Sarah Zarrow—A Success Story

IAYC sent the Vilnius Yiddish Institute money toward the expenses of Sarah Zarrow to attend their summer program. Here is her report of her experience. The money was well spent considering what she is doing with her Yiddish now, and her plans for the future. Hopefully we will have a chance to meet her at the Baltimore conference.

Sarah’s Report—Sarah Zarrow szarrow@vassar.edu

I would love to come to the conference in Baltimore. During August, I attended two Yiddish classes daily, Mon-Fri., and cultural events in the afternoons, evenings, and on weekends. I was enrolled in Yiddish III; both of my classes were primarily literature-based, with nightly homework and presentations. A student formed a klezmer band, and we rehearsed daily, performing in the “talent show” at the end of the program. Because of the level of dedication of students, and the fact that we came from so many places, we often spoke Yiddish outside the classroom.

Cultural life included lectures by professors, concerts, walking tours, and a film series. These events were in Yiddish and English. We mainly focused on Jewish life in Vilnius. Because I attended services regularly, I made the acquaintance of members of the Vilnius Jewish community.

I took a trip to Lipnishki, formerly Lipnishuk, Belarus, the town where my great-grandmother grew up. I am completing a photo-essay from my journal entries and photos about this trip. They will be exhibited in the Jewish studies office at Vassar, and in the Jewish student center. Also I am writing a series of articles on my experience more, and hope to have them published on campus.

My future plans with Yiddish include teaching a mini-course on campus. I am in contact with the director of the self-instructional language program, trying to make Yiddish an academic subject here. As the only Yiddish-speaking student on campus, I’ve started acting as a sort of clearing-house for Yiddish information.

Next year I shall apply for a Watson Fellowship for travel to Birobidjan and other parts of Siberia. I wish to document (what is left of) Jewish life and Yiddish culture there. There are a few organizations trying to restore Jewish life in Eastern Europe and the former U.S.S.R., and I would like to work with them to bring knowledge of East European culture and Yiddish both back to the original areas, and to the U.S.

8th IAYC Conference: in Baltimore: #3 Yiddish Teachers: Heroes Then & Now

Entertainment & Screenings
From September 4-7, 2003

All workshops and no play? Not at the 8th IAYC Conference in Baltimore. The Thursday night keynote evening also will feature a musical salute to Mikhl Gelbart teacher of Yiddish song, composer, arranger, choral director by teacher/klezmer Lori Cahan Simon who recently produced the highly-acclaimed CD, Songs My Bubbe Should Have Taught Me, Vol. 1, Passover. Topping things off will be the rousing traditional sounds of the huge Baltimore Klezmer Orchestra.

The Saturday night Gala concert will feature Charm City Klezmer with its innovative repertoire of Yiddish and a touch of Ladino. Charm City has thrilled local audiences with its fresh take on traditional klezmer sounds and virtuoso instrumentalists. Vocalist Judith Geller sings Yiddish with a real taam. Another musical treat, the delicious song styling of Shira Shazeer and fiddler Ken Richmond, two young musicians of Klezmania fame, striking out on their own as the Fish Street Klezmer Duo. And as a rare treat, we shall be presenting Beth Tiflah’s own beloved world-class Cantor Avi Albrecht, 5th generation Israeli born, who claims Yiddish as his mame loshn. He will share his repertoire of great Yiddish songs, glorious voice and authentic khasidik flavor.

We’ll also be screening the award-winning Australian film, Uncle Chatzkel. Chatzkel Lemchen lived through the Russian revolution, two world wars, the Holocaust (when the Nazis and their Lithuanian supporters killed most of his family and fellow Jewish citizens), a communist regime and the transition of Lithuania from a Soviet republic to an independent state. Lemchen survived using his skills as a linguist and lexicographer. Continuing to live in Vilnius, Lithuania, he provided a bridge between Lithuanian, Russian and Yiddish cultures.

Sunday morning closing ceremonies will include a musical treat, live performance of the acclaimed CD/Song Booklet Mayn Oytser published by the Sholem Aleichem Club of Philadelphia. Singer Sherm Labovitz will enchant our lucky attendees with gems of Yiddish Art and Folk Songs, arranged and accompanied by Sender Botwinik and Marvin Weinberger on violin.
Bye Bye Braverman
A Request from Jane Civins Jane_Civins@hotmail.com

A favorite movie, Bye Bye Braverman portrays 4 NYC Jewish intellectuals trying to attend the funeral of a friend. The movie is based on the novel, To An Early Grave. Alas! Bhe author and composer have died recently.

We transcribed the lyrics, and ask readers of Der Bay if anyone would translate the lyrics into Yiddish, a translation that we did literally, and not idiomatically.

Jane H. Civins and Michael A. Malardo, Cranston, RI

The Braverman Waltz— by Peter Matz, 1968

Have you seen Braverman dancing?
Three-quarter Braverman time—
Whirling and twirling and prancing,
Making each moment sublime.

Have you seen Braverman dancing?
Notice him gracefully glide by,
Hoping the band never halts—
For when it does then it's bye, bye—
Bye bye to Braverman's waltz!

A Beautiful Experience in Scottsdale, AZ

The Yiddish Club of Har Zion Temple in Scottsdale, AZ presented my one-man show, "Yiddish, Yinglish & Borscht"—two 40-45 minute acts with an intermission of mingling and noshing. I flew in from Los Angeles that morning knowing that 150 seats had been pre-sold. More than 300 showed up, and after a desperate scramble for more portable seating the doors were finally closed.

The palpable heymishkayt, the audience lustily joining in the Yiddish songs, dos hartsike gelekhter, AND, the people signing up for more information and possible membership in the Yiddish Club, were most gratifying. A special bonus: Quite a few young people in the audience.

Yearning for the culture, the language, the heritage is out there...The old expressions are still very much valid: "Dos pintele Yid"--and--"no matter what, no matter where or when, the sponge cake ligt nokh unteren hartsn..."

Archie Barkan, Woodland Hills, CA 818-999-0433
ArchiefromCA@webtv.net

A Yiddish Group in New Orleans

I am happy to let you all know about our wonderful Yiddish group in New Orleans. We meet Mondays at 1 pm and love every minute of it. We learn to read and write Yiddish and study about all the wonderful Yiddish writers of the past and everyone seems to be thrilled. Along with our exceptional teacher, Fanny Yokor we have acquired a feeling of camaraderie. We are true chavarim. Everyone makes the effort to be at class for all of the above reasons. We feel like mishpuchah and treat and worry about each other. Cards are sent, phone calls are made when someone is ill along with pickups for those who haven’t a ride to come to class. As you already know, we put on shows at our JCC for the community and it is very much appreciated. Our spirit is strong and love of Yiddish outstanding.

Spirituality and Performance on and off the Stage—The Bimah and The Bine

On Sun, May 4th, 2003 the Center for Jewish Studies at the Univ. of Maryland, College Park will be hosting a conference on the relationships between what transpires on the stage of the synagogue (the bimah) and the Jewish theatrical stage (in Yiddish, bine). In the late nineteenth century Jews began to write and perform plays in Eastern Europe that, by the early twentieth century, had become popular in England and America, attracting devoted audiences. During that period many synagogues not only became more formal but, with the growth of Reform and Conservative Judaism, challenged and transformed traditional models of worship.

The conference is organized into three sessions, one focusing on the synagogue, another on the stage and concluding with a round table debate of the issues.

For the morning panel we ask for papers that look to changes in the synagogue. Presentations might address some of the following questions:

• Whether the synagogue became more formal as a result of the emergence of Jewish theater and Jewish attendance at formal performances?
• What were the consequences for congregational intimacy of a synagogue modeled on theatrical norms?
• How did artistic expression inside and outside the synagogue reflect cultural preferences of the time?
• Did the roles of cantors change as some became stars and operatic style performers?

The afternoon session, will deal with the Jewish theater, the papers would address some of the following:

• How have synagogue rituals shaped the theater?
• In the early Yiddish theater many performers were former cantors, choirboys, or sons of cantors. Some of the plays and films dealt with a hero pulled between duties of the hazan and stardom. What does this show about the Jewish stage and its relationship to the synagogue?
• Were there shifts in Yiddish or Jewish theater with respect to depictions of Jewish religious life?

Since member of synagogues look for alternative venues for worship, the discussion will deal with the past and present. These questions might be appropriate in a panel and in the concluding discussions.

• How did Jewish ethnic and religious identity express itself through performance?
• To what extent did the preferences of congregants and audiences shape the action on stage?
• Did religiously estranged Jews find in the Yiddish theater a community and emotional outlet that might have formerly come from the synagogue?
• To what extent did performance meld tradition with modernity?
• How did considerations of high and low culture factor in the interrelationship between synagogue and theater?
• In the Soviet Union the Jewish theater was called Habimah when religious observance was curtailed. This theater moved to Israel but kept the name. What about the significance of Habimah in modern Israel?
New Federation Formed of Descendants of Jewish Holocaust Survivors
by Lisa Reitman Dobi 631-537-7830 Ljдобi@aol.com

Seven sons and daughters of Holocaust survivors came up with a plan to unite descendants of Jewish Holocaust survivors under a loose-knit umbrella group. It was in Toronto at the International Child Survivors and 2nd Generation Conference—Sharing the Past, Celebrating Life, sponsored by the World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust. The Federation will operate as a loose federation to provide resources on the issues of concern to descendants of Jewish Holocaust survivors, and will link people together via the Internet and other media. The Toronto group said: "We want as many descendants of Holocaust survivors as possible to have ownership of this process. We invite you to contact us."

Some of the resource committees are:

• Long Term Health Care for Aging Parents
• Political Action
• Restitution & Reparation
• Memoir Writing
• Preserving the Past

The website will be structured around links to regional & resource coordinators, individuals, groups & Holocaust institutions. The federation will cooperate with all legitimate Holocaust survivor groups and Jewish organizations. We look to establish contact with descendants of Jewish Holocaust Survivors worldwide. Lisa Reitman Dobi, a Southampton, Long Island writer is active in Holocaust studies. She feels it is up to descendants of survivors to carry on their work. "If we don't become involved, we shall lose the effort made by survivors to preserve the past and learn for future."

Menachem Rosensaft, founding Chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors founded in 1981, talked about the new broad-based structure. He said, "I am pleased to work with Serena, Isabel Alcoff, of Pittsburgh, Jeannette Friedman of NJ, Eva Kraus of Detroit, Isaac Kot of Boston and Lisa Reitman Dobi of Long Island. I also look forward to the involvement of others such as Dr. Romana Strochlitz Primus of Connecticut, Dr. Eva Fogelman of NY."

Jeanette Friedman, founder of Second Generation North Jersey in 1979, who worked with Rosensaft on the 1981 World Gathering of Holocaust Survivors in Jerusalem, stressed that each member or group that joins the umbrella remains autonomous, and will continue to speak for itself and its constituents.

"We descendants of Holocaust survivors come from every walk of life and every religious and political denomination. We all have different opinions, ideas and philosophies, and only one commonality binds us--what we can learn from our past and apply to the present."

The following can be contacted by email.

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Allgenerations@aol.com (Serena Woolrich, Boston, MA)
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friedmanmj@aol.com (Northern NJ)

Old Roots—New World

Lori Lippitz's Maxwell Street Klezmer Band has a real winner in this new release. The CD has 13 pieces and the only fault I could find is that Lori doesn't sing in each one. The accompanying booklet is extremely well done and an explanation accompanies each one.

Molly Picon was the inspiration for several tracks on the CD. In the listing of Yidl mish fidl there is a discussion of Molly's life on stage and in film. Abi gezunt was sung in the film Mamele which her husband Yonkel Kalich wrote the script. Mamele was the last Jewish film made in Poland prior to Hitler's invasion.

Dave Tarras, was the inspiration for both Undzere toyrele and Zol zayn gelebt. The breadth of this album can be heard in the selections that range from the old classics through khasidik-inspired works, to the Warsaw Ghetto and to the final piece—Klezmer Rhapsody. Alex Koffman, the arranger and violinist in the Band wrote this marvelous, closing track (18 minutes in length).

Contact Lori at: Maxwell Street Klezmer Band
4025 Harvard Terrace, Skokie, IL 60076 847-675-4800
Maxwel1st@aol.com http://www.klezmerband.com

A Gem—A Great Club Idea

Of all the new Yiddish organizations, institutes, conferences and collections to be founded in the last few years, the Stanford University based collection, of Gella Schweid Fishman's secular Yiddish school memorabilia, ranks up there. It is in the league of the wonderful Bob and Molly Freedman Yiddish music collection at the University of Pennsylvania.

Now for the gem—The wonderfully informative newsletter, SHULGRUSN, easily will become the centerpiece around a discussion of childhood Yiddish learning experiences at your club or class. Also this would be a great home for your memorabilia. For years to come this will be a central treasure for research on the Yiddish Secular Schools in America.

Gella will be the keynote speaker at the IAYC Conference in Baltimore next September 4-7 where the theme will be Yiddish Teachers: Heroes Then & Now.

To be put on the mailing list to get SHULGRUSN contact Gella at: FofSYSA@aol.com or write to FSYSA at: P.O. Box 19295, Stanford, CA 94309-9295

The New Orleans Yiddish Group
by Tsip Levitov

I am so happy to let you all know about our great Yiddish group. We meet Mondays at 1 PM. It was going to be for one hour, but we usually stay 2 hours and love every minute of it. We learn to read, write and study about the wonderful Yiddish writers of the past—everyone is thrilled. Along with our exceptional teacher, Fanny Yokor, we have acquired a feeling of complete camaraderie—true chavarem. We make every effort to be at class. We feel like mishpokhe and worry about each other. Cards are sent, phone calls are made when someone is ill and have pickups for those who haven't a ride. We put on shows at our JCC for the community and it is very much appreciated.
An Expert’s Opinion on Transliteration
by Troim Katz-Handler  Troim@webtv.net

To those who feel that Yiddish transliteration can somehow be “creative”, I must express the following: In English, whether one lives in Mississippi or Maine, the spelling is standard. The only variation permitted is a minor British version, not proper in the U.S. Correct spelling indicates education and respect for the language.

YIVO transliteration was established 65 years ago and follows correct Yiddish spelling, regardless of accent. Unfortunately, many people are not educated in correct Yiddish spelling and thus do use proper transliteration. Universities and dictionaries, such as Uriel Weinreich’s, use YIVO transliteration. Open one of the Mlotek songbooks, you will find perfect standard transliteration.

I worked with Prof. Kazuo Ueda of Fukuoka U., Japan, on 2 books in 1996 and 2000 (Trilingual Guide to Japan and Dialogues for Students of Yiddish In Japan) and was not surprised that his transliteration was impeccable YIVO, which is international and easily understood by one educated in proper Yiddish. When my book of love-letter poems, Simkhve, was ready for the printer in March, 2002, I asked poet Leye Robinson, editor of Yungtruf, to do the final reading before publication. Although I used YIVO transliteration, I wanted her to double-check.

Yiddish has enough problems without having our own people scoff at rules which every other accepted language demands. Such a who-cares attitude ridicules the very language we profess to love and respect. Troim Katz Handler, West Palm Beach, Florida

Are You Ready for Purim?

What? Your club hasn’t put on a Purim Shpil? Tis a pity. You’re missing so much fun. So why not plan a production of the Megile and invite “di gants mishpokhe” and “klal yisroyl”. There must be people who are itching to play the arch-villain Homen, or the “shiker” Akhashveyrish, or dem gutn yid Moredecai, or the sexpot Esther. And there must be frustrated director among you. Here’s your chance to emote, improvise costumes and wow your audience.

And we have just the tried script that has been successfully performed several times at the JCC’s in Long Beach and Orange County, California. No need to memorize lines. Just a few rehearsals and a fluent reading will do it justice. Besides, you can take as much liberty with it as you wish, ad-libbing and revising.

Sid Weinstein has been directing the Joys of Yiddish Players at the Long Beach JCC, and transliterating materials for the clubs (Potpourri, Mayshe Nuday) has a Purim packet available. This includes not one, but two Megile scripts, one in Yiddish transliteration, and one, bilingual, which allows those with little Yiddish ability to participate. Also included is a Purim quiz, a transliterated dramatization of Sholem Aleykhem’s Shealekh Mones and several Purim songs with music. Sid would have included a grager, but with today’s heightened security, can you imagine what would have happened if it had sounded off in transit? “Di gants megile kost $11.” To receive the entire package send your check to: SID WEINSTEIN, 5118 Carfax Ave. Lakewood, CA. 90713 e-mail sidweinstein@earthlink.net

I.L Peretz Shul in Winnipeg
By Chassie Margolis

The I.L. Peretz Folk Shul in Winnipeg Canada is celebrating its 90th Anniversary with a reunion on August 1-4, 2003. The I.L. Peretz Shul was the first all Yiddish Say School on the continent. I am proud to say that I am a graduate and former teacher in the school. Any former students who wish to get more information on this special event can contact the committee at 423 Inkster Blvd. Winnipeg MB, R2W 0K6, CANADA or e-mail: peretzschoolreunion@hotmail.com The web site is at: http://www.peretzreunion.com

Yiddish Folk Chorus of South Florida

This is our 5th season—Winter 2002-2003, and our motto continues to be:

A folk vus zingt vet kaynmol nit untergeyn. ’

 Jewish music has always been the very essence of our people’s heartbeat. Indeed, from the time of David, our history and culture have been preserved in poetry and music; stories of struggle and sorrow, of love and of hope, of joy and of pain.

This is our heritage, our yerusha, and it must not be allowed to fade from memory. We, in the Yiddish Folk Chorus of South Florida, in our own small way, have dedicated ourselves to preserving this priceless gift.

We sing the music born of the European shetetl and the immigrant experience; music of a spirited young Israel, and the folk music of America; music drawn from a rich history of composers, poets and arrangers: Itzkik Manger, Jacob Schaefer, and Maurice Rauch. The repertoire ranges from Goldfadden to Guthrie; from a Yiddish lullaby to a song of America’s landscape.

It is the love of singing and the love for the sound and warmth of Yiddish that brings us together. We truly believe, “A folk vus zingt vet kaynmol nit untergeyn”. A people who sing will never perish.

Today’s Yiddish Folk Chorus evolved from the original Jewish Folk Chorus that was organized in 1993 by the beloved and talented conductor, Harvey Schreibman and which flourished as the premier performer of Yiddish folk and choral music in the Palm Beach County area until Harvey’s untimely passing in 1997. Unwilling to allow all that Harvey Schreibman established to come to an end, a number of chorus members vowed to reorganize, to continue the tradition and to continue bringing this unique form of music to an even wider audience.

The Yiddish Folk Chorus is fortunate to have as its conductors, two very talented musicians with an impressive background in Yiddish folk and choral music: Shelley Tenzer and Dudl Bernstein. Each of them brings an individual freshness of style, skill and humor to the task, making participation in the chorus a truly pleasurable and uplifting experience. No doubt, the success and recognition achieved by the chorus is due, in no small measure, to their considerable skill and talent. The chorus has performed for various clubs and organizations in Palm Beach, Broward and Dade Counties, and is available for daytime or evening performances from mid January to mid March. To inquire or to arrange a booking for your group, contact Hy Perlstein at 561-451-0236 or Rose Schreibman at 561-369-0057.

Chassie Margolis
I.L. Peretz Shul in Winnipeg
451-2, 369-4, 2003, and our
http://www.peretzreunion.com
FREE: How to Maximize Your Use of Der Bay, And All of It at No Extra Cost!

Der Bay’s website is a source of Yiddish info. No other site covers so many areas or has so extensive a list of Yiddish AND other Jewish links. This hardcopy and the website are complementary.

List Events: Clubs, gigs, institutes, and festivals. To be in the hardcopy it must be in by the first of the previous month. Online it can be sent at any time.

List Your: Klezmer Group; Yiddish Club as a Member of the IAYC; As a Translator, Lecturer, or Performer. See if you are listed, and UPDATE!!

Get a Briv-fraynd: There are over 350 pen-pals world-wide. Many communicate online using transliteration. It’s faster and cheaper. Register online.

Methods of Publicity: There are 3 ways to get information in Der Bay. In order of length and effectiveness from least to most, they are:

• Send in a listing for der internatsyonaler kalender. Include; date, time, event, city and contact phone #.
• Send a letter to the editor column (Oyststugen fun briv tsu der redaktsyeye). It will be condensed to a maximum of 9 lines. It can be a request for info, to locate someone, to make an announcement, etc.
• Send an article over 9 lines and up to a two-page centerfold. If it is in Yiddish, it should be copy ready. Our editing will help on layout. It will include a by-line and all information as; address, phone, and cost.

Review Policy: Der Bay has never had a paid ad. Be assured that the item meets high standards. No unfavorable reviews will be published—why waste the space! We receive review copies of cassettes, CDs, all types of books, newsletters, and journals.

Mailing List: Der Bay outside use is strictly limited to the IAYC. If you travel and wish a Yiddish contact, ask for The Yiddish Network (TYN) contact. Freely contact any performer, lecturer, translators or klezmer groups listed at: <http://www.derbay.org>

Contacting Der Bay: Write, phone or e-mail Fishl. You will be called or e-mailed within 24-48 if he is home. All together—it’s a great package!

8th IAYC Conference: in Baltimore: #4 Yiddish Teachers: Heroes Then & Now Workshops & Lectures See Inside for Registration

Feast on a smorgasbord of Yiddish creativity. While the theme is Yiddish teachers and related topics, you can nosh on workshops on memories of Brownsville to Yiddish Tango. Lectures will be in Yiddish, English or both. Presenters to date are:

JIM KAPPELIN My Life as a Zamler for the NYBC MIRIAM BECKERMAN Mayn Lerner Doovid Katz SHOLEM BERGER Young Yiddish poet, journalist, publisher of online Der Bayebter Yid NIKOLAI BORODULIN A Sheyne Bobe-Mayse A History of Yiddish Children’s Books (slide show) also Yiddish Culture and Language in Birobidzhan MORRIE FELLER Yiddish Kompuneteray ANNA GONSHOR Yiddish at Montreal’s Peretz & Bialik Schools, also, Kadya Maladovska, Yiddish Writer and Teacher of Yiddish in Pre-War Warsaw TROIM KATZ HANDLER Women & Sex in Judaism also Simkhe, her new book of poetry MOTL ROSENBUSH Founder of the Yiddish Svides. How to start a Yiddish Sve in Your Town HILDA RUBIN Teaching Yiddish through Theatre SYLVIA SCHILDT Brownsville (Brooklyn) memories Mayn Shetete Bronzvil JUDITH SEID Secular Options in Yiddishkayt SHELBY SHAPIRO Exploring Yidishes Ganovim LORI CAHAN SIMON Researching Mikhel Gelbart YALE STROM Klezmos in Yizkor Bikher HERMAN TAUBE, Educator, Forverts Writer WILLIAM TENN Sholem Aleykhem meets Science Fiction in On Venus Have We Got a Rabbi BETTY TEPPER Yiddish Tango PROF. MAX TICKTIN Topic to be announced IOSIF VAISMAN Internet as a Yiddish Teaching Tool: also Hersh Segal, Yiddish Culture in Czernowitz between the World Wars FANNY YOKOR Dialogues: Yiddish Conversation DR. SHEVA ZUCKER Introduces her Book II, also a facilitated Session on Shule Memories.
Leon Levitt’s Letter to Murray Meld

How thoughtful of you to write Der Bay and tell of the resumption of our contact after so many years, through Fishl’s good offices. If you have any chance to arrange for a guest at a Yiddist gathering in Seattle, let me recommend Adrienne Cooper. Adrienne was here (Michigan). She is director of cultural affairs for Workmen’s Circle in NY, was asst. director of research at YIVO. She wrote lyrics for the Yiddish show that ran in NY with Many Patinkin, Theodore Bikel, etc. and was in its production. I had not heard of her before. She has translated many Yiddish songs into English.

She has a lovely voice and an ingratiating manner; and she sings in Yiddish with great beauty and expression. I like particularly her renditions of songs written during the Holocaust by residents of the ghettos in Warsaw and elsewhere. She has a CD out with Zalmen Mlotek that is a joy to listen to. Maybe I’ll send that endorsement along to Fishl.

So, do keep in touch. And best regards.

A Nayer Briv Fraynd fun Las Vegas

I live in Sun City, Summerlin in Las Vegas and I was the first president of the Jewish Friendship Club. We have a membership of over 250 people. I am now teaching a Yiddish conversation class.

I do write in Yiddish and I find it much easier than to write in "Yinglish" I should also mention that I spent this last August at the Yiddish Institute in Vilnius (Vilna) which is now part of Vilnius University.

It is a fantastic language and cultural program. In addition to studying Yiddish reading writing and speaking we traveled part of the month to former Yiddisher Shetlach with the few precious survivors who took us on location to show us where they had lived, many died and how the handful escaped. We bonded with the "lebengeblibiners" and we become at one with them. I had an apartment in what was formerly the ghetto. I cannot praise this program enough.

It was remarkable to be called up on the bima for the reading of the Torah at the only remaining Synagogue in Vilna on a Saturday morning and feeling that I was not standing up there alone but with so many souls that perished here in the Holocaust. It was in their memory that we were there to honor them. It truly made me feel We Are One We Are Here We Will Never Forget You”.

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date: 12/30/99
email: twocaspers@worldnet.att.net
hobby: Yiddish film collector
level: intermediate write: intermediate
contact: Via Email Las Vegas, Nevada

MESHUGGENARY:

Celebrating the World of Yiddish

In books from PhD. theses to those for onheybers, MESHUGGENARY is at the bottom of the ladder. Why would your editor recommend it highly? It is superior for anyone who knows little about Yiddish and culture. It is a great Yiddish 101 text. Described as “half-dictionary, half-cultural survey of jokes, expressions, recipes and proverbs,” it covers the gamut of the Yiddish arena.

MESHUGGENARY is a wonderful introduction to Yiddish and Yiddishisms. It has a clear and accurate guide to Yiddish words and expressions, and a fascinating account of the history of Yiddish and Yiddish culture in America and Europe.

It has an excellent introduction to the alphabet and use of the YIVO standard spelling. In an introduction to Yiddish one would not expect to find section on East European cooking, humor, theater and klezmer music. In each case it has sufficient basic information for most readers.

A great section is at the end—Yiddish on the Web. Listings give the URL and a site description. Categories are divided into: institutes, archives and organizations; general; online publications; language; history; studying Yiddish; movies; music and the performing arts; literature; and food.


Centre and Humour

by Stan Freeman nastanfreeman@aol.com

Letters on YIVO orthography has been lively. It occurred when you questioned my transliteration in a Glossary on my Yiddish Humor CD, A Refiya far Vantzen. It centers around two questions.

• First, should there be a standard orthography for Yiddish in Latin letters? While the spelling should be standard for Yiddish in Hebrew letters, English spelling must be intuitive. Several readers stated that if Yiddish is to be preserved, albeit in Roman letters, it deserves the respect of its own formal rules of spelling. That is defensive and sentimental.

• Second, is the YIVO version as good as it could be? It is not intuitive or obvious. ‘Fraynd’ would be seen as ‘fraynd’ (‘a’ as in fate) by the uninitiated. There has been evolution of transliteration styles: ‘kh’ has been replaced as ‘ches’ or ‘chof’ by ‘ch’, as in the Chanukah. Since the rules were set forth things have changed—some were poor choices. They should adjust like English spellings change. I, being Canadian, spell center and humor as centre and humour. Mine is the original spelling, but yours has evolved and become correct for the U.S.
RE-THINKING ANTI-SEMITISM: A CONFERENCE AGENDA

The Holocaust and the Contemporary World

UC Santa Cruz and the Holocaust Center of No. Calif. present a conference on the theme "Government-inspired & popular anti-Semitism in the Holocaust & the Contemporary World" at the University campus May 3-5, 2003, in Sonoma at the Holocaust Center May 6, and in San Francisco at Temple Emanuel on May 7.

