Overview of the 11th IAYC Conference

This is the second in a series of reports on the IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007 at the Marriott Cleveland East Hotel. Each month there will be an update and a report on another phase of this great Yiddish Conference.

Both exhibitors and vendors will have tables in the main lobby around the large, beautiful, spraying water fountain.

There will be five plenary sessions (ones where the entire conference attendees are in the main ballroom listening to a featured program). The IAYC pattern is to start each morning off with a featured lecture presentation. On both Sunday and Monday the second morning will be entertaining ones.

Each evening after the banquet there will be awards and a full program of top-flight Yiddish entertainers.

There will be 5 sessions with 5 concurrent presentations/workshops each. These will be scheduled so that they will range from all-Yiddish to English/Yiddish and all English. All phases of Yiddish interest will be covered.

August 3, 2007
Registration, and orientation session by Fishl. Introductions and greetings, dinner, election of 2007-8 IAYC Board of Directors, entertainment.

August 4, 2007
Early Saturday morning services in Hebrew and Yiddish. Lerner Memorial lecture followed by a pre-lunch session and 2 post lunch sessions. The evening program will be The Workmen’s Circle Gala Banquet with Adrienne Cooper and her troupe. The 2nd IAYC Lifetime Yiddish Service Award will be announced.

August 5, 2007
Featured lecture in plenary session followed by the People’s Yiddish Stage with 5 acts. Following lunch there will be 2 sessions with 5 presentations each. After dinner the entire conference attendees will be bused to the 29th Annual Concert in the Park (Cain Park). After the performance the performers will be coming back to our Marriott Hotel where we shall all have dessert and a chance to shmues.

August 6, 2007
There will be a featured lecture in plenary session followed by a great closing act including group singing and dancing. Special effort is being made to have a very strong closing experience followed by lunch. An excellent time to share ideas with newly found friends and old acquaintances.

Contact Information

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Yiddish: Fight, Flight or …
by Philip Fishl Kutner

Before launching into “fight, flight or …., let us examine our alternatives. There is an analogy with prehistoric humans whose earliest methods of survival were “fight or flight.” To this end in the evolutionary process the adrenal gland developed along with its production of the hormone adrenaline.

When confronted with a threatening situation, the additional release of this hormone increased the energy available. Our early ancestors were able to run faster or fight harder when the adrenaline level was increased.

What are our choices today for survival of our beloved mame-loshn? Fighting against the ever-present cultural assimilation, and the trend to have our children put in an either-or adversarial position with Hebrew, has been a losing battle ever since Israel’s decision to use Hebrew as the national language. More important was the Hebrew schools decision to not teach Yiddish.

Likewise running away from confrontation and playing the least-effort game has resulted in a constantly eroding pool of native-born Yiddish speakers. So now we have been dealing with an ever-decreasing number of fluent Yiddish speakers, Yiddish readers, Yiddish writers and Yiddish teachers. This “bleeding” of our resource pool has been taking its toll.

“Leave it to the Khasidim,” is another battle cry. “They multiply like rabbits, are extremely loyal and are using Yiddish. In a few generations they will populate the Jewish community and bring their brand of Yiddish along.” Thus, there is nothing to worry about.

This sounds like a good argument. Any help Yiddish can get should be admired, fostered, welcomed and appreciated. However, if it is at the price of losing our rich Yiddish literature theater, music and poetry—the price is too high.

Another Viable Alternative

Is there another possible path to “fight or flight”? The philosophy of Lateral Thinking is, “If you can’t pass by them by confrontational encounters, go around, go under or go over them.” In other words if you can’t beat them—join them.

In martial arts one is taught to augment the opponent’s force in a direction away from you. When the opponent is rushing toward you, step aside, and pull her along in the direction she is going.

In Israel there already are signs of Yiddish words creeping into the Hebrew language. Likewise there has been a movement in Yiddish to replace words of Germanic origin with Hebrew words.

The key in lateral thinking is getting your foot into the door. You cannot get her to listen until you get her attention. The story that dad told about his experience in the US Army in WWI was about his first experience with a mule.

It seems that the proverbial stubbornness of the mule was what dad encountered. The Sergeant came over and hit the mule over the head with a baseball bat. My dad was shocked until he was told that you cannot expect a mule to listen to you until you get his attention.

We cannot hit others over the head, but we can get in the back door by giving them what they want. If we remember that Yiddish is the Language AND culture of the Askenazic Jews of Eastern Europe, let’s place more emphasis on the cultural portion of Yiddish.

The first area in which we can achieve results is music. Especially among the young there is an interest in music—klezmer music (KlezKamp, KlezKanada, Ashkenaz). Books like the Mlotek songbooks have the lyrics in Yiddish, English and transliteration. We can help the singers with pronunciation. There are Yiddish choruses from New York to San Francisco and from Florida to Los Angeles in addition to Canada, e tc.

A second area is genealogy. Tracing one’s heritage is a fascinating way of learning about your ancestors. JewishGen is the major Jewish genealogical website on the Internet. Avotaynu is the major Jewish genealogical journal. Jewish historical societies are another rich source of original materials.

The third area pertains to a smaller group—the theater. With the blossoming of the Folksbiene and the West Coast Jewish Theatre there is much hope. With the many wonderful scripts on stage and in the films the possibility can be increased in future years. We also can add the over 50 Jewish theaters in the U.S. There are 8 in New York and 4 in California.
Tsu gast baym zeyde mendele

By Gerry Kane

To sit at Mendele Mokher Sforim’s table…to sit beside the man who said “Come what may! I will fight above all for this Jargon and serve my people” … is an honour. It’s true the Yiddish table is meager these days, the menu is thin, but it was just as thin when Mendele set out to defend his jargon—his mame-loshn, and he encouraged an army of defenders to follow his banner. And, the literature we built in defense of the Jargon….

So, here I am, in my 73rd year, Gerry Kane, sitting at Mendele’s table. Sitting surrounded by his books, both in Yiddish and in English, and enjoying his description of ne’er-do-wells and knaves, his sharp eye for the dirt and poverty of the Russian Shtetlakh, his pictures of the natural world and his social criticism both of Yiddish society and the larger world and know that when I sit at his table, read about Fishke der Krumer, (Fishke the Lame) or Di Klatshe (the Nag) I know that I’m reading about the disparities and inequities and foolishness that invest the human condition, and especially the Jewish condition biz haynt tsu tog.

Gerry Kane is a child of veltlikhe yidn…a mame un tate vos hobn gehorevet in Toronto’s sweat shops. Oreme shnayders, who instilled in their children the love of Yiddish, our traditions and literature. I grew up listening to my mother and her friends, once a week, after working in the shops, come together in a leyen-krayz, a reading circle and educate each other reading, Mendele, Sholem Aleykhem, even Don Quixote in Yiddish.

I also grew up in the Morris Winchevsky shule…the Toronto branch of Itche Goldberg’s veltlikhe shule movement. Wonderful teachers! Inspiring teachers! To have played Tevye while still a kid…who needed Broadway.

And, then you think you grow up…you go into the world and you leave your mame-loshn mit der mamen. English is the language of your career as a broadcaster, a copywriter, a communications advisor to business and government and a journalist, …except when you communicate with your mother.

She refused to read the letters I wrote her in English. “Yidish, Yankele, Yidish.” Oh, yes, mayn nomen is Yankele. So, I wrote to her in Yiddish. And, was comfortable doing so. Every time I came home, from wherever, I took her copies of Yidishe Kultur and found that I was more and more drawn to that Jargon that Mendele said he would fight for.

And, then one day, standing on a street corner, I’m met by Sam Lipshitz and Label Basman, one the former editor of the Jewish weekly the Vochenblat and the other my shule teacher who put me on stage as Tevye. And they told me the meeting was at eight o’clock that night, and I was expected to be there. What meeting—the meeting of the Committee for Yiddish of the Canadian Jewish Congress. As, it happens I had a free evening. So, I went. How could you refuse your shule teacher? The meeting changed my life.

Sitting around the table of the Committee for Yiddish was a group of older men and women… who twenty, thirty, even forty years earlier fought each other mightily. They were old Communists, Socialist, Anarchists, Left Poale Zion, Right Poale Zion, they had a world to win. They were the people behind the Forverts, the Freiheit, the Vokhenblat, Yidishe Kultur, Tsukumft. They were di veltlikhe bavegung.

But, Hitler and Stalin had destroyed that world and the one thing that united them and overcame any lasting political animosities was their love for mame-loshn. They were determined that there would be a place for Yiddish in a community that had become overtly middle class and was, like all North American communities shucking off the “old.”

They inspired me. And, I came to a second meeting. And, then I became chair of the Toronto Committee, and then I got involved in raising money for the Yiddish courses at the University of Toronto, and then I started lecturing in Yiddish and English on Yiddish literature and would you believe it twenty-five years have gone by, and Toronto is home of the Friends of Yiddish, the Ashkenaz Festival, the Jewish Folk Choir and an inspired group of younger people finding reason to sit by Mendele’s table and remember his words, “I will fight above all for this Jargon and serve my people.”

Editor’s note: Mr. Kane will be a feature speaker at the IAYC Cleveland Conference next August. He is a vibrant and dynamic lecturer. His presentations in his native Toronto have been very well attended.

His experience in the media and as a journalist have sharpened his public speaking and he will have you enthralled as he weaves stories of and about Mendele—the grandfather of modern Yiddish literature. 2007 is Mendele’s 90th yortsayt.
The Yiddish Folk Chorus of South Florida
by Mel Greenblatt

The Yiddish Folk Chorus of South Florida stands today as the leading performer of classic Yiddish folk and choral music in Palm Beach County. Led by the talented Shelley Tenzer, the chorus sings of life in the European shtetl, of the immigrant experience and of the music of a spirited young Israel. We sing the music drawn from a rich history of composers, poets and arrangers: Itzik Manger, Morris Jacob Schaefer Rosenfeld, and Maurice Rauch. The repertoire ranges from Goldfadden to Guthrie; from a Yiddish lullaby to a song describing the American landscape.

Today’s chorus had its origins in the original Jewish Folk Chorus, organized in 1990 By Harvey Schreibman and Philip (Fishl) Loeb. By the time he retired in 1988, Schreibman had already earned numerous awards and had achieved national recognition as a conductor of Jewish choruses all across the United States. Fishl Loeb, a lifelong activist in Yiddish organizations, served as the driving force behind the new chorus. As a result of their combined efforts, rehearsal space was secured in the Holocaust Library at Florida Atlantic University.

Membership in the chorus was open to all who wished to join. Word of the new Jewish Folk Chorus spread quickly and the news attracted people from across the spectrum of the Jewish community; from all affiliations and all backgrounds: Yiddish speaking and non-Yiddish speaking, both secular and religious. “You don’t have to be a great singer to be in the chorus”, Harvey would say, “You just have to want to sing”.

Harvey would also often repeat the axiom, ”A folk vus zingt yen kaynol nit untergayn” (A people who sing will never perish). Those words still hold great meaning for the 40 men and women who comprise the membership of today’s Folk Chorus. They are brought together not simply by their love of music but by their love of Yiddish, the language of their parents and grandparents.

For those of us who had grown up with the music, every rehearsal was a homecoming of sorts. The melodies and the lyrics were etched in our memories from Mittelschule, from summer camp and from having heard them from our parents, many of whom sang with the Freiheit Gezangs Farein. This was our music. The Thursday afternoon rehearsals became a popular stop for visitors from up north wanting to see old friends.

Following Harvey Schreibman’s untimely passing in 1997 a new conductor, a cantor, was hired. In spite of understandings reached about repertoire it soon became apparent that the new cantor/conductor was more intent in pressing his interest in liturgical music than he was in the Yiddish folk music selected by Harvey Schreibman.

The chorus membership split. One faction opted to remain with the Cantor. The other faction opted to reorganize as The Yiddish Folk Chorus of South Florida. Shelley Tenzer and Dudl Bernstein agreed to serve as co-conductors. Thus, the chorus was able to continue the tradition of bringing this unique form of Yiddish folk music to a wider audience. Both Dudl and Shelley brought their own freshness of style, skill and humor to the task and before long a disparate group of amateur singers were organized into a group of polished, near-professional performers.

In March of 2003 the Yiddish Folk Chorus suffered another devastating loss with the passing of Dudl Bernstein. Dudl had put his heart and soul into The Yiddish Folk Chorus and he would be sorely missed.

If there were trepidations about the following Fall 2003/04 season, they were quickly dispelled by Shelley Tenzer, who with her enthusiasm and quiet determination, pulled the chorus together again. And for the past three years the chorus has continued to flourish under Shelley’s direction.

The chorus meets and rehearses every Thursday afternoon from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at Temple Sinai, Atlantic Ave, Delray Beach. This season the first rehearsal took place on Thursday December 7th. The season will end on March 29th 2007. New members are welcome. There are no auditions; there is no requirement to read music nor does one need to speak or understand Yiddish. As Harvey used to say "you just have to want to sing”.

We look forward to the challenges of the 2006/07 season, and hope to expand our ranks and our performance schedule.

For information about membership or for a performance for your club or organization contact Hy Perlstein by phone at 561-451-0236 or e-mail Hy at Hymimi01@aol.com. Or you may contact Mel Greenblatt by phone at 561-733-2680 or e-mail at Eemel@aol.com.
When I think of Yiddish literary "dynasties" (more than one generation) in the United States, certain families come to mind, such as Opatoshu, Kerler, Schaechter/Gottesman, Goldberg, Weinreich, Mlotek, and Novershtern/Niborski. While Avrom Novershtern and Yitskhok Niborski are step-brothers, one in Israel and the other in France, both visit the U.S. so often that they have become part of the American scene. (The non-secular family list is long and includes the Jacobsons of the Algemeiner Journal.) I include my Katz/Blacker family.

My father, Menke Katz, a major Yiddish/English lyric poet, wrote 20 books, 10 in Yiddish, 10 in English. The book MENKE, The Complete Yiddish Poems of Menke Katz, 2005, was translated by Benjamin and Barbara Harshav. It has a 70-page introduction by Dovid Katz and is the most comprehensive analysis of Menke’s life and work.

My mother, Chaske Blacker (1905-1944), was a sweatshop worker who left the equivalent of two volumes of Yiddish short stories, which were serialized in the Yiddish press but never appeared as bound books. I am translating her novella, "Katsovim" (butchers) which was serialized 62 years ago in The Frayhayt for 33 double-column days. The was missing last chapter in he scrap book. This missing last chapter was miraculously tracked down by the local librarian in Monroe Township, NJ; and so now I can proceed.

In 1998, my professional-singer daughter Sheh-Shelley) produced an album of Yiddish songs, Lider Fun Mayn Zeydn, mostly folk songs which she had learned from Menke. During one song, she harmonized with my daughter Chaske (Claudia), who has set two of my poems to music. The Yiddish chorus of Century Village, West Palm Beach, Florida has performed both.

Dovid Katz, my brother, has written many books in both Yiddish and English. His latest book is Words On Fire, The Unfinished Story of Yiddish. He is now working on the paperback edition, which will contain extensive footnotes. Dovid is professor of Yiddish Language and Literature at Vilnius University, Lithuania, where he has relocated the former Oxford Yiddish program. He and I are American-born, and despite our geographic and age differences, are close friends, keep in touch by email, and see each other when he visits Florida.

From the ages of 9-15, I attended the Passaic Workmen's Circle shule. My professional Yiddish career began after graduation from Passaic, N.J. high school when I became secretary to Itche Goldberg, editor of YiddishKultur. He sent me to learn Yiddish shorthand and typing. I learned Yiddish grammar on the job by taking dictation from him and other Yiddish writers. (I attended NYU while studying to be an English teacher.)

After 5 years with Itche, I left to raise a family, become a Long Island shule teacher and completed a 30-year career as a teacher of English/Journalism in a secondary school.

After retiring, I returned to Yiddish. I volunteered at Itche's while studying Yiddish at Columbia, the YIVO, and the Workmen's Circle in NY. Thanks to a "shidekh" (match) arranged by Dr. Simon Prussin of Los Angeles with Prof. Kazuo Uedo of Fukuoka University, Japan, I co-wrote two books which appeared in Japan: Tri-Lingual Guide To Japan in Japanese/Yiddish/English (1966) and Dialogues for Japanese Students of Yiddish. (2000).

