

Der Bay

The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter

May 2009

Vol. XIX No. 5

The History of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) Conferences

Origin

In the early 1990's there were 4 Yiddish club newsletters in North America. They and their editors were: *Dos Bletl*, Barry Shockett (Toronto); *Circle of Yiddish Clubs*, Sunny Landsman (Miami, Florida); *Yiddish of Greater Washington*, Arnold Kuzmack, Yiddish editor and Shelby Shapiro, English editor, (Washington, DC); and Fishl Kutner, *Der Bay* (San Francisco, California Area). Bess and Barry Shockett and Sunny and Iz Landsman had children in the San Francisco area and were visiting Fishl and Sally at the same time.

The First Conferences

The question arose of the possibility of having a meeting of Yiddish clubs. They approached the Washington, DC group headed by Dr. Jonathan Sunshine. The result was that a trio headed by Dr. Harold Black, Dr. Jonathan Sunshine and Sid Verner held a Conference of Yiddish Clubs at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.

The group decided to follow up with the second conference in Toronto headed by Bess Shockett and then in Miami, Florida. The Miami conference headed by Ruth and Dave Barlas still holds the record for the largest attendance.

IAYC Formed

At the fourth conference held in 1997 at Trinity College in Fairfield, Connecticut, a Board of Directors and officers were elected and the decision was made to incorporate as the IAYC. Dr. Harold Black was elected the first president and Fishl Kutner as Vice President. Dr. Black held that position until his death. Since then Paul Melrood of Milwaukee, Wisconsin has been President. At this conference, Mel Rogow stepped forward and said,

"We should have a conference on the West Coast and I'll chair it." This was held on the beautiful campus of UCLA in Los Angeles.

Dr. Black again co-chaired a conference, this time with Elaine Mann at the 4H International Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland. The seventh conference was headed by Paul Melrood our President in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Number eight was in a Baltimore suburb. Sylvia Schildt, who is disabled, and in a wheelchair, did a magnificent job.

Board member Mike Baker was to chair the Milwaukee conference, but exactly as in the Toronto conference, his wife had to step in because of health problems and single-handedly chair the conference.

Lifetime Yiddish Service Award

The tenth conference in Teaneck, New Jersey was a key and went in a new direction. It saw the parent group assume a much larger role in supporting the local committee. While Sam Kutner was the chair, this was the first time that we had an official host, hostess and host club—Gregg and Stephanie Hudis and the Teaneck JCC Yiddish Club. It also was the first time IAYC gave the Lifetime Yiddish Service Award (Chana Mlotek). This was the first of three successive conferences at Marriott Hotels.

Board member Harold Ticktin chaired the eleventh conference in a Cleveland suburb. The second award went to Simon Swirsky. Again someone stepped forward and volunteered to come back to the West Coast. Norman Sarkin was a magnificent chair with the assistance of Bella Suchet. Lilke Majzner, long time leader of the premiere Los Angeles Culture Club, received the IAYC Award.

POP

By Meyer Zaremba

Many people have impacted upon my life, my thinking and my predispositions but I'd like to tell readers about two incidents involving the man that I used to call *tate* (father) and later called, *Pop*.

A very early memory of *tate* recalls something that happened before I ever started school. I was standing, looking out the window. (We lived "to the back"). I saw *tate* emerge from the cellar of the building where we lived, walk to the fence, climb over it and head towards the street that was adjacent to ours.

Later that day when he came home I asked him, "Tate, farvos hostu geshtign ibern ployt"? (Father, why did you climb over the fence?) (I spoke mostly Yiddish before I started going to school.). He answered, "Ikh vel dir anander mol zogn". (I'll tell you some other time).

I learned some time later that Pop's shop, (he was an operator on ladies slippers), had been on strike for months. When one of his co-workers was leaving the building where we lived, a gang of "goons" hired by the bosses "to teach the strikers a lesson", had attacked him and beaten him up very badly. "I", he explained, "left our building through the cellar and climbed over the fence because I was afraid that I, too, might be attacked and beaten if I left the building through 'the front'".

My memories shift to the early thirties. Pop and I were marching with members of his Jewish fraternal organization (the IWO) through Yorkville in Manhattan (a hot bed of German Nazi sympathizers), to demonstrate against what Hitler's brownshirt "goons" were doing to the Jews in Germany.

We marched along an avenue through a gauntlet of Nazi "co-religionists" who were lined up on both sides of the sidewalk, waving their swastika flags, their arms raised in the Nazi salute, shouting, "Dirty Jews" and "Heil Hitler".

I was scared but Pop held my hand as we marched and the strength of his hand strengthened me.

To this day, I am oriented towards those who "earn their bread by the sweat of their brow". I yearn for and, to an extent, strive for a "shenere un besere velt". (A more beautiful and better world.)