Since the Holocaust became a major subject of scholarly investigation in the 1960s, we have had studies of ideological origins of National Socialism and populist anti-Semitism. These developments suggest the time is ripe for a reappraisal.

First, publication of Daniel Goldhagen's book Hitler's Willing Executioners generated a controversy of the intensity and character of anti-Semitism in Germany and other European countries during the Hitler era.

Second, Jan Gross's horrifying study of the massacre of Jews in the Polish village of Jedwabne demonstrated that lethal ('exterminationist') violence against Jews was not a monopoly of the Nazis.

Third, new work on the "bystander" phenomenon, including controversial studies of the papacy and other European institutions, has deepened our understanding of the context of the Nazi genocide.

Fourth, the current resurgence of anti-Semitism in the wake of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has forced us to think again about the potency and persistence of anti-Semitic discourse in the contemporary world. Documented news reports have been gathered by the Anti-Defamation League and tell of the worldwide resurgence of anti-Semitism (appendix 1).

The conference will begin on Saturday evening with a film and discussion by the distinguished Hungarian director Peter Forgacs.

Sunday features a keynote talk by a leading scholars in the field, Professor Yehuda Bauer, founding director, Center for Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University and emeritus director of Yad Vashem in Israel. Professor Bauer will give a second address in San Francisco, sponsored by the Holocaust Center of Northern California and Congregation Emanuel, May 7.

Participants in the conference will be asked to think about the varieties of anti-Semitism during the Holocaust and in the present crisis, the interrelationship between popular and government-inspired anti-Semitism, and representations of anti-Semitism in literature, cinema, and popular culture. Curriculum Vitae on conference participants

Goals of the conference:

- Increase public awareness of anti-Semitism and its history
- Promote scholarly analysis & publications
- Preserve historical accuracy
- Provide sponsorship and publication of major statements
- Build Jewish community through experience of common interest
- Disseminating knowledge to inform the minds of those Jewish and non Jewish
- Increase participation in Jewish communal life and public affairs
Jeff Graham (Mikhoyel Basherives)
<mikhoyel@earthlink.net>

I am surprised you remembered our Flemington, NJ connection. I have translated mainly letters and postcards. The most satisfying translation was for an Amy. She had postcards from the early 1940s from relatives in Byalistok and Sokolka. From information she gathered from my translations she got in touch with a surviving relative in Israel (Amy was born after the war). The relative thought she had no family anywhere. She found other family members, none of whom knew of the others. It has been an experience.

I translated the 1910 love letters of a friend’s grandfather to her grandmother before they married. I read them to her mother when she visited from Memphis and she cried. Boy, did I get a great hug!

I read Yiddish Mondays with Maria who grew up in Moscow. She was from Bobruisk where my family had moved from Pobolov in Belarus. It is wonderful to read with someone who speaks with my own quirky dialect. Her parents spoke Russian to her but Yiddish to each other. Despite having the same dialect and accent there are differences in our speech. For ‘kaas’, anger, I say ‘keyes’ but she says ‘kas’. For ‘mies’, ugly, I say ‘miyes’ she says ‘meyes’.

We read a history of Bobruisk, Di Klyatshe by Mendele Moykher Sforim, Funen Yarid by Sholem Aleykhem. Now we are reading Fishke der Krumen by Mendele. (I read Yiddish as fast as English). When I met her she could not to read Yiddish.

We read these classic writers as they wrote their works with the archaic Germanized orthography. We have a 1910 edition of Fishke and a 1947 copy which has more modern spelling. I was reading a sentence and said poitine which is the Russian word Mendele used for spider webs. Maria said, ‘’It says shpinvebs, not poitine'! My version said pod for floor. Maria said, ‘NO, it says dil!’. Sometimes the word order is reversed such as ‘rukt zikh’ & ‘zikh rukt’.

Sometimes phrases are dropped from one version compared to the other.

I attend a Yiddish group in Petaluma at B’nai Israel which was the Petaluma JCC for decades. All but two of us are the children of immigrants and speak with authentic dialetical accents from their families. But it is their second language, and they use much Daytshmerish and Americanisms. The Auschwitz survivor and I speak the language the most fluently. He made me laugh saying a folk phrase I had never heard before. A new attendee introducing himself said he understood Yiddish better than he could speak it, but that he understood it well. Henry leaned over and quietly but caustically said, ‘Er khaul yidish vi a hunt khaft flign!’ It was so mean but so funny. The image was perfect. Dogs always snap at flies buzzing around them but they seldom catch any.

I enjoy the group and the leader’s questioning me, and am delighted with our new ability to write not only documents so effortlessly with a phonetic Yiddish keyboard /s but also to write Yiddish with the alef-beyz in email. It’s a mekhaye.

I have a Yiddish Internet Resources list of fun making up titles for the categories. Some I did straight but others I Yiddishized such as for "Discussion Lists/Forums" Tsvishn Undz Geredt, & “Miscellaneous” Un Nokh Epes. :-) That’s my involvement with Yiddish. I have almost no free time due to running my own business (a small garden shop in Stinson Beach). I love Yiddish so much. Good luck to you and aykh a yasher-koyekh! (my family says ‘aykh a shkeyakh!’).

The Kosher Option
by Sylvia Schildt (Chair/Forzitz)

For the first time, the IAYC Conference will have a Kosher option that has a small additional surcharge. This move is in deference to an increase in the number of people requiring Kosher and Observant amenities at Jewish events. We are providing these amenities in an atmosphere that the Observant will find welcoming and secure, without imposing these requirements upon those whose lifestyles are more secular.

Yiddish should be a bridge between frum un fray (religious and secular). This Conference attempts to demonstrate this. This is how it works.

KOSHER FOOD
All breakfasts, breaks, Friday night Shabes dinner (specially catered by Baltimore’s premier Kosher Caterer) and Sunday Box Lunch will be Kosher. Kosher alternatives will be provided (an option) for the Thursday and Saturday night dinners. (It will come double wrapped with single-use serveware.) The hotel uses approved kosher caterers and is accustomed to providing these services.

There are kosher restaurants in the hotel area for Friday’s Lunch On Your Own including a Pizza place and a Chinese restaurant. And since the Conference continues on Saturday, a takeaway KOSHER LUNCH will be provided for those electing this option and will remain in the hotel.

SERVICES
Cantor Allan Berman will sing Zmiros at the Shabes Dinner and will officiate at the Saturday Morning Services in the hotel. Or you may attend services at nearby Reform, Conservative, Orthodox synagogues. Anyone may attend the on-site services (with screened off areas for men and women) which precede the scheduled workshops.

We look forward to a great event where everyone feels heymish and welcome.
Jewish Labor Committee (JLC) Collection
Contains Much Yiddish Material
Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, NYU
by Gail Malmgreen, Associate Head of Archival Collections

Please visit the Archives, on the 10th Floor of NYU’s Bobst Library, to examine the historical records of the JLC and more than 200 other labor collections. Or experience JLC history:
http://www.nyu.edu/librarylbobst/collections/exhibits/tain/JLC/opener

Also, you can call the Archives (212-998-2636) to learn how to schedule a screening of our video, They Were Not Silent, which presents the history of the JLC’s founding and work during the Holocaust.

• Archival Work:

The Wagner Labor Archives held a luncheon to honor our Yiddish-speaking archivist Karl Dunkel; the occasion saluted Karl’s 80th birthday (in 2001). Karl completed a record amount of processing this year. He completed the files of Martin Lapan, began work on the files of Emanuel Muravchik and completed work on the National Trade Union Council for Human Rights records, 1950s-1980. There are ten feet of documents on the JLC of Canada. We were interested to note that more than 50 percent of the correspondence and publicity material is in Yiddish, at least into the late 1960s. Karl regularly assists researchers who are not able to read Yiddish. Thanks entirely to Karl’s efforts we located a long-lost letter from Marc Chagall to JLC founding president B.C. Vladeck (written partly in Russian and partly in Yiddish) in the Vladeck Papers; the letter was sought by a colleague from the Forward Association.

• Additions to the Archives:

We received 6 feet of JLC-related records from Edward S. Goldstein of Newton, MA. They consist of original JLC documents from the 1930s-1960s compiled by Mr. Goldstein for a proposed Ph.D. dissertation on JLC history. The proposal was submitted to Brandeis University in 1977, but the dissertation was never written. The files include important documentation on the JLC’s early history which was not available to researchers until now.

With the help of YIVO Archivist Leo Greenbaum, located a box of fascinating and little-known material documenting the activity of JLC leaders in relation to the Spanish Civil War. The originals of these documents are in the Bund Archival Collection at YIVO; we have microfilmed copies for the Wagner Archives.

• Research Use:

Projects which used the JLC Collection year:
• A group of film-makers from Toronto producing a documentary on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising;
• A writer doing a biography of cellist Gregor Piatagorsky who sought material on Adolph Held’s assistance to the Piatagorskys when they escaped from the Soviet Union;
• Two French scholars working on studies of JLC aid to French socialists during World War II;
• The Director of the website "Jews in Sports Online," seeking information on the Labor Counter Olympics of 1936 and 1937;
• The Director of the Holocaust Memorial Center in Montreal, seeking photos of JLC activity in Montreal;
• A British professor beginning a book-length study on the Jewish labor movements’ relationship to Zionism and the State of Israel;
• A researcher at the Instytut Europy Srodkowi-Wschodniej in Lublin, Poland seeking information on the history of the JLC.

• Fundraising and Special Projects:

We thank the Atran Foundation for renewing our annual grant and also to Mr. David Solomon who gave a grant to cover the cost of copying documents at YIVO. Our search for support for cataloguing collections related to the history of the JLC has yielded encouraging results. We recently learned that the Bernstein Family of Boston will provide funding to complete processing of Julius Bernstein’s JLC-related papers, and the Archives Committee of Camp Three Arrows will mount a fund drive to support processing of the Camp’s records at NYU.

Our JLC video, "They Were Not Silent," continues to be purchased and shown in many communities across the country. The latest screening planned was to be sponsored by the JLC of Arizona in Tucson on Sept. 19th.

NYU is seeking funding to assure that the JLC’s biographical records of Holocaust survivors can be put on-line and linked to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Survivors Registry. Archives staff worked with Ms. N. Schreiber of Tel Aviv—on a major exhibit of "Hidden Children" planned for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Original material from the JLC Collection will be in the exhibit in Washington.
How to Teach Adults to Read Yiddish in Hebrew Characters—and Why

Most of the members of our Yiddish Clubs speak fluent or passable Yiddish, but, alas, cannot read a word. In order to open the world of Yiddish culture to these people, someone must painfully transliterate each word into Latin letters. Not only is this method time-consuming and inaccurate, but also we lose the flavor of what we are trying to do.

Teaching members to read is not so difficult. First of all, a good number of our non-readers can read the Hebrew prayer book, either rapidly or slowly. You’ll hear their complaint: I can’t read Yiddish because it has no vowels. Once you show them what Yiddish vowels look like, you’re well on the way.

Your first task is to begin with the assumption that no one knows the Aleph Beyz. You need a large chart showing all the Yiddish characters. These can be purchased at most large Jewish bookstores. They will at least have a Hebrew letter chart that you can modify. The National Yiddish Book Center probably has Yiddish Charts. Use this aid to teach the printed Hebrew (Yiddish) letters. At first, teach only the printed letter, since that is what they will encounter in books, etc. Writing comes later. Don’t be afraid that you are treating adults like children. Everyone has to start somewhere.

Once the Aleph-Beyz becomes familiar (not perfect, just familiar) you can progress to books. Each student will need a Yiddish dictionary. I recommend Modern English-Yiddish: Yiddish-English Dictionary by Uriel Weinreich. There are a number of excellent introductory books and I can recommend two: Der Yiddisher Lerer by Hyman E. Goldin, and Yiddish, Volume One by Sheva Zucker. Goldin’s book is small and very simplistic—probably designed for elementary students. It moves along very slowly and introduces two or three letters per chapter. However, it is not babyish. Zucker’s book was written for high school and college students and will be of more value in the long run. Both of these books and the dictionary are available at The National Yiddish Book Center; Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Bldg;

1021 West Street-, Amherst MA 01002. Phone 431-256-4700. E-mail orders can be sent to orders@Bikher.org

Now you can begin with Chapter One in the textbooks. No matter how elementary it appears. Require each student to recite out loud so that each person can become accustomed to the sound of his/her own voice speaking in Yiddish. When everyone seems to be comfortable with Chapter One, then move on to Chapter Two.

Depending on the makeup of your individual club, you can integrate the lesson into your meeting. In an hour and-a-half meeting, thirty minutes should be devoted to study hour to study. In clubs, which may have only a small number of members who want to participate it may be better to have the weekly lessons on an off-night at someone’s home. You even may want to schedule two lessons per week. In every community there are many events, which may interfere with your Yiddish lessons. It is very important not to allow more than a week to interrupt the course. Once students get out of the routine, it is very difficult to get started again and you are almost back to "square one."

Now that you have your students reading, even haltingly, you can begin integrating them into your club’s programs. Assign no more than a paragraph to each new reader.

Search the voluminous Yiddish literature for easy-reading Yiddish texts for your students to read to the group, no more that two readers at a time. For example, there are many of Mark Twain’s stories and those of other well-known authors that have been translated into Yiddish. Your horizons are unlimited. You can feel a real sense of achievement at having enabled others to enjoy the rich culture which is ours to preserve.

Dr. Allan E. Blair [Columbus, Ohio]
Undzer Shprakh Yiddish Club
ablair@columbus.rr.com
Dear IAYC Member AND Friends:

You’ve read about it in Der Bay and (if you are on the Internet) seen the excitement build with special reports on www.derbay.org. The 2003 IAYC Conference in BaltiMORE is the Conference with MORE!

The theme is one we all take to heart—Yiddish Teachers: Heroes, Then and Now. This is the opportunity to SALUTE YOUR YIDDISH TEACHERS! Even if you can’t make it to the Conference, you can still salute your favorite Yiddish Teachers in our Program Book and on derbay.org’s YIDDISH TEACHER’S HALL OF FAME.

MORE workshops and presentations than ever—28. MORE music and entertainment—4 concerts with Klezmer music, shule and summer camp songs, Shabes and khasidik songs, theater and art songs, even Yiddish Tango (come learn the steps!) MORE special sessions including keynoter Gella Schweid Fishman, Henry Sapoznik, Yale Strom and David Weintraub.

MORE sightseeing fun in one of the tourist Meccas of the East Coast (and the tour of Jewish Baltimore is lavishly praised by the many Elderhostelers who take it!) MORE access to a very unusual and important Jewish community increasingly known as the Yerushalayim d’Amerika. Baltimore is Charm City—Kheyin Shtot--in the Pikesville/Owings Mills area, the heart of the Baltimore Jewish Community.

There will also be MORE diversity than ever—lots to choose, whatever your level of Yiddish, from novice to advanced speaker and points in between. And there will be a rich range of topics to explore from light and fun to substantive and educational.

There will be MORE amenities for the strictly observant, not only out of respect for Baltimore’s traditional base, but also in deference to our own membership wishing kosher food and Sabbath amenities. For those electing the kosher option, there will be a small surcharge because of the costs involved. Please be sure to make your choice when you register to insure availability. (Note: For Friday’s lunch on your own, there are kosher restaurants in the area, including kosher pizza and Chinese!)

Frum or fray, religious or secular, everyone will enjoy a strictly kosher Shabes dinner with soup and gefilte fish and challah rolls, and be treated to Zmiros. For those who cannot leave the hotel on Shabes, there will be Saturday morning services (separate screened seating for men and women) on site, led by our resident cantor. A kosher shabes lunch will be provided to enjoy in your room.

The Hilton Pikesville Hotel also can shuttle those who wish to attend services at nearby reform and conservative synagogues. And everyone can participate in the exciting workshops of his or her choice.

HOTEL COST: single or double occupancy (3 nights) $285 (+ 13% tax)

Or call with credit card, 1-800-283-0333

CONFERENCE COST $291* per person - After 7/1/03, $306 per person Registration cost includes meals (lunch on your own Friday and Saturday), kosher box lunch on Sunday, workshops and gala entertainment.

KOSHER OPTION: $315* per person - After 7/1/03, $330 per person Registration cost includes meals (Friday lunch on your own - Shabes lunch provided), on-site Sabbath services, kosher box lunch on Sunday, workshops and gala entertainment.

COMMUTER RATE: $130* - After 7/1/03, $140 per person (No meals provided) Includes all workshops, plenaries and concerts.

TOUR OF JEWISH BALTIMORE (Sunday after conference closing) $15 per person. Be sure to include this in your payment.

We expect a record turnout! Don’t miss this conference! Register early—MORE conference than ever—September 4-7, 2003 in BaltiMORE!

Sylvia Schildt (Forzits/Chair)
8th Annual IAYC Conference
Baltimore, Maryland
Ph. 410-298-4765
E-mail creativa@charm.net
8th IAYC Conference: in Baltimore:
Yiddish Teachers: Heroes Then & Now

Report #5
Welcome To Kheyn-Shtot, Charm City

A great conference awaits you. Just as important as the program is location, location, location. The Hilton Pikesville Inn is located in the heymish Jewish heart of Baltimore. It’s only twenty minutes from our fabled Inner Harbor. It has become a tourist Mecca since the city planners turned old warehouses into a dream vacation center by the water. There’s the:

- National Aquarium
- Science Center
- Camden Yards
- Harborplace Shopping Center
- Vista of Small Boats
- Food Courts
- Cafes and Restaurants, and much more.

This charming hotel offers:
- Oversize Rooms, Non-smoking and Handicap-Accessible Rooms
- In-Room Movies and Cable TV
- Hairdryers
- Dual Line Telephones with Data Ports and Voice Mail
- Hair Salon, Jewelry Shop, even a Bank
- Indoor Tennis Courts
- Nautilus Fitness Center
- Outdoor Pool
- Saunas and Massage
- Dining Room with Mediterranean Cuisine
- Sports Bar for Light Snacks
- Nearby Restaurants Include Kosher Chinese and Pizza.

The hotel is conveniently located only twenty minutes from BWI airport or the AMTRAK station. For those who will be driving up it’s also a breeze. Connect from I-95 to the Beltway, get off exit 20 and slide right in; the hotel is right at the off-ramp.

Following the Conference there will be a wonderful tour of Jewish Baltimore. Remember that Our Milwaukee Tour was a not-to-be forgotten highlight. Now you’ll see:

- Park Heights Avenue—a boulevard of shuls, shtibelek and yeshivas,
- Chanukah House
- Baltimore Hebrew University
- Old-time Jewish Baltimore Along the Harbor
- Jewish Historical Museum
- Corned Beef Row
- Lloyd Street Synagogue
- Di rusushe shul, the oldest continuously functioning Orthodox shul in Maryland.

Four fabulous days, September 4, 5, 6 and 7. Thursday to-Sunday! There is so much to see and so much do in Kheyn Shtot. Register now and avoid the disappointment. Registration form is inside or download one at the website: www.derbay.org

For any additional questions that you may have contact the Yiddish teacher and Conference Coordinator, Sylvia Schildt, by e-mail at: creativa@charm.net or by phone at: 410-298-4765
Cantor Beth Cohen Writes from Albuquerque, New Mexico

I recently found your website. It is excellent — lots of great info. I direct a thirty-piece intergenerational community klezmer band. I send them information on interesting Klezmer/Yiddish/Jewish sites. I also play and sing in a professional klezmer and Judaic band. Please add us to your klezmer list. We are: The Nahalat Shalom Community Klezband. The e-mail address is: cohenedmunds@netzero.net and the website is: www.nahalatshalom.org The Rebbe’s Orkestra can be reached at: cohenedmunds@netzero.net Both of these bands are in their seventh year here in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

I’m coordinating a great event February 28th through March 2nd, 2003. We have entitled it Klezmerquerque 2003. It’s a weekend of world-class klezmer music and dance: classes, concerts and dance parties. We hope that this will become an annual event.

KLEZMERQUERQUE 2003
February 28th, March 1st and 2nd, 2003

A southwestern celebration of Klezmer music and dance into the 21st century.

Learn the traditional music and dances of the Jewish people of Eastern Europe.

Presented by Congregation Nahalat Shalom (Inheritance of Peace congregation)

Dance parties, workshops, master classes with klezmer music and dance specialists:

Josh Horowitz: "Dr. Klez" of Budowitz klezmer ensemble: nineteenth century accordion, tsiembl (hammered dulcimer). He is a klezmer-historian and scholar.

Cookie Segelstein: Klezmer fiddler of The Klezical Tradition as featured on the ABC documentary "A Sacred Noise", principal violist in Orchestra New England, Masters degree in viola from the Yale School of Music.

Stuart Brotman: Double-Bassist of Brave Old World and Khevrisa as featured on the PBS Great Performances special "Itzhak Perlman/In the Fiddler's House" and past member of Grammy award nominated The Klezmorim.

Erik Bendix: Known throughout Europe and the United States as a Klezmer dance master, educator, researcher and choreographer. We welcome Erik back to his fourth Klezmer dance workshop at Nahalat Shalom.

Schedule Of Events:

Fri., Feb. 28, 6:30pm-10pm Freylekhe Shabbes:
6:30-7:00 - Dancing kabbalat Shabbat with Erik Bendix, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb and cantorial soloist Beth Cohen
7:00-7:30 - Klezmer concert by our featured musicians Josh, Cookie and Stuart
7:30-10:00 - Dance party to live music by Josh, Cookie and Stuart and The Nahalat Shalom Community Klezband with a short dance presentation by Nahalat Shalom’s dance company: Rikud.
Walk-through dance instruction by Erik Bendix: Hora, onga, khasidik, frelekhes, bulgar, kolomeike, Terkishe, shiffers tanz and sirba.

Saturday, March 1st Classes:
8:30am-10:30am - Klezmer dance with Erik Bendix: review and refining of Friday's dances and variations. Also: the Russian Sher, couple's bulgar, Polka Koketka, Alexandrovska, and a Romanian Passover dance Das Tsigele.
10:30am-12:30pm -Klezmer music with Josh, Cookie and Stuart. Meet in sectionals first and come together later: strings, rhythm, woodwinds and brass. All levels welcome.
1:30-3:30 - Dance class with Erik OR music class with Josh, Cookie and Stuart.

Saturday, March 1st, 7:30pm 'til whenever we poop out - Dance party and performances: Featuring dance music by New Mexico’s favorite simcha band: The Rebbe’s Orkestra Dancing and music with: Erik Bendix, Josh Horowitz, Cookie Segelstein & Stuart Brotman.

Sun. March 2, 1:30-3:00pm - Advanced classes: Dance with Erik Bendix Fidl Kapelye with Cookie Segelstein Accordions/Keyboard with Josh Horowitz Rhythm and Bass lines with Stuart Brotman Reeds and lead brass with Stewart Mennin.

Pre-registration and info:
Congregation Nahalat Shalom
"Klezmerquerque",
3606 Rio Grande Blvd. NW,
Albuquerque, NM USA 87196-0723,
www.nahalatshalom.org
505-343-8227,

Other questions:
klezmerquerque coordinator, Beth Cohen
cohenedmunds@netzero.net
505-243-6276,
**Joys of Yiddish in Bergen County, NJ**

The Senior Citizens Center in Teaneck will offer Spring courses in Yiddish - (1) for beginners and those who have an elementary knowledge of the Yiddish language; and (2) a continuation class.

Class (1), with Yiddish teacher Feygl Infeld Glaser, will be on Tuesdays, at The Richard Rodda Community Center, 250 Colonial Court, Teaneck, starting on March 4th. The aim of this course is to familiarize students with vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension, and reading and writing skills.

Yiddish students (2) are urged to participate in discussions on current and past events and learn of great Jewish personalities, the works of Yiddish poets and writers and by expanding their knowledge of Jewish historical events, holidays and songs.

For more info call 201-837-0171. For private lessons, call: 201-385-8315, or e-mail: Yiddish1@juno.com.

**An Evening of Irish & Yiddish Poetry**
Jennifer Kronovet

I am a Yiddish speaker who works at the Poetry Society of America. The first event of our new translation series will present Yiddish & Irish poetry in the original and in translation. I hope that you might list the event on your site. I can be reached at: 212-254-9628 or e-mail: Jennifer@poetrysociety.org

The program will be on Thursday, March 6th at 7:30 P.M. Readings and translations are by Michael Davitt, Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill, Irena Klepfisz, Paul Muldoon, C. K. Williams, & Leonard Wolf. It is co-sponsored by the: NY Institute for the Humanities, The Irish Consulate, Columbia University Yiddish Studies Program and NY Council for the Humanities.

**KlezCalifornia**
Julie Egger <jegger@marin.k12.ca.us>

KlezCalifornia celebrating Yiddish culture & klezmer music is an immersion in klezmer music, Yiddish language, and folk arts—in association with the Jewish Music Festival at the Jewish Community H.S. of the Bay at 1835 Ellis St. San Francisco—Sun.–Fri. June 22-27, 9 am -6 pm & evening events

The program includes classes in Klezmer music,(all levels), chorus, Yiddish language, dance, visual arts such as paper cutting & Jewish culture. A full children's program and special evening events & concerts will be held.

Teachers are members of klezmer groups such as Brave Old World, The Klezmatics, Klezmer Conservatory band and Mikva.

Registration/info: info@klezcalifornia.org www.klezCalifornia.org or 415-789-7679.
Cost is$160: children to $390: adults. $50 discount for adults registering before April 1st.

**YIVO Summer Program: June 23-Aug. 1**

The Uriel Weinreich program is an intensive course (9am-12:30pm, M-F). Students are attend conversation classes and choose from among several workshops and lecture series (1:30-6pm, M-Th.). There are excursions & socials.

- **ELEMENTARY YIDDISH**
  An introduction to modern Standard Yiddish with attention to speaking, reading and writing. A study of the grammar in chapters 1-20 of College Yiddish.

- **INTERMEDIATE YIDDISH I**
  Prerequisite: chapters 1-20 of College Yiddish. Continuation of grammar, readings in Yiddish texts, emphasis on composition, conversation and idiomatic expression. Conducted in Yiddish.

- **INTERMEDIATE YIDDISH II**
  Continuation of grammar, readings in Yiddish texts of the life and culture of East European & American Jewry. Introductory survey of modern Yiddish literature, emphasis on conversation composition, and idiomatic expression. Conducted in Yiddish.

- **ADVANCED YIDDISH**

- **CONVERSATION**
  Students participate twice weekly in conversation classes to experience the living culture and polish verbal skills through exercises and discussions.

- **WORKSHOPS**
  Students choose from several workshops including translation, drama, folksong and traditional dance. The Yiddish teacher-training workshop is for those who wish to improve their Yiddish language-teaching skills.

- **LECTURE SERIES**
  A lecture series, conducted in English and Yiddish. Speakers include researchers, poets, artists and journalists.

- **REFRESHER COURSE**
  Tues.-Fri., June 10-20

- **READING SKILLS WORKSHOP**
  Sunday, June 22
  Required of students who have no prior reading or writing knowledge of the Yiddish alphabet.

- **HOUSING**
  Students may live in Yidish-Hoyz, a dormitory-style with single rooms on the Columbia campus.

- **Partial tuition assistance is available from YIVO. Applications must be in by March 21, 2003, and you will be notified by April 25, 2003.**

- **For more details contact:** Yankl Salant
  YIVO, 15 West 16th Street
  New York, NY 10011-6301,
  Phone: (212) 294-6138, E-mail: ysalant@yivo.cjh.org
Larry and I are practically Yankees. Our parents and grandparents spoke to us in English. The only Yiddish our children heard was from the car radio. Unfortunately, all we remember from the WEVD lessons is the phrase, "Ikh bin farblondzhet."

In spite of this dearth of Yiddish our daughter wanted to learn the language. The head of her day school gave a resounding negative response to this request. Nina never learned Yiddish.

Fast forward to our granddaughter, a second grader in a day school. The same request was made for Yiddish—could it at least be as a club option (along with karate, gymnastics, art etc.). We were told that there were no teachers available. Ari did not learn Yiddish.