I began writing Yiddish poetry the night after my father died. I learned a year later that Dovid had begun to write Yiddish fiction at the same time. He was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship for Yiddish fiction. Dr. Mordecai Schaechter, my teacher, invited me to join the Shraybkrazyn after I turned in poems along with my homework.

My husband Frank and I share our Yiddish/Jewish work. At the Teaneck IAYC conference, he aroused much interest with his talk, "The Amazing Rescue of the 6th Lubovitcher Rebbe by Nazi Soldiers and Its Effect on Yiddish in the U.S." We performed bilingual humor programs hundreds of times as a team for Elderhostels and other organizations.

I lead 2 leyenkrayzn (reading circles), one in West Palm Beach, FL and the other in Monroe Township, NJ. I am a seasonal member of the Avrom Kahn Leyenkrayzn in NYC and chair the IAYC selection committee that sends materials to the IAYC clubs.

In 2002, the late Dr. Harold Black, IAYC president, invited me to prepare a book, to be published by the Clubs and distributed to all the clubs. The book SIMKHE has 73 of my 561 poems, mostly love poems between the characters Teme and Simkhe, is presented in 3 columns: Yiddish, transliteration, and English translation by Shimon Beyles. The introduction is by Dovid Katz.

On the next page is my poem #311 on page 66.
Reflections on the Suppression of Yiddish in Israel
by Samuel W. Levy Ph.D.
(Excerpt from the Sept-Oct, 2006 issue of the Canadian Jewish Magazine "Outlook")

I can still hear my father's voice, and see his face break into a smile, as he taught us to play his favourite game of Pinochle. "Nu? A koort, a bayn, a shtick holtz, a shtayn?" he would ask, urging us to play the next card. The year was about 1930, and to this day I wonder if his question could be asked so charmingly in any other language.

How could I know that even as he spoke, Zionist leaders in Palestine were doing their utmost to stifle Yiddish in order to make Hebrew the primary language of the nation. Or that twenty years later, our people in Europe would suffer annihilation at the hands of Hitler and the Nazis—followed by the murder of Yiddish writers and poets by a paranoid Josef Stalin.

The language of the victims and survivors of the Holocaust was Yiddish as well as the language of their country of origin--Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Romanian and others. The majority of middle-aged or elderly survivors had grown up with some knowledge of the stories, poems and plays of their beloved Yiddish writers: Sholem Aleichem, I.L. Peretz, Mendele Moykher Sforim, Sholem Asch, Abraham Goldfadden and many more. Indeed, the tragedy of six million deaths was compounded by the murder at the hands of the Nazis of countless artists, musicians, scientists and creative spirits whose gifts were forever lost to mankind.

Following the defeat of Germany in 1945, and the liberation of Jews from concentration and refugee camps throughout Europe, tens of thousands found refuge and were welcomed to Israel, where the Jewish population climbed from 653,000 to 1,203,000 between 1948 and 1950. Their troubles were not over as more lives were lost evading the British blockade and being caught in the midst of an ongoing war with Arab countries and the Palestinian people.

They also met with hostility from an unexpected source, for their language and culture were deemed unwelcome in their new home. Israel had no room for Yiddish "shnayders", said David Ben-Gurion. The language was banned from classrooms and publishing houses. And so it came to pass that mameloshn, that colourful language of Yiddishkeit, and its great culture of literature, drama, beauty and charm, died in the only country in which it might have survived.

In Words on Fire: The Unfinished Story of Yiddish, by the Yiddish scholar Dovid Katz the section dealing with events in Palestine/Israel is profoundly disturbing. Ben-Gurion's government passed laws preventing the publication of Yiddish newspapers. Years before the State of Israel was established, the antipathy of Ben-Gurion and other Zionist leaders toward Yiddish manifested itself in the violent actions of an anti-Yiddish gang calling itself the "Battalion of the Defenders of the [Hebrew] Language." These thugs beat Yiddish writers, firebombed kiosks carrying Yiddish newspapers, and disrupted Yiddish literary and cultural events. According to Katz, "although this group's dedication to hooligan tactics was widely known, it was enthusiastically embraced by the Zionist establishment in Palestine."

An attempt in the late 1920's to create an academic chair in Yiddish literature (a gift from American Jews) for the new Hebrew University in Jerusalem was prevented by the "Battalion." As Katz recounts, they incited riots, "roughed up professors and members of the relevant committees, and pasted the city with posters condemning the plan to put an abomination in the sanctuary of Hebrew purity."

Renowned Kabbalah scholar Gershom Scholem deplored this violence: "It is completely wrong to give in to or fear the threat of terror and fascistic methods." Not until 1951 was a chair in Yiddish, with instruction in Hebrew, introduced in Israel.

Katz also tells a story in which Ben-Gurion attended a reception for the first anti-Nazi resistance fighter to reach Palestine after the war. Rozka Korczak (1921-1988) escaped from the Vilna Ghetto and organized partisan units in the forests. Ben-Gurion listened to her for a while, then stormed out with the memorable phrase, "Ha-safe tsoremel li ba-ozem" (the language grates on my ears). This heroic lady, who deserved the highest honour the Jewish state could bestow, was speaking in Yiddish!

The noted journalist Mordke Tsanin used the term "slaughtered," noting that even the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem - designed primarily to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust – omitted Yiddish from its displays, as if the six million had been a people without a voice. Katz rejects the view that the suppression of Yiddish was needed to help unify Israel, since Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews had no strong opinions on the matter and Hebrew could have been retained as the official language even if Yiddish had been preserved.
In this regard it is noteworthy that by the late 1920's Yiddish had attained philological recognition following the first international conference of YIVO. As Katz points out, Yiddish had "won the respect of some of the most prestigious Jews in Europe - its founder, Max Weinreich, brought it to a new and unprecedented international status in academia."

My appreciation for the warmth and humour of the Yiddish language came from my parents using it in our home, and later from learning more about the literature which evolved from it. For me, Yiddish has special qualities that go far beyond being merely a basic means of communication. I am charmed by this unique, wise and colourful language.

Where else do you find a language which seldom displays hate or aggression, and seldom advocates violence for solving human problems? Where curses are filled with philosophy and fun? Where people (Tevya) argue with God? Where the village of Chelm is peopled with mythical, naive yet lovable characters performing a myriad of amusing deeds--while in fact the author is laughing at us in the real world, for believing ourselves smarter while doing far more foolish and harmful things?

The self-deprecating humour of Yiddish became the fount of material for the best American comedy -writers and comics of our time. The language is rich in expressing thoughts and feelings on philosophical, psychological and sociological themes, without pretension or snobbery.

Its intrinsic compassion helped to mould many Ashkenazi Jews into a people who cared for their young and elderly in special ways, and who often joined causes and fought on behalf of downtrodden people in our own and other lands.

Jews supported causes such as the defense of the Scottsboro boys, joined the MacPap Battalion in 1936 to fight against Franco's fascists in Loyalist Spain, and lost two martyrs to the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. I believe that in part it was their culture and language which helped to make many Jews into decent, progressive, peace-loving people.

The directive to suppress Yiddish in Israel was taken up by Zionist leaders in the Diaspora, and I remember well the heated arguments around me over abandoning Yiddish in favour of Hebrew in schools and council meetings.

Our esteemed chairperson of the Montreal Outlook Collective, one-time "Lehrer" and Principal Dovid Kunigis, recalls the distress in the communities of Winnipeg and Hamilton as successful Yiddish programs were replaced by Hebrew under the influence of ardent Zionist activists.

In the autobiography of the late Manya Lipshitz (Time Remembered), this much-loved Yiddish teacher mourned the decline of Yiddish teaching in Canada, calling it a "grievous loss to the entire Jewish educational system" and describing Yiddish as "the national treasure of Jewish people."

Is it any wonder that so many of us find it hard to accept its decline? That we applaud Aaron Lansky (Outwitting History, 2004) for rescuing thousands upon thousands of priceless Yiddish books from the dumpsters of North America; join local Mamelsoshn groups; attend annual musical and educational programs such as KlezKanada in the Laurentians, and the Toronto Ashkenaz Festival; continue to enjoy productions of the Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre group in Montreal (albeit with the help of simultaneous translation); and take pride in repeated invitations for them to perform in European cities - this year in Vienna with 2 Yiddish plays. Other programs are at YIVO, Paris, Vilnius, Tel Aviv, Bar Ilan, KlezKamp and the Calif. Institute for Yiddish Culture & Language.

The remarkable rise of Hebrew as a popular, universal language in Israel was successful. It is a tribute to the determination of the people of Israel that they made the new language work in so short a time. However, the suppression of Yiddish was unnecessary as it deprived young Israeli Jews of knowledge about their Jewish heritage. The absence of Sholem Aleichem in Israeli schools was the equivalent of banning Mark Twain, Robert Burns or William Shakespeare from our schools.

There is no turning back it seems - either in Canada, or elsewhere, where assimilation has taken its toll, or in Israel, where foolish leaders once prohibited the teaching of Yiddish and the publication of newspapers in the language. But perhaps a coming generation of Israeli Jews and its more enlightened leaders will rediscover the treasure they have lost, and encourage a greater revival of their beautiful heritage.


SAMUEL LEVY, PhD is a retired biochemist, living in Montreal, has written previously on topics of special interest to him: "The Assault on Public Health Care in Canada". "Rosalind Franklin: Great Lady of DNA", "Why the Silence?" - on the suppression of information about the Holocaust by the Canadian Jewish Congress, and now, "Yiddish", a subject close to his heart.
Plenary Speakers at the IAYC 11th Conference

This is the third in a series of reports on the IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007 at the Marriott Cleveland East Hotel. Each month there will be an update and a report on another phase of this great Yiddish Conference. All updates are on the conference website at: http://www.derbay.org/cleveland/

There will be six daytime plenary sessions (ones where the entire convention attendees are in the main ballroom). Fishl Kutner will again open the conference with an orientation session at 2 pm Friday afternoon. This will be followed by 5 entertainment acts of the Jewish People’s Stage. The closing session on Monday will have the Yiddish Lifetime Service Award and top-flight entertainment with Cantor Kathryn Sebo.

August 4, 2007

Mr. Gerry Kane is a past chairman of the Canadian Yiddish Committee. He succeeded Phil Givens (o”h), the former mayor of Toronto and a member of Parliament.

He has been a radio announcer, copywriter, journalist, and currently is the communication advisor to the Ontario government.

Gerry is an expert on Mendele Mokher Sforim and a great public speaker. His topic will be Tsu gast baym zeyde mendele. The article was in the January issue of Der Bay on page 4.

August 5, 2007

Professor Kathryn Hellerstein is the Ruth Meltzer Senior Lecturer in Yiddish and Jewish Studies and the Undergraduate Director of the Jewish Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a native Clevelander and her mother still lives there.

Her current projects include Anthology of Women Yiddish Poets and a critical book, A Question of Tradition: Women Poets in Yiddish. Her topic will be The Poetry of Kadya Molodowsky.

August 6, 2007

Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson is the editor of the Brooklyn-based Algemeiner zhurnal. Still in his 30’s, he succeeded his father as the editor and has seen great growth in the publication partly due to his historically significant outreach to the non-orthodox community. His lecture at KlezKamp was one of the highlights of that event. At this conference his presentation will be, Integrating the Secular Rich Yiddish World & the Religious Jewish Universe. Each attendee will receive a recent sample copy of the Algemeiner zhurnal.

A Registration Form for this Conference is on page 15 of this issue.

For information and any other question, please do contact:

Chairman: Harold Ticktin, Ph: 216-272-3969
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Registration: Pauline Leber, Ph: 216-831-4177
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Programming & Vending: Fishl Kutner, Ph: 650-349-6946 E-mail fishl@derbay.org
Is It Time for Evaluation?
By Philip Fishl Kutner

A Great Idea For Your Yiddish Group Meeting

Every business, every organization and, yes, every person ought to periodically stop and ask, “Am I/are we on the right track? Are we doing the things that are getting us to our aim? Are we following the goals (stepping stones) to where we want to be?” If you do not plan you are like a rudderless ship on the seas.

Plan Your Work And Work Your Plan.

A List of Yiddish Group Questions

What should we name our club?
What is/are the best day/s to meet?
What is the best time to meet?
How often should we meet?
Where should we meet?
How can we get good programs?
How can we get new members?
How can we retain members?
What is the best way to publicize meetings?
How can we get transportation for members?
What should be the format of meetings?
Where can we get Yiddish films?
Should we charge dues—how much?
Should we allow outsiders to attend?
Should we speak only in Yiddish?
Should we have a newsletter?
Should we have a booth at local events?
Should we serve refreshments?
Should we have a speaker’s bureau?
Should we use transliteration?
Should we join the IAYC?

Yiddish Lifestyles
By Philip Fishl Kutner

New words constantly enter vibrant languages as others grow into disuse. The word “lifestyle” is not found in the 1967 Random House Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language.

Today we speak of many different lifestyles—some include; casual, playboy, thrifty, retired, youthful, single, married (couple), etc. lifestyles.

The current American Heritage Dictionary defines lifestyle as, “A way of life or style of living that reflects the attitudes and values of a person or group.” Popularization of the term occurred only a generation ago.

A close Yiddish phrase would be, der shteyger lebn.

A Way of Life

When Yiddish becomes a priority in your life and not just a casual encounter, it is like the difference between dating and marriage. There is a loyalty and commitment that transcends outside distractions. Yiddish becomes a priority in both culture and language.

Style of Living

Once we have made a personal commitment to foster Yiddish, it now leads to imprinting our leisure-time activities, our purchases, our reading and our listening. By incorporating into our lives; Yiddish cassettes, CDs, or DVDs, and Yiddish newspapers, journals, and books we become part and parcel of the greater Yiddish community.

Attitudes and Values

Our personal attitudes and values are reflected when we prioritize our interests and actions. In our hierarchy of spending time and money we mirror our satisfactions and rewards. It is what we wish to hand down to our children and what we cherish.

Of a Person or Group

Yiddish is part of our value system. It is a tradition. Saying the fir kashes in Yiddish was mandatory at zeydes peysakh seyders. The relationship names of family members are part of our cultural being. Foods, items of clothing and terms of endearment all fall into a pattern that reflects the values and attitudes of the individual as well as that of the group. Yiddish is my lifestyle.
The Yiddish “Continental Divides”  
by Philip Fishl Kutner

The Front Range of the Rocky Mountains was a formidable barrier to the westward movement of the pioneers. So too does Yiddish have its “Continental Divides”.

While geographical features like deserts, oceans and mountains are natural barriers; there are man-made ones that arose out of cultural, prejudicial values.

Examining how some of these barriers have been overcome may shed some light on modes of operation that may help “bridge” the walls and chasms that are further isolating our Yiddish.

Our western pioneer ancestors traveled north and south in the U.S. until they discovered passes. The most notable one across the Continental Divide is at Cheyenne, Wyoming. Since the railroad could not easily navigate steep grades the railroad used the lowest elevation.

Thus the Union Pacific Railroad completed the final leg of the transcontinental railroad when it met in Cheyenne. The task was unbelievable. There was no major town for 1700 miles and the Weber River had to be crossed 31 times. There were no local trees for the railroad ties, Indians constantly attacked the men and the winters were brutal.

Finally the eastward and westward branches met at Promontory Point at Great Salt Lake, Utah in 1869.

Crossing the Atlantic to a new country with its new language and mores also was an extremely difficult barrier for our people fleeing the “pogroms” of Europe. In comparison the problems Yiddish faces today really pale.

First, we need to determine who or what are the barriers. Then a systematic problem-solving methodology needs to be devised. This requires leadership of the highest order, and our support by verbal and financial encouragement.

Before one can face an adversary the situation must be such that one’s own resources are all in unison and not having to be faced with battles on the “home-front”. Our splintered mame-loshn currently is not prepared or able to face her opponents. It may be more difficult to overcome our internal differences than to make headway with the external opposition. What then is the structure of this diverse splintered world of Yiddish? Is it possible to form some type of unified front?