I believe that what I am had its genesis in the teachings of the Prophets and is part of my Jewish DNA. And who was a major transmitter of that DNA?

Happy 150th Birthday, Sholem Aleichem!

Aliza Shevrin

The Jewish American world is honoring you on this, your 150th birthday year. There are newspaper and magazine articles, university conferences, radio interviews, concerts, film documentaries and for me, the great pleasure of seeing the publication by a most prestigious publisher, of my translations of 3 of your greatest novels, "Wandering Stars" (*Blondzhende Shtern*) Viking Press, "Tevye the Dairyman" (*Tevye der Milkhiger*) and "Motl the Cantor's Son" (*Motl Peysi dem Khazns*), both in one volume by Penguin Classics.

These are my 9th, 10th and 11th translations of your works, more than any other translator. I have spent almost half my life reading again, every word of and rendering into English these marvelous books. One really gets to know a person when one spends so much time making every effort to convey what the author intends to say in the best possible literary style of a second language. I have imagined you looking over my shoulder as I typed, guiding me, correcting me, even keeping me in line ("If I wanted to say it that way, I would have written it that way").

Translating "Wandering Star" reminded me that you loved the theater and music and knew all the difficulties of being a promising young artist among grasping, exploitative people. For "Tevye", I had to find a solution to convey his actual scriptural quotations in transliterated Hebrew followed by his personalized definitions in English. The deaths of his daughter, Shprintze and his wife, Golde, brought tears, as did the ending of "Motl", when the book ends with the ebbing of your own life. But the irrepressible 9-year old Motl, the ever-optimistic orphan fleeing Russia with his family and finding a new life in America was a joy.

I know and admire your granddaughter, Bel (Belitchka) and her husband, Sidney Gluck, with whom I have visited your birthplace and home in Kiev to celebrate your life with musical programs. From her remembrances of you I know you were a wonderful husband, father and grandfather.

I am lucky to have been given the opportunity to delve deeply into and to live intimately with your novels and stories. I hope with all my heart that my work will result in making these classics available to all readers now and in the future. May translators continue to translate and retranslate everything you have written and may your birthday be celebrated by generation after generation.

Story No. 2 About Different Kinds of Jokes

Prof. Norman Simms

This is a story about my parents' friend Aaron, who was a dentist, like my father, and a man who liked to tell jokes. He was like Danny Thomas in how he looked and talked: a comedian. He had a wife, Annie, and a dog whose name I forget.

So he liked to tell jokes. But not like today's stand-up comedians who insult everybody and speak bad words all the time. This is clever? *Feh*. Anyway, Aaron told sit-down jokes. You sit down and listen and he tells. For instance:

There was a fancy rich Russian lady in Russia (where else?). She was having a baby. Already she was so fat with the little-one-to-be that her husband, a rich merchant, sent for the doctor, he should be ready in the house when the baby comes. So the doctor came. He came in a sleigh because it was in Russia and it was winter.

Anyway, he sat at the kitchen table with the merchant, and they talked. They drank tea in a glass. They sipped over a piece crystal sugar, like this, you see, and then the servant girl she brought more tea from the *samovar* and so they talked all evening. Then from upstairs in the rich man's house came down a call, in French: the lady called out, help, help.

The doctor sipped his tea. The rich merchant said, Now? Not yet, said the doctor. So they talked and sipped and talk and sip. And then an hour later came another *geshrey*, this time in Russian. You aren't going up? Asked the husband. Not yet. Don't worry.

So they sipped and talked, and talked and sipped, and another hour went by. Then from upstairs fell down a shriek, *gevald, gevald*. The husband looked anxious. Not yet, said the doctor, but almost. There was more sipping and more talking. Almost the whole *samovar* was nearly empty already. Then it came a sound like it wasn't even human, maybe a sick dog or a cat. Aha, said the doctor, now I go up.

When he told this joke, Aaron began to laugh and he tapped the table. You like that? He said, poking me with his finger, like it hurt but was also a tickle, so I laughed, though I didn't really understand the joke.

All the stories were like that for years and years. Then when I was near *bar mitzvah*, I started to understand, and there was no need for a finger to poke, but there was still a tickle, which I also liked,

Aaron stopped telling so many stories, and they didn't last so long. His voice became less strong, and his eyes were full of pain. But my father and mother still went over to his house in the evening after work for a glass of tea, a cheesecake from Ebingers, and a little chit and maybe a chat.

After a while, when we went, my mother would sit in the livingroom with Annie. My father and I sat with Aaron at the kitchen table, but nobody spoke much. Sometimes my father said, "Remember this," and Aaron looked at him, and didn't say a word, so I told a story about school, and the two men smiled.