Driving and sustaining us in this quest for Yiddish was the 1979 experience in the then Soviet Union. We met with Refusniks who valiantly tried to communicate with us in English. They also introduced us to their 90+ year-old grandmother. Russian was not an option for us, and English was not an option for her. We tried Yiddish (sparse though it was) and Maya and Yuri were astounded that we had bridged the language gap with Grandma!

All these years later we finally decided to help "bridge the gap" by offering grants to teach young children the mother tongue(s) of their forebears. Elementary school children learn languages quickly. They can be imbued with the joys of Yiddishkayt and with the love of language, literature, stories, music and the history of the Jewish people.

Yiddish in America needs to be encouraged. So does Ladino, the language of Sephardic Jewry. Thus, we offer similar grants to those schools/institutions that want to teach Ladino.

We know the great constraints on everyone’s time, energy and commitments. It is an uphill endeavor, but let’s start this JOURNEY TO THE PAST AND TO THE FUTURE.

Thank you and let us hear from you. Please mail your responses to the following address. It is our attempt to help you foster Yiddish.

Larry & Dr. J. Florence Bickell
654 East 17th Street,
Brooklyn, NY 11230
Ph. 718-859-2061; Bikelljlcc@aol.com

PURPOSE: To teach languages of the Jewish Diaspora. (grants are available)

RATIONALE: Yiddish, the language of the Ashkenazim, and Ladino, the language of the Sephardim, served as forces of continuity, bonding and creativity among European Jews who were dispersed, expelled, threatened with conversion, massacred, or merely migrated seeking economic, political and religious freedom.

Today, outside of the Hasidic communities, there are fewer and fewer Jews who are able to speak or understand Yiddish and still fewer who can speak or understand Ladino. It is time that we reverse these sad facts and revive these languages to the status of living and relevant.

Some efforts have been made on the high school and on the college level(s) to teach Yiddish. Perhaps even some Ladino courses are available for adults.

If these important languages are to survive meaningfully as more than archaic, scholarly pursuits. They must be taught to the young and in age appropriate ways that will make them functional in these languages. A young cadre must be built who will learn to speak, read and write in Yiddish and/or Ladino. These students will be the core users of the Jewish books that are so diligently being collected and preserved. They can then pass this flowering of our past to future generations and reclaim an important part of our history and identities.

Thus, the Judaic Language Center for Children proposes an alliance with Day Schools (where Hebrew is already taught) to develop programs in Yiddish and/or Ladino in the elementary grades when languages are learned quickly.

University and volunteer affiliations will help provide teachers and curriculum guidance where needed. Jewish historical, religious, cultural and arts organizations and individuals will be resources and, hopefully participants in this Program.

PILOT PROGRAM: A pilot program will offer grants to day schools and Jewish Centers to develop age-appropriate programs for their students. Send in proposals for after-school or in-school time sessions. Commitment should be for at least two years.

Seed money of $3,000-$5,000 for each of the first 2 years and then matching grants for the next 3 years is available. SEE ATTACHED APPLICATION.
I am teaching: Yiddish for Beginners at the Univ. of Delaware's Division of Professional and Continuing Education. This semester there seems to be a greater interest in learning Yiddish. The text I use is Goldin’s Der Yiddishle Lerner.

Last semester, I taught the Hebrew Aleph Bet using a text/workbook I wrote at the request of my students. It is the only book I know of that allows an individual to learn the aleph bet on his/her own. It is entitled: Easy Steps to the Hebrew Aleph Bet (Teach Yourself Hebrew). It has its own flashcards and sells for $15.95; ISBN 0-9700238-0-4. Along with being used in this country, it is being used in Poland where a generation of children who were raised Catholic found out that they were the children of Jews who were murdered in concentration camps.

I am the author of a children’s book that won the 1996 best, juvenile, fiction award. I am sorry that I will be unable to attend the Yiddish conference in Baltimore in September since it coincides with the National Press Conference of which I am a member and serve on the planning committee. Delaware is serving as host to the convention. I enjoy reading Der Bay and wish you continued success.

A Letter from Leonard Praeger
<lprager@research.haifa.ac.il>

I continue to build my site located at: http://yiddish.haifa.ac.il, a main project being to put all of Yehoyesh’s tanakh on the web. Bob Berkovitz has been doing beautiful work on this front. Take a look at Shirhashirim in the Yehoyesh section. We also want a reliable text. Most of the books still await proofreading, but we are making headway. Robert Goldenberg is heading the proofreading job.

I continue to edit The Mendele Review, putting out at least one issue per month.
http://shakti.trincoll.edu/~mendele/tmrarc.htm

The Yiddish Theater Forum, which TMR Carried piggyback fashion for three joint issues has become an independent organ, a part of Mendele, separately archived. It is devoted to exploring the history of Yiddish theater, a subject that has not had the attention it deserves. Joel Berkowitz and a few other younger scholars will, hopefully, make it a lively addition to the Yiddish offerings on the web.

I congratulate you for your efforts on behalf of the Yiddish clubs. Members should learn to use the audio feature of The World of Yiddish the way Morrie Feller has—hearing Sara Reter read stories and to see the Yiddish text simultaneously. Nowhere else on the web can one experience it.

Vi zogt men af yidish?
"Ben" Schaechter <bschaechter@nyc.rr.com>


Der seykhl fun VZMAY iz, az se zenen do a sakh mentshn vos hobn nisht ken yidish-meyvn af tsv fregen vi me zogt gevise yidish verder oder frazes vos me vil nitsn un vos me ken nisht gefinen ba Uriel Weinrech in verterbukh. Ikh shrayb zikh bazunder adurkh mit a 6 yidish-mevinim vegn di meglekhe entfers tsvi d kashes fun bi bat eylikte, un dernokh tseshikt men di tshuvos tsv der gantsrer reshime.

Dervayle zenen do kemat 200 bat eylikte in der reshime fun arum der velt.

Ikh hob ober in der letster vokh aleyn geredt mit 3 mentshn vos hobn blitspost nor vos hobn nisht gevust fun VZMAY, un viln zayn af der reshime.


K.A.M. Isaiah Israel Weekend of Entertainment & Education

Henry Sapoznik, producer of NPR’s Yiddish Radio Project, will offer a weekend of entertainment and education at K.A.M. Isaiah Israel, 1100 East Hyde Park Boulevard, Chicago—Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 14-16.

Friday night, Sapoznik will speak on Yiddish art, culture, and language in “Yiddish: The Next 1,000 Years,” during Shabbat services at the temple.

Saturday night, Sapoznik and his Klezmer band, “Deva Jew,” will present a concert of traditional Yiddish dance music, folk songs, and songs from the Yiddish theater.

Sunday morning, he will present The Yiddish Radio Project, featuring forgotten radio geniuses of the golden age of Yiddish-American broadcasting who offer a snapshot of American Jewish life in the 1930s and 40s. The recordings run from man-on-the-street interviews and news programs to dramas and swing music. They offer a window into an extraordinary time. According to Sapoznik, “You see the collision of Yiddish and American cultures, the day-to-day lives of immigrants struggling to make it in a new land, and the reality of the genocide occurring across the ocean.”

For further information: call Sandy Lieberman, 773-924-1234. K.A.M. Isaiah Israel is a Reform Jewish Congregation in its 155th year, is the oldest Reform Congregation west of the Alleghenies.
From the minute you arrive at the Hilton, your Jewish experience in Baltimore begins. You will find yourself in Pikesville, the heart of Jewish Baltimore—a community of black hats, secular humanists and every point in between.

Reisterstown Road, where the hotel is sited, hosts many shops and restaurants. Parallel to this long avenue is Park Heights Avenue, a veritable parade of synagogues, and the prestigious Rambam Yeshiva.

An influx of young Orthodox and Iranian Jews, add to Baltimore’s growing reputation as the Yerushalayim d’Amerika. Drop into the 7Mile Supermarket. You’ll think you are in Jerusalem—the frum, the fray, Russian émigrés, Israelis, Americans who speak the unique Bawlamor accent, former New Yorkers, all rubbing shoulders in the crowded aisles as they rush to buy kosher foodstuffs in time for Shabes.

Down Park Heights is Baltimore Hebrew Univ., a fountain of Jewish learning. They have a great collection of Yiddish films, tapes and books. There’s a choice of kosher restaurants serving Chinese and pizza and more traditional items. Israeli products, Judaica and crafts abound.

Friday night’s Shabes dinner of heymish gefilte fish, challah rolls and delicious entrees will be followed by Zmiros and other Shabes songs, sung in the Ashkenazi nusakh by Cantor Allan Berman of the Moses Montefiore Modern Orthodox Synagogue.

Shabes, before the workshops commence, you’ll hear davening emanating from our makeshift shtibele for the Shomer Shabes. Come join in if you wish, visit the synagogue of your choice or just happily reminisce with newly-found friends or former shule-mates.

Sunday, after the conference, you’ll be able to board a bus, guided by docent Aaron Seiden who will show you Old Jewish Baltimore near the Inner Harbor, the lively Jewish Museum of Maryland and the beautiful landmark B’nai Israel Synagogue, Di Russishe Shul - (1876), the oldest Baltimore synagogue in continuous use. You’ll see Corned Beef Row, historic Lombard Street, where the Jewish immigrants lived, and so much more.

Baltimore was the hometown of Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah and the girlhood home of Yiddish actress Bessie Tomashevsky.

A great conference on Yiddish education, important speakers, concerts, a talent show, two film premieres, an exciting tour, and a great Jewish experience—this is not to be missed. Register early—don’t be disappointed.

Have a question, call Sylvia Schildt at 410-298-4765 or e-mail: creativa@charm.net
From Our TYN Contact in Amsterdam
Jack Wiegman <jack_wiegman@yahoo.com>

I'm sending you separately for your files the booklet with poems by the Yiddish poets we commemorated on the 17th of November in Amsterdam. The meeting was a big success. The reason I didn't send you the booklet sooner, is that I became a zeyde. Our eynikel is doing very well.

As far as Yiddish is concerned, there were not too many new developments, except the publication recently of a 330-page booklet: *Hbreeweuse en Yiddishe woorden in het Nederlands* (Hebrew and Yiddish words in Dutch), published by SDU Publishers in The Hague. This compilation was produced by a group of 6 linguists and contains a total of about three thousand words.

Many Yiddish words have been absorbed into the Dutch language, especially in Dutch slang. To give you an example: the popular name for Amsterdam, used daily by all people here, is *Mokum.*

The Institute for Jewish Studies in Antwerpen, Belgium, is organizing a series of lectures. One of the lectures, was presented by Professor Dr Schlomo Berger of the University of Amsterdam, deals with the Philosophical Yiddish Publication *Davke,* published in Argentina between 1949 and 1982. The Institute email address is: ijs@ua.ac.be

**Café Kasrilevke Presents**

**the Only all-Yiddish Seder in the D.C. Area**

This year, enjoy a *seder* conducted totally in Yiddish! This wonderful Passover celebration and dinner will be held on Tuesday, April 8 at 6 p.m. The cost is only $25 for JCC and Yiddish of Greater Washington members, and $38 for the general public. Reservations are required by Tuesday, April 1, and can be made by calling 301-881-0100 ext. 6713.

This will be the fourth year that Yiddish of Greater Washington will conduct its Yiddish *Seder* at the Center. Written by Yiddish poets and developed by various groups in the Yiddish movement to supplement the regular s’darim as a celebration of both triumphs and tragedies of the Jewish people across history, the Yiddish *seder* has existed for almost a century. It was the first organized community observance to include in its liturgy a commemoration of the Holocaust.

A key element of the service is the recitation of the poem *In Varshever Ghetto iz tist Hoydesh Nisan (In the Warsaw Ghetto, it is Passover Time)*, a poem commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, which took place during Passover. Led by members of Yiddish of Greater Washington, the *seder* is highly participatory, with a *haggadah* written in Yiddish, English transliteration, and translation. This is a very popular event, so reserve early!

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**Songs in the Key of Yiddish:**
**Recorded by Eleanor Reissa**

Eleanor puts a jazz flare onto old Yiddish standards as well as some never recorded Yiddish gems that feel contemporary yet traditional.

It is unusual to have one person with this vocal talent also be a director, playwright, choreographer, actor, as well as a first class singer working in English and in Yiddish. She was most recently seen off-Broadway starring in the title role of *Yentl.*

To order Eleanor Reissa’s *Songs in the Key of Yiddish* write to her c/o Two Egg Productions 535 East 86th Street, NYC 10028 or e-mail her at: ereissa@aol.com

**Der Bay’s Networking at Work**

**Sonia Fuentes, spfuentes@earthlink.net**

In an earlier issue of *Der Bay* this year, you had a write-up about a new organization called the Federation of Descendants of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. I e-mailed Jeanette Friedman, one of the people mentioned as being involved. As a result of that, Jeanette will be featuring me in the June 2003 issue of Lifestyles Magazine, a hard copy magazine that she edits. The URL for her website is: http://www.lifestylesmagazine.com/.

Jeanette invited me to stay with her in New Jersey when I come to the area to see a musical about suffrage being performed at the Louis B. Armstrong Middle School in Elmhurst, New York on April 9.

I have served as an advisor on women’s rights to Clifford Carlson, one of the teachers at the school, who is the playwright and composer of this musical. She may be joining me to see this musical, along with a mutual friend, Lorri Greif, formerly with HIAS.

**A Dictionary List from Shelby Shapiro**

Here are some other dictionaries you might consider consulting, in addition to the 1928 and 1898 Harkavy’s and Wenireich.

- Abelson, Paul. *english-idishes entsikopedishes verterbukh/English-Yiddish*
In 1914, bald nokhn oysbrukh fun der ershter velt-milkhome, hot der Tsar Nikolay aroysgegeben a bafeł, az men zol opgeb'n der regirung ale meshene un kuperne khłim, oyf tsu makhn derf un gever far der milkhome. Dos iz beemes geven zeyer a shverer klap far di shtetlshe yidishes balebostes, vos hób zikh nebekh gemuż tsesheydn mit zeyere kuperne vaserkvarten, tep, fanen un randlekhen un meshene mednites [oyf tsu preglen aynagemakhts], fil fun velkhe zaynen geven a zamlung fun durusdike yerusches. Di kazna [regirung] flegt dos alts az opvegn un aroysgebn a kabołe, az—lekhshirhib, ven got vet helf'n men vet gevinen di milkhome, vet men amol batsolin derfarr.

In der selber tsayt hot di regirung oykh ayngekasirt dos gantse mints, vi di kuperne groshens kopikhes, firers, zeksers un tseners, un oykh di zilberne un goldene matheyes un anstot dem aroysgełonzen papir gelt. Un far klayn gelt zaynen banutst gevon avelkh spetsayl—gedrukte post-markes.

Azyral, der zeygermakhher, hot tsunoyfgekblin ve bisl bruakhvarg fun di zeygerlekh, tsuzamen mit a por kuperne teplekh fun Rokhls shrage, vos hot farному a gantzte vant in der kikh, un es opgetrogn in volast bisl brukhvarg fun di zeygerlekh, tsuzamen mit a por az elikhe spetsyel gedrukte post.

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Visindik az er vet itst nit konen krign kayn ruye gold un zilber oyf tsu makhn khasesene, ringlekh, oyf velkhe er iz geven a madim, hot er oykh tsuzamengekblin a tsol zilberne halbe un gantse rubdike, un goldene finferlekh un tsenerlekh oyf der sune fun arum toyznt rubl, un es bahaltn oyf a geheymen platz, ergets in a shpolt hinter a balkn, vu di vant funem nayem moyer iz zikh tsuzamengekbenu.

Farshteyt zikh, az dos iz geton gevon b’sud sudus afil fun di eygene kinder, vayl di rusishes regirung hot aroyfgeleyt a shvere shtrof far oysbahten gold, un nor Rokh, zayn froy, hot gevust derfun.

Oynf tsveytn yor fun der milkhome az Azyral, royer biletnik, gerufn gevorn tsu farfeydikn fun foterland. Farn opforn hot er ibergetseylt dos gold un es tsurik bahaltn.

Far Peyssakh hot Rokh bashtelt Natalkan, a poyerte vos hot gevoyst oyf in rand fun shtetl un hot gekont azoyf sail gut Yidish, az zi flegt afil zogn mit kleyne meydelekh moyde ani, nokhodem vi zi hot zey gehofn zikh onton inderfrī—az yene zol ir oyskalkhn di shhtub. Ven Natalka iz avek hot Rokh gekukt tsu zen tsi der “oytser” ligt nokh in zayn bahelthenis un hot im nit gekent gefinen.

Es hot zikh han ongehoybn a korespondents vegin dem tsu Azyraln in polk (regiment) arayn, farshteyt zikh, in a farshteler shprakh, biz Azyral hot zikh oysgekhopotsht un urloyb ahem. Ven er iz aheymgekumen iz zayn ershte uvde, natirlekh, geven tzu zukhn dem oytser, velkhn er hot gefunen umbarit.


Inem khoydesh Tamuz fun 1919, hot dos truyerik—baritmte Tarashtshanski polk, fun der royer armey, zikh araynerisn in shtetl un durkhgefirt a shoderlekh sh’hiteh, oys’shlahkhtndik arum 125 Yidin in eyn tog. Di meyste aynovyner fun shtetl zaynen antlofn vu di oygn hób getrogn, un tsvisn zey oykh Azyral mit zayn famlye. Der pogrom iz dernokh forgezetst gevorn fun di poyem fun der svive far fule akht teg tsayt un a halb shtetl iz farbrent gevorn.

Azyraln moyer iz bagosen gevorn mit benzin, ober tsulib umbakante sibes hot men im nit untergetusnd.

Ven Azyral mit zayn mishpokhe hób zikh tsurikelkert in shtetl arayn in tsvey vokhn arum, iz ales in hoyz geven oysgeroybt. Dos shvere mebl vos men hot nit gekont avekfirm in tsebrokhn gevorn, oyf dem il iz geven ongevorfn brakhvarg fun di tsebrokhene vant-shpiglen un gefes oysgemisht mit federn; di vent zaynen geven fargelt funem benzin vos men hot oyf zey geshprist—ober der oytser iz geven umbarit in zayn bahalntenish.

A por khadoshim nokhn pogrom iz Azyral farshloft gevorn fun di epidemi, vos hób nokhgefolgt di milkhome un dem birger-krig un iz geshtorbn.

Fir khadoshim nokh im iz oykh zayn froy, Rokh, geshtorbn. Di kinder hób nokhdem farkoyft dem moyer tsu sheynzte noskes un hób oysgevandert kayn Amerike, un der oyster iz farblibn an eybiker sud.

Oder, ver veys? efsher mitn letstn khurbn fun underd shtetl hot epes a natsishe bestye geyoyvlt iber dem gefins fun a goldenem oytser, vos an erlekher, horepashner, yidisher zeygermakhher hot bahaltm...

Transliterated by Rae Meltzer. Rae was born in Mogliev, Russia and Yiddish was her first language. She was on the faculty of the University of Chicago. She is a graduate of the Workmen’s Circle Yiddish H.S. She works extensively as a Yiddish translator with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. Chronicle Books published her books of translations and transliterations, Yiddishe Khokhme far Eltern (Yiddish Wisdom for Parents) and Yiddishe Khokhme far der Khasene (Yiddish Wisdom for Marriage).
In 1914, soon after the outbreak of the First World War, Czar Nicholas, issued a decree that all brass and copper pots and pans must be turned in to the government to be made into arms for the war. This was truly a very harsh blow for the Jewish housewives of the shtetl who had to give up their essential brass and copper water pails, cooking utensils, and any tools made of these metals. Jewish housewives were forced to give up their precious brass pots that they used for frying the traditional delicacy "ayngemakhts" [preserves or jam].

Many brass and copper items were inherited from parents and grandparents. When they were turned in to the government they were weighed and a receipt was given, with the statement that when, with God’s help, the war is won, payment will be made at some future time. At the same time, the government controlled the mint, where copper coins, pennies, 4 centers, six centers, ten centers, gold and silver coins were held. In place of the metal coins, the government printed paper money. For small change, postage stamps were printed. Azryal, the watchmaker, collected parts of watches, several copper pots which hung over Rokhl’s entire kitchen wall, and carried them to a good hiding place.

He knew that he could not get "raw" gold and silver to make wedding rings in which he was an expert craftsman. Therefore, he gathered silver rubles and half-rubles, golden fives and tens totaling approximately $1,000 and hid them in a secret place in the wall of his house. The secret spot he chose was a crack in the wall behind a beam just where the new wall met the old wall of his dwelling. Of course, he did all this secretly. Even his children did not know the hiding place of the treasure, to protect them from the government’s severe punishment for hiding gold. Only his wife Rokhl knew the secret.

In the second year of the war, Azryal, was drafted to defend the fatherland. Before he left for the army, he counted his gold and hid it again. For Passover, Rokhl hired Natalka, a peasant woman, who lived on the outskirts of the shtetl and spoke Yiddish very well. She even said prayers with the little girls, after she helped them get dressed in the morning. After Passover, when Natalka left, Robel went to check the hiding place to make sure that the treasure was there. She could not find it.

In a disguised language, Rokhl corresponded with Azryal about the treasure. At last Azryal was able to get a pass to go home. As soon as he got home, he immediately went to check the treasure and found that it had not been disturbed and was exactly where he had hidden it.

Azryal served in the Czar’s army for two years. He came home just at the time that civil war broke. The Russian soldiers, who had run away from their posts, attacked the Jews of the shtetl. Through this chaos, the treasure remained safe and whole.

In 1919, the Red Army attacked the shtetl and began a dreadful massacre. Jews of the shtetl fled "wherever their eyes carried them." Azryal and his family fled. Local peasants continued the pogrom for 8 days. Half of the town was burned.

Azryal’s new wall was doused with benzene, but miraculously, no one set it on fire. In about two weeks, Azryal and his family came back to the shtetl. Thieves had stolen everything from his house. They had smashed up the furniture that was too heavy to move. On the floor was a hodge-podge of scraps, shattered wall mirrors and broken dishes mixed up with feathers. The walls were yellow from the sprayed benzene—but the treasure was undisturbed and safe in its hiding place.

A few months after the pogrom, Azryal, succumbed to the epidemic that followed the war and the civil strife. Four months after his death, his wife Rokhl also died. Then the children sold their house to Sheyntse Noskes and "wandered out" to America. The treasure remained a secret forever.

Or, who knows? Perhaps with the last "khurbn" in our shtetl, some Nazi beast rejoiced when he found the golden treasure that an honest, hard working Jewish watchmaker had hidden there.

Mitchell Nitikman was born in 1904 in Teopipol, (Shon in Yiddish). After WW I there was widespread poverty and anti-Semitism in the Ukraine. Nitikman immigrated to Canada in 1922 and settled in Winnipeg where he lived until his death in 1982.

He apprenticed as a linotypist at Di Yiddishe Vort, and was editor in the 1960’s and on staff until it closed in 1973. His Yiddish stories were published in Di Yiddishe Vort and in The Jewish Daily Forward. He called his collection, Fun Mayn Shtetl Shon, and used the pen name Y. M. Ukrainik.

He had much in common with Sholem Aleichem. Both wrote about the shtetl with humor compassion and empathy. Nitikman’s stories deal with the shtetl folk of the WW I era. The main characters in many of his stories are his father Azryal a kind, honest, watchmaker and his mother Rokhl, who was forced to become a bootlegger when Azryal was drafted into the Czar’s army. Other characters ranged from the generous, the devout, to clever, or selfish, and those who are brave. They encompass the human spectrum.
Association for Canadian Jewish Studies
June 1–3/03 – Halifax, Nova Scotia

Session 1 Holocaust Studies, Memoirs & Art
SOL LITTMAN (University of Arizona)
The Canadian Jewish Congress, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee and the 14th Waffen-SS
M. BUTOVSKY & K. JONASSOHN (Concordia)
Publishing Unpublished Holocaust Survivor Memoirs
LYNN ROTIN (Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia)
Holocaust and Memory

Session 2 Canadian Jewish History & Sociology
HAIM AVNI (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)
Zionism in Canada and in Argentina: The Study of the History of the Zionist Movement in 2 Settings
LEO DAVIDS (York University) and RANDAL F. SCHNOOR (McGill University)
2001 Jewish Population of Canada: A First Look

Session 3 Montreal Jewish Life – Part I
SARA TAUBEN (Concordia University)
Immigrant Synagogues of Montreal-1880’s-1945
REBECCA MARGOLIS (Columbia University)
Montreal Yiddish Literary Clubs, 1916-1940
DANA HERMAN (McGill University)
Hasidic/French-Canadian Relations in Montreal

Keynote Session
HAGIT HADAYA (Ottawa)
Case Studies in Maritime Synagogue Architecture
Tour Pier 21: If a relative immigrated to Canada through Pier 21, bring the information for a search.

Session 4 Montreal Jewish Life – Part 2
IRA ROBINSON (Concordia University)
Violence as a Factor in Montreal Jewish Community in the Early 1900s
EVE LERNER (Concordia University)
A Tale of Three Breads
Howard Gontovnick (Montreal)
The Synagogues of Laval, Quebec

Session 5 Administering Canadian Jew. Studies
SUSAN LANDAU-CHARK (Concordia University)
Preservation of Jewish Archives in Canada”
Dennis Stoutenburg (Wilfred Laurier University)
New Direction(s) in ACJS Membership: A Proposal

Session 6 Jewish Education in Canada
ESTER REITER (York University)
Secular Yiddish School Movements in No. America
TONY MICHEL (Carleton University)
Jewish Responses to Religious Education in the Ontario Public Schools, 1944-1969.
HERBERT BASSER (Queen’s University) Shifts and Trends in the Orthodox view of Jewish Education in Toronto from 1950 to 2002

A Yiddish Teacher Writes from Chicago

In a journal I get from Israel, they write the khes, like an “H” with a line under it like, H or h. It sounds like a simple solution. What do you think? I communicate in Yiddish with the Russian immigrants where I give classes on Jewish subjects. I also play Yiddish records for them that I purchased from Libby Olas when she closed her Jewish Radio Program. We had a great Yiddish sing-along.

Now I am teaching Yiddish to four different grades in our small elementary Jewish Day School. I use song and story pictures for the youngest grades, and speaking and reading for the older grades.

I enjoy Yiddish so much that I probably would pay someone to let me teach it. Thanks for all your efforts to promote the Neshomo-Loshn. The Lubavitcher Rebbe said that when you speak Yiddish, you feel the other speaker’s G-dly, Jewish soul. Reitza Kosofsky, Ph. 773-338-5063
E-mail ikosofsky@unitedrecycling.com

The Vilnius Yiddish Institute by Chic Wolk

After a lapse of more than 60 years Yiddishkeit has a new start in Vilna. Vilna is now known as Vilnius. Until the Nazis destroyed Vilna it was the center of Yiddish culture. Two years ago the Vilnius Yiddish Institute was established as a department within the University of Vilnius.

In addition to academic year classes, there is an exciting, well planned four week summer session. Students of all ages and all degrees of Yiddish competence including beginners are welcome. The summer session includes field trips, cultural activities and the opportunity to meet other students from all corners of the globe.

The web site is: Institute@Yiddishvilnius.com
The American Friends of the Institute can be reached at: chicwolk@webtv.net

Bobe Mashinke’s Upcoming Events
By Marcia Gruss Levinsohn

Yiddish of Greater Washington and the Jewish Educational Workshop produced—Yiddish Family Fun, Mishpokhe Yiddish. Adults and children watch bobe mashinke’s Yiddish Purim folk tale, Yentele, Royt Mentele, make a Purim craft, learn a Yiddish song and game, and of course enjoy hamentashn.

Our event at the Chesapeake Children’s Museum will be April 13, 2 – 3 P.M. We shall enact, der retekh, and make a craft to take home. Although, no prior knowledge of Yiddish is necessary, the story will be in Yiddish. Call bobe mashinke 301-598-2187 and see: http://www.geocities.com/yiddish2000us/
The centerfold inside this issue is the near final program schedule. It is very well planned and has the proper balance so that there are sufficient sessions for both the knowledgeable and seasoned veterans as well as for the first time attendee or fairly new beginner. With a full schedule of evening programs of entertainment and a magnificent tour at the end, lead by Aaron Seiden, even the absolute beginner will have a great time. The complete choice for everyone to feel at home with kashruth and shabes services means that for the first time we are now able to completely satisfy your personal needs.