YUP = Yiddish Unification Plan

• Energize our Yiddish base.
• Organize our disparate groups.
• Unify our Yiddish efforts.

The vigor, vibrancy and vitality of youthful thinking are needed to instill the beauty and potential into our daily lives. The utilization of the rich body of literature poetry, music and theater is only an arm-length away. The 200 klezmer groups in the U.S. alone show the interest and dedication of mostly younger folks to the enjoyment and personal rewards of this artistic form.

It was a long trek from Theodore Herzl’s dream of a Jewish homeland and the formation of the State of Israel in 1948. Not only were there external anti-Semitic governments to deal with, but also there were (and still are) internal Hareidi elements that currently are violently opposed to a Jewish State. Thus we should not expect to draw everyone under one umbrella.

There have been attempts to organize the disparate Yiddish organizations under a common umbrella. We are little communities who do not want to give up our leadership. An example is two adjacent towns that cannot support their small fire or police departments. If they combined, they would need only one fire chief and only one police chief. The homes near their common boundaries might better be served by the other fire or police dispatch. The problem is which town gets to keep the chief. I mentioned that one should get the fire and the other the police. The response was that’s too simple.

There has been a small but significant movement when the League for Yiddish and Yugntruf moved to the Workmen’s Circle Building at 45 East 33rd St. in New York City. This building already houses the Forverts, Living Traditions, Golden Lands as well as the Workmen’s Circle organization with its bookstore rich in Yiddish materials.

It is good to organize Yiddish clubs under the wonderful International Association of Yiddish Clubs, but there needs to be conventions to which the various other major entities like YIVO, NYBC and the wonderful groups worldwide—especially in Israel, Canada, France, Australia, Europe and the groups on the Internet.
Dr. Samuel L. Levy Shares His Correspondence

This is part of the correspondence I’ve had with readers who responded to my article in Der Bay (and Outlook).

One was from Martin Jacobs.

Regarding your article on Yiddish in Israel, I say: Right on! This is something everyone should know about. What the Israeli government did to Yiddish is just what Franco did to Catalan in the 20th century, and the English did to Welsh in the 19th. But to Franco the Catalans were foreigners living in Spain; to the English the Welsh were not Englishmen but part of the "Celtic fringe". The Zionists were suppressing the language of their own people, not that of foreigners.

This attitude goes back as far as Herzl himself. Herzl wrote ("The Jewish State", in the translation of the Dover Books edition, p. 146) "We shall give up using those miserable stunted jargons, those Ghetto languages which we still employ, for these were the stealthy tongues of prisoners". Herzl was an assimilated product of Budapest and Vienna. One wonders how much contact he ever had with East European Jewish culture, or with our beloved Yiddish language.

Take heart. The Catalan language is alive and well in Spain, in the post-Franco state, and Welsh is thriving in Britain. But these languages have their own geographic homelands; Yiddish has no land of its own and so must be carefully cultivated.

Martin Jacobs, Brooklyn, NY

My reply

I knew that publication of my article was pending in Der Bay but haven't seen it yet. Hopefully Fishl will send the issue to me in Florida where we are snowbirds during the winter. The editor of Outlook - Carl Rosenberg can be reached at coutlook@telus.net should you wish to submit your article on a related topic.

Re the use of Yiddish in Israel, apart from the Chassidic community I was aware only that the language is taught as a specialty in graduate school. Did the PBS program give any more info on the subject?

The subject of language-survival demands a critical number and concentration of people using a language. I find it sad to hear about the demise of aboriginal languages. With respect to Yiddish, Dovid Katz believes that only the orthodox Jews offer a hope for its survival, since the aging population of secular Jews who still use it is diminishing rapidly. Hopefully another parameter may come into play viz. the intensity of feeling and interest on our part in keeping it alive!

Happy Chanukah! ...Sam

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Martin’s reply

I read your article in the latest issue of Der Bay. I watched a documentary on Yiddish in Israel on PBS here in New York. It makes some of the same points you made but shows how the Israeli government has reversed itself and is encouraging Yiddish, but it may be too late (let’s hope not).

I will expand my comments into an article and submit it to Der Bay (or, if you wish, to Outlook. I’m not familiar with that publication). I met Fishl at the IAYC convention in Teaneck, and had spoken to him several times over the telephone, so he knows who I am!

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Another came from Prof. Gordon Fellman at Brandeis University as follows:

This is a marvelous and very enlightening article. Have you thought of sending it to Jewish Currents for publication? I believe that magazine would embrace and love what you have written.

Thanks so much for sending me this. I am glad to have been at the Deerfield Progressive Forum.

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From Annabelle Weiss, Shaker Heights, OH

I read your article in Der Bay and loved it. You expressed so well the anger I have felt at Israel all my adult life for suppressing Yiddish. It’s so unjustified—especially in light of the respect and nurturing Ashkenazim have shown to Hebrew.

I learned something important from your story. I had not known about the “Battalion”. How could Jews behave in such an anti-Semitic manner? It’s beyond my comprehension.

I had read about Rozka Korczak, but the version I read was different from yours. It appeared in the English Forward some years ago. According to that story, Korczak spoke to a group of political leaders, after which Ben-Gurion commented, “You have been listening to a story in ‘Zhargon’.” This comment was picked up and printed in the Jerusalem Post.
This article first appeared in the Yiddishe Kultur, July-August issue, 1993. (in Yiddish)

Fifty years after the murder of millions of Yiddish speaking and culturally creative Jews. Fifty years after the Nazis and the non Jewish neighbours of the annihilated Jews, destroyed about two thousand libraries, Jewish schools, cultural institutions and with them an entire civilization—the Ashkenazic modern culture, which was created during centuries—we are witnessing how, before our eyes, a conspiracy and an annihilation process of the remainder of this culture. Not by anti-Semites is this conspiracy led. The conspiracy and the annihilation are led by none other than Jews. We are witnessing the organized conspiracy to wipe out the East European Jewish culture.

The then president of Israel, Chaim Hertzog, unveiled a monument in Poland, with the inscription in Hebrew, Polish and English, (not one word in Yiddish...) with the excuse that it was made for tourists... It was the initial sign to erase any vestige of what kind of language the murdered Jews spoke and in which language they created treasures that compare favourably and in many instances surpass the cultural and literary treasures which Jews created in "Eretz Isroel" (Palestine), Babylonia and Spain.

Before the establishment of the state of Israel, the excuse for the war against the Yiddish language and the East European Yiddish culture, was that Yiddish hinders the revival of the Hebrew language and the Hebrew culture. Today, fifty years after HASHEM ISBORAKH (the almighty) helped to liquidate the Yiddish-speaking people, together with its galut (diaspora) culture and its high moral plain, the lying excuse is no longer valid.

Other than the ideological enemies of Yiddish, the language is no threat to anyone. The country (Israel) is a Hebrew one. The political, economic and cultural-life is in Hebrew. Why are the Israeli leaders continuing the war against the language of the murdered people and hiding from the young complex-free generation the truth about the East European Jewry.

When the memorials to mark fifty years since the murder of our people, memorials that were organized by the Israeli-establishment, in Warsaw, Poland, at the monument by the famous sculptor Rapaport, and in Birkenau-Aushwitz, representatives of Israel, the President and Prime Minister spoke and not only did they forget to mention the cultural treasures that the murdered Jews struggled for its continuity, but they did not utter one word in Yiddish. Just like in Poland and the same at the memorial in "YAD VASHEM" in Jerusalem, for the youth who visited TREBLINKA and MAYDANEK-youth from Israel and from all over the world—even in the language for tourists: "YENGALISH"—was there any mention who and what were the murdered Jews. Hotentots? Gypsies? Bushmen? Aborigines? NOTHING.

An anonymous people was murdered, a people that didn’t create anything: They even avoided mentioning that without the East European culture and without their heroic martyrdom’s death, Israel would not have been established. And if these Jews didn’t merit that the young generations should learn who they were and what they represented, that among them were hundreds of thousands of writers, scholars, scientists, musicians, actors, artists—a people with all national attributes, that with their death in the gas chambers brought about the establishment of the Jewish state, more than all the other social factors in Israel and the world Zionist movement.

If the murdered Jews were culturally anonymous and without their own language and the speeches of the Israeli leaders were only an expression of humanitarian feelings, to show the world the big heartedness of the Israeli leaders, it must be remembered that not only millions of Jews perished in the period of the Nazi murders in the second world war. Millions of citizens of the former Soviet Union perished under Hitler and his hordes, also many Gypsies and Poles, and if the murdered Jews were culturally anonymous, I would advise our retiring president, Chaim Hertzog, that he should get into the aeroplane of the millionaire Isenberg and visit countries everywhere and give speeches where the Nazis slaughtered and murdered, if humanism—let there be universal humanism “Made in Israel”.

With the liquidation process there appears a bizarre situation. When A. Shneyerson established a memorial (in Paris, in the fifties) a “Yad Vashem”, in the memory of the murdered Jewish people, the Israeli establishment was ready to tear him apart. How does Shneyerson dare to establish a YAD VASHEM in the Goles (Galut) France, when a Yad Vashem is being built in Jerusalem?

continued on the next page
But while the YAD VASHEM in Jerusalem, a partner in the process to erase any sign of Yiddish—and you won’t find any inscription in Yiddish, just as if all the Jews in the horror photos were deaf mutes, so it is good that in Paris there is a “YAD VASHEM” and better yet, that in Washington, there is a Holocaust Museum with a Yiddish Pavilion, where you will find an inscription in Yiddish, and where you can see black on white, that the Jews of Eastern Europe did have a language—YIDDISH, that they did create lasting cultural treasures that surpass in quantity and quality everything that Jews created in all their languages. There, at the Washington “YAD VASHEM” you will learn the truth. While the “YAD VASHEM” in Jerusalem will serve to bring foreign diplomats and generally rich tourists with cantorial “AL MOLE RAKHMIMS”. (Prayers for the dead.)

In the interest of truth, it has to be told that the enemies of Yiddish and the denyers of the East European “GALUT CULTURE” which doesn’t mean German or English, but they mean only the East European culture in Yiddish.

Out of a feeling for political, social and cultural demobilization and respect for Israel, Jews in the Diaspora acquiesce to the vandalism, of the Israeli leaders. They are quiet when the Yiddish language of millions of Jews on whose behalf the Israeli leaders speak and demand, are stomped on with jackboots. Never mind, like in all similar cases, Jews of the world and also in Israel will some day come to realize that this was a despicable anti-cultural act, but then when they will understand the gravity, it will be too late, just as they realized too late, they should have rescued the Jews from the Nazi beasts...

Mordkhe Tsanin

Mordkhe Tsanin, is one of the most renowned authors, Yiddish activists and literary giants that we have in the Jewish cultural world. He is a universally recognized author, journalist, editor, researcher and fighter for the Yiddish language and culture. He has edited newspapers, periodicals and magazines in Poland, the former Soviet Russia and in Israel.

He is the Founder/Editor of Israel’s Yiddish Newspaper Letste Nayes and among the giants in the Yiddish literary world, like Y.L. Peretz, Chayim Zhitlovsky, Avrom Sutskever and Itche Goldberg, who left us recently at the age of 102.

Mordkhe Tsanin’s own 100th birthday, was recently celebrated in Israel and all over the world. Among his most famous creative efforts, was a complete YIDDISH-HEBREW dictionary (Verterboookh).

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**Prof. Will “Velvl” Rayms Writes**

I’ll come to the club “tsu tu a kuk” how things are.

Rubin Kilkulkin, who inspired me to learn Yiddish (an older immigrant from Russia who leads Yiddish classes at The Golda Meir Home in Milwaukee), said that his group was invited by Alvin Holzman to perform at Congregation Shalom.

I wish to buy all books by Sholom Aleichem (in Yiddish, used but in reasonable shape). I did get from Kilkulkin 3 books but in bad shape.

I studied (besides my native Polish) and speak Russian, German, Ukrainian and can figure out the pronunciation (and meaning) of many "hebraishe verter" in Yiddish texts (which is quite a challenge).

Let me give an example (from the "ayzenban geshichtes", geshichte numer tsvey: der glikchiber in kodni, page 33).

…shpringt aroys a neyfesh mit a por piskes un mit a gegolener morde un balekt zich vi a kats un macht zu mir beloshn fonye: " shto nada?"

Zog ich tsu im dafke oyf yiddish "mistome nado. s’zol nisht nada volt ich mich nisht gehetsket aher azh fun kodni"

I love Sholom Alechem’s language where every word carries weight. Here is a little inventory (the rest are German words)

NEYFESH, BELOSHN, DAFFE, MISTOME (HEBREW)

PIKES, MORDE (POLISH, RUSSIAN), AZH (POLISH)

SHTO NADO (CORRECT SPELLING CHTO NADO - PRONOUNCED SHTO NADA) (IE "WHAT DO YOU WANT" IN RUSSIAN)

FONYE - THE JEWS CALLED THE RUSSIAN FONYE, SOMETIME ADDING FONYE GANEV, FONYE GAZLEN, FONYE MANZER OR SIMPLY FONYE SHTINK.

The Russian translation of "makht zu mir beloshn fonye" is "he asked in Russian". Well, the whole flavor of this sentence evaporated.

I was born before WW II in Kovel (in Yiddish Kovle), Vohlynia, Poland (now the Ukraine). I heard Yiddish there but never spoke it.

On another topic: During my students years in Wroclaw (Breslau), Poland I was in a dorm (room and board, financed by the American JOINT (sic!)).

One of my friends there was Pinches Kutner. I do remember that he was from Belgium and later returned there. Might he be your relative.
The Chelm vs. Lublin Wagon Race
By Philip Fishl Kutner

Quite some time ago the champion Lublin Loggers sent a courier to Hymie the captain of the Chelm Wagon Wheelers (CWW). The letter was full of snide remarks about the manhood of the CWW bokhers, and included a challenge for a 4-man wagon-pulling race. The letter stated that the Lublin courier would remain in Chelm until a reply was forthcoming. It further stated that their courier would personally take the response, for the Chelmer courier probably could not find Lublin.

According to the Chief Archivist of the Chelm Courier, many years ago, a Lublin wagon pulling team had trounced a team from Chelm. The loss was so heart-wrenching that Chelm never accepted the challenge again. After many years, the invitations stopped coming, and it was lost in the memories of the elder Chelm sages—that is, until now.

The letter was read at the following meeting of the CWW, and the idea that anyone would insult their manhood and that Chaim their courier could not find Lublin was too much to swallow. A letter was dictated and sent with the Lublin courier to Louie the Lublin Loggers’ chief Lieutenant. In essence it accepted the challenge with the contest to be held at the upcoming Annual Lublin Country Fair. The choice was made to embarrass the Loggers on their own home grounds.

Both clubs selected their respective teams and began a regimen of a strict nutritious diet. The CWW bokhers ate bowlfuls of golden chicken soup with kreplekh to build up stamina for the grueling event of a kilometer. In addition physical conditioning took up several hours every day. They alternated upper body exercises of weightlifting and cardiovascular exercises of Jumping Yankls and skipping rope.

As the weeks passed, the CWW bokhers became very physically fit, and they were sure that the match would be an easy victory and the Lublin Loggers would be greatly humiliated in their own city. However, no effort was made to account for the mental/psychological aspect of the grueling race.

Despite the Chelemers best effort, they lost the kilometer long race by over 100 meters. On the way home all four Chelem racers were very quiet and upset. It was decided to take a week off and then to meet and decide on a strategy for a face-saving rematch. There was no doubt that, with adjustments to the team effort, CWW bokhers would be victorious and have a face-saving experience.

When the week passed, the team of four Chelemers met with the entire group. After much discussion a game plan was developed. It was decided that they lost because Lubliners had 3 men pulling the wagon and one man in the wagon holding the reins. The Chelemers had just the opposite—3 men sat in the wagon—one holding the reins, a second blowing the bugle and a third playing the drums.