Months later my father walked over, and he asked me to come. We sat in the kitchen with Annie, and Aaron, they said, was upstairs. He had a nurse. The grown-ups whispered, and I drank an egg-nog, which was Annie's specialty, with Good Health seltzer, cold milk and a few spoons of Fox's U-Bet. The dog curled up in the corner. Upstairs was a lot of walking around, and sometimes a sound, maybe someone talking. Once when I went to the bathroom near the steps, I saw upstairs Aaron in his striped pajamas. He had a white bandage like a turban around his head. He looked like an old man.

Then one evening, when we walked over for the usual chat and tea, I could hear from upstairs someone moaning and crying. When Annie came in with the empty cups from the bedroom, she said something in Yiddish and my father started to cry, which was unusual and frightening. Then he patted me on the head and said, "You should keep healthy." I could hear the crying again from upstairs and this time it was loud, like an animal's scream. My father said, "We better go now—because of the boy. Annie kissed my cheek.

A few days later, we went, it was the last time, and I heard something no one should ever hear, not even my worst enemy, God forbid. We stayed only a few moments. My father only said one thing as we were leaving: The morphine doesn't work any more. At that time I didn't know what he meant.

Later that week, after the funeral, we went over to sit *shiva* with Annie. She looked like an old woman, small and weak, and she spoke only in Yiddish, which I couldn't understand. She sipped her tea quietly. Her brother, who I had never met before, brought me an eggnog, and he patted me on the head and said: Life is no joke, son.

End of the second story.

One Pair of Shoes

by Rifke Galin

Translation by Prof. Sarah Traister Moskovitz

The wind wails, it's cold and wet
and I can't go out today
My little sister and I –
we both share one pair of shoes

Today my little sister hid
the shoes someplace, I don't know where.
Then she started teasing me,
so I caught her and hit her.

I don't know what came over me,
but suddenly I began to see
how pale and thin my little sister was...
and then my anger left me.

Something seized me in my heart–
it made me so ashamed
that in those two minutes
I became so very good.

"If you want, " I say, "put on the shoes,
and take them for yourself always.
I am strong and can insist,
and I love going barefoot anyway."

She looks at me and does not stir.
I see she doesn't believe a word.
Then I go closer to the bed
and softly pat her little head.

And once more I repeat,
but this time with kinder voice:
"You want the shoes, take them they're yours,
and wear them every day, your choice."

"For I am strong and can insist
and love going barefoot anyway."
There was much more I had to say
but tears were choking in my throat.

Editor's note: This poem is from the Ringelblum archive. It will be in Professor Moscovitz's new book Poetry in Hell. The Yiddish poetry was dug up in Warsaw, buried in milk cans etc. and retrieved at the end of World War II. Professor Moscovitz has worked tirelessly for the past five years to translate it from Holocaust Museum Washington microfiche. She chose a group of poems that are relevant to teaching in Yiddish schools and not hardcore, tragic, Holocaust related.

Professor Moscovitz has presented at our IAYC conferences and can be reached by e-mail at: smoskovitz@csun.edu

Response to Al Grand's Letter

By Frank Krasnowsky

The lyrics of the Yiddish drinking song *Altn Daym*, which I cited, reminded him of the song his mother sang to a tune from Enesco's Rumanian Rhapsody which is based on Rumanian folk songs such as the tune of *Hob Ikh Mir An Altn Daym*. It was one of many Yiddish songs that he saved when he came to America in the 30's. Rumania was rich in folk music, and there were many lyrics and variations, in Yiddish and Rumanian, set to the same tune.

Gelbert and Enesco were contemporaries. Both used Rumanian songs; Gelbert in songs and Enesco in rhapsodies. The Yiddish words and melody of *Altn Daym* are in Eleanor Mlotek's *Mir Trogn a Gezang*, and they are in my first cassette: *Chutzpah Brings Yiddish to the Rockies*. The lyrics are not the same as Gelbert's. Variations in folk songs are common. Here are Gelbert's lyrics and my translations. (Here are not *tra-la-las*, needed to vocal performances.)

Hob ikh mir an altn daym,
iz der daym oykh nit mayn....

Chorus:

Lomir ale freylakh zayn,
kumt mit mir in shenk arayn.
trinken bronfn, trinken vayn...

Nit keyn morgn, nit keyn haynt,
nit keyn khaver, nit keyn fraynt...
Hob ikh mir a gantzn toler,
vel ikh zayn der gantzer tsoler ...

Hob ikh nit keyn vayb un kind,
bin ikh fray vi der vint...
Lomir nit zayn vie di alte babes --
lomir makhn fun mitvokh shabes ...

I have only one thin dime,
and that dime's not even mine.

Chorus:

Let us have a joyful time.
come into this bar to dine
we'll drink whiskey, we'll drink wine...

No tomorrow, no today --
all my friends have gone away...
I have here a dollar bill --
everybody drink your fill...