Here are a few of the highlights. Because of the theme relating to Yiddish teachers, the number of Yiddish teachers attending will be larger than in the past. There will be the opportunity for them to meet and share ideas, and for the rest of us to get questions answered.

While many of the best presenters from previous conferences are returning there will be a remarkable, new group who will add a wonderful new dimension to the program.

Among the exciting new presenters will be Dr. Sheva Zucker, author of Yiddish: An Introduction to the Language, Literature & Culture in two volumes. Eve Jochnowit will bring balance and interest with her lecture on Jewish Foodways. William Tenn has a title catching topic—Sholem Aleykhem Meets Sci-Fi in On Venus Have We Got A Rabbi. Miriam Beckerman will speak on Mayn Lerer Dovid Katz. Kollye Borodulin will give two different programs—Yiddish Life in Birobidjan and a slide show on Yiddish Children’s Texts. Motl Rosenbush will tell us how to start a Svive and Lori Cahan-Simon Will speak on researching Mikh Gelbert. Betty Tepper’s topic is Yiddish Tango: Buenos Aires to the World. Also new is Sholem Berger’s Yiddish presentation, Vos fara Yid redt Yidish? Then Shelby Shapiro will treat us to Fascinating Exploration of the Yidishe Ganovim. Judith Seid will lecture on Secular Options in Judaism.

Plenary session speakers are both new and have a formidable background. Gela Schwei Fishman’s keynote address will cover The Secular Yiddish Schools in North America —An archival Collection as a Living Source of Jewish Creativity. The second plenary speaker will be David Weintraub the Executive Director of the Dora Teitelboim Center for Jewish Culture.

The long list of returnees and special, previous presenters are shown in the centerfold. All in all this will be a conference not to be missed. Your editor looks forward to seeing you there.

Have a question, call Sylvia Schildt at 410-298-4765 or e-mail: creativa@charm.net
AAPY Conference  
Leon Levitt <llevitt151203MI@comcast.net>

The topic for the 2003 session of the American Association of Professors of Yiddish at the Modern Language Association Annual Meeting in San Diego, California will be *Teaching/Reading Yiddish Literature.*

Yiddish literature is rarely mentioned without superlatives such as *rich, vibrant, unique,* or even *ground-breaking.* It is sometimes referred to as the *building-block* of modern Yiddish culture in its entirety. But though we hear of a Renaissance in Jewish studies in general, and in Yiddish studies in particular, is Yiddish literature taking its place alongside new courses in Yiddish language and linguistics, history, culture and anthropology? Is Yiddish literature taught on a comparable level to other national literatures?

This session may include: literary texts as a part of language instruction; teaching Yiddish literature in translation; teaching Yiddish literature at intensive summer programs (Columbia/Oxford/Vilna); teaching medieval Yiddish literature; the application of contemporary literary theory to Yiddish literature; comparative literature and Yiddish; graduate research in Yiddish literature; syllabi and curricula in Yiddish literature. For further information contact:  
Dr. Dror Abend-David  
658 Carroll St. #3-A  
Brooklyn, NY 11215-2037

**Songs In The Key Of Yiddish**  
by Eleanor Reissa

Ms Reissa is a director, choreographer, singer playwright, and actor, working in English and in Yiddish, Ms. Reissa was seen Off-Broadway starring in the title role of *Yentl.* She has performed her one-woman show all over the world. She is a Tony-nominated director for *Those Were The Days,* which she also choreographed and starred in. She recently directed *Syncopation* at the Marin Theatre Company in Northern California.

As a playwright, her first play was *The Last Survivor.* Her second play, *Wishful Thinking* won the Dorothy Silver Playwriting Competition 2000. She performs Yiddish concerts all over the world.  

In her new CD/cassette, *Songs In The Key Of Yiddish,* Eleanor Reissa has unearthed folk songs and theatrical pearls. Her performances bring to life a world of love and loss, satire and pathos, insight and inspiration. She puts a jazz flare onto old Yiddish standards as well as some never recorded Yiddish gems that feel contemporary yet traditional.  

Eleanor Reissa  
535 East 86th Street #7C  
NYC 10028  
Ph. 212-535-3808 or e-mail ereissa@aol.com

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**A Letter from Atlanta, Georgia**  
fun Jacob Szczupak


Undzer atlantor yidish libhober club vet zikh farzamlen in der sharaei shemaim shul zuntik, dem akhtsetn may elef azeyger farmitog. Di teme: lider, vits, vertlekh vi oykh lernen yidish leyenen. E-mail ljszczupak@aol.com Tel. 404-636-5497

**A New Yiddish Learner**  
By David Leash

I am an architect living in San Francisco. I am just retiring from full time work and have always dreamed of studying Yiddish. My mother came from Staszw, Poland and was a lifelong Yiddish speaker. I can say without reservation, "Ikh ken nisht redn yidish." Somehow, although I heard Yiddish often, it never rubbed off on me. Being a longtime Hebrew student, I know how important it is for adults to learn grammar because, unlike children, they can not always learn a language by sound, especially not hearing the language on a daily basis. Although 20% of Yiddish words derive from Hebrew, the language is totally different.

I would like to join a beginning Yiddish class with friendly people and gradually progress in the language. Eventually, I would like to enjoy Yiddish-based events and literature.

**Der frisher numer LEBNS-FRAGN**


Der zhurnal efnt zikh mitn leyt-artikl u"n" der marsh keyn Bagdad", un anhalt artiklen un unformatesyes oyt farsheydnaprakte temes. In dem opteyl vegn dem geto-oyfshtand is opgedrukt a telegrame fun der untererdisher bavegung tsu der poylisher goles-regirung in London.

Dem numer ken men koyfn oder bashteln: Lebns-Fragn, Itzhak Luden  
Brit Avoda - Arbeter-Ring  
48 Kalisher-Street, Tel-Aviv 65165, Israel  
tel/fax 03-517-6764 e-mail: luden@netvision.net.il
Mayn Shtetele Bronzvil
Remembering Brownsville
By Sylvia Schildt

As my brother Leybl put it, with all the rest of us siblings nodding our heads in agreement, “We didn’t know how poor we were until we moved out.” Only recently, while assembling my stories, did I ever encounter any scholarly studies about Brownsville and learn how economically challenged a community it really was. For us it was normal. Everyone lived as we did.

This book Mayn Shtetele Bronzvil/ Remembering Brownsville is a collection of 12 story vignettes about life in Brownsville, Brooklyn in the 40’s and 50’s. It is written from the viewpoint of a child growing up in the unique and by now vanished environment of a close-knit Jewish-American urban ghetto, chronicling its unique Jewishness as well its encounters with the larger American culture. The stories and characters are true, with only slight literary license.

Written in Yiddish, it also incorporates interlinear transliteration, followed by the English language version and a relevant photograph.

I believe it will be readily readable even by those of mid-level Yiddish reading proficiency, as its language includes recognizable elements of American influences on Yiddish (these words will be in quotes and explained in a glossary.) The more erudite loshn koydesh words and phrases are also at a minimum, since I tried to capture the essence of the immigrants’ speech.

The stories are:

1. A Nayes in Shtetl/Something New in Town
2. Bronzvil Hot Lib Esn/Brownsville Loves to Eat
4. Beauty, Der Vunder Hunt/Beauty, Wonder Dog
5. Kinderhitn/ Babysitting
6. Di "Muvis"/ The Movies
7. Mis Cherichetti un di Lyalkes/ Miss Cherichetti and the Dolls
8. "Betsy Head Park"
9. Slek Sizn/Slack Season
10. Gut Yontev, Bronzvil/Gut Yontev, Brownsville
11. Di Lebn-Geblibene/Those Who Remained Alive
12. Kishke King un di Bruklin Dodzhers/Kishke King & the Brooklyn Dodgers

(I have located historic photos including: Belmont Ave. pushcarts, Loew’s Pitkin, and Kishke King - others are from my personal collection.)

Each story is a stand-alone and can be read and studied at ibw session. The appeal is multi-fold:

1. Nostalgia appeal for those who lived in Brownsville or in similar situations during this era.
2. Up-close access to this way of life by the younger generations who did not experience it.
4. And I hope, some literary merit—this I leave to critics and reviewers.

The book will be spiral bound so it lies flat for easy reading. It is published by the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) and will be officially presented at the Baltimore Conference.

Sylvia Schildt, a freelance advertising copywriter by trade and alumna of Thomas Jefferson High and CCNY, has already published a book of poetry Tsaytvaylike Lider/Temporary Songs. She studied in the NYC Workmen’s Circle shules, and completed the mitl shul and Lerer Seminar. She received a Yiddish Pen Club prize for an essay, whose judges included the great Avrom Reizin.

Nine years ago, she founded Yiddish of Greater Baltimore and has been teaching Yiddish and lecturing on Yiddish subjects in Baltimore, at national Yiddish events and in Israel. Sylvia is coordinating the Baltimore IAYC Conference with a growing committee of enthusiasts. She has formed Internet friendships with Yiddish patriotn all over the globe.

For readings/appearances: creative@charm.net
Sylvia Schildt
3702 Durley Lane
Baltimore, MD 21207

Bulgaria A Country of Saviors

International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation invites all of the human rights organizations to commemorate the 60th. Anniversary of the historic act of courage and heroism: "The rescue of the Bulgarian Jews from Nazi Holocaust in 1943".

In that critical moment not even one of the Bulgarian 50.000 Jews was deported to the gas chambers.

"The uniqueness of this act was that the entire Nation, the people, the King and the Orthodox Church stood united, confronted the Nazi terror thus saving their Jews compatriots from extermination” - declared Baruch Tenembaum, founder of The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation and Honorary Member of the National Initiative Committee to Commemorate the rescue of the Bulgarian Jews during WWII.

All individuals, institutions, Governments are invited to join the foundation in this initiative: irwf@irwf.org.ar

The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation
<http://www.raoulwallenberg.net>
Itche Goldberg—The Man I Know
By Seymour Graiver

Itche is a remarkable man. He was not one of my teachers, but I know him since I first worked in Camp Kinderland in 1943. He was a member of the camp directorium. I’ve heard him lecture often, have read many of his writings, and as Director of the Yiddish Shules of the old IWO, he signed my diplomas of elementary shule in 1940, and my mittleshule diploma in 1944. Incidentally, the 1940 diploma is on display at the Judaica Museum at the Hebrew Home for the Aged in Riverdale, NY, where they have an exhibit of the Jewish Labor Cooperatives built in the Bronx in the 1920’s.

At almost 99, he can still be found at his office, writing, speaking on the phone with people such as Dovid Katz in Vilna, Sutzkover in Israel, etc. He still publishes Yiddishe Kultur every 2 months. The only restraint is finances. His hearing is not what it once was and he uses a cane to get around. He is probably the oldest active Yiddish teacher.

Itche Goldberg

Itche Goldberg, has been a leader in secular Jewish education for many decades, both in the United States and Canada. He has authored, edited and been involved in the publication of many books, teaching materials, magazines, journals, lectures, and in the administration of Yiddish organizations.

Born in Poland, March 22, 1904, he grew up in Warsaw and studied in Hebrew Worldwide Shules and the Poznanski Teachers Seminary. He immigrated to Canada in 1920, where he graduated high school, studied philosophy, political economics and German at McMaster University.

He taught Yiddish in the Toronto Workmen Circle Folkshelet in 1924, and later in the shules, mitlshule and seminars of the Fraternal Folkshelet of Toronto, Philadelphia and New York.

From 1936-1951 he was Culture and Shule Director of the shules of the Jewish People’s Fraternal Order of the IWO in America. From 1937-1951 he edited a Yiddish children’s magazine Yungvarg, and educational magazines for parents and teachers. He wrote many Yiddish children’s stories.

He has lectured in both Yiddish and English on Jewish culture and literature, with special stress on Jewish Secular Education. He has also written several Yiddish textbooks and edited many more on Yiddish language, literature and history.

Itche was the Director of the Service Bureau for Jewish Education and the Zhitlowsky Foundation, providing textbooks in history, literature and language for Jewish Secular Schools.

He is the author of Undzer Dramaturgie, an anthology of Yiddish dramaturgy, Yiddish Stories for Young People, a collection of translations of Sholem Aleichem, Peretz, etc. for teenagers, and Essayen (in Yiddish), a collection of 37 essays in Yiddish literature from Mendele to I.B. Singer.

Café Kasrilevke 26th Commemoration of the Yortsayt of Sholem Aleichem
May 18, 2003, 3:00 pm

- Traditional Reading of the Ethical Will of Sholem Aleichem
- Dr. Max Ticktim, “Sholem Aleichem and Yiddish Folklore”
- Di Shpilers performing excerpts from Sholem Aleichem writings and Yiddish Folklore

$6 Members of the JCC, Yiddish of Greater Washington, and Workmen’s Circle/$8 General Public. Call 301-881-0100, ext 6713 for reservation Co-sponsored by YGW & Workmen’s Circle

Cookie Sings Yiddish

Cookie is a newcomer to the singing world. Here are her personal feelings. “Last night I sang at a Yiddish club. Without realizing it I was on an hour and 15 minutes. When I said I was ending the show a murmur went thru the place. I felt so honored. I told them would do the show again, and what a murmur came thru!! They wanted to stay. With a comedian opening up and the band doing their shtik—the show was already over two hours long!! It was my greatest success. We sold over $500 worth of CD’s/cassettes and I got 3 job offers!!

I went down into the audience and Dave and Ruth Barlas were there. Haven’t seen them in a long while. I was glad to see them well. Now if I could only stop the awful pre-jitters. I keep saying “what do I need this for?” When I’m up there and seeing their response to me, I get my answer.”

Cookie leads 2 Yiddish groups in Tamarac, FL and is on the Boards of the Circle of Yiddish Clubs of S. Florida and the IAYC. To order Cookie Sings Yiddish, write to: Cookie Blattman
7377 Granville Drive, Tamarac, FL 33321
CD’s $15, cassettes $10, e-mail: lblattman@aol.com
Association for Canadian Jewish Studies
June 1-3/03 – Halifax, Nova Scotia

Session 1 Holocaust Studies, Memoirs & Art
SOL LITTMAN (University of Arizona)
The Canadian Jewish Congress, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee and the 14th Waffen-SS
M. BUTOVSKY & K. JONASSOHN (Concordia)
Publishing Unpublished Holocaust Survivor Memoirs
LYNN ROTIN (Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia)
Holocaust and Memory

Session 2 Canadian Jewish History & Sociology
HAIM AVNI (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)
Zionism in Canada and in Argentina: The Study of the History of the Zionist Movement in 2 Settings
LEO DAVIDS (York University) and RANDAL F. SCHNOOR (McGill University)
2001 Jewish Population of Canada: A First Look

Session 3 Montreal Jewish Life – Part I
SARA TAUBEN (Concordia University)
Immigrant Synagogues of Montreal-1880's-1945
REBECCA MARGOLIS (Columbia University)
Montreal Yiddish Literary Clubs, 1916-1940
DANA HERMAN (McGill University)
Hasidic/French-Canadian Relations in Montreal

Keynote Session
HAGIT HADAYA (Ottawa)
Case Studies in Maritime Synagogue Architecture
Tour Pier 21: If a relative immigrated to Canada through Pier 21, bring the information for a search.

Session 4 Montreal Jewish Life – Part 2
IRA ROBINSON (Concordia University)
Violence as a Factor in Montreal Jewish Community in the Early 1900s
EVE LERNER (Concordia University)
A Tale of Three Breads
Howard Gontovnick (Montreal)
The Synagogues of Laval, Quebec

Session 5 Administering Canadian Jew. Studies
Susan Landau-Chark (Concordia University)
Preservation of Jewish Archives in Canada
Dennis Stoutenburg (Wilfred Laurier University)
New Direction(s) in ACJS Membership: A Proposal

Session 6 Jewish Education in Canada
ESTER REITER (York University)
Secular Yiddish School Movements in No. America
TONY MICHEL (Carleton University)
Jewish Responses to Religious Education in the Ontario Public Schools, 1944-1969.
HERBERT BASSER (Queen’s University) Shifts and Trends in the Orthodox view of Jewish Education in Toronto from 1950 to 2002

Café K End-of-the-Year Gala Presents
An Evening of Yiddish Theatre and Song

Join Café K on Sunday, June 8 at 8:00 P.M. as we celebrate the magic of the Yiddish theatre with Shifra Lerer, Hy Wolfe, and Herbert Kaplan. The evening will include rarely heard vocal selections and songs from Yiddish classics and a reception.

Shifra Lerer is the first Argentinian born Yiddish actress to have starred on American stage. She appeared on Spanish stage before turning to Yiddish theatre where she has appeared with Maurice Schwartz, Jacob Ben Ami, Zigmund Turkow and Ida Kaminska. Her International theatre credits include: The Brothers Ashkenazi, Tevye the Dairyman, The Idiot, and The Dybbuk. Ms. Lerer has appeared in New York stage productions including The Strangers Return in English and Yiddish, A Klezmer’s Tale, The Sunset Gang, Deconstructing Harry, directed by Woody Allen and Barry Levinson’s Avalon. She is the recipient of two Goldies. In 2002, Ms. Lerer received an Award for Lifetime Achievement in Yiddish Theater from New York Governor Pataky in celebration of 100 years of Yiddish Theater.

Hy Wolfe is an actor who last portrayed Hersh-Ber in Peretz Hirshebein’s Green Fields at the new Yiddish Public Theatre. The New York Post voted this production #8 in their top 10 list of all Off-Broadway Shows for the 2000 theater season. Mr. Wolfe narrated the documentary film The Tapirape of Brazil for the American Museum of Natural History and has translated two plays into English: Sholem Aleichem’s Stempenyu and Jacob Gorkin’s Mirele Efros. Mr. Wolfe has taught Yiddish Theatre in Yiddish for Columbia University/ YIVO's Uriel Schwartz, Jacob Ben Ami, Zigmund

Herbert Kaplan is a pianist and a frequent soloist with Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops. He holds Masters degrees in Business and Music from Yale University and a Diploma in piano from the Vienna Akademie. He was rehearsal pianist for the Bell Telephone Hour and assistant to Robert Craft for the American Premier of Alban Berg’s Lulu. Mr. Kaplan has been engaged by theatre and opera companies including serving as a composer for the musical Snapshot, produced by the Hudson Guild Theatre. He has appeared on CBS (As the World Turns and Search for Tomorrow) NBC and PBS, and toured nationally for A Party With Comden and Green.

Call 301-881-0100, xt 6713. The Café Kasrilevke Gala is made possible in part by the Daniel Leivick Memorial Endowment Fund.
Klezfest in Ukraine, 2003

The Center of Jewish Education in Ukraine, with the support of the Jewish Communities Development Fund for Russia and Ukraine (USA) and the Canadian Embassy in Ukraine announces the fourth annual Klezfest music festival in Kiev on August 24-29, 2003!

Klezfest Ukraine 2003 will be devoted to the study of the traditional performance of Ashkenazi music and its modern interpretation and composition. Special attention will be devoted to methods of promotion of modern Jewish music in the music market.

Performers (vocalists and musicians), members of Jewish music bands and composers who use elements of traditional Jewish music are invited to take part in Klezfest Ukraine 2003.

On the Klezfest Ukraine 2003 program:

• Adrienne Cooper, New York; Vocal master class by singer and interpreter of Jewish songs,
• Marilyn Lerner, Canada; Composition class by composer from Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band;
• Merlin Shepherd, Great Britain; Class for musicians by clarinetist of the Sukkah trio, and leader of the Kharkov Klezmer Band Stas Raiko
• Paulina Achkinazi (Russia) and Yefim Chorny (Moldova); Choral classes by composers, veterans of Klezfest in St. Petersburg and in Ukraine.

Yiddish classes will be taught in groups according to the students’ level of Yiddish;
Lectures on Jewish musical folklore;
A roundtable devoted to the problems of using Jewish music in communities as a means of reviving and spreading Jewish self-identification;
A gala concert for the general public by participants of Klezfest Ukraine 2003!

Please send your application forms before July 1, 2003. The committee will not examine application forms received after that deadline. To your form please add an audio or videotape with your performance, quality pictures and information of the band or performer. The organizing committee will not examine application forms without these supplements. You will be informed about the selection before July 15, 2003. For leaders of bands and performers: Please add an audio or videotape with a fragment of your performance and brief information about your band and repertoire.

For additional information please contact:
Center of Jewish Education in Ukraine
6 Kurska St., Room 37, 03049, Kiev, Ukraine
Telephones: (380-44) 248-3670, 248-3634, 248-5377;
fax: (380-44) 248-3670, 248-5377
E-mail: center@cjeu.carrier.kiev.ua

Charlotte Yiddish Institute: Aug. 14-17

It is located in the Wildacres Retreat (Little Switzerland), and is sponsored by the JCC of Charlotte, North Carolina. This will be their silver anniversary. Bus transportation is available from Charlotte Airport. There will be daily and Shabbes services in Yiddish, Hebrew and English.

The faculty this year consists of:
Yale Strom—Klezmer musician, scholar, recording artist, filmmaker and author.
Robert Abelson—Singer, Broadway performer and Cantor.
Joyce Rosenzweig—Conductor of choral and cantorial groups.

Call Baila Pransky, Coordinator 704-366-5564 or write to: Charlotte Yiddish Institute
Shalom Park, 5007 Providence Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28226

Jew. Cultural Experience: July 4-Sep. 1

The Workmen’s Circle again has a full summer of programs. Many are Yiddish-oriented. They are held at Circle Lodge on Sylvan Lake in Hopewll Junction, NY. For a full summer program call 800-922-2558 xt 272. or write to W.C. 45 East 33rd St.
New York, NY 10016. Programs include; Yiddish theater, poetry, language, literature and ends with the Folksbiene Weekend.

The renowned faculty includes; Miriam Hoffman, Paul Glaser, Alisa Braun, Nikolai Borodulin, Adrienne Cooper, Zalmen Mlotek, Miriam Isaacs, Michael Wex, Yale Strom, Sam Kassow, Peysakh Fiszman, Eugene Orenstein, Eve Jochnowitz, Jeff Warschauer, Deborah Strauss, Jeffrey Mallow, Henry Sapoznik, Jeremy Dauber and Chava Lapin.

Yugntruf Sof-Vokh: August 20-27


Ale aktivitetn zenen af yidish, tvishn zey: sport, folkstents, lektsyes, diskusyes, a leynenkrayz, lager-fayern, a talantarnye, kontsertn, filme, a tegleker yidish-klas far avansirte onheybers un protemdike programen far kinder.

Ale protim kent ir gefinen afn yugntruf-vebzaytl: http://www.yugntruf.org/
arayngerekhtn registrir-boygn un protemdike shayles un tshuves. Yo, me meg zikh shoyn registrirn.

Az ir kent nisht leyenen oder aroysdrukn PDF-takes afn vebzaytl, shraybt yvokh@yugntruf.org
It takes a lot of work to realize a conference from the original vision to the on-the-ground event. And the Baltimore conference scheduled for September 4th through 7th is no exception.

SYLVIA SCHILDT, coordinator and chair, took the original theme and ran with it. She recognized its potential because of her ten years studying with great Yiddish teachers of the Arbeter Ring. Sylvia saw in it a celebration of glories past, and a challenge to Yiddish teachers and Yiddish lovers to carve out a new role for Mame Loshn as one of the pillars of Jewish education today. Aiding her was her personal acquaintance with a who’s who of the world of Yiddish through the Internet. She was also guided by the input of founder Harold Black, along with Hilda Rubin, Fishl Kutner and Morrie Feller. Her search for the key post of treasurer brought her a true treasure, an oytser in the person of TED (Tevye) CHASKELOHN, who continues to bring order and sanity to the business management of the conference, but also has expanded his role to promotion of the event to local synagogues and other Baltimore groups.

Co-Chair ERIKA GREENBLUM will be overseeing the events at the Conference to be sure all goes smoothly. AARON SEIDEN helped plan the tour of Jewish Baltimore and is the person for the job, since he is a docent and guide with the Jewish Historical Museum.

At a series of meetings, attended by committee at large members, CHARLOTTE GELLER BETTY TEPPER, AL KARCHEM, JIM KAPPLIN, DAVID FISHMAN, GILBERT RUDDIE, JEAN PINDRIK & SUE TYBERG, details of the program were hammered out and beautiful pocket folders are being prepared.

Baltimore Councilwoman RIKKI SPECTOR has aided in liaisons with the city authority. Thanks also to Dr. SONAT HART, DEBORAH MARGOLIS & ELAINE ECKSTEIN of co-host Baltimore Hebrew University for their assistance. And to co-host JCC’s RABBI NINA CARDIN and EILEEN BERMAN for generous counsel and support.

Other committee members MARK HART and ROKHL EISSENSTADT are waiting in the wings to assist with registration, tickets at special events, hospitality and other tasks.

All these people are important to the success of the Conference, as are the stellar cast of Presenters and Performers. But the most important people at the Conference will be you, the participants. We need you to register NOW. And remember: prices go up for those received after July 1st – and bus space is very limited for the Tour. If you need a registration form, call Sylvia Schildt at 410 298-4765.
8th IAYC Conference: in Baltimore:
Yiddish Teachers: Heroes Then & Now
September 4, 5, 6, 7, 2003 Pikesville Hilton, Baltimore, MD

Report #9
By Popular Demand!
Monster Talent Cabaret—with Emcee, MITCH SMOLKIN

Undser vunderkind, Mitch Smolkin, vet onfird
mit a rizikn kabaret, bay der konferentz, frytik
nokhn shabes moltsayt. Kumt un hot hanoi,
zingt, tantst, layent poezye, deklamirt epes
vunder-sheyn farn oylem.

Zeyer vikhtik ir zolt araynshikn di registratsyes
un gelt, vi oykh reservirn ayere pletser mitn
hotel. ANIT, KEN ZAYN TSU SHPET UN IR
VET FARFELN A GROYSE SIMKHE.

Our wonder boy, Mitch Smolkin, will lead a
giant Talent Cabaret at the Conference, after
dinner Shabes (Friday night), come and enjoy,
sing, dance, read poetry, recite something
extraordinary before the crowd.

Very important to send in your registration and
money, and reserve your place at the hotel. If
not, you may find it is too late and you will miss
out on a huge celebration.

Mitch who is just 24 years old, is a Yiddish
teacher, singer and actor, as well as a cantor and
he runs ASHKENAZ, the largest new Yiddish
cultural festival in North America. He will also
be lecturing about the Yiddish program in
Vilnius created under the tutelage of Dr. Hirshe
Dovid Katz.

His wife Sylwia (mit a “w”) just published two
books in Poland, one on the liquidation of the
Otwock ghetto and the other in which she
spent 1 year translating and editing Yiddish
relations from the War. She is an historian and
was the Yiddish professor at Warsaw
University until immigrating to Canada a short
time ago. She will repeat her Ashkenaz lecture
Yiddish, Alive and Well in 21st Century Poland?

They both have been teaching Yiddish in
Toronto at Bialik for the past year. Information
about them is at www.ashkenazfestival.com
<http://www.ashkenazfestival.com> in the
program book and so forth.

We have tried to reserve enough rooms for all
at the special rate. If you experience or have
experienced any problems, call Sylvia and she
will straighten it out. 410 298 4765. Kosher
option is available.

Don’t forget to bring shule memories to share –
yearbooks, textbooks and photos. Also send in
your teacher salutes for the program book –
honoring teachers will be a very important part
of the conference. It’s such a beautiful gesture,
to remember your Yiddish teacher after all
these years. You should do this even if you
can’t come to the conference.
**Yiddish Leaders**

What makes a leader in any field, in any industry, in any company on any team or in any Yiddish club? These are the same characteristics or traits that make a person step forward and assume the prime position in leading a Yiddish conference.