The game plan did away with the musical instruments, for it added weight and it meant that the puller could lighten the load and move faster. However this raised a problem, what would the musicians do in the wagon? It was decided that the bugler would urge on the puller by repeating the rhyme;

Khap, Khap, Khap, Klipity Klops
Chelm is on top and Lublin Flops

The question was raised about what to do with the drummer. After much brainstorming the decision was reached to have him face backwards to see how far the Lublin wagon was behind and let the Chelm team know if the enemy was catching up.

A week before the race, Chelm held a pre-victory party. The entire town came out to celebrate and urge their contestants to come home as winners.

Early the next morning the team started the 70 kilometer trek to Lublin. It was decided that they would use the six days as a toughening period, and instead of having a team of horsed pull the wagon that their human team would do the pulling.

On the day of the race The CWW team was still 10 kilometers away and they forfeited the race. It was a humiliation that they could not face. How could they go back to Chelm and tell them that the Chelm team had once again been defeated by the Lubliners.

According to the story in the Lublin Ledger the CWW team was jeered all their way through Lublin. It was said that they kept on going and ended up in Bialystok—never to return to Chelm.

If you visit Bialystok today, you will find that there is a story about fools arriving from Chelm and were married off to four old maids who could not find anyone who would marry them. The story further relates that the four couples were sent to America and all became multi-millionaires.
Mama’s Aprons
by Philip Fishl Kutner

Mama had many sayings. I remember she used to say, “What you wear on the inside is for you to be comfortable so that you can work, but what you wear on the outside is for others to see. It tells a lot about you.”

Mama’s aprons were lovingly made on her old foot-pedaled Singer Sewing Machine. The material came from chicken feed bags made of cotton—the ones that were filled with mash from the Purina Feed Company.

The feedbags were brightly colored pastels with lovely patterns. The ones that held grain were in brown burlap bags, and they were too coarse to use.

Each morning mama came downstairs to her large, old woodstove on the chicken farm 8 miles from Flemington, New Jersey. She always wore a freshly ironed apron. I don’t remember mama ever wiping her hands on her apron or ever seeing a dirty one.

Her aprons were neatly stacked in a dresser drawer next to their bed in mama’s, and pop’s bedroom. She was as proud of her aprons as any movie actress would be of a closet full of designer gowns.

I wish I had one now to put against my cheek—all I have is memories.

When Mama Got Old

Mama had 4 boys, but there were only 3 when she got old.

Mama could not take care of herself when she got old.

Mama could not stay with her children, because she had no daughters.

Mama was moved from nursing home to nursing home because, “They are stealing my clothes.”

Mama went from the East Coast to the West Coast and back to the East Coast, when mama got old.

Mama now rests next to papa.

When mama got old
Entertainment Schedule at the IAYC 11th Conference

This is the Fourth in a series of reports on the IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007 at the Marriott Cleveland East Hotel. Each month there will be an update and a report on another phase of this great Yiddish Conference. All the updates are on the Conference website at: http://www.derbay.org/cleveland/

There will be highly talented entertainment each evening. During the first and last day of the conference there will be daytime shows.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 3, 2007

Afternoon Show

• People’s Yiddish Stage: 5 Acts
  The WEVD Yiddish Radio Hour
  The Handlers in Yiddish Humor
  My Favorite Yiddish Songs
  Di Shpilers—Yiddish Skits
  The Yiddish Folksinger

Evening Performance

• Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band
  Bert Stratton, Leader
• Kum Lakh Mit Undz
  Reuben & Dorothy Silver

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4, 2007

Yiddish Songs for Our Times

• Workmen’s Circle National Troupe
  Featuring Adrienne Cooper, one of the most influential international performers of Yiddish vocal music.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 5, 2007

Klezmer Concert at Cain Park

Conference attendees will be bused to Cain Park for the 29th Klezmer Concert in the Park.

• Arbeter Ring Klezmer Orchestra
  Director: Norman Tischler, Vocalists: Lori Cahan-Simon & Martin Moskow
• Yiddish Swingtet: Featuring, Greg Wall, Joanne Borts, & Susan Watts

MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 2007

The Closing Session will feature group participation in singing and dancing.

• Cantor Kathryn Sebo:
  Yiddish, Broadway and Beyond

Among the 30 lecture/workshops will be performers & vendors who will entertain you, and have materials for your groups back home. They are Adrienne Cooper, Bert Stratton, Hale Porter, Cookie Blattman, Hilda Rubin, “Lil Rev,” and Frank & Troim Handler.

Contact Information

Chairman: Harold Ticktin, Ph: 216-752-1881
E-mail: avvocato@peoplepc.com

Registration: Pauline Leber, Ph: 216-831-4177
E-mail: paulsam@adelphia.net

Program & Venders: Fishl Kutner,
Ph: 650-349-6946   E-mail fishl@derbay.org
Held in Albuquerque, New Mexico it is “The Southwest’s Celebration of Klezmer Music and Dance”—a weekend of concerts, dance parties, classes, and a lunch ‘n story featuring world renowned klezmer artists and scholars. The annual event took place February 16-18, 2007 and again was sponsored by Congregation Nahalat Shalom.

Klezmerquerque, featured performances, workshops and presentations with world class klezmer musicians and dancers. Past guest artists included Joshua Horowitz, Stuart Brotman and Cookie Segelstein (of “Budowitz”, “Brave Old World” and “Veretski Pass”), klezmer clarinet virtuoso Margot Leverett (founder of “The Klezmatics”), klezmer flute expert and band teacher Adrianne Greenbaum and klezmer dance masters Erik Bendix, Shulim Zaltman (from Moldovia) and Steve Weintraub. “Klezmerquerque” is held each year in February over President’s Day weekend.

Returning this year by popular demand was Adrianne Greenbaum, scholar and recording artist of the klezmer flute and associate professor of flute and klezmer ensemble teacher at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA.

Also back at Klezmerquerque 2007 was the klezmer dance master Steve Weintraub, who teaches and performs klezmer and East European Jewish dance at workshops around the world. He has been a regular and popular presenter at KlezKamp. Both Adrianne and Steve performed on Friday and Saturday evenings in addition to having taught two workshops on Saturday and one on Sunday.

The Rebbe’s Orkestra, which is the Albuquerque-based klezmer ensemble, performed on Friday and Saturday evenings and accompanied Adrianne Greenbaum on her pieces.

Featured at the concert on Saturday night was, Beyond the Pale, Toronto’s critically acclaimed and award-winning 5-piece klezmer ensemble.

The festival opened on Friday with a danced freylekh Shabbes “service” to the music of Alavados, Nahalat Shalom’s 5-piece in-house band. Then there was a vegetarian potluck dinner and performances by dancer Steve Weintraub, Adrianne Greenbaum and The Rebbe’s Orkestra. The music and dance continued with The Nahalat Shalom Community Klezmer band and open dancing led by Steve Weintraub and Nahalat Shalom’s Yiddish dance troupe Rikud.

Congregation Nahalat Shalom’s talent includes

The Rebbe’s Orkestra which performs throughout the southwest, includes our cantorial soloist and music director Beth Cohen (violin, mandolin and vocals), Barbara Friedman (electric bass), Randy Edmunds (guitar) and Debo Orlofsky (accordion). (http://arnoproductionsnm.com/index.htm)

Alavados Holy Days band is comprised of cantorial soloist Beth Cohen (guitar, violin and vocals) and congregation members Barbara Friedman (electric bass), Jake Zengerle (percussion), with violinists Jeff Brody and Gabrielle Rosen. Since 1999, Alavados has provided accompaniment for our congregational prayers, songs and dances during holidays. All of the musicians are members of Nahalat Shalom’s 20 piece intergenerational Community Klezmer band.

The Nahalat Shalom Community Klezmer Band is multi-generational and has family groups playing together. Under Nahalat Shalom’s cantorial soloist Beth Cohen’s direction, this band has a repertoire of music to play for dancing at Freylekh Shabbes services and at other holiday freylekh.

Rikud Yiddish Dance Troupe began in 2001 under the direction of Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb and Erik Bendix. Band and dancers rehearse together on Sundays 2-4 pm, and it’s open for the public to join.

Congregation Nahalat Shalom is a spiritual and cultural center for Jewish Renewal in the Southwest. It affirms and supports discovery and exploration of Jewish identity, heritage, and the arts.

Nahalat Shalom is also committed to reviving an earth-centered religious practice that emphasizes the natural elements inherent in Jewish holidays. We value and nurture the creative, spiritual, and intellectual contributions of each member.

We are a vibrant Jewish Renewal community, open and welcoming to all. We cultivate and live our Judaism through worship, learning, dialogue, joyful celebrations, community involvement, arts, music, and dance.

Beth Cohen, Klezmerquerque coordinator
Congregation Nahalat Shalom, 3606 Rio Grande Blvd. NW, ABQ, NM 87107 (505) 343-8227 office (505) 243-6276 home cohenedmund@netzero.net
Meet my last two IAYC Roommates: Celia Gordon and Hilda Rubin. Before that I roomed in Baltimore with Henrietta Baron whose twin brother came down to visit.

Please don’t tell my dad, (Fishl) but I have to admit that one of the highlights of the 10th Annual IAYC Conference held in Teaneck, New Jersey last year was my roommate, Celia Gordon. We stayed up talking well into the night, every night during the conference. I was fascinated by her life in Toronto. She is an accomplished artist and sculptor who creates entire settings of people engaged in activities. Just for an example, she has a group of characters playing bridge and another of a Passover seder.

These caricatures are on display. They are created out of clay and found objects which an art term multi-media artists use to describe having the good sense of looking around and finding the exact fit for what you wish to express. I would consider my friend, Celia, a great find for me and a perfect match.

I think of her often and was delighted when she called me in Florida. We plan to see each other next month when I am her roommate again in South Florida. Celia was wonderful, and while I feel certain she must have brought clothes for the convention, honestly I can only picture her in pajamas with her head propped up on one elbow on her pillow.

If she plans on getting any sleep, it better be before I arrive and after I leave. I want to take in the pieces she has created that are in her winter home. I have a million questions, since I have just signed up for a caricature doll-making workshop. Her techniques, I expect, will be as varied as all the things we spoke about.

I was preparing for my daughter, Melanie’s, wedding and running ideas behind her to incorporate shtetl-wedding ideas. She had some wonderful suggestions. She was a neophyte to the Yiddish conference world and I am blessed that she had the adventuresome nature to sign on without knowing whom she would room with. While I was amazed at what I was hearing, almost every question I asked her was answered with a pause and then some laughter as she spoke about where her inspirations come from.

She is truly an inspiration to me and I know the 3-hour train-ride to see her will go quickly with anticipation. So, what is a roommate like at an IAYC conference? You share a key some closet space and you turn around and step into their life. When it’s the last night before conference is over, you are sad to realize that your world will feel a little smaller without the other person to talk with right in front of you.

Meet My Roomate at the 9th Annual IAYC Conference: Hilda Rubin

At the previous conference in Minneapolis, I roomed with Hilda Rubin, of Rockville, MD whom I also thoroughly enjoyed, and I learned so much about what a great Yiddish chapter is capable of doing with committed people. Specifically, I enjoyed hearing about the theatre and drama that she is actively involved with.

Both of these women exemplify the adage that once a person’s mind has been expanded to a new idea it can never return to its original size. Somewhere between check-in and check-out, I came away with a personal experience that gave me so much to think about how I could apply Yiddish creatively within my community and artistic expression.

Personal Note to Hilda: Thanks for all the help you gave me when I had a huge headache. I hope you have forgotten the new French words you learned from me at the height of my migraine. You saved me from breaking and entering charges for the hotel rooms adjacent to ours where I would have ransacked their place for aspirin.

Do You Want an IAYC Conference Roommate? Here is what you have to do.

It is simple, for we have been very successful in matching. After you have completed your conference registration contact Fishl and let him know you want a roommate. Usually he will have or will get a perfect match.

The rooms at the Cleveland Marriott East Hotel are $115 per night plus tax. Your share will be half, and that is only $57.50 plus tax. Scholarship winners also get a shared room.

Please be sure you see the IAYC website updates at: http://www.derbay.org/cleveland/ Each month the front page of Der Bay covers another aspect of the upcoming Conference in the Cleveland area, and it also appears under Conference Updates on the website.
The Seattle Yiddish Group gave Frank a party to show him our appreciation for his part in our founding, vitality and continuity. Entertainer Sheila Fox, leader of The Kosher Red-Hots, rendered some of his favorite Yiddish numbers, accompanied by D’vorah Kost, accordionist. As co-chair of the Group, I spoke in tribute of him. Here is my short talk entitled, "Ode (Owed) to Frank Krasnowsky" is attached.

Frank, how can we thank you enough for the many years you’ve devoted yourself to keeping the Yiddish language and its music alive, not only here in Seattle but in our surrounding towns -- and even beyond? We in the Seattle Yiddish Group know of contributions you made directly to us; you came in from Duvall without fail to every one of our monthly meetings regardless of stormy weather, floods, and other adversities.

You brought us your songs and stories, your knowledge of the poetry, literature and history of Yiddish theater. Yet, you weren’t content with the Yiddish you learned as Mame-loshn at home; you went on to hone it by taking the summer program at the National Yiddish Book Center, the course in Yiddish at Oxford University and attendance at conferences of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs. You shared all those experiences with us, and we were your beneficiaries.

But in looking over the record of more than thirty years since you prompted a small core of friends to organize as the Seattle Yiddish Group, I began to realize how active and generous you’ve been in bringing energy and talent to an amazing circle of audiences. I want to share some of that record with everyone here. Before I’m through, I’m sure they’ll agree that you, Frank, deserve being called a “living, Yiddish-loving legend”.

Beginning in 1984, you performed Yiddish songs (some of which you also translated into English) at the Northwest Folk Festival, and in 1992, 1994 and 1995, as well, at the Folk Life Festival in the Seattle Center. Until 1999 you were a featured performer at several Ethnic Heritage Fairs. The Crossroads Festival of Lights put you on stage in 1997. You won them over in Sun Valley, Idaho, at the Rocky Mountain Folk Festival. Mostly you shared the platform with the late Sidney Schueuer, partner in your duo, “Chutzpah”.

Those were your professional gigs. Your labor of love (the real meaning of “amateur”) was your visits to retirement homes and senior centers. You went to the Kline Galland Home monthly since 1983. You brought memories and tears of joy to the folks at Cascade Vista, Lakeview Gardens, Evergreen Vista, Madison House and Hearthstone House, and to senior centers in Bothell, Carnation, and the Pike Place Market. The Jewish Community Center opened its door to you in 1983.

Your contribution to the ethnic richness of the Seattle area was recognized by grants from the Seattle and King County Arts Commissions, as well as by the Seattle Labor Theater. This brings up another aspect of your record: The songs and poetry of the labor movement, the songs of struggle and protest.

The cassette you made of these deserves special mention. It includes such classics as Ale Brider, Mayn Ruhe Platz, In Kampf, Dem Milners Trern, Arbeter Froyen, Vakht Oyf, and Ot Azoy Neyt a Shnayder. Related are the songs you did with Sydney Schueuer at the Warsaw Memorial Gathering: Zog Nit Keynmol, Undzer Shtetl Brent, not to mention your “Yiddish Songs of Hope and Defiance” performed at Whitworth College and the Ann Frank Exhibit in Portland.

There’s another side, Frank, which I must mention: Your acting and directing during the time you were a member of Actors Equity; You performed 25 or more roles with the Seattle Civic Light Opera, Center Stage and other companies. Notable plays were Got Fun N’koma; you were the defending angel in Bontshe Shveig. I was proud to join you in “Yiddish Lives!” in 1996; you were the script writer, narrator and director and we sold out a four-hundred-seat house in 1996 at the Seattle Museum of History and Industry.

Perhaps the best gift you gave us all is what you did to help develop some new, young Yiddish performers, two of whom, Sheila Fox and D’vorah Kost, are here today to play and give you “koved”.