I have neither wife nor child --
like the wind I'm running wild.
Don't act like you're old and grey --
let's have shabes every day ...

SHOLOM ALEICHEM AND SHANGHAI

Yao Yi-en, Senior Research Fellow
Shanghai Research Institute of Culture & History
First Published in *Der Bay* April 1994

I. April 21, 1910, Maxim Gorky wrote to a writer:

"My dear colleague,

Your book has been duly received. Having read it, I could not help laughing and crying. What a fantastic book! The translation seems to me to be quite well, and it was done out of love for the author though in some places, the difficulty to convey in Russian the sad and touching humour in the original is felt. I mean it is just felt.

I like this book very much. I would say again that this is a great book. It is full of noble, kind and sincere love for the people, which is so rare in the present day.

M. Gorky

Capri, April 21, 1910"

The book mentioned in the letter was Sholom Aleichem's famous work *THE ADVENTURES OF MOTL, CANTOR'S SON* whose Chinese version was published in Shanghai in 1957.

"The sad and touching humour" is an important feature of Sholom Aleichem's works. The noble, kind and sincere love for the people."

As the translator of the Chinese version of *THE ADVENTURES OF MOTLE, THE CANTOR'S SON* and the researcher of Sholom Aleichem, I would like to brief about Sholom Aleichem first and then go into his influence in Shanghai and China as a whole.

II. Life and Creation of Sholom Aleichem

Sholom Aleichem--that is to say, "Hello There!", which is the pen name of Sholom Nohumovich Rabinovich, means literally 'peace be upon you'. The phrase is used among Jews as a popular greeting. He was born in Ukraine on March 2, 1859 and died in New York on May 13, 1916. He was only 20 when his first book was published in 1879.

During his 35 years of writing, Sholom Aleichem wrote more than 30 volumes of literary works, which include novels, short stories, dramas, poems and commentaries. His works such as *TEVYE THE DAIRYMAN, MENACHEM MENDL* and *THE ADVENTURES OF MOTL, THE CANTOR'S SON* were written as a series of short stories.

These stories were written about people of no importance in humorous language. The force of his humor is that it has enabled those people to despite the evil and surmount hardships, and convinced them that truth would prevail.

Sholom Aleichem, like Dickens, Mark Twain and Chekhov, enjoys great prestige in the world of letters. His works have been translated into many languages and are popular all over the world. He and his works were introduced to Chinese readers. The first writing about Sholom Aleichem was published right in Shanghai 73 years ago.

III. Shanghai—a city where Sholom Aleichem was introduced the earliest and in the great numbers.

In June, 1921, a report on Sholom Aleichem was in the literary supplement *CONSCIOUSNESS* of *Minguo Daily*, which reads: "Contemporary Jewish writer Aleichem is called Jewish Mark Twain because his works are much like Mark Twain and their ideas are very similar to each other." The report was written by Mao Dun, a great Chinese writer under the pseudonym of "P Sheng" when he was only 25. He wrote to me to confirm this in 1979 in his later years.

Mao Dun was the first person; to introduce Sholom Aleichem to China, and the first one to translate his works. His translation of Sholom Aleichem's, *THE MAN FROM BUENOS AIRES* appeared in the *Fiction Monthly* No. 10 of 1921 published by Shanghai Commercial Press. Later it was incorporated into *Fiction Monthly Series* No. 54 *THE ANTHOLOGY OF NEW JEWISH FICTIONS* (1925), and then into *Collection of Mao Dun's Translation of Short Stories* entitled *SNOWMAN* published by Shanghai Kaiming Publishing House. (First edition appeared in 1928, and by 1931, the book reached its third edition.)

The famous writer and translator Lu Yan made contributions in this field. He began to translate into Chinese, and his translations of *CRABCHIK* and *MIRACLE HASHONO RABO (THE SLOWPOKE EXPRESS)* were published in *Eastern Miscellany* in Shanghai in 1924 and 1925. In 1926, Lu Yan translated *THE SELECTED JEWISH STORIES*. It was published by Shanghai Kaiming Publishing House. Six pieces of Sholom Aleichem's works were in the *Collection*, which made up more than a half of the total.

More translations of Sholom Aleichem's works appeared in Shanghai and the rest of China. The veteran writer Lou Shiye translated the short story *THREE LITTLE HEADS*. The translation was first published in the Sea Wind Weekly of 1929 in Shanghai and then included in Selections from Rising World Literatures entitled *THE BRIDGE* brought out by Literature Publishing House. At least 3 Chinese versions of *THREE LITTLE HEADS* have appeared.

Zhou Zuoren's translations of Sholom Aleichem's two short stories *A PITY FOR THE LIVING* and *PASSOVER IN A VILLAGE* appeared in the Fifth Volume of Yushi in 1929, a weekly published under the direction and editorship of Lu Xun.

