540 Philadelphia daily. Barry Reisman Show, Monday - Friday 3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M. and Sundays 6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. Reisman's klezmer, Yiddish, and Israeli music <http://www.wnwr.com/jewishindex.html>. E-mail: Radiobarry@aol.com, (Barry Reisman).

Texas: College Station/Bryan: Mike Sherman hosts "Rejuvenating Heritage," Jewish music, 7-9PM Weds on 89.1 FM, KEOS. Israeli pop/rock, Yiddish, Klezmer, and other Jewish music. Web page: <http://stat.tamu.edu/~sherman/KEOS/Klezmershow.html>. (Mike Sherman).

Credits to: The KlezmerShack Ari's home page <http://www.klezmershack.com/contacts/klezradio.html>

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Pirates of Penzance in Yiddish

Off-Broadway Premiere of Al Grand's "Pirates of Penzance" Commandeers Folksbiene's 92nd Season

Yiddish translation loyally polishes Gilbert & Sullivan original helping it captivate anew.

On October 29 music, song and Yiddish will break out at the JCC in Manhattan, 334 Amsterdam Avenue, when the National Yiddish Theatre – Folksbiene presents the Off-Broadway premiere of Al Grand's Yiddish translation of Gilbert & Sullivan's operetta "Pirates of Penzance." The costumed and choreographed production, directed by Allen Lewis Rickman, with music direction by Zalmen Mlotek, through November 12. (This is a limited engagement; just 16 performances. Performed in Yiddish with English and Russian supertitles. "Di Yam Gazlonim" melds two languages to create a theatrical marvel. "Di Yam Gazlonim" features a cast of 14.

Created by lyricist William S. Gilbert and composer Arthur Sullivan, "Pirates of Penzance" premiered in New York in 1879. Gilbert & Sullivan were so popular in New York their "H.M.S. Pinafore" played in 9 of New York's 11 theatres simultaneously! While Grand's Yiddish translation has been in development since 1988, the Folksbiene-produced "Pirates of Penzance" marks not only the translation's professional Off-Broadway premiere, but it is the first staging entirely in Yiddish. (Past versions featured portions of the book in English.) Folksbiene presented a one-night-only concert version of the operetta -- also directed by Rickman, with music direction by Mlotek -- in May 2004.

Grand a resident of North Bellmore, Long Island has completed Yiddish translations of two other Gilbert & Sullivan operettas -- "Trial by Jury" and "H.M.S. Pinafore." His twin obsessions of Yiddish and Gilbert & Sullivan are uniquely compatible.

Now in its record 92nd consecutive season, the newly renamed National Yiddish Theatre – Folksbiene, is America's only professional Yiddish theatre. Folksbiene champions a two-fold mission: to be the custodian of a rich cultural legacy, while developing new works to add to this legacy.

"Pirates" ducats, which are \$40, can be acquired via Ticket Central -- by phone at 212-279-4200 or online at www.ticketcentral.com. For more information visit www.folksbiene.org. Folksbiene is in residence in the state-of-the-art JCC, at 334 Amsterdam Avenue (76th Street, NYC). Contact: Beck Lee at: 718-403-0939

Yiddish on Your Computer

by Prof. Raphael Finkel

For those who want Yiddish letters on their computer, there are various methods you can use. You can find discussions of computer issues and Yiddish at: <http://www.uyip.org/>

You are welcome also to use my shraybmashinke, which is at: <http://www.cs.uky.edu/~raphael/yiddish/makeyiddish.html> It lets you type in text in Romanization. You need to follow transcription rules pretty precisely.

Sloppiness like "tz" instead of "ts" or "ai" instead of "ay" will lead to misspellings. You can then decide in what form you want it to display the Yiddish in proper characters. I suggest that you pick Unicode UTF-8. You can copy and paste the result into your email.

Another option is to use the shrayberke, which is at: <http://www.cs.uky.edu/~raphael/yiddish/shrayberke.utf8.html>

This software (which takes a while to load into your browser) lets you type Roman letters and immediately see Yiddish text. Once again, you can copy and paste, although you might need to relax your browser's security settings to do so.

The Seattle Yiddish Group

We are a friendly circle of people who want to hear Yiddish spoken, sung and discussed in a relaxed informal setting. Fluency in Yiddish is not required since readings, songs and conversation have been translated into English. Interested persons of all ages, opinions and persuasions are welcome.