Frank, I’ve spoken of gifts you’ve given us. You have been blessed. That’s best summed up by Paul Buckley when he said: “A wonderful voice, sometimes soft and tender, sometimes booming and boisterous, but always heart-full.” Although you’ll be in Portland, you’ll continue to bring insights and pleasure. And, for us, we’ll have memories of our laughter, tears, and the conviction that we are all “brider un shvester” -- a theme that you expressed so well over all these years.
Carole Stein Writes from Eugene, OR

I would like to thank you for your long dedication to Yiddish Clubs. We are in our 13-14th year, and have had continual bimonthly meetings all that time. I was the organizer, although I do not speak Yiddish well. My daughter, Sarah Stein, was the instigator for this club forming. (She is now Professor of History and Jewish Studies at the University of Washington).

I have managed to get transliterated materials, and recently, with the addition of a new member, we have been reading in the original language. We would like to receive IAYC materials in category A, B and C—in other words, all of your offerings. We greatly appreciate everything that IAYC has sent in the past. I would like the e-mail address for our club to now be in my name, carolestein@hotmail.com.

Even though we are in Oregon, it may not surprise you to know that most of our members, town folks, and professors from the University of Oregon, went to public schools in New York City. So the evenings we meet are not only about Yiddish, but also about commonly shared memories of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles as related to the Jewish community.

Sam Levy Writes

Many thanks for sending me the February issue of Der Bay. It was a pleasure to read. The contents weren’t a complete surprise to me because Dovid Kunigis’s e-mail got here ahead of the post. Still, it gave me particular pleasure especially in seeing Dovid’s translation of Mordke’s Tsain’s passionate article because it was truly a historic piece which otherwise might never have been accessible to English-speaking Jews.

Dovid deserves credit for bringing it back to life. I’ll bet there’s a wealth of wonderful material of that kind that could use his talents and love of Yiddish. In my jaded view, politicians, old and new prefer to hide their sins—not expose them.

I was also pleased to read Jerry Cohen’s comment on seeing the name of his late mother-in-law Manya Lipshitz mentioned in my article. The remarkable story of her experiences together with a group of young teen-agers who literally organized and ran a Jewish school for themselves in the former S.U., and wrote their own journal plus the chance recovery of her original manuscript was a beautiful read.

Permit me to correct an error in my reply to Martin Jacobs re my article on the suppression of Yiddish. Carl Rosenberg, editor of the Canadian journal Outlook can be reached at: cjoutlook@telus.net

Davka

"Davka: Eretz yiddish vetarbuta" ("Davka: Yiddishland and its Culture") edited by Benny Mer, in Hebrew and Yiddish. $21 one-year subscription including shipping, 2X a year, ISSN: 1565-8198.

"Davka is a Hebrew-language magazine that explores the culture of Eastern Europe Jews," says editor, Benny Mer, an author and translator. To subscribe: The Hebrew University Magnes Press sales@magnespress.co.il Tel: +972 2 658 6660

The editorial board has historian David Assaf, author Haim Be’er, & literary critic Avner Holzman. Davka, pronounced davka in Talmudic Hebrew, with the accent on the second syllable, is davka in modern Hebrew, with the accent on the first syllable. This term, means "precisely this way," connotes defiance ("just because") pronounced davka.

A quote on the Internet regarding the magazine: "Those wishing to get an impression of Yiddish culture should look at Davka, a new journal that deals with Yiddish culture, which means Yiddish culture in its widest sense—literature, film, music but also the daily life of Eastern European Jews.”

Congregation Shalom Vinkl

For the second time our Congregation Shalom Vinkl in Milwaukee, WI held a Gastronomical Yiddish "Tepl Mazl"—a pot luck luncheon. Fifty-one of our members brought their favorite dishes; herring dishes, chopped liver, gefilte fish, gribenes, kugels, stuffed cabbage, brisket, varnishkes and kashe, mandelbreyt, strudel and more. With a committee headed up by my wife Reggie, this extravaganza brought almost 100 members. Ilya Vernik and Reuben Kinkulkin presented a program of Yiddish music. If any Yiddish club wants to have an afternoon of fine dining and a short program, this is your ticket. Lots of work, but A LOT OF FUN!! I’d share this idea with anyone contacting me.

The clubs don’t share ideas with others. We are looking for new ideas for our monthly meetings. We wish to share other ideas. Our attendance shows that we are doing something right. So let’s all share. Our vinkl would not be where we are without the ideas that came from Barbara Goldstein, and Fishl. We celebrated our sixth anniversary, and still growing! Dink Holzman papadink@aol.com at 414-352-3884 8950 N. Fielding Rd. Milwaukee, WI 53217

****Roz Baker is presenting a workshop, at the IAYC conference in Cleveland, on sharing Yiddish club ideas. Call her at: 612-377-5456
YIVO frilingkursn
Der Maks Vaynraykh-Tsenter bam YIVO leygt for di vayterdike frilingkursn: Ale klasn kumen for in YIVO. Ir muzt zikh farshraybn in foroys.

Dr Khave Lapin (Kvinser kaledzh)
Loshn un shteyger
3 dinstikn, 6:45-8:15 in ovnt
Februar dem 27tn, marts dem 13tn un 20stn

Eve Jochnowitz (NYer universitet)
Yidishe kulinaire landshaft
3 donershtikn, 6:45-8:15 in ovnt
April dem 12tn, 19tn un 26stn

Dr Hershl Glasser
Yidishe etymologyes
3 dinstikn, 6:45-8:15 in ovnt
May dem 8tn, 15tn un 29stn

Courses at YIVO Spring 2007

YIDDISH LANGUAGE AND LIFE
Instructor: Dr. Chava Lapin (Queens College)
Discover how Yiddish reflects and shapes Jewish life.
Class conducted entirely in Yiddish.
3 Tuesdays, 6:45-8:15 P.M.
February 27, March 13 and 20
Tuition: $90 / $75 (YIVO members)

YIDDISH GASTRONOMIC LANDSCAPES
Instructor: Eve Jochnowitz (NYU)
Yiddish and food? a great combination.
Class conducted entirely in Yiddish.
3 Thursdays, 6:45-8:15 P.M.
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Tuition: $90 / $75 (YIVO members)

YIDDISH ETYMOLOGIES
Instructor: Dr. Hershl Glasser (YIVO)
Learn everything you wanted to know about where Yiddish words come from.
Class conducted entirely in Yiddish.
3 Tuesdays, 6:45-8:15 P.M.
May 8-15-29
Tuition: $90 / $75 (YIVO members)

Address: 15 West 16 St., New York NY 10011-6301
For further information call 212-294-6138

A Pen Pal from the Netherlands
Sem van Gelder, semvangelder@pianowereld.nl

After I contacted you I got reservations about the whole thing. On Der Bay’s site I read a contemptuous statement about Jews who speak ‘daytshmerish’ and I am afraid that’s exactly what I do.

In The Netherlands almost no one can speak the ‘real Yiddish’, apart from a small group around the journal ‘Di grine medine’ (which is now published entirely in oysyes). In our country up to the 20th century Jews always spoke ‘West-Yiddish’ (according to German expert Salcia Landmann), i.e. Yiddish without any Slav influence. So, no ‘bopkes’, ‘nudnik’ or ‘farblonzjert’ with us.

Although I have a few good books on Yiddish (a.o. Feinsilver, The Taste of Yiddish), my Yiddish vernacular is mostly made up of many words and expressions my parents used (for instance I use words such as a lewaye, a matzeiwe, shivve sitzen, an almone, jorzajt etc). Therefore I fear that I will remain an outsider and that does not attract me. Could you perhaps shed some light on this?

Sem van Gelder
(60, married before; now relationship with daughter (39) of an older cousin who hid from the Nazis together with my parents. Two own children around 30, stepfather of two girls now.) Co-publisher of a nationwide piano journal, jazz and classical buff, chess fan, admirer of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, Isaac Singer, Krishnamurti, Nietzsche, Horowitz, Glenn Gould, Michelle Pfeiffer, Marilyn Monroe, Mary Tyler Moore (I am getting old!), Mohammed Ali, soccer/football etc.

Two New Yiddish Clubs in Kansas
Eileen Miller, Dir. Resident Services, Vlg. Shalom

Our Wednesday 3pm Yiddish group came up with a name! They liked your suggestion of the Kansas Knakers! The Tuesday conversational Yiddish group will get back to the task of naming their group at their next meeting..

A project of the Wednesday group is working on a translation of Goldilocks and the 3 bears. Once they are finished with translation they plan to go ahead and act it out.

We did visit today the sample newsletter you sent. On the back page you had the TUM TAM article. Peculiar to most of our group today were the following 2 expressions/words: Strakadur—one of the members of the group said her mom always used it to describe someone who talks a lot. A greps aroys, a gezunt arayn—a belch comes out and good health in...used by a member’s mom when burping a baby. Are these familiar to you or others?

If you’re ever in the Kansas City area please do come over.
"Purim in Khelm"

The National Yiddish Theatre - Folksbiene presents Purim In Khelm:
by Motl Didner & Miryem-Khaye Seigel

An originele yidishe muzikalishe komedye
Prezentirt mit englishe un rusishe iberkeplekh)

Fir fraye forshtelungen:

1) Tuesday, February 27 - Hunter College, Kaye Playhouse - 7 PM. Free tickets: 212-772-4148
2) Tuesday, March 6 - Lehman College, Lovinger Theater, - 2 PM. Free tickets: 718-960-8025
3) Wednesday, March 7 - Queens College, Colden Auditorim - 2 PM. Free tickets: 718-93-8080
4) Thursday, March 8 - Brooklyn College, Whitman Theater - 2 PM. 718-951-4600

Info: Folksbiene 212-213-2120
http://www.folksbiene.org

Ikh hof az ir vet bayzayn. (I hope you can make it.)

Linette “Lin” Schlossman o"h


After earning a degree at the Fashion Institute of Technology, she joined Wamsutta as a textile designer. At the University of Cincinnati, she earned a bachelor's and then a master's degree in Education (with a specialty in reading). She was awarded the honor of The Most Outstanding Scholar in the College in 1969.

From 1969 until her retirement in 1984, she taught second grade at Brent Elementary School in Finneytown, Ohio. She published more than 140 poems and stories in Yiddish and English, and contributed articles to the Yiddish Forward newspaper. Lin was considered Mrs. Yiddish of Cincinnati and led the Yiddish club there.

The family relocated to Sarasota, Florida and from 1995 on, Lin taught weekly classes on Yiddish language, literature, culture, a reading course and ran monthly community programs at the Flanzer Jewish Community Center. She was a member of the Congregation for Humanistic Judaism. Lin was 76 when she died.

Judith Lubeck Writes

I noted that in your Oystsgugen ... was a note from Stanley Siegelman of Great Neck, NY telling that the "Forward" is discontinuing its "Yiddish Vinki" column of which he is an outstanding contributor.

It is a shande that The Forward is canceling the ONLY column with some Yiddish in it when the original Forverts was, and remains a Yiddish language newspaper reflecting a Yiddish perspective on the world and our culture. Mr. Siegelman is very clever in Yiddish and English. What he produces is a delight. And a reminder of how "it" used to be. Some Yiddish in the Forward would be appreciated.

At the January meeting of our group "Keep Yiddish Alive" at the Osher Mann JCC, San Rafael, CA I used 3 of Siegelman’s poems from old issues for a full hour of learning and enjoyment by all of us.

Please pass our appreciation to Mr. Siegelman with a groyse dank and he should keep doing them and find a new outlet or better yet have "The Forward" continue printing them because of a groundswell of complaints by all readers and all those who want to keep creative Yiddish expression alive.

This item reflects much of the focus of your last issue. I hope there will be the groundswell of reprimand to The Forward for canceling this very important last and only tangible Yiddish in its paper.

Paramus Yiddish Club

(Khaverim Far Yidish), Friends for Yiddish, meets at 2:00 P.M. on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Our February topic is, “Tu Bishvat”. Discussion is mostly in Yiddish and is led by Rabbi Arie Gotlieb at the Paramus JCC in Paramus, NJ.

The purpose of this club is to encourage the discussions in Yiddish, so that Yiddish becomes a current living language, not just a nostalgic curiosity. Our Club joined the IAYC to be able to use the educational materials such as Writings from famous Yiddish Authors at club meetings, and to find out from other clubs about Yiddish speakers also about the International Yiddish Conferences.

All are welcome. Membership is $10 a year. Call Varda Grinspan 201-791-0327 or e-mail: vardagrinspan@verizon.net
Mama’s Knipl

Papa was always short of money, but mama always had a knipl. It was the Great Depression. Times on our chicken farm eight miles outside of Flemington, New Jersey were not good. Yes, there always was plenty of fresh and canned fruit and vegetables, dairy products, eggs and chicken—no hard cash. But mama always had her knipl.

It was in a slit in the mattress—Papa and we boys knew it, but never dared touch it. Mama’s bed sheet was tucked so tight that mama could notice even a slight pull. No hospital or hotel sheet has ever been put on the way mama did.

When mama went to the hospital to give birth to little Semele she took her knipl—it was at her side the whole time. When Semele was brought in to be nursed, she had her two must prized possessions—one on either side of her chest.

Mama’s knipl was earned from roomers and boarders who came out from The City. Our large farmhouse was always crammed during the summer. We boys all slept in one room, for every room meant more for mama’s knipl.

Although mama collected cash from the roomers and boarders, she never paid papa for the chicken, eggs, milk, butter, cream, pot cheese, fruits and vegetables that we produced.

My mama always had a knipl!

Mama, Speak to Me in Yiddish

Mama, speak to me in Yiddish. I remember how you drawled my name so that it sounded like fi’she-le, fi’she-le. When Chayle calls and she says it the same way, a chill and goose bumps cover my skin.

Now I see you very late at night. You are sitting on a chair with your hands clasped like Whistler’s Mother. Mama, speak to me in Yiddish.

I miss you and our talks in Yiddish. Now I think about grammar, transliteration, syntax, past participles, complemented verbs, and my speech is stilted. With you it was cozy, free and easy.

Look at me—you’d be so proud and happy.

Mama, oh mama, speak to me in Yiddish!

Der Bay
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Web site: http://www.derbay.org
E-mail FISHL@derbay.org
Ph: 650-349-6946
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If you’re blessed, Please send a LITTLE extra
Label date is when you LAST contributed.

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

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Look at me—you’d be so proud and happy.

Mama, oh mama, speak to me in Yiddish!
Lecture/Workshop Presentations at the IAYC 11th Conference

This is the Fifth in a series of reports on the IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007 at the Marriott Cleveland East Hotel. Each month there will be an update and a report on another phase of this great Yiddish Conference. All the updates are on the Conference website at: http://www.derbay.org/cleveland/

Last month we covered the three keynote plenary session speakers. Each morning will start with a keynote lecture in plenary session.

Among the 30 lecture/workshops will be some of the performers and vendors who will also have materials for your groups back home. They include: Adrienne Cooper, Bert Stratton Hale Porter, Cookie Blattman, Miriam Beckerman, “Lil Rev” Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson, Sonia Pressman Fuentes, Hilda Rubin, Frank Krasnowsky and Marcia Gruss Levinsohn.

As we near the Conference date there will be more details and about the presenters. Some will be discussed here and others in Der altveltlekher farband fun yidish-klubn nayes.

Here is the list of lecture/workshop titles.

Programming for Yiddish Clubs—A Workshop
Yiddish Translator’s Workshop
Yiddish and the Labor Movement
Di Yidishe Shtunde
Fascinating Yiddish Children’s Literature
The Exciting KlezKamp Experience
New Yiddish Songs from Around the World
Isaac Bashevis Singer Made My Mother Cry
The Early Montreal Immigrant Experience
Oysgeblozn fun finger: mir shafn a nay folkslid

The 3 Great Classic Yiddish Writers:
   Similarities & Differences
How Being an Immigrant Affected My Life
Life for Jews in the Middle-Ages
The Songs of Mordecai Gebirtig
Vladimir Medem: Non-Jewish Jew and Yiddishist
Yiddish Used in Communication
Komputeray-blits post un vebl zaytlekh
Jewish History through Yiddish Music
Yiddish Kids in Action
The Jews of Krakow, Poland
Yiddish Theater’s Influence on Music & Culture in America
Turkey’s Rescue of Jewish Intellectuals 1933-45
The History of Jewish Music
The Vilnius Yiddish Institute
Lomir Shpiln Teater: Di Khelemer Naronim
Jews in Vaudeville
Learning Yiddish Through Music
Mickey Katz From Cleveland
Bolsheviks and Bundists
Born to Kvetch by Michael Wex—A Critique

Contact Information

Website: http://www.derbay.org/cleveland/

Co-Chair: Annabelle Weiss..Ph: 216-752-2021
Co-Chair: Marilyn Cagin.....Ph: 216-378-0507
Co-Chair: Harold Ticktin.....Ph: 216-752-1881
E-mail: avvocato@peoplepc.com

Registration: Pauline Leber, Ph: 216-831-4177
E-mail: paulsam@adelphia.net

Programming & Vending: Fishl Kutner,
Ph: 650-349-6946 E-mail fishl@derbay.org
**Our Friend, Sidney Weinstein o’h**

Sidney Weinstein passed away at the age of 91. He was a devoted Yiddishist, a camp director, school teacher, published writer, lecturer, produced and directed many of his own Yiddish plays.