In the 1930's the famous translator Fu Dughua published his translation in Literature Monthly of Life Publishing House in Shanghai and included it in his Collection entitled *OUTLAWED* which was published by Shanghai Commercial Press.

In 1947, Shanghai Cultivation Publishing House republished Sholom Aleichem's short stories under the title of *THE HAPPIEST MAN IN ALL KODNY* translated by Liu Wugou, the daughter of the famous poet Liu Yazi.

In the 1940's Jews came to Shanghai as refugees during World War II and published Sholom Aleichem's works and wrote articles about him in Russian language. I have two books in my library: *THE RAILROAD STORIES, TALES OF A COMMERCIAL TRAVELER* Published by Gong Publishing House and *JEWISH WRITERS* published by Jewish Publishing House in 1942.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the efforts to introduce Sholom Aleichem gained new momentum.

1. In 1959, while the people were marking the centenary of the birth of Sholom Aleichem, solemn meetings were held in Beijing and Shanghai to commemorate this outstanding writer. In Shanghai, I gave a speech on the life and creation of Sholom Aleichem. I held an exhibition of Sholom Aleichem's works from my collection.

Meanwhile, newspapers and magazines like People's Daily (Beijing), The World Literature (Beijing), Guangming Daily (Beijing), the Liberation Daily (Shanghai), Wenhui Daily (Beijing), Children's Epoch (Shanghai), Academic Journal of Zhongshan Univ. (Guangzhou) carried articles or translated works of Sholom Aleichem.

2. Publication of the Chinese versions of Sholom Aleichem's major works.

TEVYE THE DAIRYMAN came out in Shanghai in 1964 and the second edition consisting of 42,000 copies was printed in 1983. *THE ADVENTURES OF MOTL THE CANTOR'S SON* was published by Shanghai Children Publishing House in 1957 and republished in 1982 with a circulation of 36,500. The first edition of *MENACHEM MENDL* with 70,000 copies was brought out by Jiangxi Publishing House in 1980. The autobiographical novel of Sholom Aleichem *BACK FROM THE FAIR* and the novel *WANDERING STARS* have also been translated into Chinese in full.

Several collections of Sholom Aleichem's short stories have also appeared, such as those entitled *SELECTED SHORT STORIES OF SHOLOM ALEICHEM, TEVYE BLOWS A SMALL FORTUNE, THE OLD COUNTRY*, etc.

3. Introduction of Sholom Aleichem in more varied forms.

Since 1980's, Sholom Aleichem's works have been continuously included in various collection; and reference books with a large circulation. For example, *TRAPEZA* and *THE PENKNIFE* have been entered in translation series published by Shanghai Publishing House. *THE PENKNIFE* has also been included in Children's Library-The World Children's Stories. *I AM WELL, I AM ORPHAN* has been made an entry in the Dictionary of Foreign Short Stories for Appreciation and was broadcast more than once by Shanghai Broadcasting Station in the Appreciation of Literature Program.

The lexicographical work *SEA OF WORDS*, a medium sized Chinese dictionary compiled in Shanghai, has a special entry of Sholom Aleichem. The dictionary has a circulation of 20 million and is almost an indispensable reference tool; for families of culture in China. The above work has been mostly carried out in Shanghai and I have also played my humble part.

I was just a young man when I began to study Sholom Aleichem. How time flies! Now, I have already become an old man with grey hair. It is my great pleasure, however, to introduce in my declining years directly to our Jewish friends the initial results in my study of Sholom Aleichem, especially in the memorable year of the 135 anniversary of the birth of the writer.

I look forward to the opportunities to give a full presentation of Sholom Aleichem's influence in China to more Jewish friends and show them my collections of Chinese translations of Sholom Aleichem's works and other materials about him.

Shayles un Tshuves in "Hilkhes Libe"

Fun der khaznte Khane Slek - "Forverts" - 3/27-4/2/2009

[transliterated and annotated by Goldie Adler Gold]

Tayere khaznte,

Dos gantse lebn hob ikh fargetert [*idolized*] mayn eltere shvester, Beyle. Zi iz klug, gut-hartsik un hatslokhedik [*successful*], ober ikh hob ersht itst bamerkt [*noticed*], az nokh a shmues [*chat*] mit ir, hob ikh shlekhte gefiln vegn zikh aleyn. Zi tut dos nisht bekivn [*on purpose*], ober ven mir tsesheydn zikh [*part*], ver ikh baumruikt [*troubled*]. Lemoshl, zi git a zog - "Hostu shoyn gekoyft a matone far der mamen oyf muters-tog? Ikh hob ir ersht gekoyft a nay kleydl, vos zi vet azoy lib hobn", oder "Undzer bobe benkt nokh dir [*longs for...*]! Ven hostu dos letste mol ir geklungen?", oder "Ikh bin di vokh geven in sportzal yedn tog un kh'bin in a gutn fizishn matsev [*condition*]." Vi ken men makhn a sof fun azoyne reyd, velkhe kritikirn mikh umdirekt?