We meet at the Hillel Center for Family Life, 4745 17th Avenue NE, Seattle, on the third Sunday of each month, from 2 to 4 p.m. Please call or e-mail Murray Meld for information or to verify the date at holiday times. There are no regular dues.

From time to time, the Group will sponsor special events or film showings. It belongs to the International Association of Yiddish Clubs and to the National Yiddish Book Center. It also collects Yiddish books and recordings to be sent to the NYBC for preservation.

For further information contact:
Murray Meld, Co-chair
5033 44th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105
Ph: 206-523-6564 E-mail: murmelo4@aol.com
Co-chair: Frank Krasnowsky Ph: 425-788-4535

Libe Khaya Berman

fun goldele@rcn.com

Ikh hob geleyent ayer briv in *Der Bay* un shik aykh do di iberike strofes fun dem troyerikn lid "DOS FARVOGLTE KIND"--fun Khane Heytin. Ikh banuts zikh mit dem lid ven ikh red tsu mayn klas vegn khurbm. Ikh shik a kopye tsu Fishl Kutner oykh. Di ershte strofe hot ir; di iberike zaynen azoy:

Khaye's briv

Mayn yidisher nomen iz Khaye, ober do ruft men mir Raye. Ich bin geboyrn in Poylen, Rovno, (yetzlike Ukraine) un hob ibergelebt di Tzvoyte Krig in Rusland. Bis di letste tsvey yor bin ikh geven a Yidishe ertsyern un Director fun a Religiye Shule in Miami, Fl. Di letzte 10 yor hob ikh zikh oykh farnumen mit lernen Yiddish tzu dervaksene.

Yiddishe/ hebreishe musik is ale mol geven mayn grester fargnigen. Yetzt gefun ikh zikh in a gezeshhaft fun yidn vos hobn oykh ibergelebt di tzvoyte krig un hobn lib tzu zingen Yiddishe lider.

Mayn repertuar fun Yiddishe lider is gantz groys. Dokh fayln mir di verter fun a lid vos fangt zikh on mit di dozike verter (:Efsheer kent ir mir helfn gefinen emittzn vos gedenkt dos lid. Dos lid iz geshribn gevorn in tzayt fun Krig.)

fun Khaye

In a Litvish derfl vayt,
in a shtibl in a zayt
Durkh a fenster nit kayn groys,
kukn kinderlakh aroys.

Yingelakh mit flaksn kep,
maydelakh mit blonde tzep
Un tsuzamen dort mit zay,
kukn oygn shvartze tzvay.

fun Goldie

Shvartse oygn ful mit kheyn
un a nezele a kleyn,
liplekh tsum kushn nor,
shtark gelokte shvartse hor.

Di mame hot es do gebrakht
ayngeviklt shpet bay nakht,
gekusht es shtark, geveynt, geklogt
un shtil hot zi tsu im gezogt:

Fun haynt, mayn kind, iz do dayn ort,
gedenk dayn mames letstn vort.
Ikh bahalt dikh do derfar
vayl s'drot dayn lebn a gefar.

Mit di kinder shpil zikh fayn,
zolst shtil, gehorkham, ruik zayn.
Kayn yidish vort, kayn yidish lid,
vayl du, mayn kind, bist mer kayn yid.

Dos kind gebetn zikh bay ir:
ikh vil, mame, zayn mit dir!
Loz nisht iber mikh aleyn!
Er hot getsitert un geveynt.

Zi hot im tsugezogt a sakh,
nisht geholfn hot keyn zakh,
es hot geshrien neyn un neyn,
kh'vil nisht blaybn do aleyn.

Oyfn hant genumen im
un mit a tsiterdiker shtim,
vi amol in shtub bay zikh.
Ayngeshlefert im oyf gikh.

Mit royte oygn fun geveynt
gekusht zayn kepele dos kleyn,
gekusht im mit a harts ful shrek,
aleyn gelozn un avek.

A kelt in droysn un a vint,
a shtime hert zikh: oy mayn kind!
Gelozn dikh oyf fremde hent,
nor andersh hob ikh nisht gekent.

Es geyt a mame, mit zikh redt,
in droysn shreklekh kalt un shpet,
es veyet in ponem ir der vint,
got, hob rakhmones oyf mayn kind!

A fremde shtub mit mentshn ful,
er geyt arum zikh fremd un shtil.
Redt nisht, redt nisht, vil keyn zakh,
zelt ven er git a lakh.

Fremd far im iz yede shtim,
fremd di shprakh men redt tsu im.
Zayn nomen, yosele, oykh fremd,
zayn kinder-hertsl shtark farklemt.