Stop for a moment and visualize the people whom we admire because they are the best athlete, the best actor, or the best artist. In most case they are not the company presidents. It is interesting to note that the ownership of most law firms are not by law school graduates who were in the top of their graduating class.

If being the best does not make one a leader, then let us go back to the question asked in the first sentence of this article. Let us look at Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, Soros, Sam Walton, Martin Luther King Jr., Gandhi or Herzl. It is the same set of characteristics or traits that pioneered the settlers in the founding of Israel.

Leaders are not afraid of failure. They know that treading on new ground means that there will be stumbles—and even falls. Leaders know that one learns from mistakes. Leaders rebound with something they did not have before their fall. Most of all leaders have a vision. They keep that vision in front of them at all times.

Leaders are also pragmatists—realists. Leaders are not problem solvers—they are problem managers. Taking charge is no problem for them. When an emergency occurs they step forward and handle the situation. There is no time for calling a committee together and coming up with a consensus. They know when the time is right for meetings and when decisions are needed immediately.

By now you might ask why is this article in an Anglo-Yiddish newsletter? It is because we are coming up on our eighth IAYC Conference and are in the process of deciding on the next conference site and conference coordinator.

We are looking for another Dr. Harold Black, the Barlases, Bess Shockett, Stephen Dowling, Mel Rogow, Paul Melrood or Sylvia Schildt. Will it be in Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, New Orleans, Boston, Montreal, New York or a dark horse? For the last three mentioned, they stepped forward at the previous conference and said, hineyni—you can count on me. Here I am.

As a lover of our mame-loshn, and as you read this, think who might be the next Black, Barlas, Shockett, Dowling, Rogow, Melrood or Schildt. Are you the right person at the right time in the right place? Think of the best location for the next conference. If you have an idea, send in that great suggestion to your editor, or see him at the conference.

**Important IAYC Club-Sharing Sessions**

Innovative programs are essential to having successful Yiddish groups.

At a special session of the IAYC Conference (in Baltimore September 4-7, 2003) we shall have an opportunity to share program ideas, learn how to achieve maximum participation, learn from one another how best to utilize the material we have received from IAYC, and inspire one another to plan stimulating programs.

What programs have been the most successful during the past year?

How has your group used the material you received from IAYC?

It is important that you take part in the special session on Saturday morning at 10:45 am.

We will all gain from this give and take—and make good programs even better!

To help me plan this session, please call or write to me with your information.

Roz Baker     612-377-5456
2012 Girard Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55405

**MAYN SHTETELE BRONZVIL**

It is hot off the press, published by the IAYC and will be launched at the conference. Advance copies are available. $18.00 USD plus $5.50 s/h.

While this book will be of interest on its own merit, for layenkrayzn and such, you must have it if you grew up in New York – especially ex-Brownsvilies. This book contains archival photos of the Loew’s Pitkin, Belmont Avenue pushcarts, the famous Kishke King deli, Fortunoff’s, Ebbetts Field and more. It’s in Yiddish with interlinear transliteration, followed by an English translation. Write to:

Sylvia Schildt,
3702 Durley Lane, Baltimore, MD 21207.

**Using A Treasury of Yiddish-American Cartoon Humor in Your Yiddish Club**

For your Yiddish club, copy cartoon pages for everyone in attendance. Have people fold the page just below the original Yiddish caption. Then ask for volunteers to read the caption and translate it. Next, everybody can unfold the page for the book’s translation and word list. The cartoon pages are in A Treasury of Yiddish-American Cartoon Humor.

A copy can be ordered, $14. postpaid from:
Companion Publications
8844 Monard Drive,
Silver Spring MD, 20910,
Phone 301-563-6435 or Email apbs@dc.net.
Hints on Using Der Bay’s Website

Der Bay’s readers range from computer geeks/nerds to those just learning how to send e-mail. This is not meant for regular users, but rather for those who under-utilize or have never browsed the many pages of this most comprehensive Yiddish site.

Start with the homepage. There are 27 sections listed along the left column. Also you can order Der Bay or see a sample issue. The arrow changes shape when you place your cursor on a link. By clicking on the link, it will take you to that page. At the bottom of most pages there is link back to the home page. When you are finished reading a page you can click and go back or click on the back arrow and go to the previous page.

Take one link on the homepage and follow it. One of the more popular pages is a list of wordlists. It shows 29 categories of words and leads to a test with the answers. The words are shown in standard YIVO orthography and Yiddish equivalent. One wordlist is for verbs. There are 432 shown. In all the other lists, alongside of a noun you will find its gender.

Another much-used section is the list of calendars. A search can be made of geographic regions, whether it is Canada, New York, Florida, Southern California or the other 8 areas. All of the listings are in the proper geographic calendar. The date, time, name of event, key presenters, contact phone number and often a link to their e-mail or website.

Finding a briv fraynd (pen-pal) is easy with the list started by Frida Cielak and Dr. Allan Blair. Just fill out the online form and receive at least 10 names. This can be an individual effort, or one for a class or club. It is free. You can request to write online in or in hardcopy using the Hebrew / Yiddish letters.

Remember that Der Bay is purposely not copyrighted (with very few exceptions in the hardcopy and they are marked). You are welcome and encouraged to make copies of any pages and distribute them to your group. If you do, let us know about how they were used so that others can share the ideas. Another column in this issue is on sharing ideas on club programming. Roz and Mike Baker will chair a panel at the conference.

A South Africa Contact
fun Rochelle Winer

I was in Johannesburg in January and I spoke there. The hall was packed to capacity—almost 200 people. My talk was entitled: The Spice and Spirit of Yiddish Wit, Wisdom, and Folklore. The organizers told me that if they would have 100 people they would be very pleased, but when I told some of my friends about the evening the news spread and so the audience grew!

They served tea and cake afterwards, and everybody stood around talking for a long time, asking me questions and reminiscing about their childhood and where they heard Yiddish—either in their grandparents’ homes or their parents. There is always an interest these days in anything to do with Yiddish. I am sure this is happening all over, as I see when I read your wonderful magazine.

I also get Der Forverts now and enjoy reading it as well. It is good practice for my Yiddish reading or else I will forget. Zayt gezunt un ikh hof tsu heren fun aykh.

Center for Jewish Culture & Creativity

Through its Judaic study programs, workshops, fellowships, commissions and mentorships, encourages the creation of new cultural works on Jewish themes in music, drama, dance, poetry, literature, cinema and the fine arts by a network of talented professionals in Israel and the Diaspora, and facilitates the public dissemination of such works, including its annual Festival in San Diego, thereby widening the horizons of Jewish culture, and the Jewish contribution to world civilization.

The Center was founded in Tel Aviv in 1990 by leading artists, scholars and entrepreneurs who recognized that creative talent is a major resource of the Jewish people and that persons gifted with these attributes should be identified, mobilized and bonded through the Center into an activist movement devoted to sustaining Jewish identity.

A non-profit educational institution in both the U.S. and Israel, the Center is a global fellowship of artists, scholars and benefactors committed to evolving the dynamic national Jewish culture envisioned by Zionist philosopher Ahad Ha’am. To preclude the fossilization of Jewish culture, the Center stimulates and facilitates the creation of new cultural works from a Jewish perspective and the dissemination of the artistic expression in respect public venues, thereby broadening the horizons of Jewish culture and ensuring an ongoing Jewish contribution to universal civilization.

The Center is not a funder but the hub of an international league of artists and scholars, who receive comradeship and opportunities. While maintaining strategic relations with many institutions, the Center is independent and embraces the spirit of K’lal Israel.

In 1998, the Center formed “Synergy” as an ensemble of musicians, actors and dancers to show the work of the Center’s global network of affiliated creative artists and present rarely performed works from the established repertoire of Jewish culture.


Nokh der gimnazye zogt mayn tate az ikh zol shtudirn in Frankraykh (France). Zogt mayn mame—mayn tate zogt, mayn mame zugt zugt mayn mame az in Frankraykh redt men frantzoysh. Frantzoyshiz, a sheyne shprakh, ober yederer ken a bisl frantzoyshiz: pardon, mersi, frere zhake. For ikh ken Frankraykh un ikh lern zikh a bisl frantzoyshiz.


Ikh veys az in Amerike redt men eynglish. Ven mir hobn gevart, hob ikh genumen etleke eynglish lektsies fun a daytshn profesor vos hot gezogt az mit tsvantsik yor frier hot er shtudirt tsvey yor in Amerike. Hob ikh gelernt a bisl eynglish.


Ober mit eynglish iz nisht alts azoy glaykh. Dem tsveytn tog zog ikh az ikh gey in shtot. Fregt Ent Flori in eynglish: "Ver ar yu goin?" Entfer ikh in eynglish: Ay em goin tu therd Avenue". Zogt zi:" Don’t bi engri, bat dont sey I em goin to tert Evenyu, sey I em goin to toyt Evenyu". Ikh kik zi on un ikh meyn: farvos zol ikh geyn tsu an Avenue vos iz toyt, zog ikh gornisht un ikh gey tsu "therd Avenue".


Ober bay mir in kop? A bisl eynglish un a bisl rusish, a bisl frantzoysh iz un a bisl lataynish, a bisl daytsch un a bisl arameyish, a bisl hebreiysh un a bisl povlsh, a bisl Varsheyer yidish un a bisl Litvish yidish, oy vey vos far a gemish in mayn kleyn kepele!

Yetst, yest kent ir ale mayne fraynd un tsoherers farshteyn farvos mayn yidish iz nisht azoy gut!
Eldridge Street, New York City has been a locus of Jewish life since the late 19th century. Between 1880 and 1890 about 60,000 Jews fleeing violent anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe made came from the shtetls to the Goldene Medina, specifically to the Lower East Side of Manhattan. The tenements they occupied upon their arrival were congested, airless and unhealthy. Most were forced to earn a living at the lowest rungs of the economic ladder. But their religious life was rich. Pooling hard-earned pennies, they established small neighborhood shuls to sustain and nourish their Orthodox traditions.

With time, a modicum of prosperity enabled a group to commission an architectural firm to design and build a large-scale synagogue on Eldridge Street. It was completed in 1887 for Congregation K’hal Adath Jeshurun, which later merged with Anshe Lubz. It was the first Orthodox synagogue ever built for and by Eastern European immigrants in America. By 1920 nearly 400,000 Jews lived, worked and worshipped on the Lower East Side, but Orthodoxy was losing its grip on many of the American-born; others abandoned the neighborhood as soon as they could afford better housing. The congregation of the Eldridge Street Synagogue shrank, and the once-majestic building fell into disrepair. Concurrently, new Asian immigrants moved into the dilapidated apartments on the block as Chinatown expanded.

Today, the synagogue, that was landmarked in the 1980s and continues to undergo restoration, thanks to the efforts of the Eldridge Street Project is a symbol of Yiddishkeit to generations of Jews who consider the Lower East Side their spiritual birthplace in America, although Eldridge Street is now part of Chinatown.

Numerous similarities exist between the immigration experiences of Jews and Chinese. Both have known extreme hardship in their countries of origin that propelled them to endure perilous journeys to America. Once here, they confronted widespread discrimination in the belief that they were too different and too strange in religious practice or physical appearance to ever meld with American society. Initially, each group kept to its own ethnic enclave. Jewish and Chinese newcomers relied on mutual aid societies, family or village associations, to ease their transition from “greenhorn” or “FOB (fresh off the boat)” to seasoned city dweller. Chinese immigrants came to dominate the “needle trades” of the garment industry that had once launched Jewish refugees upwards from poverty.

Today, Eldridge Street’s population is mostly Chinese-speaking, but the Jewish community stays loyal to its religious roots. Shabes and holiday services have been held there continuously for over 115 years. Each year the Eldridge Street Project organizes the Egg Rolls & Egg Creams Block Party to celebrate traditional language, arts, music and dance of the Jewish and Chinese cultures that make this block so unique.

A historical precedent for the harmony between Jews and Chinese may have been set in the Tan Dynasty in Kaifeng, China, where a synagogue was built in 1163. Until the 17th century, some 5,000 Jews lived in peace and prosperity in that city. Isolation, assimilation and intermarriage may have contributed to the community’s gradual disappearance.

In Jewish neighborhoods Chinese restaurants prosper, and their glatt kosher counterparts have penetrated all Orthodox corners of the city. Everyone is familiar with the egg roll. Only New York nostalgia buffs know of egg creams from the heyday of Jewish soda shops, where stirring chocolate syrup and milk with seltzer made them. Ironically, there are no eggs in either of these creations from which the Eldridge Street festival takes its name. Immigrants in San Francisco and New York invented both, respectively.

The 3rd Egg Rolls & Egg Creams Block Party was presented on June 1st. A large crowd gathered at the entrance of the synagogue to watch the opening lion dance. Students of kung fu performed this Chinese tradition, believed to invoke good luck.

The Ray Musiker Klezmer Ensemble had all swaying to the Yiddish music whose scales and tunes are borrowed from chazzanut, an ancient repertoire of Jewish chant. A demonstration of Beijing Opera and Chinese classical and modern instrumental music were applauded enthusiastically. The Shashmaqam Bukharan Jewish Cultural Group had musicians and dancers from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (former USSR regions bordering China). Their cultural heritage is more from Iran and Turkey than from Eastern Europe.

In the sanctuary, Rabbi Clive Jacobson displayed a tallit and explained the relationship of its tzitzit to the 613 mitzvot. Nearby, Rabbi Zelig Mandel, a master calligrapher, demonstrated their kindred arts. In both Jewish and Chinese cultures, handwritten documents are prized for their beauty and sacredness.

In the basement egg rolls and egg creams sold briskly. Kids were engrossed in crafts and students learned a bish Yiddish. Charismatic teacher Pesakh Fiszman had his audience reciting their names and the days of the week as well as singing simple lyrics about Shabes, Yontef and Sholem, set to a Hasidic melody.

This festival is a celebration of “one block, two cultures,” and the Eldridge Street Synagogue remains a symbol of the Jewish-American spirit extending its welcome to all.
Stanley Siegelman of Great Neck, N.Y. is a master of the wit and wisdom that distinguishes seykhel from ordinary intelligence. His genius is Yiddish poetry, on current matters with a dose of biting commentary. This contribution is about Senator Joseph Lieberman, who hopes to win the Democratic nomination for president. The English version, and the YIVO standard orthography, is by Gus Tyler who writes for the English Forward. Along with the Yiddish Forward, the English version is a club resource. This appeared in Der Yiddish Vinkl, May 30, 2003. Reprinted with permission.

**A Yidisher Prezident**

Ot kumt er yetst, mit groysn shpan:  
'S'iz undzer Yosl Lieberman!  
Oy zog undz, Senator, vos brent,  
Farvos mustu zayn prezident?  
Dertsyley undz Yosele farvos  
Du vilst shtark zayn der balebos  

"Oy vintsh mir glik, gib mir a kush,  
Un Lomir poter zany fun Bush!  
"Vu shteyt es geshribn ot azoy:  
'A president muz zayn a goy'?  
Azoy redt er, un mit respekt  
Der landsman fun Konetiket.  

Nor zoln mir take zayn tsufridn  
Dos vet gut zayn far ale Yidn?  
A yid zo hoykh? Iz yetst di tsayt?  
'S'iz efsher nor a narishkayt?  
A shtikl Yid zol zayn a riz?  
Er efsher geyt oyf krum fイス  

'S'iz take meglekh, zog undz bloyz,  
An erlikher Yid in Vays Hoyz?  
A Yid vos teglekht tfiln shhtelt  
(Kuk on vi zayn mame kvelt?)  
Vos far a Vays Hoyz vet es zayn  
Az undzer Yosl muft arayn?  

Kumt Fraytik nakht; der tunkl krikht  
Di "Ershchter Leyde" tsint on likht.  
(Vos vet zi ton ven Krismes kumt?  
Tsindn on a Krismes boyml punkt?)  
Nit mer tsom galakh Billy Graham  
Vet Vays Hoyz zayn a tsvetsyey heym.  
Ver kumt fr shmueun un a glezl tey?  
Der prezident fun UJA!  

Ken Yosele oyf seyder-tsayt  
Zitsn oyf zayn linker zayt?  
(Der linker zayt, zogt Gor, zayn "pal"  
Iz epis tsufil liberAL)  
Ven diplomatn kumen arayn  
M'git zey Manischewitz vayn.  
A kipa Joe trogt far a het.  
(A shande farn Kabinet.)  

Oy, meydlekh, boyes, mener, froyen  
Joe hoft tsu zayn an Abe Lin-Cohen!  

**A Jewish President**

Now, here he comes with great élan,  
It is our Joseph Lieberman.  
Please tell us why you’re so intent  
On being U.S. president.  
Oh tell us, Joe, the reason why  
That you must be the topmost guy.  

"Oh wish me luck, give me a kiss  
Together we will Bush dismiss.  
We must the nonsense now destroy  
That says the prez must be a goy."  
"’T’is thus he speaks and with respect  
Our Joseph from Connecticut.  

But should we really hail this news  
Will it be good for all the Jews?  
A Jew so high? Is this the time?  
Can Joe this lofty mountain climb?  
Can he perform this daunting feat?  
Or does he go on crippled feet?  

Now can it be, just tell us p1ain  
Can you, a Jew, White House attain?  
A Jew who daily says his prayers  
(Just see how much his mother cares.)  
What kind of White House will it be  
When Joseph holds the tenancy?  

Comes Friday and quite soon the night  
First lady does a candle light.  
(At Christmas time, what shall we see?  
First Lady lights a Christmas tree?)  
No more will Billy Graham roam  
Around the White House he calls "home."  
Who’ll come instead most every day?  
The president of UJA.  

Can Joseph when it’s Seder time  
Upon his left with ease recline  
("Leaning left," says Gore, his pal  
Would really be too liberAL")  
When diplomats do come to dine  
They’ll offer Manischewitz wine.  
The yarmulke that Joe does wear  
Will make his Cabinet want to swear  

Know all who know he is “our own”  
Joe wants to be an Abe Lin-Cohn.
Music from Baku, Azerbaijan  
by Yelena Irzabekova  rir@gmx.de

I am a musicolog (Ph.D) from Baku, Azerbaijan now living in Berlin. Daniel Galay, a Yiddish composer and pianist from Israel, whom I met last summer in Israel, suggested I contact you. For the last few years I have collected, researched and published collections of Yiddish music sheets that I’ve been able to find in Baku’s libraries, archives, private collections, etc.

During 2001-2002 I published four collections of Yiddish music: An Anthology of Soviet Yiddish music; Jewish Songs and Dances arranged by Soviet Jewish composers; Melodies of Yiddish Shtetlakh; An Anthology of Yiddish Music (2nd collection).

The main target of this work is to assist in the revival of Yiddish musical legacy and to reintroduce it into modern cultural life.

Chana Mlotek, YIVO music archivist, told about the first and second collections in the Yiddish Forward, October 12, 2001.

I published (in Russian) a textbook on Yiddish music addressed for music teachers and piano students. It consists of two parts, the first of which summarizes the history, theory and musicology of Yiddish musical tradition, and the second provides musical texts for piano or piano duet. These have been arranged at an elementary technical level suitable for children. The book concludes with annotations. The aim is to introduce Yiddish music to children and music amateurs, while providing a more technical orientation for teachers.

I’d be glad to provide you with more information if you are interested.

The Jewish Book of Fables:  
Selected Works of Eliezer Shtaynbarg

The Dora Teitelboim Center for Yiddish Culture has released The Jewish Book of Fables, The Selected Works of Eliezer Shtaynbarg, (Syracuse Univ. Press, 2003, ISBN 0-8156-0718-0.). The fable has a 3000-year-old tradition in Jewish literature, going back to the Bible and the Talmud. Other works of fables abound in Hebrew literature, but it was not until the advent of the Eliezer Shtaynbar that fable writing in Yiddish was honed to perfection.

This volume marks the first book devoted to his work. Translated from the Yiddish by Curt Leviant, this edition features the fables printed side by side in English and Yiddish with all new color and black and white illustrations by Dana Duane Craft. The book can be purchased at the Center’s website, www.yiddishculture.org.

David Weintraub, Exec. Dir., 305-774-9244  
Dora Teitelboim Center for Yiddish Culture  
269 Giralda Ave., # 201, Coral Gables, FL 33134

A briv-fraynd fun Kharkiv, Uktaine

Sholem Aleykhem un gut shabes.


Akhuts dem hab ikh gehat a meglekhkayt tsu hern yidish biz mayne dray yorn. Ist ikh interesir zikh nisht nor in loshn, oder in yidishe kunst, geshikhte un bikhhal yidishkhayt. Akhuts mayn universitet ikh tu grafishe un fotografishe arbet, epes fun grafisher design (Dos vort veys ikh nit af yidish). Khe vel zayn tsufridn tsu ibershrayn bikh mit yeder, ver hot az a meglekhkayt.

A dank.

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Editor’s note—If you wish to correspond with Yurek, register at Der Bay's website at: www.derbay.org and click on Yiddish Pen Pals. If you are registered, just send an e-mail message to fishl with your briv fraynd number requesting Yurek’s e-mail address. If you forgot your number, it will be sent to you.

A Letter from Leon H. Gildin

Knowing how exact you are with respect to that which appears in your publication, I felt compelled to write to you about the poem Kum tzu mir or more precisely the translation entitled Come to Me.

The poem itself is a sentimental piece consisting of six four-line verses wherein the second and the fourth line are rhymed. (One verse is five lined with the third and fifth line rhymed.) Since no other credit is given, I assume the author did the translation.

If a poem is in rhyme, then a translation of the poem must be in rhyme. If the poem has a rhythm or a meter, then that too must be maintained in the translation. If these rules are not followed, then you have an English version of that which was written in Yiddish or an English poem on the same subject as that which was written in Yiddish. It is not a translation.

Translating a rhymed poem is very difficult. I am translating certain poems of H. Leivick (he always wrote in rhyme). I shall combine that with other 20th century poets for a new book of translations.
8th IAYC Conference: in Baltimore:
Yiddish Teachers: Heroes Then & Now

Report #10
TOP TEN REASONS
TO COME TO BALTIMORE

Very early registration has far surpassed our expectations when considering geographic distribution. We have always had a great representation from areas outside of the conference city, but never before was early registration so widely represented.

1. Your friends are coming from:
- Canada: Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg
- Midwest: Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin,
- New England: Connecticut, Massachusetts
- Mid-Atlantic: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and DC,
- South: Florida, Georgia, Louisiana,
- Far West Arizona, California, Colorado ..... come join them and make new friends.

2. You’ve been to one or more IAYC conferences, so you know how great they are. Come again. We have a very high percentage of repeat attendees. It has to be great. We must be doing it right.

3. You’ve never been to one, and you’ve heard how great they are. Come on down. If you belong to a Yiddish club, this is especially the time to attend.

4. You are a Yiddish teacher or club leader – come learn and share ideas. There will be special workshops for your interests and needs. Meet and share ideas.

5. Come honor those who taught you Yiddish. This says it all. It will bring back fond memories of those special people.

6. You went to a Yidishe shule or camp – come have an alumni reunion. It is amazing how many of us have met old friends, and even distant family.

7. You love Yiddish music – come hear klezmer, folk, theater, art songs, shule and camp songs and more. Our evening entertainment is meant to relax and yet invigorate your Yiddish funny bone.

8. You like to perform – come to our bigger than ever Talent Cabaret with Mitch Smolkin. Each conference has seen an increase in interest in this event. Mitch has brought it to new heights.

9. You haven’t seen the fabulous Baltimore Inner Harbor ... come try the paddleboats and shop ‘til you drop. Even great for those who come only for the entertainment.

10. You need a change of pace – come to a memorable 4-day getaway!!
A Student Shraybt
Marilyn (Miryam) B. Cohen,
Metairie, Louisiana
marilynbcohen@yahoo.com

Before class begins in Fannie Yokor’s, ”Lomir Lernen Yidish” group, gib a kuk—look at the chalkboard. There you will see a numbered list, an outline of what Fannie hopes to cover that afternoon. ”Oh, no!” you might say, ”a lesson plan—how boring!” Punkt farkert!—just the opposite—we the students are ensured of a varied, well-organized two hours of learning, participation, and fun. We sing songs and recite dialogs, easily learning vocabulary without realizing it. Jewish poets and playwrights, holidays and customs are all familiar to us. We recite poems, and, eyder vos un eyder ven before we know it, we have memorized them.

The class is learning to read and write in Yiddish, and there is even some grammar sneaked in. (Personal note: I love the grammar, but resist learning cursive writing in Yiddish). Fannie encourages us to compose our own individual dialogs in Yiddish, using proverbs we have learned. Many of the dialogs we learn are student-generated. Once a month we view a Yiddish film with English subtitles. The Yiddish class has even performed a few programs of songs and skits for the entire Jewish community.

Our group is a close-knit, heymish one. We care about each other, noticing who is absent from our more than twenty student group, and calling the absentees to inquire about their well-being, or to offer rides where needed.

I have been in the Yiddish group for ten years. I consider it a privilege to be in Fannie Yokor’s class. I don’t let anything else interfere with my time on Monday afternoons. It is the most pleasurable time of the week for me.

A Teacher from Alsace, France
Pascal Curin CurinP@aol.com

Thanks for word lists and the free using for teachers (in my case in Alsace, France, an old Yiddish-speaking region). However, it would be more practical for me to have the possibility to get all subjects in one time, it is tedious to save one list after each other. Dou you have a folder where all files are in it and that you could download? It would be very nice!!

Ich bin iwwerraschd, dàss Jiddisch (aü vum Oschde) ’m Elssassisch ähnli isch!! ich kann fàschd ohn Wordschicte verstehn, wann de hebräischi Weerder net dozwische kumme täte !!

e Grüessle vum Elssass

E-mail #2

Thanks for your quick answer! No problem with YIVO, just a little surprising! But Yiddish singing artists use it here as well. I never saw current Yiddish in Europe which was written with German alphabet. I mean it would be more practical to read when you know German or German dialects such as Alsatian.

I agree with an article about Yiddish activity in Alsace, a former important Yiddish center in the Middle Ages until the Revolution. The Yiddish-speaking people I knew are almost all dead! I see only one in my neighborhood (Mr. Katz), he is very active and organizes with the Region Alsace every year a big cultural programme about Jewish Life in Alsace as a big component of Alsatian past. I took part in his programme and have contact with him.

If I had to write this article in English (I) would rather send the text to a Jewish friend living in Chicago, President of a Jewish Congregation whose mother still speaks Yiddish. He will be able to correct my English. Please tell me what you’d like to get as an article linguistics or history etc.?

From Natal, South Africa
Rochelle Winer rochel@icon.co.za

Ikx hob bakumen July 2003 Der Bay un ikh bin geven zayer gliklekh. Ober ikx mayn az a por bleter hob ikh nit. Inhalt - Ikx hob nit bakumen Pg 3,4,5 8,9 10. Bite shikt mir di bleter. Ikx hob bakumen July 2003 Der Bay un ikh

A Request for Help
Gail Erlichman, Lakeland, FL gaile@concentric.net

I met you at an Israeli Fair a few years ago. I am friends with your daughter Deb Herman and didn’t know who else could help. My mother in Rochester NY was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s. Both of my parents are survivors of the Holocaust and are fluent in Yiddish, not so with English. I would appreciate greatly if you could help me with translation of info on Alzheimer’s and caregiver needs from English to Yiddish so I could help dad understand it. Where can I get this info in Yiddish.

merrynbcohenyahoo.com
Managing Change in Yiddish?

Why is change threatening to all of us at times, and to some of us most of the time? Of what are we afraid? How can we feel comfortable about inevitable change? How can we initiate change in others who feel uneasy about making changes?

First we must understand that change is the norm. Each day’s weather is different. Plants and animals, including we humans, are growing and dying each moment of our lives. So this first step is being aware that all about us, in every sphere, change is the norm—albeit often imperceptible.