In ir shotn (in her shadow)

Tayerer in-ir-shotn,

Fun di bayshpiln [*examples*] vos ir hot ongegebn, dakht zikh mir, az ayer shvester tut aykh nisht keyn shlekhts - zi vil zikh nor teyln [*share*] mit aykh ir pozitive energye un ir tsugang [*approach*] tsum lebn. Oyb ir filt zikh shlekht, vos ir hot nisht gezen di bobe a lengere tsayt, to fort zet zi! Oyb ir darft makhn mer gimnastik, to gefint a tsayt tsu makhn di gimnastik, ir zolt zikh nisht filn shlekht. Farbet [*invite*] ayer shvester, ir zolt beyde forn aynkoyfn tsum muters-tog matones. Ir darft nemen a mer onfirndike [*leadership*] role un initsyativ tsu farbesern ayer lebn un gefiln vegn ayer zelvstvert [*self esteem...*]. Ven ir vet dos ton, bin ikh zikher, vet ir mer hanoehobn fun ayer batsiung tsu ayer shvester Beyle.

+++++

Tayere khaznte,

Ven ikh bin geven a meydl hob ikh gehat a noente khaverte Yurd. Mir hobn alts geton tsuzamen fun forshul [*preschool*] bizn finftn klas. Demolt hot zi bashlosn [*decided*], az zi vil beser vern a khaverte mit di mer populere kinder. Zi hot mir mit dem zeyer vey geton. Mit 3 yor shpeter hot zi bay mir gebetn mekhile [*pardon*], un ikh bin ir moykhl geven [*forgave*], ober gehalten zikh a bisl fun der vaytns. Shpeter in 'college' hobn mir beyde bakumen roles in a drame vi shvester, un gearbet tsuzamen inem zelbn zumerdikn kunst-kemp [*summer art camp*]. Undzer frayndshaft hot zikh

tseblit [*blossomed*] un undzer frayndshaft iz geven andersh vi bay andere, vayl mir zenen take oyfgevaksn tsuzamen.

Zi hot mir dertseylt, az ir eyntsike kharote [*regret*] in lebn, iz vos zi hot mikh nisht bahandlt rikhtik [*treat...properly*] in di frierdike yorn. Mir zenen gevorn noent un hobn farbrakht tsuzamen di vakatsyes. Ober ven mayn yingere shvester iz ernst krank gevorn un hot gehat an operatsye, hot Yurd afile nisht ongeklungen [*call*]. Demolt hob ikh ir geklungen un mir hobn opgeredt, zi zol kumen tsu mir aheym, ober zi iz keyn mol nisht ongekommen, un keyn mol nisht geklungen nokh dem. Ikh hob oyf ir entfer-mashin gelozt an onzog [*message*], gefregt tsi alts iz in ordenung, un zi hot mer nisht geentfert.

Haynt iz shoyn laykhter durkh der internets oystsugefinen vos es tuen alte khavertes. Ikh hob a kuk geton oyf ir vebzayt, un ikh bin tsufridn az es geyt ir gut, un az zi hot letstns khasene gehat. Nokh azoy fil yorn trakht ikh nokh alts vegn ir.

Ikh shpil zikh mitn gedank zi tsutsugebn tsu der reshime [*add to list*] vi mayn khaverte, vi es firt zikh oyf der vebzayt 'facebook'. Ober tsurikgeredt, hot zi mir tsu fil mol vey geton. Mir hobn zikh azoy gut gekent un ikh fil, az ikh volt zeyer gevolt hern vegn ir lebn. Zol ikh ir shraybn, oder oplozn di frayndshaft?

Getraye khaverte

Tayere g-kh,

Lozt di frayndshaft op. Ir vet ale mol trakhtn vegn Yurd un zayn naygerik [*curious*] tsu visn vegn ir un ir lebn, un ir vet ale mol veln "shlisen dem kapitl" un farshteyn far vos zi hot ibergelozt aza getraye khaverte vi ir, ober zi hot aykh shoyn tsu fil mol vey geton. Oyb zi volt geven naygerik vegn aykh, volt zi zikh geshtelt in kontakt mit aykh, un dernokh volt ir gekent zayn in farbindung [*contact*] nokh a mol.

Ir hot ir shoyn gegeben a tsveyte un a drite gelegenheit [*opportunity*] tsu zayn a teyl fun ayer lebn, un zi hot nisht opgeshatst [*valued*] ayer frayndshaft. Oyb ir vet nokh amol nokhgeben Yurd, kon es aykh vider vey ton. Frayndshaft fun di kinder yorn iz a zeltn [*rare*] un spetsyel gefil, ober ir kent nisht ayer gevezene [*former*] khaverte azoy gut vi ir meynt.