A mames harts es filt gants gut,
zi rut nisht ayn kayn eyn minut,
zi filt dos harts es geyt ir oys,
zayt yosele iz fun shtub aroys.

Tsu moyshes mamen iz zi glaykh,
azoy vi moyshen oyfn taykh:
elnt, eynzam, oyfn vint
hot zi gelozn oykh ir kind.

Yiddish in Paris?

by Ruth Kaplan

So why would one go to Paris to study Yiddish?
Because it's there?

"Alors," I returned from a three-week intensive Yiddish language immersion program in the heart of Paris known as the "Summer University in Yiddish Language and Literature" sponsored by the Maison de la Culture Yiddish/ Biblioteque Medem. As a result, my Yiddish is vastly improved, and my French a little less so. (My ability to mix the two in one sentence is most impressive!)

But, "far vos?" Why did I and 70 others from France, the United States, several European countries, Israel, Russia and Australia choose to spend three weeks in this fashion?

The Yiddish language—the language of Eastern European Jews that was decimated by the Holocaust—has been experiencing a "mini revival" among a small but resilient group of mostly secular Jews during the past decade or so. There are some amazingly vibrant institutions that support Yiddish, especially the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Massachusetts where director Aaron Lansky has succeeded in saving thousands of volumes of modern Yiddish literature and depositing them throughout university libraries in the U.S. and elsewhere. You can read about his remarkable achievement in his recent account "Outwitting History." (Algonquin Books, 2004)

Locally, (Boston Area) one can study Yiddish at the Workman's Circle on Beacon Street, and at some area universities. On Wednesday evenings from 7:30-8:30 p.m. one can tune into "The Yiddish Voice" on WUNR 1600 -- a weekly Yiddish radio hour hosted by Brookline resident Mark David.

But we all know that Yiddish has a limited future. It is no longer a language spoken on the street, unless that street is Meah Shearim in Israel or Williamsburg in Brooklyn. So why bother?

There are many reasons to bother. Modern Yiddish literature, which flourished in the mid-19th and early 20th century, is unbelievably rich and diverse. One can read poetry, essays, and novels of such literary giants as Sholem Aleichem (whose stories about Tevya the Milkman formed the basis for "Fiddler on the Roof"), Y.L. Peretz and so many others too numerous to mention. Their lives reflect both the tragedy and heroism of modern Jewish history. The experience can create and enhance a strong connection to one's Jewish heritage.

But this is where my assumptions of the appeal of Yiddish were challenged and expanded. Much to my surprise and delight, a significant number of non-Jewish students were struggling along with me in my intermediate level class, and one of my two teachers, an amazingly adept Yiddish scholar, Natalia Krynicka, was a young Polish woman. Natalia is the head librarian of Biblioteque Medem.

It is difficult enough to explain to most Jews why their fellow Jews study Yiddish—so what motivates the non-Jew? And why do Jewish people tend to assume that others who are not members of their faith or ethnic group would not be interested in studying a Jewish language?

One of my fellow non-Jewish students who hails from the Lorraine region of France explained to me that his native language, which is a form of Frankish and is closer to German than French, very much resembles Yiddish. Moreover, his grandparents had Jewish friends whose Yiddish expressions worked their way into his family's language. Frankish is truly dying out. By studying Yiddish, he found a way to feel closer to his own heritage.

At our culminating event upon completion of our program, I had a lengthy conversation in Yiddish with a non-Jewish classmate who is French, and who teaches German. As he spoke no English, Yiddish was our best connection. So, I have returned home with a new determination to recommend the study of Yiddish to anyone—Jew and non-Jew alike—who would enjoy entering a rich universe of powerful literature and the very special connection that comes with conversing with fellow idealistic travelers committed to this marvelous language filled with cultural and historical significance.

In the end, I cannot comment on all the motives of the others—Jews and non-Jews. We were too busy studying, speaking and just enjoying the experience. When I asked one of my fellow French-Jewish students why she studied Yiddish, she answered: "I am not sure." The same goes for me, except to say that reading, writing and speaking Yiddish is one of the most pleasurable and meaningful pursuits I have ever experienced, and hopefully will continue to. I guess that is reason enough.

Ruth Kaplan began her study of Yiddish in connection with a Master's degree she received in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis University. Ms. Kaplan is also a member of the Brookline School Committee.