Second is to learn what it is that causes us to resist change. It is fear of the unknown. If we do the same thing each time, we can predict the outcome. If we don’t feed the baby, the child will cry.

Change is like entering a dark room. It is scary. We don’t know the outcome. Once we turn the lights on our fear is reduced. People like what they can do well. Saying, "I don't like to bowl" is synonymous with I'm not good at bowling.

Perhaps we can agree on a few basics about Yiddish. If you disagree then, one or all of this set of assumptions needs to be modified or discarded.

- Even though many Yiddish organizations are losing membership or stopped growing, we must increase the size of our groups or else we shall pass from the scene as have many of the others.
- If we wish to contribute to worthy causes, such as awarding scholarships, then we must raise money.
- At our peak of Yiddish speakers and activities we had many more Yiddish publications, theaters and Yiddish being taught. We may consider revitalizing several former ones and be willing to innovate new ideas like expanding Yiddish online, and video-conferencing club meetings and conferences.
- Cooperation is the basis of success. We ought to have greater contact with other groups like—The National Yiddish Book Center, YIVO, Arbeter Ring, League for Yiddish, Yugtruf, FOY, Congress for Jewish Culture, YKUF, Forward, Folksbiene, IAYC, Yidishkayt LA, Congress of Jewish Culture, CSJO, Institutes, Universities, Vendors, Museums, Libraries, Clubs, Klezmer Groups.

The above is only a partial list, and you can add others. The key thing is that we initiate a dialogue on how to give our mame-loshn even more vitality. Because we all are interested in maintaining our own turf, we lose sight of the greater picture.

What is needed are not leaders, but facilitators. Facilitators are non-threatening and can work with organizations and individuals for the common good. Let us start with a Yidish Kalendar so that we all know each other’s events and try to minimize scheduling conflicts.

Zi kukt far a briv fraynd


Shulamis Lupotnik
Artyoma str. 14 app. 12
Kharkov 61002
Ukraine

A Request from Germany

I am very interested in learning Yiddish. About a year ago I heard on the radio a documentary about the Yiddish language and culture, and it really interested me, so I decided to find out more. However, I’ve been having difficulties in finding ways and places to learn the language. I can already speak good German and have heard that this is a good start. Could you recommend any websites or books? I have heard of “arele” but am finding it difficult to buy this book.

I would like to take part in the Yiddish pen-pal plan. I can’t speak Yiddish yet and I’m not Jewish, would that be ok? I live in a small village near Bonn. I’ve already had a quick search around the local area but couldn’t find any clubs or classes. If you know of any that would be a great help or of someone in Germany I can get in touch with.

Robert Cooper <robcouper4@hotmail.com>

From The World of Yiddish
by Morrie Feller

I have succeeded in copying the reading of some of the Onkelos stories that are to be found in Leonard Prager’s World of Yiddish. I think you might enjoy listening to these stories while reading them either on your computer screen, or from hard copy that has been printed out.

The simplest way to access the Prager Web site is to go to the Der Bay Web site. Select Yiddish links, and scroll down to The World of Yiddish by Leonard Prager. Click on this, and you will see a large circle with Yiddish in the center. Click on the circle, and you will get a square with a smaller circle in it. Click on this circle, and you will get a line that says: Yiddish Stories. Click on this, and the texts of twelve stories are shown which have all been read by Sara Blacher-Retter.

Click on a PDF selections to bring up the text.
Let’s Play Pinochle in Yiddish

In an attempt to improve the Yiddish classes, we instituted the conversation period. The first attempt was with the kitchen. The table was set with dishes and silverware. A copy of the words on Der Bay’s website was handed out. The class went well and we decided to continue on with new themes.

Next we tried to have the speaking/leaning session center around playing games starting with pinochle. Other card games or board games will be used. While this is being tried in a classroom situation, it could easily be adapted to club meetings.

Below is the list of words used for the pinochle class. None of the students had ever played the game, but most said that their parents had played it. One can set up games of 2, 3 or 4. A pinochle deck has no jokers and only nines and higher. Also there are 2 of each card from 9 to ace. Thus a pinochle deck has only 48 cards, unlike a regular deck of 52 cards.

Your editor hopes that readers will give further suggestions and evaluate the word list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Yiddish</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ace</td>
<td>toyz di, tayz di</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bid</td>
<td>(v) bot, (n) onbot der</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cards</td>
<td>kortn</td>
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<td>Clubs</td>
<td>shpog der</td>
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<td>Count</td>
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<td>Cut</td>
<td>shnayd</td>
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<td>Deal</td>
<td>geb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deck</td>
<td>pash der, peshl dos</td>
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<td>Diamonds</td>
<td>lekekh der</td>
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<td>Fewer</td>
<td>vintsiker</td>
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<td>Hearts</td>
<td>royts dos, eykhl dos</td>
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<td>Highest</td>
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<td>Jack</td>
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<td>Pair</td>
<td>por</td>
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<td>Pass</td>
<td>pas</td>
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<td>Points</td>
<td>pintlekh</td>
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<td>Queen</td>
<td>kinigin, malke di</td>
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<td>Shuffle</td>
<td>tash (iber)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spades</td>
<td>pik, shvarts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suit</td>
<td>kolir der, mast der</td>
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<td>Take in</td>
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<td>Throw out</td>
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<td>Trick</td>
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<td>Trump</td>
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Selecting a Conference Site

Just like the birth of a baby, all the work in conceiving and carrying the fetus is done out of sight. It is only after the child is born do we see the fruits of all the labor. So it is with the selection and preparation processes with and for a conference.

• How does the IAYC select the next conference site?
• Where will it be held?
• Who will be the co-ordinator/s?
• When will it be?
• What will the theme be?
• What are the accommodations?
• How much will it cost?

We hope to have the next site selected and announced at the Baltimore Conference. We have been able to do so at the last two conferences. It is interesting to note that no two conferences have been alike. Each has had a different theme and no two have been in the same place.

Conferences have been held in hotels, universities, conference centers and even where the meetings, dining and sleeping all were in different locations at a single conference. In fact one was at a Catholic College. All worked well.

There has been a single coordinator, a pair and a team of three coordinators. There have been Yiddish teachers as well as coordinators who could not make a good presentation in Yiddish. All worked well. In several instances someone came to us at a conference and said, “I would like to have a conference in our city. Whom do I see?” In each case the person became the coordinator for the following conference.

Accommodations have been in a luxury environment and in dorms with shared bathrooms down the hall. Obviously there was a difference in comfort, but other benefits more than compensated for it so that the overall result was excellent.

Themes are selected by the hosting city, and usually depend on the unique resources of the local community. In Milwaukee Yiddish and the Holocaust was selected because of the unusually active Second and Third Generation Holocaust Survivors. They were a significant part of the planning committee. Many wonderful themes will be used in the future—Yiddish Organizations Yiddish Publications, Yiddish Theater, Yiddish Humor, Yiddish Songs, Yiddish Writers and Poets.

If you would like to know about how to have your city sponsor a future Yiddish Club Conference, contact the editor or see any of the IAYC officers or board members at the Baltimore Conference. Every conference has been financially successful, and the IAYC will put up the deposit.
There is a close connection between theater and language. A *letz*—a jokester—once said: Az di mame shrayt, vert der tate on loshn—when mama screams, papa is speechless—the origin of mame-loshn.

Until the end of the 19th century it was largely the everyday language of the Jewish masses. Hebrew was the holy language, Loshn Koydesh, to be used in the synagogue mainly by men, and in studying Torah and the Talmud—largely by men. The Enlightenment (Haskalah) looked westward toward German as the civilized language and to the east to Russian. The Khasidim, expressing their joy in their religious continuity used Yiddish. Traditional Misnagdim (the Orthodox rabbis) tried to keep that wall of separation between Hebrew and Yiddish. In the Orthodox synagogue the women sat behind a curtain. Instead of reading the Torah in Hebrew, they followed along in a form of Yiddish called Tseyne Areyne.

Jewish creative intellectuals recognized the need to wed the everyday language to standards of grammar, pronunciation, syntax, and spelling. In 1908 at the Tshernowitz Conference, Yiddish writers led by Yitzkhok Leyb Peretz proclaimed Yiddish as a Jewish national language.

Jewish culture always contained an element of the arts, despite the prohibition against making graven images. Theatricality was an important factor:

The following elements continued into the diaspora in a kind of *goldene keyt*—a golden chain—to today.

- A single G-d who was invisible, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient;
- The choseness of the Jewish people who alone could communicate with the supernatural;
- G-d's will to justify suffering as well as joy;
- Abraham and the attempted sacrifice of Isaac;
- Moses from the basket on the Nile to the plagues visited upon the Egyptians;
- To the parting of the Red Sea as the way of escape;
- To proclaiming the Ten Commandments;
- The secret entry of the prophet Elijah at Passover;
- The miracle of the lamp oil in Khanuке;
- The heroics of the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba;
- The vengeance of Mordekhai in slaughtering Haman;
- The victory of David over Goliath;
- David the psalmist and harpist;
- Solomon the wise and creative poet;
- The cantors and the choirs;
- The candle-lighting in hushed tones on the Shabes.

Thus going back to the Renaissance in the Italian city of Mantua, Jews formed *Universita Israelita* where Jewish writers, actors, stage craftsmen, musicians, costumers and dancers performed in public.

Two celebrations in Jewish religious life were the settings for theater directed to the Jewish people, but attracted the attention of dominant forces—Moslems and Christians. These were:

- Simkhes Torah, celebrating the end of the cycle of Torah reading and beginning again with Genesis;
- Purim celebrating the end of Haman, the Jew-killer, at the hands of Mordekhai in the service of the Persian King Ahasuerus, and his Jewish Queen Esther as set forth in the Megillah.

On Purim there were excesses, of wild dancing, drunkenness and garish costumes. The Jewish religious hierarchy issued warnings, but to little avail.

**Purimshpil**

Here’s the scene of a Purim festival in the Prague ghetto in the 1740’s. There is a public parade:

- Led by the lord, the *Marshalk*, riding a horse and wearing a baroque, gentleman’s costume;
- Then came the *Nar*, the fool, on a horse, wearing a garish woman’s costume, bedecked with pastries, eating and bleating on a trumpet;
- Then the clown-hero—*Der Payatz*, astride a wine cask pulled by a gang of Yeshiva boys,
- A crazy Purim King,
- A Bacchus waving an enormous wine glass.
- Then came more and more clowns—
- A Harlequin called Pickle Herring; a half fool;
- Biblical figures of Abraham, Moses and Aaron;
- The various Jewish trade guilds;
- Finally outlandish clown-musicians, one a dwarf playing a fiddle on top of a flagpole.

Purimshpilers would burst into their neighbors’ homes, usually the wealthy, perhaps numbering 30, including musicians. These were the targets for joyous, food festivities, and money. The Homentashn are triangular poppyseed cakes filled with raisins and almonds. Whenever Haman’s name was mentioned, the noisemakers, the Graggers, were quickly activated. Unfortunately sometimes these public displays were also periodic occasions for anti-Semitic rumors by the non-Jews and even pogroms occurred. The Purimshpil continued well into the nineteenth century as the main theatrical event in Jewish life. It gave rise to the wandering musicians—*Klezmorim*—who breached the confines of playing at weddings to go from one town to
another town and perform street concerts. These actors were often the Badkhonim—the jesters at weddings and the Payatsim—the clowns skilled at rhyming — alternating Hebrew and Yiddish:

**Broderzinger**

They came from the town of Brod—located in Galicia in the relatively free Austro-Hungarian Empire. These bards and troubadours, who were influenced by the Enlightenment (Maskillim), also enlisted the Badkhonim and Payatzim in wandering the countryside from town to town playing at taverns (kretchmas) in rudimentary playlets with lyrical tunes. They wore costumes, and the leader was attired in a frock coat. Some of these presentations were sheer poetry:

**Night Watchman**

I'm a poor night watchman
I lie awake and think all night
That my lot is harder than any other man's
For me there is no rest
Every other creature God created,
Rests with his kind in their nest
But I lie on this cold ground, ill-fated
For God sends me no rest.

I carry loads all day, for I'm a porter.
All night I watch in the streets,
I carry heavy bricks. I carry mortar.
Whose body aches as mine does, and whose feet?
I would only thank God and bless Him
If I could only rest and ease my weary bones
But whenever someone comes, before I pass him
I must not fail to call out, Halt Who Goes?

Sleep, sweet sleep, your dearest brother,
You strengthen people with your art
If I could rest my limbs like any other
I'd have fresh energy to start
Another night of wakefulness and cold,
You'd give me life. But I must go again
To watch the streets. For bread, my life is sold,
Again you've flown away—Sleep, from My pain.

**Change in Jewish Population**

Together with the development of Yiddish as a recognized language of the East European Jews, was an important change in the character of the population. By the end of the 19th century there were over 500,000 Jewish artisans, 100,000 day laborers and at least 50,000 Jewish factory workers. This was despite the enormous emigration to America. They formed unions, embraced socialist ideology of the Labor Zionist and Bundist varieties. The ordinary worker was disdained by the aristocratic rabbinic Judaism; by the snobbish upper class Haskala Enlightenment; by regular Zionism which was bourgeois and philanthropic. Yiddishist school systems were organized by the Jewish Workers Bund and some Labor Zionist elements—explicitly secular, but embodying traditional values such as social justice.

**Avrom Goidfaden: (1840-1908)**

*Founder of the Modern Yiddish Theater*

It was in this setting that 36 year-old Goldfaden began his theatrical career in Jassy, Romania in 1876. He wrote the first professional plays, music and all, and produced them. He was a folksinger, folk poet, Maskiel trouper, artist, dreamer, intellectual hustler, scrapper, and con man. He succeeded the Broderzinger and corresponded with Sholem Aleichem and Peretz in hoping through drama to elevate the status of Yiddish. His plays were not profound, but touching stirringly lyrical, and comical.

In his play *Shulamis*, the heroine is left with her new-born child and faithfully awaiting her husband's return which occurs after many years of loneliness. Here is his most popular song: *Rozhinkes mit Mandlen*

In dem beys-hamikdosh, in a vinki kheyder
Zitst di almone, bas tzion aleyn,
Ir ben-yokhidl, yidele, vigt zi k'seyder,
un zingt im tzu shlofn a lidele sheyn:
"Unter yideles vigele
Shteyt a klor
Dos tzigele iz geforn handlen
Dos vet zayn dayn beruf;
Rozhinkes mit mandlen
Shlof-zhe, yidele shlof!

Goldfaden took the audience at its level—a song, some slapstick, a quarrel, a kiss, a jig—and elevated it to a sense of responsibility. Some themes: *Bobe mitn Eynikl*—marriage for prestige gives way to granddaughter marrying for love; *Shmenadrik* and *Tsvey Kunilemls*—forced marriages in Khasidik families; *Koldunye*, the witch aimed against witchcraft; a wicked stepmother causes the stepchild Mirele to leave home. Mirele meets up with Hotsmakh, a merry wandering peddler who foils the plan; Interspersed were songs of with everyday characters—a butcher, a woman selling latkes, buyers—singing, dancing and declaiming.

Goidfaden recruited people who became legendary actors both in Europe and America—including Jacob P. Adler, the dramatic tragedian; Sigmund Mogulescu, the comedian; David Kessler the most versatile; and Kenni Liptzen, the exciting tragedienne. But Goldfaden found himself in murderous competition with proponents of Shund (trash theater) who pirated his plots and songs and catered to the lowest popular taste. When Goldfaden came to America he found that his plays had...
preceded him and he became old hat to the theater audiences.

**Theater in America**

Initially it was based on the needs of the semi-literate working-class families, for their life was Bread and Theater. After hours of dreary sweatshop labor Jewish masses flocked to the Shund presentations with varied and extensive repertory that was designed to titillate audiences and based upon superficial changes in plot. House lights were on all the time, and people would feel free to converse, eat, and identify with what went on by shouting at the actors. The Star System soon prevailed where theaters were owned and managed by the superstars. Thus Thomashevsky Kessler, Adler, and Liptzen, had their own theaters, competed with each other for casts and developed followings of fanatic patrioten. The many societies based on the towns and cities of European origin—the Landsmanshaften—depended on additional income from their tickets to finance sick and death benefits. These organizations in addition to the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring branches bought discounted blocks of tickets.

**The Theaters**

The Yiddish playhouses were originally places for simple English dramas on the Bowery and then moved to over a dozen theaters on Second Avenue. The casts dwelt on types: the prima donna, the flirtatious soubrette, a lover, comic, villain, old men and women character roles. It took some time to overcome the Orthodox prejudice against women acting. Another barrier that finally was breached was the use of Yiddish for low characters and Daytshmerish (Germanism) for noble and prestigious types.

**Goldfaden’s Contribution**

Boris Thomashevsky gave a tribute to Goldfaden in the final and impeccuous stage of Goldfaden’s life: "Goldfaden made us comedians, tragedians, playwrights, prima donnas and soubrettes. If not for him we’d be plain and simple Jews—cantors, choir singers, wedding jugglers, peddlers, and garment workers."

**Jacob Gordin (1853-1909)**

Gordin was a revolutionary intellectual. He came to the U.S. in 1891 at the age of 38 with his 8 children. He wrote 35 plays and sought to elevate Yiddish drama with a purer language, serious topics, and with the dramatist in command. He was hailed by Ab Cahan, the editor of the Yiddish Daily Forverts, as a welcome change from the popular Shund Theater. Gordin wrote about revolutionists imprisoned in Siberia, took themes from Shakespeare, Gogol, Chekhov, and Ibsen and transmuted the plots into Yiddish life. The Yiddish King Lear has an old, wealthy Jew face the ingratitude of his daughters; Got Mensh un Taygel reworks the Faust story with a poor weaver buying a winning lottery ticket from the Devil, becomes a rich exploiting boss in his factory, and then hangs himself in remorse. His most famous play, a kind of Yiddish Queen Lear, entitled Mirele Efros starred Esther Kaminska and later her daughter, Ida. It had the will of a matriarch standing up to an avaricious daughter-in-law and her weak son. The famous diary of the self-made Glückl of Hamlin dating back to the 17th century may have been a model for Gordin. I have my own memory that play put on by Polish Yiddish refugees in WW II Shanghai when I was in the navy. Gordin lost favor by obliterating the Jewish tradition and having actors orate and pontificate from the stage. But the cast ad libbed and he himself made some artistic compromises to feed his family.

The principal actors; Adler, Thomashevsky, Kessler, Moguiescu and Kenni Liptzen swung between their yearning for a purer Yiddish theater and succumbing to shund to make the theater business a going concern. Even the Hebrew Actors Union that antedated Actors Equity, became a job trust in deference to the star theater owners and their casts. Through auditions they prevented such coming stars from being admitted as Maurice Schwartz, Jennie Goldstein and Peyshak Burstein. Even Herman Yablokoff, known theatrically as Der Payatz, was initially rejected but later became the head of the Hebrew Actors Union.

Actors, critics, and producers of the English stage paid profound respect to the Yiddish actors and actresses. Eminent critic, Stark Young, found in Yiddish acting "expressiveness of hands and eyes and shoulders—tremendous and inexhaustible vitality. It had the realism of intense feeling and a deep respect for that feeling. Its best efforts come from a compulsive rendering of that intensity; and the beauty of these effects is a spiritual beauty, almost without appeal to the eye."

Gilbert Seldes, Jed Harris, and John Barrymore expressed similar sentiments.

**Toward a Yiddish Art Theater**

Beyond. Jacob Gordin, there were outstanding literary figures who enriched the quality of Yiddish drama and entered into a race between Yiddish survival in a less and less compact Yiddish-speaking population and its cultural expression. The grandfather of Yiddish literature, Mendele Moykher Sforim; the father, Yitzhok Leyb Peretz; and the grandson, Sholem Aleichem had their plays performed on the Yiddish stage. Mendele wrote of the Meat Tax and Military Conscription.
Later a movie starred David Opatoshu in *Fisht der Krummer* that featured the love of a blind girl for a crippled young man. Peretz wrote more directly for the theater:

- **Shvester** is about 3 young women; a widow with starving children, one who is seduced and made pregnant, and a third whose boyfriend was stolen by the middle sister.
- **Frimorgen** pictures poverty and despair in a slum basement.
- **Kvores-Nakht** deals with an abused wife crying on her mother’s grave,
- **Di Goldene Keyt** concerns a rabbi who wants to preserve the very essence of Jewish continuity through the creative device of an eternal shabes,
- **Bay Nakht Afn Altn Mark** employs symbolism in the interaction among the ghosts of the past. They include; a poet, a streetwalker, and a water-carrier.

**Sholem Aleichem (1859-1916)**

Among Sholem Aleichem’s one-act plays was *Mentshn* set in a wealthy Jewish household with the servants being abused. In my college days I worked as a waiter in Rosenblatt’s Hotel in the Borsht Circuit. The owner, Lebke Rosenblatt was a Yiddishist who staged a play in Yiddish. Since I knew Yiddish from my Arbeter Ring Shul days, I acted in *Mentshn*. The word *mentsh* has 3 meanings—a person, an outstanding human being, a servant. In this play the head of the household castigated his children for their nefarious acts toward the servants. Sholem Aleichem’s punch line was, "Mentshn zaynen oykh mentshn" (Servants are also people).

Then there is the often-produced *Groyse Gevins*. This is a happy play of a simple tailor whose lifestyle changes when he won a 200,000-ruble jackpot. Still another is *Shver tsu Zayn a Yid* where two students, a Russian Christian and a Jew trade places for a year. *Fiddler on the Roof*, the successful musical, is derived from *Tevye the Dairyman*.

**Sholem Asch (1880-1957)**

His reputation, outside Yiddish Theater, was as a novelist.
- **On the Sanctification of the Name** is about martyrdom in a Yiddish stage
- **Kiddush Hashem** in a 17th century Cossack pogrom.
- **Motke Ganef** about the underworld.
- **Uncle Moses** dealt with love and money in the Lower East Side garment trade.
- **G-t Fun Nekome** (G-d of Vengeance) was notorious —dealing with a Jew who owns a whorehouse, is married to a former prostitute, and their daughter who defies the father’s effort to save her when she is involved with a lesbian prostitutes.

**David Pinski (1872-1959)**

The 1903 Kishenev pogrom caused him to write the *Family Tzvi* about a bourgeois family awaiting a pogrom with the patriarchal grandfather confronting his three grandsons—a Zionist, a Bundist, an assimilationist. His *Yankl der Schmidt* concerns a virile blacksmith who wants his neighbor’s wife as well as his own. One of his plays was translated into English and produced by the Theater Guild—*The Treasure* about a town getting wild with greed about a treasure supposedly hidden in a cemetery.

**H. Leivick (1888-1962)**

Maurice Schwartz staged three of his plays dealing with the clothing business on the East Side—*Shmattes, Shop* and *Bankrupt*. His *Der Goylem* is set in 17th century Prague where a rabbi fashions a mechanical man out of clay to defend the Jews against a blood libel. The Golem then turns to the rabbi’s daughter, at which point the rabbi destroys the Golem to a heap of clay.

**Ossip Dymov (1878-1959)**

*Yoshke Musikant* (adapted by Joseph Buloff) was produced by the Folksbiene Yiddish Theater. A fiddler loves a servant girl and wins a fortune in a lottery. He turns the money over to a rival wastrel (a spendthrift) whothen—marries the servant girl. Yoshke commits suicide over his broken heart. *Bronx Express* appeared on Broadway in English.

**Peretz Hirshbein (1881-1949)**

He wrote of rural Lithuanian Jewish life. In *Grine Felder* a Jewish farmer hires Levi Yitzkhok to tutor his sons. The daughter Tsine tries to prevent him from taking a job with a nearby farmer and wins Levi’s hand. Other plays include—*Der Shmidt’s Tekhter* and *The Pustie Kretshme*.

**Anski (1863-1920)**

Anski’s *Der Dybbuk* was one of the most popular Yiddish plays, put on also in English and Hebrew. It deals with exorcism of a spirit in the bride’s betrothed who dies and afflicts the bride to a rich suitor.

**Maurice Schwartz (1890-1960)**

After moving from Irving Place to the original Madison Square Garden, Schwartz amassed funds to
build his own theater on Second Avenue and 12th Street. Its greatest successes included J.J. Singer’s Yoshe Kalb. The actresses were Bina Abramovitch, Jennie Goldstein, Celia Adler and Berta Gersten. The actors were Jacob Ben-Ami, Lazar Freed, Maurice Schwartz, Muni Weisenfreund (Paul Muni), David Opatashu, and Joseph Buloff.

The Vilne Troupe

This company was made famous by the avante-garde production of the Dybbuk in Vilne (Yerushelayim di Lite). Led by Leyb Kadison, his (daughter, Luba and her husband Joseph Buloff, his company achieved world-wide recognition. It arrived in New York’s competitive theater in the late 20’s and was pulled in many directions by rival companies. After Muni Weisenfreund left Schwartz’s Yiddish Art Theater, Buloff took his place acting in such classics as Three Cities by Sholem Asch, J.J. Singer’s Yoshe Kalb and The Brothers Ashkenazi. Buloff’s ability as an actor resulted in his joining the English stage where he appeared as the Greek landlord in My Sister Eileen, the peddler in Oklahoma, and in Arthur Miller’s The Price. He also acted in a Yiddish version of Miller’s Death of a Salesman. He held one man shows with readings from Chekhov and delightful humorous pieces by Lutsky (A Piece of Paper Driven by the Wind, and A Pot of Bubbling Soup).

Yiddish Comedy

Yiddish comedy was always an important phase, of Yiddish theater, but some of it descended to Shund. Ludwig Satz, Aaron Lebedeff, and Peysakh Burstein were outstanding followers after Sigmund Mogulescu in their ability to use mime—a variety of vocal expression, facial plasticity and body language to caricature a character. Last in this male line was Menashe Skulnik—the perfect player of Shlemil and Shmendrik.

The diminutive Molly Picon stands out all by herself, in her ability to sing, dance, turn cartwheels, and sparkle as a gymnast. All of the comedians were capable of acting more serious roles if called upon.

ARTEF

ARTEF was the artisan politicalization of Yiddish theater. It is the acronym for a group tied to the Jewish sector of the American Communist Party. Existing in the glow of the Moscow Art Theater of Stanislavsky and the great Yiddish actor-producer Shlomo Mikhoels (later murdered by Stalin along with Soviet Yiddish writers) ARTEF drew a following under the direction of Benno Schneider. The Yiddish plays had expressionistic staging and adapted some standard Yiddish plays with a party-line twist. Many Broadway actors came to ARTEF performances. David Opatashu got his start there and appeared in movies and on Broadway. Jules Dassin who was associated later with the great Greek actress Merlina Mercuri also was a product of ARTEF.

Music & Dance

Much of the music for Second Avenue came from the pens of Joseph Rumshinsky, Abraham Ellstein, Alexander Olshanetsky and Sholem Secunda. Secunda composed Bay Mir Bistu Sheyni and in the depression years sold it for 15 dollars! Many plays had choreographed dance developed by Binyumin Zemach, Felix Fybush, & Pearl Lang.

Yiddish Theater Today

Despite growing numbers of Viniklen, Yiddish courses at universities, at the Workmen’s Circle, and well-attended outdoors Yiddish festivals, the Yiddish theater leads a tenuous existence. The Folksbiene, founded in 1915 as a branch of the Workmen’s Circle with amateur actors and actresses, continues to carry on. Once housed in the auditorium of the Forward Building on East Broadway, it moved to the Central Synagogue on East 55th Street. Since the fire there, it has had two seasons on West 55th Street, starring Yiddish actresses Mina Bern and Shifre Lehrer.

The 2002 season of the Folksbiene opened with Yentl, a play based on a story of I. Bashevis Singer. It stars Eleanor Reissa with excellent support of the veteran actress Minna Bern. It is hoped that the Folksbiene, the Forward, and the Workmen’s Circle will locate in a setting for all three kindred organizations. The Foiksbiene has a program for youngsters, Kids and Yiddish. There are staged readings by veteran Yiddish actors and actresses in classic Yiddish plays.