A 50th Anniversary Tribute To Bob And Molly Freedman

Dr. Kathryn Hellerstein khellers@sas.upenn.edu
Assoc. Prof. of Germanic Languages
University of Pennsylvania

The Robert and Molly Freedman Jewish Sound Archive at Penn is an incomparable resource for researchers in Jewish and Yiddish music, culture, folklore, history, linguistics, and literature. These researchers have included scholars, performers, and Penn students.

Aside from being a major archive of world-wide recordings of Yiddish folk and art songs, as well as liturgical, theatrical, vaudeville, and klezmer music, the collection also includes readings of Yiddish literature by some of the great writers and actors of the twentieth century. The Freedman Jewish Sound Archive is unrivaled in its depth, breadth, and variety.

What makes this archive supremely usable for those who want to research the *gilgul* or transformation of a song from a folk song to a theater piece to an anthem of survival in the ghettos and concentration camps, or to find a particular musician's recordings, or to locate biblical or political references in Yiddish song is the database in Yiddish and English of more than 35,350 entries, which the Freedmans developed long before there was an easy way to write the Yiddish alphabet on the computer.

This index, now searchable through the Penn libraries websites, made the collection a magnet for both individual researchers and institutions, such as the U. S. Holocaust Museum and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. The Freedman Archive has received credit in many films, plays, audio albums, musical programs, and books.

Alongside its scholarly importance, the archive is an amazing resource for teaching Yiddish language and culture. In 1991, when I began teaching at Penn, I would bring my Yiddish students to Bob and Molly's Center City apartment for an evening of Yiddish music. where we enjoyed bowls of *rozhinkes mit mandlen* (raisins and almonds) and *heymish* graciousness. Since the Freedman's collection became Penn's Robert and Molly Freedman Jewish Sound Archive, Penn students have continued to enjoy and learn from Bob and Molly.

Every semester, my colleague Alexander Botwinik and I bring our Yiddish language students to the Freedman Archive. I also schedule sessions in the

Archive for the students in my courses on Jewish American literature, Yiddish literature in Eastern Europe, women and Jewish literature, and

Translating Cultures as do other Jewish Studies faculty in their disciplines. Bob custom-designs excellent Programs for these classes. on such topics as Itzik Manger's poems. "From Tradition to Modernity." "Songs in Yiddish Theater and Film," and "Translation and Song."

Sometimes Molly joins Bob at the head of the seminar table to recount their family romance with collecting Yiddish music. Although we cannot munch on raisins and almonds in the Smith Room on the sixth floor of Van Pelt-Dietrich Library. the students come away from Bob's and Molly's lectures with a *tam gan-eydn*—a taste of earthly paradise.

The warmth with which the Freedmans talk about how Yiddish music shaped their courtship and marriage gives my students an appreciation of Yiddish that goes far beyond the classroom. They see the greater rewards for memorizing all those conjugations and adjective endings.

Bob's work over the past few years to digitize selected recordings from the archive will expand the reach of the Freedman collection. giving students, faculty, and the Penn community access to the music on line. Anyone who hears this music will know how deeply and joyously Yiddish lives.

Beginnings

Bob and Molly are native Philadelphians who grew up in bi-lingual Yiddish and English speaking homes. Their common backgrounds and common love of *Yiddishkayt* - Jewish culture - made for a perfect match. Shortly after they married, Molly suggested they should buy Jewish musical recordings wherever they traveled.

Thanks to her foresight. the Freedman collection contains the broadest spectrum of Jewish music from across the U. S. Canada. Argentina. British Isles. Holland. Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Russia, and Ukraine. The Archive is also the beneficiary of gifts of recordings, books, sheet music, and ephemera from myriad donors. Today, the Freedman Jewish sound archive has grown to be one of the largest in the world and without question the most accessible resource of its kind because of the Freedman's unparalleled public database.

Mama's Shep

by Philip Fishl Kutner

Di shep is the Yiddish word for scoop. This is not about an exciting new news story hot off the wire service, but the piece of equipment we used to dig into the feed bin or barrel to get the powdery mash or scratch (a mixture of whole grain, usually corn, wheat, and oats.)

We boys had a smaller scoop because the strength in our wrists wasn't like Mama's. The scoop was used to fill up the pails from which the feed mash was placed into troughs called hoppers and the scratch was scattered in the litter, and from which the word scratch was derived.

The smaller scoop was purchased from Paul Kuhl, who ran a hatchery in Copper Hill, NJ and sold poultry equipment. He also was the one to whom we sold hatching eggs and who supplied us each year with the baby chicks.