During World War II he served in the Army Air Corps as a gunnery instructor. With the G. I. Bill he completed his education and received two degrees from NYU. In 1954 he accepted a teaching position and moved his family to Lakewood, CA.

Sid helped organize and taught Kindershuln in Boston, Philadelphia, New York and Southern California. His wife Ethel joined him in teaching at the shuln. They loved children and each other.

Sid considered the JCC in Long Beach an important part of his life. He took pride in his contributions to the Center. Throughout his life he was socially and politically active for the rights of all people. Those who knew him marveled and enjoyed his warmth, his humor, sensitivity and knowledge.

*Editor’s note:* Sid was a prolific writer and a person to whom I often turned for advice. He will be missed.

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**Dr. Mordkhe Schaechter o”h**

Professor Schaechter passed away just as the last issue of *Der Bay* went to the printer, and I had read several of the obituaries written about him. They all noted the many contributions he made to Yiddish in the form of publications, organizations and teaching. This list is a very, very impressive one.

My personal remembrances is of the man who greeted me in #40 when I was just beginning in the summer of 1990 and leading up to the first issue January 1, 1991. He was warm and friendly. Even though there were frequent interruptions with phone calls, Dr. Schaechter never made me feel that I should leave.

From that time on he was a phone mentor. I remember he jokingly said that I could refer to him as “du”, for I was a year older.

The dozen letters that I happened to save are very dear to me. He gently castigated me on my errors, along with the corrections.

How are you? OK? I hope everything is well. Sometimes one reads undeserved criticism, sometimes undeserved praise. A good example of the latter is your statement (*Der Bay*, Nov. 1994 p.1) about “interesting information of world-wide interest in ….”

I never felt that they were said in any way other than to be informative and helpful especially when it happened the second time. Sometimes the letters were signed by Nettie Farber mentioning that “Dr. Schaechter” had asked her to write to me.

Then there was the two-page, single-spaced letter in regard to the ongoing debate over the shtumer alef.

Thank you for the very warm words that you had to say about *Afri Shvel*, Yugntruf and me in the latest issue of *Der Bay*, March 1996 issue. In the same issue on page 1, you write that [it is desirable that one] “not quibble over minor matters. — like the shtumer alef.” I would like to comment on it, if I may.

Professor Schaechter then proceeded to comment on a possible discussion between two Orthodox Jews about kosher versus glatt kosher, or kol-ishe, or any of a thousand other details of Jewish religious law or customs. He proceeded to write about what is relevant to someone and what is not. This was followed by a detailed discussion.

*Dr. Schaechter, we all shall miss you.*

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**No. Shore Sr. Ctr. Yiddish Club**

_by Miriam Stein_

Our Senior Center requires that all members of the Yiddish Club be members of our Senior Center. We offered the Yiddish Club for the first time in our bulletin a few months ago. The response was overwhelming. We had to close the Club at 30 members with 25 on the waiting list. This coming year we are offering a Yiddish Club on Monday and a different Yiddish Club on Friday. There are still people on the waiting list. Who knew!

I think we will indeed subscribe to *Der Bay* and also to the International Association of Yiddish Clubs. We will be passing around an envelope each meeting to collect $2 from each person. It’s a funny thing, I never get as much money as there are people at the meeting.

You know what we need more of? Good Yiddish jokes. We have conversation, tell jokes, sing songs, and read very short stories or proverbs each week. I will indeed spend time on your site.

Is there an exchange of interesting material among the Yiddish groups? I know we’ll all have different approaches. Our group wants fun. No grammar. Nothing academic. Just a love of the *mame-loshen* that we heard when we were children.
With its inception in 2006, the Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program is piloting a number of new courses at the University of Ottawa in history, literature, and language that address the multifaceted experience of Canadian Jewry. The Vered Program is attracting a variety of undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral students as well as members of the community-at-large.

As of September 2007, the University of Ottawa will be offering a minor in Canadian Jewish Studies and further expanding its course offerings. As the newest addition to the Vered Program, I am excited to be announcing the following developments in the field of Canadian Jewish Studies, and in my area of specialization: Yiddish Canadian Studies.

Yiddish is one area of emphasis in the Vered Program, as reflected in the creation of two new courses in 2007. The first, a seminar called “Yiddish Canada in the Twentieth Century” taking place in the winter, examines the past and present of Yiddish as it relates to ideology, the press, education, literature, and theatre.

The second is an intensive elementary Yiddish language course slated for the spring. This intensive language and culture course provides the basics of Yiddish reading, writing and speaking, plus the fundamentals of Yiddish cultural literacy in just six short weeks, and with a uniquely Canadian focus.

The course will run from May 3 to June 12. It will offer morning instruction from Mondays to Fridays covering the first half of Weinreich’s *College Yiddish* and supplementary materials on Canadian literature and culture, as well as additional activities on some afternoons, evenings, and Sundays.

This program is designed to complement the expanding field of Jewish Canadian Studies, where much of the collective experience of Canada’s Jews has been steeped in Yiddish. An intensive Yiddish language program is a highly effective means of acquiring basic skills in Yiddish grammar, comprehension, reading, writing, speaking, and an overall appreciation of the wealth of Yiddish culture.

Such programs, which are generally offered during the summer in places like New York, Paris, Tel Aviv, and Vilnius, combine classroom learning with outside enrichment activities.

They attract a diverse, international body of students, and have produced accomplished scholars in areas including Jewish Studies, comparative literature, history, and performance as well as helped to train Yiddish singers, actors, writers, and Yiddish-speaking parents.

Having taught for several years in New York’s intensive Uriel Weinreich Program in Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture, I can attest to the effectiveness of the intensive approach: with no “Yiddishland” to call home, these program’s provide a full immersion experience. However, there is currently no such program in Canada, despite its status as a centre of Yiddish language and culture.

This very intensive course, which is being offered under the auspices of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, will provide students with a multifaceted immersion experience in Yiddish. The intensive course consists of two components that function in tandem: formal classes in language, and complementary activities.

Several afternoons a week, students will participate in activities such as lectures, workshops, or Yiddish film screenings to complement classroom learning. Students will also have the opportunity to take part in programs and excursions some evenings and Sundays. The course thus integrates grammar and language study with a strong cultural component that includes folklore, music, literature, film, and theatre.

The course will teach Yiddish as a living language and culture. As its instructor, and a former instructor of New York’s Uriel Weinreich Program in Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture, my approach to the teaching of Yiddish is to emphasize active engagement with Yiddish from day one. Students will be able to hold a simple conversation by the end of the first week, and be able to write a postcard soon after.

They also will be exposed to the development of the language and its literature over its long history in Europe as well as in its immigrant centres, with a strong emphasis on the Yiddish communities across Canada. Instruction will take place in English, and no previous knowledge is required. The course is designed to appeal to a wide variety of participants: students at the high school,
undergraduate and graduate levels; post-doctoral scholars and researchers; writers, actors, singers and musicians; genealogists and individuals with a personal interest; and anyone with an interest in learning a language and culture of a thousand years of Jewish life. It will prepare students to read a wide variety of texts, and to write and speak Yiddish in its Standard form while at the same time gaining an appreciation of its many variants and dialects.

The course will highlight Canadian writers such as J. I. Segal, Ida Mazá, Rokhl Korn, and present the rich institutional life of Yiddish in Canada: newspapers, journals, libraries, schools, theatre, and political organizations. It will encourage students to tackle the language creatively and produce projects that present an aspect of Yiddish in Canada, from an interview with a Yiddish activist to the creation of an original work of literature or art.

The course consists of two 3-credit undergraduate classes: YDD 1101-1102. It is open to all University of Ottawa students, while students registered at other universities may enrol with a letter of permission from their home universities. The course also is open to non-University students as Special Students (auditors are not permitted).

For details on fees and payment, visit: www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/regist/fees/fees2006_en.htm or call the University of Ottawa’s InfoService at 1-877-868-8292. Limited accommodation is available in the University of Ottawa’s Residences. For more information on housing at the University of Ottawa, visit www.ottawaresidences.com or call 1-888-564-4545.

To register for the course or for information, please contact Houria Messadh, Administrative Assistant of the Institute of Canadian Studies, at 613-562-5800 ext. 3231, or via e-mail at hmessadh@uOttawa.ca. The Vered Program’s website is located at http://www.canada.uottawa.ca/en/vered.htm. Space is limited: reserve your spot today!

Editor’s note: Rebecca Margolis, the course instructor, received her doctorate in Yiddish Studies at Columbia University. She has taught Yiddish in a variety of settings, including Columbia University, the Urie Weinreich Program in Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture, the Charlotte Institute, Workmen’s Circle shuln in the New York area, and at Montreal’s Jewish Public Library. The focus of her research is Canadian Yiddish culture, in particular on issues of transmission.

This article is based on one that is also appearing in The Canadian Jewish Outlook magazine in March of 2007.

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**Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson**

Rabbi Yosef Yitzkhok Jacobson, in his early thirties, is the youngest Yiddish editor. Each week, he produces the largest circulation Yiddish newspaper, the Algemeiner Zhurnal. When his father, Gershon Jacobson, the paper’s founding editor passed away in 2005, Yosef Yitzkhok (“Y.Y.”), not quite 33 at the time and the youngest of the editor’s five children, took over editorship, while his older brother Simon became publisher.

Since then the paper has, included new writers ranging from Hasidic to a wide range of authors from the international Yiddish literary community who contribute weekly from Washington New York, Boston, Vilna, Kiev and Tel Aviv. The paper has been republishing classics of Yiddish literature, including works of Sholem Aleichem, Leyb Naydus, Y. L. Peretz, Mendele Moykher Sforim and Moshe Kulbak, bringing the best of Yiddish literature to today’s (largely haredi) Yiddish speakers.

Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson achieves, and maintains the one major Yiddish forum truly open to haredi and secular Yiddish writers and readers alike.

Rabbi Jacobson is a sought-after Jewish speaker internationally, and has lectured to Jewish and non-Jewish audiences on 6 continents and in 35 states. An orator renowned for his humor, erudition, and ability to communicate profound subjects lightly and entertainingly to diverse audiences, he is also known for his tolerance and respect toward the widest diversity of thought in Judaism (and in the field of Yiddish!) today.

He teaches Jewish philosophy and mysticism at the rabbinical college Chovevei Torah in New York and produced the tape series “A Tale of Two Souls” and “Rebuilding a Shattered World.” His weekly Internet essays (in Yiddish and English), on Judaism, mysticism and psychology are read by tens of thousands worldwide. His weekly Yiddish editorials in the Zhurnal have become one of the most exciting current Yiddish reads of our times.

Instead of shirking the issues of the Haredi-Secular “Yiddish confrontation”, Y.Y. has taken them on frontally, opening up the major issues of Yiddish culture to frank discussion in a spirit of moving forward with mutual respect and cooperation.

Yiddish, As the Language of Choice for the Great Jewish Writers of Eastern Europe in the 19th Century
by Samuel W. Levy

This is a slightly amended e-mail exchange I had with Dr. Angelika Maeser Lemieux, a history (?) professor in Montreal, on the emergence of Yiddish, as the language of choice for the great Jewish writers of Eastern Europe in the 19th century. She has no objections to using her name.

...Sam

4 Oct 2006

Dear Sam,

I read this beautiful and informative article of yours and congratulate you on bringing to the foreground an important part of Jewish history and culture. About two years ago I read a book at McGill about the history of Yiddish and knew something of the fight against Yiddish in Israel, but your article gives a brief yet succinct view of the facts and rightly maintains that language is a culture carrier; great poets/writers have indeed shaped the consciences of millions of people and raised their level of humanity.

Perhaps the Yiddish revival will help somewhat to restore it again; like many aboriginal tongues, Yiddish may have been deliberately silenced, but it will be taught and spoken again even if it is marginal to the mainstream culture. It occurred to me that perhaps there is an unconscious gender bias in the rejection of Yiddish and the hegemony of Hebrew as the official language of Judaism in Israel.

After all, "mother tongue"—the Yiddish spoken and written language which as you say produced a highly humanistic and creative culture among Ashkenazi Jews—can be symbolic of the Mothers, the archetype of the eternal Feminine principle which the arch-patriarchal advocates of a "muscular Judaism" want to deny and suppress. (See Y. Rabkin on the transformation of Eastern European male identity to "muscular Judaism")

I would also add that the same phenomenon can be seen in Protestant Canada at the turn of the century when the term "muscular Christianity" came into prominence, and the Western Canadian minister, Ralph Connor, wrote many novels to reinforce that "macho" male WASP identity among the pioneering Westerners! I see a link here between the Jewish settlers of Palestine and the Anglo-Saxon settlers of the Great Plains; both threw off the gentle side of the Mothers or the Feminine aspect of Being and tried to force the "tough guy" traits to prevail in the "conquerors of the land".

In social and cultural life, the rejection of the maternal principle brings about greater violence, militarism, cruelty, one-sidedness, the destruction of nature, and the demonization/inferiorization of women, pagans, and people of color.

Clearly, Jewish culture in Israel has suffered due to the lack of balance, and the Tree of Life is dying (if such a thing could be, but I am speaking metaphorically here) for want of water from the "springs of salvation": the Feminine/Mother side of Being. For me, "tikkun" today requires that we each try to restore that primal union, balance, and integration of polarities. And maybe speaking some Yiddish wouldn't hurt either, "nu"?

Sam:

Dear Angelika,

We think of languages in general, and Yiddish in particular, as a mother tongue (mameloshn) with all the love and nurturing it implies. Dovid Katz in "Words on Fire" (p.203), discusses it in another way. Back in the days of a struggle between Hebrew & Yiddish, an ardent Yiddishist (Lifschtz) in Odessa wrote some daring poetry in an early Zeitung (1862) about Yudl & Yehudis—Yudl being the Jew (male) and Yehudis, the female language (Yiddish). Yehudis challenges her husband as follows: "You just want to have pleasure from others," she tells him, but "if you pamper me and caress me, you will work yourself up into a sweat, but afterwards you'll have the ultimate pleasure." The romantic and sexual images then broaden out to issues of equality with other nations, writes Katz. "If you want to be equal to other people, then don't keep your distance from me.

Polish me, clean me up, and I will be beautiful. You will see how in a short time a great person will emerge. I will sing my song for you as the finest nightingale. I will be able to read and write in every branch of wisdom, all kinds of work, whatever you will want; let me just learn, I absorb things lightly, just try and you'll be full of joy...." It came to pass, of course, that writers Mendele Mokher Sforim, Sholem Aleichem, Y.L. Peretz and many others, caressed her into beauty and maturity. "Nu?"

This is a book worth reading!
Israel Medres, Montreal of Yesterday: Jewish Life in Montreal 1900-1920
Translated from the Yiddish by Vivian Felsen (Montreal: Vehicule Press)

ISRAEL MEDRES’ portrait of Montreal Jewry is akin to and as evocative of its subject as the Spirit of the Ghetto (1902), Hutchins Hapgood’s sympathetic snapshot of Yiddish culture on Manhattan’s Lower East Side. But Montreal of Yesterday, a series of newspaper sketches begun just after World War II and first published in toto in 1947, is a unique document.