I end with a dream and hope for the future—Zukunft. The Folksbiene must dare to flourish by incorporating:
• A Chorus and Chorale;
• A Dance program associated with Pearl Lang;
• A troupe appearing in urban centers across the U.S., even in Central and South America;
• A contest for new plays in Yiddish;
• A dramatic training program for new Yiddish performers;
• A Klezmer program.
Lovers of Yiddish and Yiddish culture will help make this dream and hope a reality.

Other ethnic groups have successful theaters — Repertorio Espagnol and The Irish Repertory Theater are but two examples. Yiddish has survived many
obituaries and the Nobel Laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer predicted that it will continue. As for the Yiddish theater as an expression of Yiddish culture, it is too important a part of historic Jewishness to disappear into nostalgic oblivion.

**Important Sources**

**Books**


Great Songs of the Yiddish Theater, Norman H. Warebud, Quadrangle, 1975

On Stage, Off Stage: Memories of a Lifetime in the Yiddish Theater, Luba Kadison and Joseph Buloff, Harvard University Library, 1994


The World of Our Fathers, Chapter 14, Irving Howe, Harcourt, Brace, Joyvanovich, 1976

The Downtown Jews, Chapters 12 and 13, Ronald Sanders, Harper and Row, 1969
The 8th IAYC Conference: in Baltimore, Is Now History

And what a conference it was!

Meeting again old friends who live thousands of miles away, and making new ones, is one of the highlights for your editor. Of all the conferences this one produced the most new friendships—they keep getting better and better. This is the place for Yiddish club leaders, teachers, translators, authors and klezmer group leaders to make contacts.

President Dr. Harold Black announced that the next Conference (IAYC IX—we shall be half way to chai) will be in Minneapolis, and that the coordinators will be Mike and Roz Baker—Mr. & Mrs. Yiddish of Minneapolis. The Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul are by the headwaters of the Mighty Mississippi River and loaded with wonderful sightseeing. Future issues of Der Bay will report on the great plans for this next International Association of Yiddish Clubs Conference (IAYC).

Elections of the IAYC Board were held. All Board members were re-elected. New trustees are Roz Baker (forzitser of the Minneapolis JCC Yiddish Vinkl) and Susannah Juni (very active in Yungtruf). Then the Board elected the new officers.

- President: Dr. Harold Black, Bethesda, MD
- Vice-Pres.: Paul Melrood, Milwaukee, WI
- Secretary: Barbara Goldstein, Houston, TX
- Treasurer: Seymour Graiver, Bayside, NY

IAYC Trustees elected are:

- Oscar Antel: Winnipeg, MB Canada
- Mike/Roz Baker, Minneapolis, MN
- Dr. Allan Blair: Columbus, OH
- Cookie Blattman: Tamarac, FL
- Morrie Feller: Phoenix, AZ
- Prof. Rafoyel Finkel: Lexington, KY
- Troim Handler: Monroe Township, NJ
- Susannah Juni: New York, NY
- Fishl Kutner: San Mateo, CA
- Bess Shockett: North York, ON, Canada
- Mitch Smolkin: Toronto, ON Canada
- Fanny Yokor: New Orleans, LA

Conference Coordinator, Sylvia Schildt, successfully launched her new book Remembering Brownsville. It is the most recent book published by the IAYC. Each member club is receiving a copy.

Attendees Came From:

- Canada: Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg
- Europe: Spain
- New England: CT, ME, MA
- Mid-Atlantic: D.C. MD, NJ, NY, PA
- South: FL, GA, LA, NC, SC, VA, WV
- Midwest: IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI
- Far West: AZ, CA, CO, WA

The Lectures and workshops were definitely on a high par. The number of Yiddish and Yiddish/English lectures were the highest of all conferences. Many new presenters were uses and they must be invited again.

The highlight was the amount and caliber of the evening performances. It went into the wee hours of the morning. Our own talent filled the Friday evening program. Mitch Smolkin is a highly talented performer and emceed. Zalmen Mlotek reviews, Yale Strom, and the magnificent voice of Cantor Avi Albrecht highlighted stirring performances by the Baltimore Klezmer Orchestra, Charm City Klezmer, Lori Cahan-Simon Trio, Fish Street Klezmer, The Trio performing Mayn Oytser and Cantor Allan Berman.
How Fishl Won the Honorary Nar Award
By Philip "Fishl" Kutner

A long time ago, in the City of Warsaw, in Poland, there was an Arbeter Ring conference—the theme of which, was, How to Increase Membership. It seems that all the major cities in Poland like Warsaw, Lodz, and Bialystok had active Branches, but the outlying dorf (village) had no Branches.

It was decided to place all the money and "know how" on a single test case dorf (village). They wanted to test an example on a test case which could be written-up and used as a model for organizers to use in Branch development. The site chosen was Chelm.

A messenger was immediately dispatched to the Mayor of Chelm notifying him of the plan and the arrival in a month of a distinguished group of representatives consisting of the National Executive Director, the Director of Member Benefits, and the Director of Culture and Education.

Upon receiving the message the Mayor immediately became upset. How was he to prepare for this auspicious occasion? He hurriedly called an emergency meeting The City Council, The Chief Rabbi, The Superintendent of Schools, The Banker, and The Town's Chief Gossiper.

After stuttering through reading the message, the Mayor sat down and began to wring his hands. "Oh what can we do to be sure all goes well?"

The Chief Rabbi wisely said, "Let's all form a Branch before they come and then everyone will be a member and there will be no problem".

"Excellent idea" said the Banker "We can even have elections and have a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Financial Secretary, and ten Trustees".

"What a wonderful idea" said the Superintendent of Schools, "We'll need an installation of officers."

"Oh, we can have it ready when the Workmen's Circle National Executive Director, the Director of Member Benefits, and the Director of Culture and Education come" chirped the Town's Chief Gossiper.

"Oy" said the Mayor. "How can we have an installation without our honoring someone? We must have an honoree."

"Farvos nisht, why not give an award to the organizer with the best idea?" asked a Councilman.

A shout arose from all in great excitement. It was then and there decided that the First Annual Honorary Nar Award would be announced at the installation in a month in the presence of the National Workmen's Circle dignitaries.

"But to whom shall we present the award?" was the question raised by another Councilman.

"Your right" replied the Mayor, "and I thought we had the problem all solved. Wait, I have it. Let's have a contest".

Kluger Veysman, the Supt. of Schools said, "Let's call the Award the Oscar, Emmy, or Tony".

"No" chirped up Ruvn Raykhman, the banker, "All those names are used in di goldine medine. Let's call it the Nar Award after our shtot nar (town fool)."

There was an instantaneous roar of agreement and the shnaps was passed around. They danced clumsily in circles all night long to celebrate the solution to their problem. However, the next morning when the Mayor reported to his wife the goings on of the previous night she asked him, "But, who will receive the Gimpel Award?"

Quickly the Mayor reconvened The City Council, The Chief Rabbi, The Superintendent of Schools, The Banker, and The Chief Gossiper. When he explained the let down he had after his wife's question, the entire council room was set in deep gloom.

"I told everyone of that all the problems were solved" blurted The Town Gossiper in tears, "No one will believe me any more. What am I to do?"

"Ah, hah" blurted out Kluger Veysman, The Superintendent of Schools, "You didn't appoint me as The Superintendent of Schools for no reason. Let's give the award to Gimpel the town water carrier. After all he carries water from the river to the school at the top of the mountain, and when it's winter the leaking pail leaves a stream of freezing water. It gets so bad that little children can't go to school."

"But why did we put the school on top of the mountain" asked Gerta Geretner, the town Gossiper."

Chief Rabbi, Frumer Rov, quickly replied with this explanation. "I believe that we need to teach Family Values, and those are Lofty Ideas. The higher up we are, the closer we are to God and the loftier the ideas."

"No, Gimpel shouldn't get the Award," stated Ruvn Raykhman, the banker, "It should go to Beryl Blostfunzikh, the Town Crier. It's his idea to build a windmill at the top of the mountain to pump water."

"Yo, I mean yes, and when there was no wind, he had all the men blowing out their lungs and it still did no good. No, he doesn't deserve the Nar Award."

"You didn't elect me Mayor for no reason. I have the right person for the right reason," gleefully said Meyer the Mayor. "There is no doubt that the First Annual Nar Award should go to Fishl the Organizer."

"What is his idea to warrant this prized Award?" came the cry from everyone in the Council Chambers.

Meyer the Mayor arose, and he smugly replied, "He organized the pregnant women in a Labor Union. All the women get pregnant sooner or later and they all go into labor. Naturally they'd all want to join a labor movement. When those Leaders come, we'll have everyone belonging to The Arbeter Ring, and we'll have the nominee for the First Nar Award."

Everyone danced and drank all night. Even the Mayor's wife, Vaybele, was pleased the next morning.
JOSEPH GRINSSPAN (1929-2002)

Joseph Grinspan was born on April 13, 1929 in Lodz, Poland, a textile city. For many generations his family worked in textiles. When World War II broke out, the family; father, Mother and a brother left for Russia. It was hard work, but they were safe. A sister was born in Russia during those hard years.

After the War the family moved to France. Joseph played in a Yiddish theater there. In April 1949 they moved to Israel. Joseph worked in the textile industry as an engineer, and he met his wife Varda Hanuka, a Sephardic from Turkey. He taught her Yiddish. She was his first student and became quite adept at it.

Joseph had a great love for Yiddish teaching and also his family trade—textiles. He was a textile instructor at the ORT school in Israel. In January 1963, Joseph, Varda and their infant daughter Esther, moved to the United States. He was asked to teach Yiddish at The Workmen Circle’s Camp Hemshekh in New York State.

Later the family moved to Boston. There he was employed by the Workmen’s Circle in Brookline, Massachusetts as the principal of the Yiddish Shule. The family stayed in Boston for five years, and Joseph was able to finish his education at Northeastern University.

Joseph wanted to move to NJ to be close to his parents. In Paterson he procured a position in textile upholstery manufacturing as Director of Systems and Analysis. During the afternoons Joseph taught Yiddish at the Bergenfield Workmen’s Circle Shule.

While living in Fair Lawn NJ, he studied Gemorra with Rabbi Yudin at Congregation Shomrei Torah. Joseph taught at the Fort Lee Jewish Center, the Fair Lawn Jewish Center, Teaneck Jewish Center and also tutored at home Yiddish, Hebrew, Judaism and the Torah. His teaching of Yiddish was to both adults and children. It is interesting to note that Joseph gave his grandchildren Gershale and Adinale Yiddish lessons every Friday afternoon.

He was a dedicated Jewish educator (iber gegebener dertsier). Joseph passed away Shabes afternoon, October 26, 2002.

Editor’s note: Joseph & Varda attended the very first IAYC Conference at the University of Maryland where we all remember him with his constant smile, yarmulke and ready to engage anyone with the merit of the religious portion of Yiddish knowledge.

His wife Varda and he also attended the IAYC Conferences in Toronto, Miami and the Los Angeles conference at UCLA. Joseph will be missed!

You Must Read Manya Bertram ‘s Letter

This is about my Yiddish Pen Pal, Karen McKinney, who lives in Apache Junction, Arizona. I have not met Karen face to face, but through your Yiddish Pen Pal program we became friends and I want to share with you some of my reasons for being so proud of her.

Karen and her husband Art have been married about 33 years. Fairly recently through a Temple in which they are active in Tempe, Arizona, Karen became more aware of her Jewishness and began to study every aspect of it. Inspired by her enthusiasm, Art became interested, as did Patrick Cutts the husband of Karen and Art's oldest daughter, Shirley. The two men studied Judaism and last May were officially converted in ceremonies welcoming them into the religion of our Fathers. You can imagine how joyful and proud Karen and Art must have been at that ceremony. She now awaits the Bat Mitzvah of the daughter of Shirley and Patrick next year.

In the meantime, because of her knowledge and love of Judaism, Karen went to Cincinnati to be Certified as an Outreach Fellow of the organization known as Jews by Choice, which will qualify her to work with persons of any faith, or for any reason, wishing to convert to Judaism.

I may have missed a few of the facts but I have embellished none, and I am as proud as punch of my Yiddish Pen Pal, who came to me via Der Bay. Karen tells me that there are long lines of people, single, married, Jewish, non-Jewish waiting to sign up for assistance from the Outreach Fellow of the Jews by Choice organization. Perhaps there are others in our midst who should be contacting their synagogue to find the Jews by Choice organization so they can help those joining the rush.

A Son’s Appeal

I am the son of Yiddish writer Chaim Barkan. He had nine books published in Yiddish, in varied fields. Our family possessed all but one book. They were all forwarded to the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Mass. for their digitization process.

The novel, Fisher, was published in the 1930’s or 1940’s. It has a green, hard cover and has about 175 pages. This book has eluded us, and I would like to complete the job of perpetuating his works.

If any of Der Bay’s readers has knowledge of a copy or happens to own one, please contact me. Along with expenses of course, a matone, and a heartfelt thanks included, all will be forthcoming.

My fax as well as phone number is: 818-999-0433. E-mail ArchieFromCA@webTV.net or write me at: Archie Barkan, 22140 Victory Blvd. #B-118 Woodland Hills, CA 91367
Bulgaria is slightly smaller in area than the State of New York. It borders on the Black Sea in the East and by Greece, Turkey and Romania on the west.

The earliest traces of Jewish settlement go back to the XIII century when some Jews immigrated from Italy. The land was a former Roman colony and known as Thrace. During the XIV century the western cultural influence intensified and the Jews became active participants—many held important government positions. Incursions by militant Turks became frequent and they occupied important cities.

Due to the persecution in Germany, Jews from the city of Landsberg arrived and later another from the Southern France region of Provence. At the end of the XV century there was a large influx of Jews from Spain and Portugal after the Spanish Inquisition.

In the early XVI century the land became part of the Ottoman Empire. The Jewish population is now about 100,000. The Chief Rabbi, Jonah of Tsarigrad, was famous throughout Europe. Jews resided here since 1344. The Sofia Central Synagogue is the object of admiration by all Jewish communities in Europe.

During the Renaissance book printing evolved rapidly. In Italy, it became an art greatly exercised by Jews. In 1568 Pope Pius V banished the Jews from Italy and some came to Bulgaria where they started a thriving printing business of religious books.

A setback occurred during the rule of sultans Suleman II and Murad III. Jews were persecuted and had to wear identifying clothing. This ended with the victory over the Turkish army by the Russian Tsar Alexander III in 1878 and the liberation from the Ottoman Empire. The Jews then gained equal rights.

The Jewish population of Bulgaria is 80,000. Over 25% live in the capital Sofia, a city of 1.5 million. The sprawling metropolis is very clean and orderly with many wide, tree-lined streets reminiscent of other Western European cities. The Boulevard named after King Boris III leads to the center of the city. It is still paved with cobble stones and lined with rose bushes on either side. The city center contains within a walking distance the shrines of the world’s 4 foremost religions: a Catholic Cathedral, a Moslem Mosque, a Russian Orthodox Sobor and the Central Jewish Synagogue which is being renovated. It is an imposing building in Mauretanian style (actually Arabic), with colored limestone on the exterior, slim oriental columns and arches, and intricate geometrical decorative designs in polychrome in the main auditorium. The restoration began two years ago thanks to a donation of $50,000 by a Mexican Jew of Bulgarian origin and are scheduled to be completed in two more years. Donations from local sources and visiting tourists are also helpful in bringing back the vivid colors of the past splendor.

The Synagogue seats 1200 persons, including the gallery which according to orthodox custom is reserved for women, but its use was abandoned for safety reasons. The congregation numbers 2000—mainly Sephardic. Many are descendents of those who came 1000-1200 CE mainly from Toledo after their expulsion from Spain. One of them is David Asher who is updating me on the present situation. The ethnic mix of the Jews is a result of immigration from Yugoslavia, Turkey, Greece and Romania. The majority is Sephardic but there are 2000 to 3000 Ashkenazim. Besides the main Synagogue there are ten other small places of worship. The Lubavitch are making inroads. There is no reform movement.

Sabbath Services draw 30 to 40, and the High Holidays often see crowds of up to 500. The low turnout is ascribed to the past period of socialist culture. There are many intermarriages, 6000-7000. Jews who want to marry within their faith usually travel to Israel where many Bulgarian Jews live.

Bulgarian Jews are highly respected in Israel. Many visit their old homeland and have a strong tie to the Bulgarian culture and their old friends sharing memories and enjoying old, cherished tunes.

In the historical museum are many religious artifacts and memorabilia from World War II. The director, Yosif Hilel, was a colonel in the Bulgarian army and a partisan during German occupation. I asked him the reason for the patriotism of the Jews in Bulgaria unlike other countries. He credits it to the fact that there was little anti-semitism and none supported by the government. As an example he notes the events of February 1943 when the Nazis (on the initiative of Adolf Eichman) vied for the cooperation of King Boris III to annihilate the Jews. The king, wishing to preserve the independence of the country agreed. When the Jews were rounded up for transport to extermination camps. The outrage of the general population at this treatment of their fellow citizens made the king reconsider and deny cooperation with the Germans. So were 50,000 Bulgarian Jews saved from this final fate.

After WW II the Jewish population grew to over 100,000 due to immigration from other European countries. The younger generation is mainly in the professions. The number in government services is small compared with the socialist period. The central market, in the heart of Sofia, was renovated and is a hub of activity. It reminds one of Montreal’s Faubourg on St. Catherine St. with its many shops and restaurants.

There are schools in which Hebrew is taught. They are popular because of high standards. Many elderly are destitute and exist from the support of American Joint and other Jewish organizations.
Broderzinger

They came from the town of Brod—located in Galicia in the relatively free Austro-Hungarian Empire. These bards and troubadours, who were influenced by the Enlightenment (Maskillim), enlisted the Badkhonim and Payatzim in wandering the countryside from town to town playing at taverns (kretchmas) in rudimentary playlets with lyrical tunes. They wore costumes, and the leader was attired in a frock coat.

Night Watchman

I'm a poor night watchman
I lie awake and think all night
That my lot is harder than any other man's
For me there is no night
Every other creature God created,
Rests with his kind in their nest
But I lie on this cold ground, ill-fated
For God sends me no rest.

I carry loads all day, for I'm a porter.
All night I watch in the streets,
I carry heavy bricks. I carry mortar.
Whose body aches as mine does, and whose feet?
I would only thank God and bless Him
If I could only rest and ease my weary bones
But whenever someone comes, before I pass him
I must not fail to call out, Halt Who Goes?

Sleep, sweet sleep, your dearest brother,
You strengthen people with your art
If I could rest my limbs like any other
I'd have fresh energy to start
Another night of wakefulness and cold,
You'd give me life. But I must go again
To watch the streets. For bread, my life is sold,
Again you've flown away—Sleep, from My pain.

Change in Jewish Population

Together with development of Yiddish as a recognized language of the East European Jews, was a change in the population. By the end of the 19th century there were over 500,000 Jewish artisans, 100,000 day-laborers and 50,000 factory workers. This was despite the emigration to America. They formed unions, embraced socialist ideology of the Labor Zionist and Bundist groups. Workers were disdained by aristocratic rabbinic Judaism; upper class Haskala Enlightenment; Zionism which was bourgeois and philanthropic. Yiddishist school systems were organized by the Jewish Workers Bund and some Labor Zionist—explicitly secular, but embodying traditional values.

Avrom Goldfaden: (1840-1908)
Founder of the Modern Yiddish Theater

It was in this setting that 36-year-old Goldfaden began his theatrical career in Jassy, Romania in 1876. He wrote the first professional plays, music and all, and produced them. He was a folksinger, folk poet, Maskiel trouper, artist, dreamer, intellectual hustler, scrapper, and con man. He succeeded the Broderzinger and corresponded with Sholem Aleichem and Peretz in hoping through drama to elevate the status of Yiddish. His plays were not profound, but touching stirringly lyrical, and comical.

In Shulamis, the heroine is left with her new-born child and faithfully awaiting her husband’s return which occurs after many years of utter loneliness. Here is Goldfaden’s most popular song: **Rozhinkes mit Mandlen**

In dem beys-hamikdosh, in a vinki kheyder
Zitst di almone, bas tzion aleyn,
Ir ben-yokhidl, yidele, vigt zi k'seyder,
un zingt im tzu shlofn a lidele sheyn:
"Unter yideles vigele
Shteyt a klor-vayse tzigele,
Dos tzigele iz geforn handlen
Dos vet zayn dayn beruf;
Rozhinkes mit mandlen
Shlof-zhe, yidele shlof!

Goldfaden took the audience at its level—a song, some slapstick, a quarrel, a kiss, a jig—and elevated it to a sense of responsibility. Some themes: **Bobe mitn Eynikl**—marriage for prestige gives way to granddaughter marrying for love; **Shmendrik** and **Tsey Kuniemls**—forced marriages in Khasidik families; **Koldunye**, the witch aimed against witchcraft; a wicked stepmother causes the stepchild Mirele to leave home. Mirele meets up with Hotsmakh, a merry wandering peddler who foils the plan; Interspersed were songs of with everyday characters—a butcher, a woman selling latkes, buyers—singing, dancing and declaiming.

Goldfaden recruited people who became legendary actors—including Jacob P. Adler, the dramatic tragedian; Sigmund Mogulescu, the comedian; David Kessler the most versatile; and Kenni Liptzen, the exciting tragedienne. But Goldfaden found himself in murderous competition with proponents of **Shund** (trash theater) who pirated his plots and songs and catered to the lowest popular taste. When Goldfaden came to America he found that his plays had preceded him and he became old hat to the theater audiences.
A Success Story
Dr. Florence Bickell—bikelljlcc@aol.com

Joan Rudd, Jewish Culture Specialist at the Seattle Jewish Community Center is the recipient of a grant to develop curriculum and to TEACH Yiddish to pre-school children. Ten children between the age of 2 and 5 will meet twice weekly. Parents and community groups will be involved in multi-generational programs.

Those of Sephardic background are invited to share their Judaic language of Ladino.

This Pilot Program is seen as a precursor to Shule, Day School, JCC classes etc. The Workmen's Circle will oversee the program.

Thank you, Fishl. Joan’s line of communication with the Judaic Language Center for Children was through Murray Meld, Chair of the Seattle Yiddish Group who gave her a copy of Der Bay. Thanks Murray.

Also thanks to Portia Rose of Los Angeles for her cogent support for the TEACHING of Yiddish to young children. I hope we can interest Day Schools to add the language to their curriculum.

Six million Jews were killed during the Holocaust. Let’s try to make sure that “they/we” don’t let their language die as well.

A Letter from Portia Rose

I am writing so that you can shep nakhes that your last issue of Der Bay created a shidakh, really pen-pals—between Brooklyn and Beverly Hills. I was extremely touched by Dr. Florence Bickell’s desire to fund a proposal to perpetuate both Ladino and Yiddish. I sent her the addresses of Rabbi Buscala and the Bureau of Jewish Education in L.A. I am enclosing her two letters. I sent her the names and addresses of the following people and why I feel they might help with her dreamz—Eric Gordon, Jacob Basner, Lilke Majzmer, Rabbi Pressman and Archie Barkan c/o Pierce College in the Valley.

As you know, I’ll sell my soul to perpetuate Yiddish! Mel and Yvonne know about our efforts. If you prefer to e-mail any words of wisdom to me via Mel, he’ll surely get it to me. You now know Der Bay serves a good purpose!

An Excellent Link
Alex Dafner: Pres. Kadimah

Di redaktzye fun Di Yunge Gvardie

Khoshever Redaktor fun Der Bay.

Zayt azoy gut un shtelt arayn undzer hoydeshlekhe oyssgabe Di Yunge Gvardie
an internets zshurnal far yugnt, tzvishn di yidishe farbindungen links, fun ayer kheshever oyssgabe.

A Tragic Victim
by Archie Barkan

For the past two and a half years I have been the facilitator of a Yiddish Reading Class at Santa Monica Emeritus College. We currently are completing the reading in the original of Sholem Aleykhem’s classic Motl Peyse dem Khazn’s.

At times the class resembles a kheyder of days gone by—as students; follow, make penciled notations, and take their turns reading. Some are more skilled than others, but all are very patient. The atmosphere and camaraderie in the classroom is simply a joy to experience—mishpokhe!...

We lost our best reader in the terrible tragedy at the Santa Monica Market on Wednesday afternoon, July 16, 2003 {An 86 year-old man plowed through a crowd and killed ten People}. Movsha Hoffman is gone!....

On Friday morning, when all the victims’ names and accompanying photos were made public, our class, on summer hiatus, was reunited in grief. The phone rang incessantly and tears along with reminiscence followed.

Here was a man who fled Stalin, lived simply through difficult times, and never lost an ounce of his effervescence and optimism. His perpetual smile and good nature led everyone to love him, and his bubbly, effusive greetings were something special. To help someone was pretty much his mantra.

A warm and wonderful person has left us, a true example of human decency. He will long be remembered. May that memory be for a blessing!....

Our TYN Contact from Crakow
Przemyslaw Piekarski piekar@vela.filg.uj.edu.pl

I teach Yiddish at the Lauder foundation. This year my friend Julia Makosz will join me, and we shall have three levels; beginners, intermediate and advanced.

During the festival this year Julia and I both had two groups—Polish medium and English. Together we had one hundred people every day—six days, from Sunday to Friday.

I teach at the Chair of Judaic Studies at Jagiellonian University with my friend and colleague—Dr. Magdalena Ruta. Each of us has around one hundred students.

This year we shall start an intensive course of Yiddish at the Chair of Intercultural Translation under the auspices of UNESCO—which is going to become (hopefully) the kernel of the future Krakow’s school of translation from Yiddish. In this program the students are graduate or undergraduate and pay tuition.

Ikh shik a grus tsu di khaveyrim ba der IAYC konferents.
January 2004 Will Mark Der Bay’s Bar Mitsve Issue

A Special Occasion

This is to let all of our readers know about a very special occasion, and to send in special articles. The January 2004 Issue will mark the completion of 13 consecutive years of publication with no delayed or missed issues. There have been several years with an extra issue—this year will be one of them.

While the special issue will be sent only to recent contributors, we continue the policy of no paid ads. Every recommendation and suggestion is based solely on its merits. Also, all listings of Yiddish club events and gigs are placed on the website and in hardcopy as space permits irrespective of contributions or not.

New on the website is the special search for Der Bay website. If you have a club, a band or are a teacher, translator, performer or presenter, you can find every listing on the site by inserting your name or the name of the group. By doing this you can check the accuracy and ask to have any needed changes. Most important is to check your e-mail address.

Der Bay continues to be the international clearinghouse for contacts and information on Yiddish clubs, Yiddish teachers, klezmer groups, Briv-Fraynd (Pen-Pals), performers, presenters, Yiddish Institutes and Conferences.

Oystsugn fun briv in der redaktsye (Letters to the Editor) is the most popular column followed by Der internatsyonaler kalendar. Each year there have been feature writers and many read like a Who’s Who in the World of Yiddish.

The date on the label shows when you last contributed. If it has been a year already, please help again.

A Yiddish Translator’s Nakhes

by Archie Barkan ArchiefromCA@webtvnet.

You can enter another connection success into your vast log of shidukhim! This one comes with an amazing series of fortuitous events—Jewish Geography at its very best!

It seems, a college professor in the San Francisco area, very interested in genealogy, and wanting to search out his widely dispersed mishpokhe, came across a pack of old letters and sepia picture postcards with faded Yiddish scrawl. He was referred to you, and you brought me into the picture as translator.

This gentleman was aware of mishpokhe in Kentucky, St. Louis, Odessa in the old country, etc. Little by little, as I pieced together a fact, a name, a location, in an infinite struggle with faded letters and odd sentence structure, with no punctuation marks and no such thing as a paragraph. Then results began to show.

One day he discovered relatives in nearby Daly City a stone’s throw from his home—and there he met up with an older relation, just over from Russia. When the happy hysteria died down, he found out that just at that moment, another cousin was en route from Australia for a visit and reunion.