Japanese Yiddishist Visits Seattle

By Murray Meld, Co-Chair
The Seattle Yiddish Group

Professor Yoshiji Hirose, one of ten Yiddish-speaking Japanese scholars, and head of The Jewish Literary Society of Japan, came to Seattle for a visit. It was to meet again with the teacher who had sparked his interest in Yiddish—an entirely new language for Hirose at that time.

His class with Dr. Edward Alexander, now Professor Emeritus of English Literature at the University of Washington, had introduced him to Isaac Bashevis Singer's "Shosha". wanting to pursue Singer in the original led to subsequent studies in Yiddish and Judaism at Oxford.

The visit was his first in thirty years. Meanwhile, Dr. Hirose has translated "Shosha" and Singer's short story, (for which as yet there is no English translation) "a eunuch who got married and a rabbi who remarried" into Japanese. He also has published articles in the *forvertz* and *afn shvel*. The current issue of the society's journal, *shlemiel*, has "in search of the sense of ambiguity", an analysis of Cynthia Ozick's *the Puttermesser Papers*.

At Dr. Alexander's invitation, I had the pleasure of sitting in on his conversation with Dr. Hirose. While they also discussed academic and professional matters, the subject of Japanese attitudes toward Jews and Jewish culture came up. Because of limited contact, stereotypes are common, but even though books like *Mein Kampf* and *the Protocols* can be found in bookstores, there isn't any anti-semitism, he said. Indeed, there was serious academic study early in the 20th century of the relationship between Japan and the Tribes of Israel. Respect for parents and tradition made *Fiddler on the Roof* very popular.

Since *The Symbolic Meaning Of Yiddish* (2001), and *Shadows of Yiddish on Modern Jewish American Writers* (2005), Dr. Hirose's latest book is *The Yiddish Influence on American Literature*. It was reviewed in the February 24th issue of the *Forvertz* by Michael Krutikov.

At Notre Dame Seishin University in Okayama, some of Dr. Hirose's students are engaged in translating Rosten's *Joys of Yiddish* into Japanese. A pair of graduate students are intensively studying the literature of Jewish-American authors. Membership in the Jewish Literary Society numbers over one hundred.

I found him a most enjoyable passenger. We spoke in Yiddish on the way to and from the university campus. He was excited to see the change in the student landscape since the 'seventies.

Worlds within a World: Conversations with Yiddish Writers

A velt mit veltelekh: shmuesn mit yidishe shraybers Itche Goldberg: oyb nit nokh hekher.

The League for Yiddish is pleased to announce that the film *Itche Goldberg: A Century of Yiddish Letters (Itshe Goldberg: Oyb nit nokh hekher)*, the first film in our series *Worlds within a World: Conversations with Yiddish Writers (A velt mit veltelekh: shmuesn mit yidishe shraybers)* is available.

The film is an interview with Yiddish poet, essayist, literary critic, editor and educator Itche Goldberg by his former student, Professor Eugene Orenstein of McGill University, enhanced by photo stills and music. The film is 83 minutes long. The interview is entirely in Yiddish with English subtitles. In it, 101 year old Itche, who has become synonymous with the *linke* (progressive) Yiddish movement, discusses his life: his upbringing and schooling in Poland and Canada, his work as an educator and editor, the achievements and failures of the *linke shuln*, and his views as a literary critic. This is a rich picture of the life and world of a man who attended the funeral of the great Yiddish writer I.L. Peretz over 90 years ago and has remained creative in Yiddish circles.

The film is directed and edited by Josh Waletzky, director and editor of *Image before My Eyes* and *Partisans of Vilna*. Josh is the recipient of the Silver Ducat at the Mannheim International Film Festival for *Image* and First Prize at the Anthropos International Film Festival for *Partisans*.

Worlds within a World: Conversations with Yiddish Writers aims to provide a visual and oral document of prominent contemporary Yiddish writers so that present and future generations can "spend time" with these fascinating figures and gain insight into their work and milieu. Would that we had been able to do this for Sholem Aleichem, Peretz, Molodowsky, and so many others! Thus far, we have filmed poet/songwriter Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman and painter/writer Yonia Fain.

This is a perfect program for a Yiddish circle, class, or your local Jewish or documentary film festival. The film is available in VHS or DVD format. **To order, send \$30 plus \$3 postage (in the US) to League for Yiddish 45 East 33rd St. Suite 203, New York, New York 10016.** Postage for Canada \$4.25. Postage for Europe, Israel, etc.--surface post \$5, airmail \$9. You can also pay by credit card or paypal. If you have questions, please contact us at info@leagueforyiddish.org or call 212 889-0380.