Medres wrote for a popular Jewish readership, in the Yiddish-language Keneder Adler (Daily Eagle); as a Yiddish speaker, Medres knew his subject in a way that Hapgood, a non-Jew coming from an old Boston background, could not. Although Montreal of Yesterday is arguably the more valuable historical resource, however, given both its depth of understanding and its breadth (covering twenty years in chronological order), it was virtually a lost work, unknown to most historians.

It was unknown, that is, until 1997, when French-Canadian Yiddishist Pierre Anctil translated it into French. Now that Vivian Felsen, inspired by Anctil’s example, has rendered her grandfather Israel’s words into English, the book is available to an even wider circle of readers. Montreal of Yesterday is compulsory reading not only for students of Jewish history but also, because of the far-ranging influence of Jewish radicalism as well as for anyone interested in the early development of the left in Canada.

Although only about 8 of Medres’ more than 50 chapters deal explicitly with issues relating to labour, his laconic prose conveys the complexity of the ideological choices offered to and made by new immigrants to Canada’s then largest metropolis—Montreal. Medres relates the rising and falling fortunes of anarchism, socialism, Bundism and the Arbeiter Ring, political and cultural Zionism, and two variants of labour Zionism (one Yiddishist, the other Hebraist) in the hearts and minds of those who cared and thought about these things in his city’s east end. All receive their due in a manner that ordinary readers could understand.

But the limpid style is of benefit to historians as well. For instance, Medres’ explanation of the difference between cloak-makers and other needle tradespersons, in terms of status and skill level, is deceptively simple but crystal clear: “In the pre-World War I period, women dressed differently than they do now. Suits were more fashionable than dresses. Therefore ... cloak-makers were the aristocrats among the workers. They earned higher wages, they were better dressed, they attended the Yiddish theatre more frequently, they purchased Jewish books more often, and in summer sent their wives to St. Sophie or New Glasgow.”

Medres’ strength lies not in the analysis but in an artistic, journalistic flair for telling detail. Here is his description of typical theatre-goers: “People who frequented the theatre on a regular basis were those who earned more money, those who had arrived. It was easy to recognize these successful people. The surest sign that they had been in the country for a long time, perhaps as long as ten years, was their gold teeth.

A well-to-do Jewish husband would wear one or two quite massive gold rings and a gold watch and chain over his vest. His wife, in an oversized hat with a long feather, was adorned with jewelry, much of it from the old country. The gold teeth, however, were most certainly acquired here in Canada.”

There are some errors, of fact and of omission. According to Medres, the first Jewish bookstore in Montreal was Hirsch Hershman’s on Main Street, between Ontario and Craig. This is only partly true. Hershman, a socialist who had previously been the door-to-door distributor of the Daily Forward (a Yiddish daily from New York that was perhaps the most influential Jewish newspaper at that time), was persuaded to set up shop as a general purveyor of Yiddish literature in 1902.

Slightly east and southwards, on St. Lawrence (68 Lawrence, to be precise) the Zionist Reading Room had been established two years earlier in 1900. It did not last long, because local support for Zionism had yet to pick up steam, but it was there. Seven years later, the Keneder Adler came into being and could be found up the street, also in the heart of The Main, at 508 St. Lawrence.

Translator Felsen provides us with a map of “The Old Neighborhood,” but one would have to be armed with a microscope to locate any of the many landmarks mentioned above, in her introduction, or in the text proper. Incidentally, bad maps, or no maps at all, are a problem in most Canadian Jewish historiography.

Therefore, It is time for someone to create a historical atlas for students in this area of study. My students are often unaware that Montreal, or Manhattan for that matter, is located on an island. How then are they to apprehend spatially the contours of immigrant quarters in The Main or the
Lower East Side, to say nothing of second-generation migrations to Outremont and Westmount or Brooklyn and the Upper West Side, without benefit of clearly laid out visual aids? More satisfactory is the job Felsen has done of annotating the book. Without the over 250 endnotes she provides readers would have had a hard time with some of Medres’ more obscure allusions (I detected but one slip: A.A. Roback was raised in Québec City, not in Montréal, as Felsen says). A glossary of Yiddish terms as well as a bibliography is also provided courtesy of the translator.

Medres’ most egregious error of omission is his neglect to mention Montreal’s other Jewish newspaper: the Jewish Times, a fortnightly that holds the honour of being Canada’s first Jewish newspaper. This glossing over of its existence is understandable. The Jewish Times was founded in 1897, and by 1910, the date of Medres’ arrival in Montreal, its influence was on the wane. More significantly, however, he, like other downtown detractors, regarded the Jewish Times, Westmount-based, Anglophonic, and Anglophilic—as nothing more than an uptown society rag.

Nevertheless, several of the personages figuring in Montreal of Yesterday, had one connection or another to this bastion of acculturated Jewry. Sam Jacobs, described by Medres as “an outstanding jurist, a leading figure in the Baron de Hirsch institute,” and “the first Jewish member of the Parliament of Canada,” was one of the co-founders of the Jewish Times. The other individual was Lyon Cohen, another member of Montreal’s Jewish elite, who during World War I helped to establish the national body known as the Canadian Jewish Congress.

Among his collaborators on that project was Hirsch Wolofsky, publisher of the Keneder Adler. Eventually Wolofsky bought out the Times and hired a new staff, including writer A.A. Roback. A frequent Adler contributor, Roback was given the opportunity to write his blistering denunciations of the stultifying effects of Anglophone culture in English as well as in Yiddish.

All of which is to point out that although they were in some respects worlds apart, the two newspapers—and by analogy the Jewish community of Montreal as a whole, uptown and downtown—were yet linked in various ways. His snubbing of the Jewish Times aside, Medres showed how the dots connected in a manner that was fair, relatively unbiased, and colourful.

Editor’s note: The second printing will be available in May as well as from Vivian Felsen, the author, at the IAYC Conference where she will be a presenter. Montreal of Yesterday, Israel Medres, Véhicule Press P.O.B. 125, Place du Parc Station, Montreal, Quebec H2X 4A3 CANADA ISBN 1-55065-133-1 Tel: 514-844-6073 Email: vp@vehiculepress.com

My Grandfather—Israel Medres
by Vivian Felsen

Israel Medres was my grandfather. For over 40 years he was a full-time staff writer for the Montreal Yiddish daily, the Keneder Adler, known in English as the Jewish Daily Eagle. The Adler was an influential paper with a large readership, and Medres wrote on a daily basis. He was a court reporter, movie reviewer, theatre critic, political commentator, news editor, and labour editor. His articles also appeared in the Canadian Jewish Chronicle, in the Canadian Labour Zionist newspaper, Dos Vort, which he edited, and the Morgn Zhurnal.

He was the Montreal correspondent for the Morgn Zhurnal. Medres excelled at writing fellietons, short light-hearted personal essays on serious subjects. These fellietons, under a penname, Ben Mordecai, were reprinted in Yiddish newspapers worldwide.

Almost 20 years after his death there were books that appeared in Yiddish, but what is even more surprising is that they also were in English, mentioning my grandfather or had his biography or excerpts from his work. I collected them and had a whole shelf of them—the Canadian Jewish Anthology, the Canadian Jewish Mosaic, A Coat of Many Colours, Lexicons of Yiddish writers, histories of Yiddish literature, etc. On this shelf were the two Yiddish books my grandfather wrote, that everyone in the family knew about, but few had read.

Suddenly, in 1997, exactly fifty years after its initial publication, Montreal of Yesterday appeared in French. This came as a total surprise to the family. Even more surprising was the fact that its translator was a non-Jewish French Canadian anthropologist, who had made the effort to learn to read, write and speak Yiddish in order to study the Jews of Quebec.

The first time that I actually read one of my grandfather’s books was in 1997—in French. I discovered that in 55 short chapters, Medres described almost every aspect of Jewish immigrant life in Canada between 1900 and 1920: where people lived, what kind of jobs they had, what the synagogues were like, what weddings were like, the Yiddish theatre, movies, what books they were reading, trade unionism, Zionism, socialism, etc. etc. And it is Medres’ gentle humour, always gentle, never biting or sarcastic, that gives Montreal of Yesterday its special charm.

The French translation inspired me to translate my grandfather’s books from Yiddish into English, and to go on to translate other books. I am working on an English translation of Hundert yor yidische un hebreyshe literatur in Kanade by Chaim Leib Fuks.
**My Strange Example of "Jewish Geography"**
by Tom Lewin

Editor’s note: This incident occurred at a wedding and was told to Laurie Melrood, Paul’s daughter.

I’m a 75-year-old German Jew from Berlin who left Germany in early 1939 for the U.K. and eventually rejoined my father, in Minneapolis, in 1945. My dad got out of Germany in 1940, via Poland, Russia, Korea, Japan and Panama, while the Stalin-Hitler pact was still in effect. Being of good Ashkenazic stock, what did I know of "Ost Juden and Yiddish"? But I married "one of them," and have lived a happy married life for over 42 years — so far! My wife — whose grandparents came to America from Romania and Lithuania — told me how her father called us Reform Jews "those Christian Jews," but he attended a few of our services at Reform Temple Israel, his reaction was "They’re not that bad a bunch after all!"

Her father was the sports editor of the Minneapolis Morning Tribune, and later its Copy Editor, and was very involved in the Minneapolis Jewish Community. He was president of his Beth El Synagogue — conservative and chaired its capital campaign for the new building they eventually built in the suburbs. He has a forest in Israel in his honor for the fundraising work he did when Israel became a state.

Yesterday afternoon, my wife, Rhoda, and I were at a wedding in Tucson. The son of Rhoda’s first cousin, Rabbi Arnie Turchick, by his first wife, was marrying a non-Jewish girl from Canada, and Arnie flew in from Sao Paulo for the occasion. Arnie does not have a congregation in Sao Paulo; Brazil he works as a chaplain in a Jewish hospital and a seniors’ residence.

During the dinner following the wedding, Arnie happened to mention a collection of 20,000 Yiddish books, which are stored in a Sao Paulo warehouse that’s about to be demolished. He said the books would be burned or buried because no one was interested in that "old stuff.

Rhoda and I immediately thought of Aaron Lansky’s National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, and mentioned that to Arnie. His reply was, "That’s interesting, but there’s no way we can ship so much stuff to the US. It’s far too expensive!"

Lori sat opposite me, and she said that her father was the president of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs, and gave me Paul’s telephone number, because I figured he might be able to give me Aaron’s home telephone number in Amherst. Arnie is flying back to Brazil tomorrow, Monday, and leaves at 6 a.m., so there was no way I could reach Aaron on a Sunday. When you clarified your situation with me, I called the library, which IS open on Sundays. It turns out that the library in Amherst is moving much of its collection to a new building, so the staff is more than fully occupied. But they said they’d figure out what to do and call me back a.s.a.p.

Soon I received a call from Catherine Madsen, who said they’re interested in ALL Yiddish books, but has no idea how they can possibly move quickly enough to retrieve 20,000 books from Sao Paulo. She said that she also knew you — and sends her regards!

They do have contacts in Buenos Aires, and said that if Arnie and others in Sao Paulo can figure out a way to get the books packed, the Book Center could probably raise the needed funds to have the collection shipped to America! She also thought that some of the folks in Buenos Aires might be able to come and help with the packing. I gave Catherine Arnie’s phone number, address, and E-mail information so she can have someone reach Arnie when he gets back to Sao Paulo.

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This is another example of Jewish Geography. I’m currently in a Humanities Seminar class at the University of Arizona that’s being taught by Professor Tom Price. He is an amazing fellow who spent 20-plus years, as one of only a very few Jews, in the U.S. Foreign Service, mostly in the Middle East and Central Europe, and speaks at least 8 of that area’s languages fluently, including Turkish, Hebrew and Yiddish.

Tom tells a wonderful story about how, when he was stationed in Austria in about 1970, he told his station chief that he wanted to take time off for the Jewish High Holidays. His chief was "of the old school," and was somewhat reluctant to give a Jew time to attend services, but the Foreign Service had received specific directions from the President that religious services attendance for non-Christian holidays was to be granted. So his question to Tom Price was, "I wonder how we’ll code that absence from work -- medical leave?"

After his retirement from the Foreign Service, he received his Ph.D. and is now teaching at the U of AZ. The course I’m taking is called "Modern Jewish Literature," and covers Jewish authors from the French Revolution (1789) to 1939, after which the genre became "Post-Holocaust Literature." Naturally, most of that early literature is Yiddish -- Sforim, Alechem and Singer, etc.
Exhibitors and Vendors at the IAYC 11th Conference

This is the sixth in a series of reports on the IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007 at the Marriott Cleveland East Hotel. Each month there is an update and a report on another phase of this great Yiddish Conference. Last month we covered the Lecture/Workshop Presentations. These updates are on the website at: http://www.derbay.org/cleveland/

Exhibitors & Vendors

This area is a win-win situation. It gives the author, bandleader, performer, editor and organizational representative the venue to showcase their materials. Likewise, attendees have the opportunity not only to purchase or see these items (or handouts), but even more important to meet and discuss first-hand with the exhibitors and vendors. Many of the ones at the Teaneck Conference will be returning, for they had a very positive response. Here is a partial list—additional ones have been coming in weekly.

Since many of these vendors/exhibitors will also be presenting, you will receive additional information. It is a wonderful opportunity to get your item autographed by the producer.

A Partial List of Exhibitors and Vendors

Algemeiner Journal
Forverts
Living Traditions-KlezKamp
National Yiddish Book Center
Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band
IAYC
Der Bay

Authors:
Miriam Beckerman,
Vivian Felsen,
Sonia Pressman Fuentes,
Ruth Goodman,
Troim Katz Handler,
Marcia Gruss Levinsohn,

Performers:
Cookie Blattman,
Lori Cahan-Simon,
Frank Krasnowsky
Heather Klein
“Lil Rev”
Cantor Kathryn Sebo

Organizations and Programs:
The Workmen’s Circle / Arbeter Ring
Ohio District of The Workmen’s Circle
Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland
Congress for Secular Jewish Organizations
Friends of the Siegal College Library
Vilnius Summer Institute,
League for Yiddish
Concert in the Park

Contact Information

Co-Chair: Annabelle Weiss..Ph: 216-752-2021
Co-Chair: Marilyn Cagin.....Ph: 216-378-0507
Co-Chair: Harold Ticktin.....Ph: 216-752-1881
E-mail: avvocato@peoplepc.com

Registration: Pauline Leber, Ph: 216-831-4177
E-mail: paulsam@adelphia.net

Programming & Vending: Fishl Kutner,
Ph: 650-349-6946 E-mail fishl@derbay.org
Rokhl Shraybt fun Dorem Afrika  
by Rochelle Winer

My new email address is: rochel@beach.co.za

A groysn dank far Der Bay. Es is zayer vunderbar tsu bakumen Der Bay. I love reading all the wonderful articles and to see what is happening in the Yiddishe Velt so far away from Dorem Afrika.

I wish I could attend a Conference. Perhaps some day I will be able to travel to the States. The exchange rate between the dollar and our currency is a problem, but I enjoy reading the reports about it. If I can't be there personally, I will derive nakhas from reading about it.

We had about 85 people for our Chanukah party. It was the 13th party of my Yiddish Group. We had wonderful refreshments, and we told good vitsn. I read mayselekh in Yiddish. I started with 10 people, but it has grown. We get together about 6 times a year. It is like a school re-union. There are people who don’t see each other and then they meet and men redt a bisl Yiddish un men lakht oykh in Yiddish.

Yiddish at a Phoenix Jewish H.S.

Phoenix has a Jewish parochial high school, the Jess Schwartz Jewish Community High School. Every year, right after Pesakh, the students are offered mini-courses on a variety of subjects. My wife, Tybie, and I volunteered to teach Yiddish. The course will last five days from May 7-12, an hour and a half each morning. When we went to meet with the coordinator, the question in my mind was: So? How many students would be interested in such a course? Imagine my shock when she said that the entire graduating class of seventeen students had already signed up! Hopefully we will succeed in instilling an abiding interest in Yiddish to these students. We will let you know the final outcome and results.

Research Fellowship 2007-2008

Friends Of The Secular Yiddish Schools In North America Collection At Stanford University Libraries, Department of Special Collections is accepting applications for its Research Fellowship 2007-2008.