A few weeks later I was notified that the reunion in Daly City, now quite sizeable, gave birth to cousins in Toledo, Ohio and Detroit. These couples did not know of one another, and they were actually 30 miles apart.

The story is ongoing. Everyone is now in contact with the one remaining family member in Odessa, and a huge total family reunion is in the works.

I have been kept apprised of the ongoing developments and koel a lot! And, Fishl, so should you....
Congratulations on an outstanding conference. I had a fabulous time! The quality of everything was fine. The hotel and the food were ok. Those don’t concern me much, and they were certainly sufficient in my view. The quality of the presentations was much more important to me. The ones I attended were first rate. I learned a lot and had a great time.

I would like to mention three presentations that were standouts in my view. These were not those of the well-known superstars like Zalmen Mlotek, from whom I expected a first rate experience and got it, or the others Iosef Vaisman and Sheva Zucker, whose presentations were excellent—as I would have expected. The featured programs both day and evening were for the most part all top quality. Rather, I wish to make special mention of three less well known, but who were fabulous, and whom I’d like to see a lot more of at future events.

**Lori Cahan-Simon:** I’ve enjoyed Lori Cahan-Simon’s earlier CD of Pesakh songs, but I was totally blown away by her presentations on Mikhail Gelbart. Lori’s “Salute” with two wonderful members of her band exceeded all expectations. Her scholarship, musicianship and enthusiastic participation in so many aspects of the conference made this conference one of the best Yiddish events I’ve ever attended.

**Martin Green:** Marty was such a quiet presence at first. At the Amateur Hour on Friday I got just a hint of his lovely neshome from the way he modestly but expertly accompanied those who needed a piano accompanist. His performance of his compositions was truly wonderful! I bought his CD immediately. I love the way he melds Yiddishkayt into country music in such a sweet and meaningful way. His translation of *On Foreign Soil* is remarkable as well—a wonderful teaching aid.

**Marcia Gruss Levinsohn:** If there is one thing I am taking home to actually USE, it is her materials! I dropped in because the other three programs didn’t interest me so much. I am interested in promoting programs for young children as a pathway to attracting young parents—the same young parents who send their kids to the day schools and religious schools, who sit on those boards, and who are the population that must be reached to bring a new generation in to Yiddish. For this reason Marcia’s activities have the most potential for bringing Yiddish to a younger population. They have another advantage. They can be replicated easily without using expensive performers. I hope to produce her *Three Bears* story here in Chicago. It could be done effectively and reasonably. I got more take home ideas from her workshop than from any other!

Thank you for a great program, and I’m looking forward to Minneapolis!

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**One of Our Tel Aviv Contacts**

Daniel Galay asafgl@012.net.il

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**A Letter from South Bend, Indiana**

I just found you on the Internet. How exciting to see that Yiddish is alive and well. My father, the founder in 1910, of the Workmen Circle (which is no more) in South Bend, Indiana wrote many articles for the Jewish Forward in Chicago. One of his stories won a prize and was published by the Forward. I have a copy of it and would love to see it in print. Would you be interested?

I speak and read Yiddish but very few people in South Bend do. My father was one of a large committee that went to a gathering after the war in Israel. Trying hard to see that the language should be Yiddish. He was so certain that Yiddish and all the Yiddish literature would be lost. He would be so happy to see that Yiddish is alive and growing. Love to hear from you. Mrs. Vodnoy (Elsye)

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**An Elderhostel Alternative**

by Meyer Zaremba greenehzuzineh@aol.com

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The course that I teach at Madison Senior Scholars is titled, *The Jewish Experience Through Humor and Song*. Actually, it goes beyond that. It is based upon the premise that we can learn a great deal about a society through its cultural elements. I don’t just sing songs and tell jokes. Everything is placed in context. In addition there is exposure to Yiddish literature, *A bisele geshikhte*, Yiddish/Jewish film. (I have shown *Tevye, Grine Felder, The Light Ahead, Momele*, etc.

Last summer we showed and discussed *The Chosen, Daniel* (Israeli), etc. This is my course, there are many others, as you will see from the material that will be sent. Thanks for the information about the Perlstein Center.
I was a guest speaker at the symposium at Oxford University. Below are two pieces of writing. One argues the case why it is imperative to translate Holocaust Memorial Books, originally written and published in Yiddish, into a major world language (my choice is English). The second is built around this theme, and the argument facilitated my ability to make the case to my audience.

The host was the Oxford Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies at Yarnton Manor. The OCHJS website is at: http://associnst.ox.uk/ochjs

The Issue

This symposium was organized because of the generally recognized fact that Yiddish, as a language, is in a serious decline that was accelerated by the calamity of the Holocaust. Of fundamental concern to those who hold Yiddish dear, is the threat that the language could disappear. This concern formed the subliminal agenda of the entire conference.

While those present are lovers of mame loshn, few are optimists (i.e. there is a viable future for the language as we know it today). Most of them did not turn away from the demographic and linguistic reality, that a viable population base does not exist—nor is it likely to be regenerated—that would embrace Yiddish as its language of daily living and discourse.

This concern would not have existed, were it not for the fact that Yiddish experienced a literary and cultural flowering in the 150 years, starting at the dawn of the 19th century, that propelled it into the ranks of those world languages, in which mankind’s most fundamental hopes and aspirations, are articulated in its highest form. A central issue that ran through this symposium, was how to make the Yiddish Canon vibrant and real for future generations.

Matters of Positioning

A basic problem undermined the thrust of this gathering: this was a place where academics were meeting to exchange views that were grounded in various scholarly pursuits. The fundamental problem of trying to conserve and nurture Yiddish is a labor-intensive, long-term commitment to developing a scholastic infrastructure that runs into a considerable amount of money and human resources. This group was not equipped to discuss this issue, nor capable of projecting a vision of what such an undertaking might look like. The symposium ended without an action plan. However, while we did not highly resolve anything, a community did come into being that didn’t exist before.

A terrible incubus lies across the body of World Jewry that dates back to the mid-19th century, when Yiddish and Hebrew contested for primacy as the national language of the Jewish people. That struggle, which split the Jewish community, created an implacable hostility by Zionists towards the language of the Diaspora. The price for the victory of Hebrew was to deal Yiddish a body blow that became mortal as a consequence of the Holocaust.

Now, sixty years after the Holocaust, Hebrew is the uncontested national language of the Jewish homeland. Considerations regarding Yiddish are treated gingerly by the Israeli educational and cultural establishment, and somewhat coolly. This is no small matter when it comes to marshalling and allocating resources at a global level. The challenge here is to change the point of view, so that the Yiddish Canon is viewed as a national treasure—worthy of nurturing and conservation—rather than the legacy of two millennia of a European Diaspora experience, best forgotten.

Where My Presentation Fit In

Yiddish Canon contains ‘Holocaust Literature’ written in Yiddish. ‘Holocaust Memorial Books’ (or Yizker Bikher) are a proper subset of the ‘Holocaust Literature.’ My case argued for conserving and nurturing this segment of the Canon, on the basis of the importance of their content for three reasons: There is important, and sometimes unique, history to be gleaned from these books—not available anywhere else. The eye-witness accounts of the Holocaust experience constitutes vital testimony for the posterity of all mankind. Few other sources so illuminate the way of life of the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe as these books do. Conservation implies translation into English. By making a text available in English, broader access will be afforded to all (Jewish and non-Jewish alike), whereas letting them sit in their original Yiddish form, consigns them to becoming esoteric reference material for a highly constricted universe of scholars.

Other Interesting Things

A paper was presented to illustrate the pitfalls of translating Yiddish by people who lack more than just linguistic training. A good Yiddish translator clearly needs cultural, religious and historical training to be effective. This underscores the long-term nature of developing a skill base. We heard of the destructive results that early Israeli state policy had on the viability of Yiddish.
I'm sending *Der Bay* this Khanike poem from Theodore Bikel. It is his translation of a Yiddish poem by Morris Rosenfeld. Thanks for all of your help in getting the word out of my interest to support the teaching of Yiddish to children.

In anticipation of the upcoming *yontev, khanike*, here is the Morris Rosenfeld poem and my translation.

**In English**

*i* **Oy ir kleyne likhtelekh**  
by Morris Rosenfeld

Translated & Adapted  
by T. Bikel

Sent in  
by Florence Bickell

O little lights of mystery  
You recall our history  
And all that went before  
The battles and the bravery  
And our release from slavery  
Miracles galore.

As my eyes behold your flames  
I recall our heroes' names  
And our ancient dream:  
"Jews were learning how to fight  
To defeat an awesome might  
They could reign supreme"

"They would rule their own domain  
When the enemy was slain,  
The Temple cleansed and whole.  
Once there was a Jewish land  
And a mighty Jewish hand."  
Oh, how it moves my soul!

O little lights of mystery  
You retell our history  
Your tales are tales of pain.  
My heart is filled with fears  
My eyes are filled with tears  
"What now?" says the haunting refrain.
Archeologists in Israel are constantly digging and finding parts of Jewish history and culture that otherwise might be lost to all generations. Albert Barry, 76 a film maker is trying to save a bit of Jewish history. His interest has been in the wooden synagogues built in the shtetls of Eastern Europe in the 15th to 18th centuries or even earlier.

When a group of Jews joined together in the shtetls to form a synagogue. Their first place of worship was in their homes. But as the towns grew, their desire to build a synagogue became upper-most in their minds. They needed a "home for their souls."

Wood was chosen for construction for several reasons. First, it was handy. The builders didn’t have to go to the quarry to buy stones, but could go to the forest and cut down trees needed for the synagogue. The material was available and affordable. Another consideration was that wood was not ostentatious. The Jews did not want to appear to outdo their neighbors and their churches, though it was common practice for the Catholic, Protestant, as well as Jews, to use wood for their sacred houses of worship.

The structure usually had a plain exterior with a three-tiered roof almost like a Chinese Pagoda. It was simple, but practical, for what the Jews needed for the inside of the synagogue. The 3-tiered roof made it possible to construct a cupola or dome like ceiling.

The complexity of the roofs confirm the technical skill, artistry and engineering skill of the craftsmen. The artisans fell into two groups: the professional craftsmen who were members of the carpenter’s guild, and those who practiced carpentry as a side line. This explains why some wooden synagogues show a remarkable degree of proficiency, while others erected at the same time, are quite simple.

Although the exterior of all wooden synagogues were very plain, not so the interior. The walls and ceilings were painted and decorated "with floral and arabesque designs and were entwined with signs of the Zodiac, biblical beasts and tablets covered with inscriptions, giving the appearance of a woven tapestry," describes Barry in a recent lecture.

Because there was a biblical injunction against Graven Images, no human figures were painted on the walls and ceilings. Two of the best known artists who did such beautiful paintings were David Friedlander and Eliezar Katz. Their paintings, and others doing similar work, has been called “the only real Jewish Folk Art in history.”

One of the special features of these wooden synagogues were the Bimahs, centrally located to the interior. It was usually a "raised gazebo-like structure under a splendid canopy of wood." with steps on two sides, and from which the Torah and Holy Scriptures were read. The intricately-carved Bimah, together with the Ark for the Torah, were the outstanding features of the synagogue.

The Bimah was handcrafted and carved without the use of modern tools and with loving care. It has been estimated that approximately 1,000 wooden synagogues were built. But today, sadly, you cannot find a single one which remains as a synagogue. Some were burned down because they were made of wood and very flammable.

In many cases, the synagogues were destroyed by Cossacks during the pogroms, and what they did not destroy, the Nazis did during the Holocaust. Often the Nazis entered a town, gathered all the Jews, locked them in the synagogue, and burned the building down. Not only did the Nazis destroy the Jews but their culture as well.

Barry’s family came to the United States in 1904 from a small Polish shtetl called Blendov. It had no synagogue. To pray the family went to the neighboring town of Mogielnica—three miles away. This synagogue was one of those burned by the Nazis with all of the residents locked inside.

Of the remaining structures in Eastern Europe, all are boarded up and in disrepair. In 1993 researchers from the Center for Jewish Art at Hebrew University in Israel went to Lithuania to find remnants of Jewish Life. They were surprised to find 6 wooden synagogues—that no one was aware of.

Barry, with the auspices of the Judaic Collection at FAU Libraries, decided that a documentary must be made so that future generations could see the structures and the art. He contacted a production company in Miami and went with them to Eastern Europe to document these few that are left. He documented the six, and also discovered four additional synagogues that no one was aware of.

The film, The Lost Wooden Synagogues of Eastern Europe has won awards at five film festivals. Theodore Bikel did the narration. The film was released in English, Hebrew and Yiddish. For a VHS copy in Yiddish, contact: Albert Barry, 9761 Sunrise Lakes Blvd. Suite 205, Sunrise, FL 33322 or call 954-578-7070.
The American Yiddish Theater: Origins & History—Part III
by Israel Kugler

Theater in America

Initially it was based on the needs of the semi-literate working-class families, for their life was Bread and Theater. After many hours of dreary sweatshop labor, Jewish masses flocked to the Shund presentations with varied and extensive repertory that was designed to titillate audiences and based upon superficial changes in plot. House lights were on all the time, and people would feel free to converse, eat, and identify with what went on by shouting at the actors.

The Star System soon prevailed where the theaters were owned and managed by the superstars. Thus Thomashefsky Kessler, Adler, and Liptzen, had their own theaters, competed with each other for casts and developed followings of fanatic patrioten. The many societies based on the towns and cities of European origin—the Landsmanshaft—depended on additional income from their tickets to finance sick and death benefits. These organizations in addition to the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring branches bought discounted blocks of tickets to be sold to their membership.

The Theaters

The Yiddish playhouses were originally places for simple English dramas on the Bowery and then moved to over a dozen theaters on Second Avenue. The casts dwelt on types: the prima donna, the flirtatious soubrette, a lover, comic, villain, old men and women character roles. It took some time to overcome the Orthodox prejudice against women acting. Another barrier that finally was breached was the use of Yiddish for low characters and Daytshmerish (Germanism) for noble and prestigious types.

Goldfaden’s Contribution

Boris Thomashefsky gave a tribute to Goldfaden in the final and impecunious stage of Goldfaden’s life: “Goldfaden made us comedians, tragedians, playwrights, prima donnas and soubrettes. If not for him we’d be plain and simple Jews—cantors, choir singers, wedding jugglers, peddlers, and garment workers.”

Jacob Gordin (1853-1909)

Gordin was a revolutionary intellectual. He came to the U.S. in 1891 at the age of 38 with his 8 children. He wrote 35 plays and sought to elevate Yiddish drama with a purer language, serious topics, and with the dramatist in command. He was hailed by Ab Cahan, the editor of the Yiddish Daily Forverts, as a welcome change from the popular Shund Theater. Gordin wrote about revolutionists imprisoned in Siberia, took themes from Shakespeare, Gogol, Chekhov, and Ibsen and transmuted the plots into Yiddish life.

The Yiddish King Lear has an old, wealthy Jew face the ingratitude of his daughters; Got Mensh un Tayvel reworks the Faust story with a poor weaver buying a winning lottery ticket from the Devil, becomes a rich exploiting boss in his factory, and then hangs himself in remorse. His most famous play, a kind of Yiddish Queen Lear, entitled Mirele Efros starred Esther Kaminska and later her daughter, Ida. It had the will of a matriarch standing up to an avaricious daughter-in-law and her weak son.

The famous diary of the self-made Glückl of Hamlin dating back to the 17th century may have been a model for Gordin. I have my own memory that play put on by Polish Yiddish refugees in WW II Shanghai when I was in the navy. Gordin lost favor by obliterating the Jewish tradition and having actors orate and pontificate from the stage. But the cast ad libbed and he himself made some artistic compromises to feed his family.

The principal actors; Adler, Thomashefsky, Kessler, Moguiescu and Kenni Liptzen swung between their yearning for a purer Yiddish theater and succumbing to shund to make the theater business a going concern. Even the Hebrew Actors Union that antedated Actors Equity, became a job trust in deference to the star theater owners and their casts. Through auditions they prevented such coming stars from being admitted as Maurice Schwartz, Jennie Goldstein and Peysakh Burstein. Even Herman Yablokoff, known theatrically as Der Payatz, was initially rejected but later became the head of the Hebrew Actors Union.

Actors, critics, and producers of the English stage paid profound respect to the Yiddish actors and actresses. Eminent critic, Stark Young, found in Yiddish acting “expressiveness of hands and eyes and shoulders—tremendous and inexhaustible vitality. It had the realism of intense feeling and a deep respect for that feeling. Its best efforts come from a compulsive rendering of that intensity; and the beauty of these effects is a spiritual beauty, almost without appeal to the eye.”

Gilbert Seldes, Jed Harris, and John Barrymore expressed similar sentiments.
Beyond. Jacob Gordin, there were outstanding literary figures who enriched Yiddish drama and entered into a race between Yiddish survival in a less and less compact Yiddish-speaking population and its cultural expression. The grandfather of Yiddish literature, Mendele Moykher Sforim; the father, Yitzhok Leyb Peretz; and the grandson, Sholem Aleichem had their plays performed on the Yiddish stage. Mendele wrote of the Meat Tax and Military Conscription. Later a movie starred David Opatoshu in *Fishl der Krummer* that featured the love of a blind girl for a crippled young man. Peretz wrote more directly for the theater:

- **Shvester** is about 3 young women; a widow with starving children, one who is seduced and made pregnant, and a third whose boyfriend was stolen by the middle sister.
- **Frimorgen** pictures poverty and despair in a slum basement.
- **Kvores-Nakht** deals with an abused wife crying on her mother’s grave.
- **Di Goldene Keyt** concerns a rabbi who wants to preserve the very essence of Jewish continuity through the creative device of an eternal shabes,
- **Bay Nakht Afn Altn Mark** employs symbolism in the interaction among the ghosts of the past. They include: a poet, a streetwalker, and a water-carrier.

**Sholem Aleichem (1859-1916)**

Among Sholem Aleichem’s one-act plays there was *Mentshn*. It was set in a wealthy Jewish household where the servants were being abused. In my college days I worked as a waiter in Rosenblatt’s Hotel in the *Borsht Circuit* in the Catskills in upstate, New York. The owner, Lebke Rosenblatt was a Yiddishist who staged a play in Yiddish. Since I knew Yiddish from my Arbeter Ring Shul days, I acted in *Mentshn*. The word mentsh has 3 meanings—a person, an outstanding human being, a servant. In this play the head of the household castigated his children for their nefarious acts toward the servants. Sholem Aleichem’s punch line was, "Mentshn zaynen oykh mentshn" (Servants are also people).

Then there is the often-produced *Groyse Gevins*. This is a happy play of a simple tailor whose lifestyle changes when he thinks he won a 200,000-ruble jackpot. Still another is *Shver tsu Zayn a Yid* where two students, a Russian Christian and a Jew trade places for a year. *Fiddler on the Roof*, the successful musical, is derived from *Tevye the Dairyman*.

**Sholem Asch (1880-1957)**

His reputation, outside Yiddish Theater, was as a novelist.

- **On the Sanctification of the Name** is about martyrdom in a Yiddish stage
- **Kiddush Hashem** in a 17th century Cossack pogrom.
- **Motke Ganef** about the underworld.
- **Uncle Moses** dealt with love and money in the Lower East Side garment trade.
- **G-t Fun Nekome** (G-d of Vengeance) was notorious—dealing with a Jew who owns a whorehouse, is married to a former prostitute, and their daughter who defies the father’s effort to save her when she is involved with a lesbian prostitutes.

**David Pinski (1872-1959)**

The 1903 Kishenev pogrom caused him to write the *Family Tzvi* about a bourgeois family awaiting a pogrom with the patriarchal grandfather confronting his three grandsons—a Zionist, a Bundist, an assimilationist. His *Yankl der Schmidt* concerns a virile blacksmith who wants his neighbor’s wife as well as his own. One of his plays was translated into English and produced by the Theater Guild—*The Treasure* about a town getting wild with greed about a treasure supposedly hidden in a cemetery.

**H. Leivick (1888-1962)**

Maurice Schwartz staged three of his plays dealing with the clothing business on the East Side—*Shmattes, Shop and Bankrupt*. His *Der Goylem* is set in 17th century Prague where a rabbi fashions a mechanical man out of clay to defend the Jews against a blood libel. The Golem then turns to the rabbi’s daughter, at which point the rabbi destroys the Golem to a heap of clay.

**Ossip Dymov (1878-1959)**

*Yoshke Musikant* (adapted by Joseph Buloff) was produced by the Folksbiene Yiddish Theater). A fiddler loves a servant girl and wins a fortune in a lottery. He turns the money over to a rival wastrel (a spendthrift) who then marries the servant girl. Yoshke commits suicide over his broken heart. *Bronx Express* appeared on Broadway in English.

**Peretz Hirshbein (1881-1949)**

He wrote of rural Lithuanian Jewish life. In *Grine Felder* a Jewish farmer hires Levi Yitzkhok to tutor his sons. The daughter Tsine tries to prevent him from taking a job with a nearby farmer and wins Levi’s hand. Other plays include—*Der Shmidt’s Tekhter* and the *Puste Kretshme*.
Anski (1863-1920)

Anski's Der Dybbuk was one of the most popular Yiddish plays, put on also in English and Hebrew. It deals with exorcism of a spirit in the bride's betrothed who dies and afflicts the bride to a rich suitor.

Maurice Schwartz (1890-1960)

After moving from Irving Place to the original Madison Square Garden, Schwartz amassed funds to build his own theater on Second Avenue and 12th Street. Its greatest successes included J.J. Singer's Yoshe Kalb. The actresses were Bina Abramovitch, Jennie Goldstein, Celia Adler and Berta Gersten. The actors were Jacob Ben-Ami, Lazar Freed, Maurice Schwartz, Muni Weisenfreund (Paul Muni), David Opatashu, and Joseph Buloff.

The Vilne Troupe

This company was made famous by the avant-garde production of the Dybbuk in Vilne (Yerushelayim di Lite). Led by Leyb Kadison, his (daughter, Luba and her husband Joseph Buloff, his company achieved world-wide recognition. It arrived in New York's competitive theater in the late 20's and was pulled in many directions by rival companies. After Muni Weisenfreund left Schwartz's Yiddish Art Theater, Buloff took his place acting in such classics as Three Cities by Sholem Asch, J.J. Singer’s Yoshe Kalb and The Brothers Ashkenazi. Buloff’s ability as an actor resulted in his joining the English stage where he appeared as the Greek landlord in My Sister Eileen, the peddler in Oklahoma, and in Arthur Miller's The Price. He also acted in a Yiddish version of Miller's Death of a Salesman. He held one man shows with readings from Chekhov and delightful humorous pieces by Lutsky (A Piece of Paper Driven by the Wind, and A Pot of Bubbling Soup).

Yiddish Comedy

Yiddish comedy was always an important phase, of Yiddish theater, but some of it descended to Shund. Ludwig Satz, Aaron Lebedeff, and Peysakh Burstein were outstanding followers after Sigmund Mogulescu in their ability to use mime—a variety of vocal expression, facial plasticity and body language to caricature a character. Last in this male line was Menashe Skulnik—the perfect player of Shlemil and Shmendrik.

The diminutive Molly Picon stands out all by herself, in her ability to sing, dance, turn cartwheels, and sparkle as a gymnast. All of the comedians were capable of acting more serious roles if called upon.

ARTEF

ARTEF was the artisan politicalization of Yiddish theater. It is the acronym for a group tied to the Jewish sector of the American Communist Party. Existing in the glow of the Moscow Art Theater of Stanislavsky and the great Yiddish actor-producer Shlomo Mikhoels (later murdered by Stalin along with Soviet Yiddish writers) ARTEF drew a following under the direction of Benno Schneider. The Yiddish plays had expressionistic staging and adapted some standard Yiddish plays with a party-line twist. Many Broadway actors came to ARTEF performances. David Opatashu got his start there and appeared in movies and on Broadway. Jules Dassin who was associated later with the great Greek actress Merlina Mercuri also was a product of ARTEF.

Music & Dance

Much of the music for Second Avenue came from the pens of Joseph Rumshinsky, Abraham Ellstein, Alexander Olshanetsky and Sholem Secunda. Secunda composed Bay Mir Bistu Sheyn and in the depression years sold it for 15 dollars! Many plays had choreographed dance developed by Binyumin Zemach, Felix Fybusl, & Pearl Lang.

Yiddish Theater Today

Despite growing numbers of Vinklen, Yiddish courses at universities, at the Workmen’s Circle, and well-attended outdoors Yiddish festivals, the Yiddish theater leads a tenuous existence. The Folksbiene, founded in 1915 as a branch of the Workmen’s Circle with amateur actors and actresses, continues to carry on. Once housed in the auditorium of the Forward Building on East Broadway, it moved to the Central Synagogue on East 55th Street. Since the fire there, it has had two seasons on West 55th Street, starring Yiddish actresses Mina Bern and Shifre Lehrer.

The 2002 season of the Folksbiene opened with Yentl, a play based on a story of I. Bashevis Singer. It stars Eleanor Reissa with excellent support of the veteran actress Minna Bern. It is hoped that the Folksbiene, the Forward, and the Workmen’s Circle will locate in a setting for all three organizations. The Folksbiene has a program for youngsters, Kids and Yiddish. There are staged readings by veteran actors and actresses in classic Yiddish plays.

I end with a dream and hope for the future—Zukunft. The Folksbiene must dare to flourish by incorporating:
• A Chorus and Chorale;
• A Dance program associated with Pearl Lang;
• A troupe appearing in urban centers across the U.S., even in Central and South America;
• A contest for new plays in Yiddish;
• A dramatic training program for new Yiddish performers;
• A Klezmer program.

Lovers of Yiddish and Yiddish culture will help make this dream a reality. Other ethnic groups have successful theaters — Repertorio Espagnol and The Irish Repertory Theater are examples. Yiddish has survived many obituaries. Nobel Laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer predicted that it will continue. As for the Yiddish theater as an expression of Yiddish culture, it is too important a part of historic Jewishness to disappear.

**Important Sources**

**Books**

Great Songs of the Yiddish Theater, Norman H. Warebud, Quadrangle, 1975
On Stage, Off Stage: Memories of a Lifetime in the Yiddish Theater, Luba Kadison and Joseph Buloff, Harvard University Library, 1994
The World of Our Fathers, Chapter 14, Irving Howe, Harcourt, Brace, Joyvanovich, 1976
The Downtown Jews, Chapters 12 and 13, Ronald Sanders, Harper and Row, 1969
Frage: Why should we learn the alphabet in the standard order? As long as you know the letters, what difference does it make? (See answer at the bottom.

There are tricks used in learning/teaching alphabets. A major problem is look-alikes. Here are a few. The mem & tes both have slits—mem on the bottom and the tes on the top. Another example is the reysh-daled problem. The reysh is rounded and the daled extended. Also there are pairs of adjacent sound-alikes; beys-veys, khes-tes, kof-khof, pey-fey, shin-sin and tof-sof. The lamed looks like a bolt of lightning. With the exception of the shlos mem all of the lange oyyes (those different at the end of a word) look exactly like their regular partners except that the lower portion is curled 90 degrees to the left.

In the Roman alphabet the M is the 13th letter—the middle one. In the Hebrew alphabet the lamed is the 14th letter of the 27 letters, and thus the middle one. There is one Hebrew triple sequence that follows the Roman alphabet—lamed, mem, nun. It spells LeMoN.

Dr. Allan Blair has taught a workshop at an IAYC conference on how to teach the alphabet.

Der romanisher alef-beys af yidish

A a from A-Z fun alef biz tof
B be musical notesi
C tse musical notedo
D de musical notere
E e musical notemi
F ef musical notefa
G ge musical notesol
H ha
I ee self ikh
J jot
K ka
L el
M em
N en
O o
P pe
Q ku
R er
S es
T te
U u
V ve
W toplve
X iks
Y inrek
Z zet

Entfer: If there were not a general agreement in the accepted sequence of letters, there would be no useable lists as the likes of telephone books, encyclopedias, dictionaries rosters of names, etc.