Mama's scoop was made entirely of wood. It was twice the size of our manufactured metal scoop made of tin. When we tried to use Mama's scoop, after a while our wrists began to hurt. It was only after several years of milking our few cows that my wrist developed the strength to use *Mama's Shep*.

At first the feed was kept in large wooden barrels and we scooped as much feed into the pails as possible and then used the scoop to fill them up. Later Papa built bins in the feed-room, which actually was a small section of the chicken coop before you entered the large room or rooms where the chicks or hens were kept.

These bins were large. The bottom of the bin was actually the concrete floor and the back and sides were part of the walls of the feed-room. With the large bins we could scoop out the different sized pails and not need the scoop. Later we became mechanized and had automatic feeders that moved the feed from the feed-room through the coops with a chain that was pulled through the long trough.

To the very last day we were on the farm, Mama's Scoop hung in the feed-room as a reminder of how it used to be.

Later when we boys went on to college, found our life companion, married, and had children of our own, I remember mama saying "lkh *shep* nakhes fun mayne kinder un kindsKinder."

Editor's note: The Yiddish word for sheep both singular and plural is sheps.

Mama's French Toast

by Philip Fishl Kutner

It all started with the khale on Friday night when we had our usual traditional shabes dinner. Mama did the blessing over the candles, and we took turns with the blessings over the khale and the wine

We started at both ends of the khale with the shpits and worked our way to the middle. The part of the huge khale that was left over for the French Toast was what we later called the "center cut."

French Toast was our Sunday morning breakfast specialty. It was never eaten on shabes. The khale was sliced into one-inch thick slabs and dipped into Mama's thick, rich batter. I should not say dipped, for it was permitted to soak. The rich batter permeated into every pore of the khale, which became very limp. Mama's batter was made of only three ingredients: eggs, rich sweet cream from our Guernsey and Swiss cows, and some kosher salt.

The large black iron frying pan was brought to a high heat and Mama put in a large amount of our homemade butter, which soon caramelized into a rich brown color. We could hear the sizzling and smell the wonderful aroma as Mama turned the slices at the right moment. They were golden brown and never burned at the edges. Somehow they were fried perfectly through and through.

Each of us had his favorite jam. Fishl had apricot, Sol loved strawberry, and Bobby, z'l, would take only Mama's cherry jam. Semele was too young.

This was not the end of the preparation. Because our chicken farm had plenty of broken eggs that we could not sell, there were fried eggs placed on top. The eggs were always perfect. The albumen (white) was always firm and the yolk slightly soft.

On Sunday morning Mama always made hot cocoa during the cold wintry days and switched to cold cocoa in the summertime. I remember that my usual Sunday breakfast consisted of four large slices of that mouth-watering toast, two fried eggs on top, and two large glasses of the cocoa.

No Parisian chef of haute cuisine ever made French Toast like Mama's.

Editor's note: Mama was Pearl "Pauline or Perele" Kutner, nee Kaplan. She was born in Tiktin (Tikocyn) near Bialystok, Poland. She married Max Kutner in August 1925. Fishl was born September 1926 and the twins 53 weeks later. Semele came 13 years later.

Mama's Three Authorities

Even though Mama always won all the arguments, Papa always did what he wanted. Mama never used G-d as an authority—S/he was too important. G-d was the one she went to when one of her boys was sick and she wanted a favor.

Mama's authorities were:

1. the rabbi of the shul in Flemington, NJ.
2. Dr. Beaudette, the pathologist at Rutgers Univ., the state ag college. When the chicks were sick, Papa took them in to find out what was wrong
3. FDR—"President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was good for the Jews so he was a good leader."

Papa occasionally got a word in, but mostly he just listened. Usually the matter was over Papa spending too much money. When it came to money, Papa said, "It was meant to be spent," so he never had any.

When he could not take Mama's nagging he hopped into the red, half-ton, International pickup truck and went to the Circle Diner on the Flemington Circle for a cup of coffee.

Papa was a staunch Republican and disliked FDR. He voted for Alf Landon and worshipped Wilkie.

Der Bay

Editor: Philip "Fishl" Kutner,

Web site: <http://www.derbay.org>

E-mail FISHL@derbay.org Ph: 650-349-6946

Please make checks for chai, payable to *Der Bay*.

If you're blessed, Please send a LITTLE extra

Label date is when you LAST contributed.

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

Send in a note to honor a dear one at a special occasion or send her a subscription to *Der Bay*.

Send a notice of vinkl meetings, DVD release, klezmer performances, book publication, lectures, classes, conferences, institutes, or stage performances.

When traveling, look at der internatsyonaler kalendar for events to attend and for contacts

Der Bay is the first source of information for news about the International Association of Yiddish Clubs and the exciting IAYC conferences.