The sum of $3-4,000 is to be awarded to the applicant who will commit to at least a 2 month in-residence period (of choice) using the impressive multilingual resources (Yiddish, English and Hebrew) of the extensive SYSNA Archival Collection. Fluency in reading Yiddish is required. A substantive publishable paper or project in any of the three languages is one of the goals of this fellowship.

Sholom Aleykhem’s Stepmother’s "kloles"

by Prof. Will “Velvl” Rayms

I found out why Jews called the Russian fon ye. It is from a Russian popular first name Afanasy that they called first "afonye" and finally "fonye" or "fonke".

My favored Yiddish writer is Sholom Aleykhem: It is well known that he composed at the age of fifteen a dictionary of his stepmother’s “kloles”. Here are her one-liners formed from common verbs:

esn- esn zoln dir verm
trinen- trinen zoln dikh piyavkes
shrayen- shrayen zolst du oyf di tsayn
neyen- neyen zol men aykh’ trakhrikhim
geyen- geyen zolst du in der erd
shoteyn- shoteyn zolst du pravtsem
zitsn- zitsn zolst dikh in hekhakte vundn
gign- gign zolst du in der erd
redn- redn zolst du fun der khits
shvaygn- shvaygn zol ir oyf eybig
zogn- gezogt zol akh vern aldes beyz
hobn-bobn zolst du makes behoyres
nit hobn- nit hobn zolst du keyn guts vayl du lebst
trogn- trogn zol dikh der riyakh oyf di pleytse
aratrogn- aratrogn zol men dikh a krankn
aroystrogn- aroystrogn zol men dikh a toytn
arumtrogn- arumtrogn zol men dikh oyf di hent
avektrogn- avektrogn zol men dikh oyf dem beys hoylom
shraybn-shraybn zol men dir retseptn
farshraybn- farshraybn zolst du vern tsum toyt
opshraybn-opshraybn zol men dir fun kedokhes
araynshraybn- a meshugenem oysmekn- un dikh araynshraybn

Here is one of her multiliners
"s’zol dikh onkhapn, reboyne shel hoylom, a shtekhenish un a brekhenish, a raysenish un a beysenish, a trikenish, a fardarenish, ayndarenish, ayn ayntrikesnish, ayn darenish, a fardarenish, ayn oystrikenish, ayn ayndarenish, ayn hoylom
shraybn-shraybn zol men dir retseptn
farshraybn- farshraybn zolst du vern tsum toyt
opshraybn-opshraybn zol men dir fun kedokhes
araynshraybn- a meshugenem oysmekn- un dikh araynshraybn

hartsiker foter, getrayer!
The Uriel Weinreich Program in Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture, known as the zumer-program, will once again be sponsored by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research and the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies of New York University.

The program will boast all levels of language courses and a wide range of co-curricular activities, the best Yiddish instructors in the world, students from many countries and walks of life. It will be located at the NYU campus in Greenwich Village, just a few blocks from the YIVO offices.

This year's grammar and literature teachers will be

- Dr. Sheva Zucker,
- Dr. Eugene Orenstein,
- Dr. Abraham Lichtenbaum and
- Hanan Bordin.

Afternoon activities include twice-weekly conversation classes; advanced research workshops, as well as workshops in drama, folksong and traditional dance; internships in the YIVO archives and the YIVO library; a lecture series, conducted in English and Yiddish, on the history of Yiddish language, literature and East European/American Jewish culture; field trips to Yiddish-related sites in the New York area and beyond; film screenings; shabes get-togethers.

There will be a refresher course for students who have studied some Yiddish before and a reading workshop for those who do not yet know the Yiddish alphabet.

This summer's Program will take place from Monday, June 25 to Friday, August 3. Admissions will be handled by New York University.

For applications, please see the Program website, http://www.nyu.edu/fas/summer/yivo,

or contact

Shayne Figueroa,
Graduate Secretary
Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies,
Phone: 212-998-8981

or e-mail yivoyiddish@yivo.cjh.org

Pinochle in Yiddish
by Philip Fishl Kutner

I miss the good bagels and the pinochle games in sunny California. They say you cannot have it all. I remember the two-handed games with papa. Even though it wasn’t for money we played as if it was cut-throat.

Of course there were the evenings with 4-handed for money (small amounts, for we were all young family men). Those days are only memories. Out here in the Wild West it is bridge, and mah jongg for the ladies!

Our Pinochle Word List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yiddish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ace</td>
<td>toyz di, tayz di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bid</td>
<td>(v) bot, (n) onbot der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cards</td>
<td>kortn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubs</td>
<td>shpog der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut</td>
<td>shnayd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal</td>
<td>geb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deck</td>
<td>pash der, peshl dos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declarer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamonds</td>
<td>lekekh der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer</td>
<td>vintsiker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow Suit</td>
<td>hant di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearts</td>
<td>royts dos, eykhl dos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>hekker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>hekhster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>poyer der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King</td>
<td>kinig der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loser</td>
<td>farlirer der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>nidiriker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>nidirksht</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>khasene di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meld</td>
<td>leyg oys</td>
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<tr>
<td>More</td>
<td>mer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pair</td>
<td>por</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinochle</td>
<td>pinokl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>kinigin, malke di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuffle</td>
<td>tash (iber)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spades</td>
<td>pik, shvarts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suit</td>
<td>kolir der, mast der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take in</td>
<td>nem arayn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throw out</td>
<td>varf aroys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trick</td>
<td>trik der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trump</td>
<td>kozer der</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Void</td>
<td>posl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winner</td>
<td>geviner der</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If any of our readers wish to add or correct any of the above words, please write your editor. If you still play the game, I envy you. If you will be at the IAYC conference, bring a deck along.
CSJO Conference

The Congress for Secular Jewish Organizations will hold their conference in Cleveland May 25-28, 2007 at Ursuline College in Pepper Pike. The theme is: A Fusion of Social Issue, Civil Liberties and Jewish Culture,

The program and registration can be downloaded at: http://www.csjo.org/pages/conference2007.htm
It can be found as a link on Der Bay at: http://www.derbay.org/jlinks.html

Among the workshops/lectures is:
How Do You Say It in Yiddish?

Executive Director, Roberta Rifke Feinstein, has been a long-time Der Bay subscriber and was a presenter at our IAYC Conference in Baltimore. She will be attending our conference. CSJO again will have an exciting booth of books and other materials. Rifke can be reached by e-mail at: rifke@adelphia.net or telephone her at: 216-481-0850.

Presenting at CSJO as well as at the IAYC conference will be Adrienne Cooper and Gerry Kane.

Yiddish Tongue Twisters—A Club Program Idea

For a different club program ask your members to volunteer to come to the next meeting with a Yiddish tongue twister. All such activities should be purely voluntary.

Try slowly saying the following 3 times and pausing between each word. Try it again without pausing and finally say the phrase as fast as you can.

Moyshes khazershe fleysh

Here’s another one

Fishls sheyne shlisl

These rely on the SH sound and requires you switch the position of your facial muscles and position of your tongue. Place your hands on your facial cheeks and feel the movement.

Notice the location of your tongue, teeth and lips when you pronounce the following letters B, D, O, F, S, and the diphthongs TH, TS and SH.

Other sources are: Mendele Vol. 07.088 and the world’s largest collection of tongue twisters. http://www.uebersetzung.at/twister/

My Mama Never Did…
by Philip “Fishl” Kutner

Mama NEVER thought her shnir were good enough for her 4 boys—except the last one.

Mama NEVER raised her voice except when she was angry with papa.

Mama NEVER hit her boys—except when Fishele asked her, “What do you do with that (a kontshik)?”

Mama NEVER liked anyone in papa’s family—except her shver—after he died.

Mama NEVER thought papa was a good businessman—except when he took her advice.

Mama NEVER said teachers were wrong—except when they gave one of her boys a B on a report card.

Mama NEVER spoke Polish—except to a hired hand.

Mama NEVER spoke Russian—except with the woman from the farm on the other side of the creek.

Mama NEVER drove a car—except when we moved to the farm.

Mama NEVER ate treyf—except the first time she met papa’s folks—and she didn’t know it until later.

Mama NEVER talked to her boys about sex—except to tell her boys that nice girls don’t do IT.

Mama NEVER ate on Yom Kippur—except when she was pregnant with one of her boys.

Mama NEVER stopped lifting very heavy weights—except after she gave birth to Semele.

Mama NEVER voted for a Republican—except when John F. Kennedy ran for president.

Mama NEVER went into a church—except when one of her grandchildren got married.

Mama NEVER stole anything—except little onion rolls—when we ate at Ratner’s on Delancey Street.

Mama NEVER thought kids should eat candy—except her grandchildren.

Mama NEVER said Xmas was good—except when Semele had a good season in the shoe store.

Mama NEVER missed lighting Friday night candles—except when she got very, very old.
A PRESERVATION MISSION
by Helen & Meyer Zaremba

This article is not only about a book but about two people, Helen & Meyer Zaremba, who believe that there is validity to the question, “If a tree falls in a forest and there’s nobody around to hear it fall, does it make a sound?” Likewise, if treasures of Yiddish creativity abound but nobody can understand them, do they “make a sound?”

The name of their book is, “120 Yiddish Folksongs Sung in English” and subtitled, “Thoughts Of an Extraordinary People”. It is an “anthology” of Yiddish folksongs that have been rendered into English. The songs have not just been translated. In “rendering” them into English, they’ve operated on the assumption that if the lyricists did not know Yiddish and had to communicate the content in English, they would have written the songs as the Zarembas have written them. It’s “khutzbadik”, to be sure, but “hostu ba zey an avle” (loose translation..“So sue them”).

It’s not only the Yiddish “chestnuts” that have been rendered. Again, they’ve operated on the assumption that Yiddish songs are not just “lidelakh” that give us the “fuzzies” when sung and heard; they are repositories and archives wherein can be found so much of the Jewish Experience. They should not be the Rodney Dangerfield of Jewish creativity; they deserve to be understood and they will not be understood unless they are rendered in a language that people can understand.

Yes, “Grineh Kuzineh” is in the book, but so is, “The Song of Mendl Beilis”. There is a rendition of, “Oyfn Pripetchik” but, also, Gebirteg’s “Undzer Shtetl Brent”.

Most people, and surely younger generations, cannot understand:

S’brent! briderlekh, s’brent!
Oy, undzer orem shtetl nebekh bren!

But they can understand:

Aflame, brothers aflame!
Our little town is all aflame!
Angry winds with fury raging,
Twisting, turning, wild rampaging,
Fiercely flame the frenzied fires,
All around us burns...

All the English lyrics are very singable. In the words of Chana Mlotek, who wrote about the book in the Forverts, “Di shures gramen zikh un zingen zikh vi naturlakh in eynglish”. (The lines rhyme themselves and sing themselves naturally in English.)

And to those who say, “But it can’t have the same “tam” (flavor) as in Yiddish; it’s as in Chaim Bialik’s words, “Like kissing a girl through a veil”, we counter with, “If there’s only a choice between kissing a girl through a veil and not kissing a girl at all, what would you do?” Hey, mister, I’m talking to you.

Each rendition is preceded with a “narration” that places the song in a historical/societal context.

For those who are saying, “Great, where can I buy this book?”, the answer is, “You can’t; it’s not for sale; we want to give it away. We’d love to get a grant so that we can place it in every college library in the country and make its availability known so that our children and grandchildren will know that this record of their unbelievably rich heritage can be recited, sung and savored.

Lines in Gebirteg’s, “Undzer Shtetl Brent” admonishes us with these words:

Aflame, brothers, aflame!
If we don’t act we have ourselves to blame!
If our town to us is dear,
Then let’s do more than shed a tear,
Let’s douse the flames with our own blood, etc.

Helen & Meyer Zaremba, both in their 80’s, have involved themselves in this labor of love because they want to do more than shed a tear at the loss of what Yiddish folksongs can have to say to our posterity. They want to douse the flames of the destruction of our Yiddish heritage, to the limited extent that they can, with their efforts.

Editor’s note:
The Zarembas are very well known in the Greater Miami Area Yiddish speaking circuit. They have entertained most of the Yiddish groups there.

Meyer has written and sent in suggestions almost since the inception of Der Bay. He is also the author of Freud & Fargenign: A Serio-Comic Look at More Than 999 Irreverent Jewish Freudian Expressions and Their Relation to the Unconscious.
Seminar for Yiddish Teachers: Integrated Language Instruction

18 – 22 June, 2007
New York University, NY

Guest Workshop Leader
Dr. Richard Korb, German Language Program
Director, Columbia University

Dr. Korb regularly leads workshops for language teachers; he is an expert in the use of technology and the Internet in language instruction, and the author of the textbook German for Reading Knowledge.

The seminar will introduce participants to the theory and practice of Integrated Language Instruction: combining cultural information and all language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in classroom activities.

There will be an emphasis on using these ideas in the teaching of Yiddish language and culture, and on creating teaching materials that participants will be able to use in their own classes.

The first two days of the seminar, when Dr. Korb will lead the workshops, will be conducted in both Yiddish and English. The remaining three days—in Yiddish only. Participants must know both languages.

Seminar Coordinators:

Dr. Brukhe Caplan, lecturer in Yiddish language and culture, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore

Dr. Naomi Kadar, teacher of Yiddish language and culture, Jewish Theological Seminary and formerly Director of Education for The Workmen’s Circle.

Dr. Sheva Zucker, author of Yiddish: An Introduction to the Language, Literature and Culture; lecturer at the Weinreich Program and Executive Director of the League for Yiddish

The seminar is being organized by the Yiddish Teachers’ Committee of Yugntruf—Youth for Yiddish within the framework of the Uriel Weinreich Program in Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research/New York University, and is generously supported by the Fishman and Levinson Foundations.

For further details, please contact: Brukhe Caplan: bcaplan7@jhu.edu

Summer Programs in London

Come to Ot Azoy!. We have a brilliant array of Yiddish teachers; Khayele Beer, Heather Valencia, Peysakh Fiszman, Lily Kahn, Shura Lipovsky and Sonia Pinkusowitz. Instrumentalists get the chance to do a lot of singing in this course. There are films, drama, conversation and lots of fun. You will start dreaming in Yiddish. Ot AZOYNIKS. Think about joining the KlezFest Jewish song school for an Ot Azoy! experience with bells on. There are reductions when you do both courses – and there are some scholarships available – write and ask.

Be at ‘Yiddishland’ in London. Spend some of your summer holiday singing, playing, dancing, reading, writing and speaking Yiddish and klezmer at the JMI summer schools in the heart of London.

Amateur, professional instrumentalists and singers will be closeted with the finest teachers from the USA, Europe and the Former Soviet Union. There will be six days of, inspirational workshops, master classes and jams with luminaries of the klezmer world led by members of Grammy award winning Klezmatics and others usually known only from their CDs. You can join the instrumental sessions or you concentrate on Yiddish and other Jewish song.

To make your instruments and voices sound more faithful, you can study the expressive and musical Yiddish language with grammar and conversation classes as well as a rich cultural programme of song and film in Ot Azoy! the one-week Yiddish crash course which follows the parallel KlezFest and Song School.

Whether you are a complete beginner or an advanced professional or amateur musician or language student – from 15 years of age or at the equivalent of musical grade 5 upwards, JMI summer schools will help you progress.

The courses are:

JMI KlezFest London
Sun. 12 – Fri. 17 August (daily 9.15am – 11.00pm)

Jewish Song Summer School
Sun. 12 – Fri. 17 August (daily 9.15am – 11.00pm)

Ot Azoy! Yiddish Crash Course
Sun. 19 – Fri. 24 August (daily 9.30am – 6.30pm)

Tel 020 8909 2445 Fax 020 8909 1030 e-mail jewishmusic@jmi.org.uk or register online: http://www.jmi.org.uk/
Der Parizer yidish-tsenter Medem-bibliotek
The Paris Yiddish Center-Medem Library

The Paris Yiddish Center-Medem Library has recently published three books (two song collections and a book of short stories):

1. Oyfn veg - Yiddish folksongs with harmonies for choral singing by Jean Golgevit. 147 pages, 25 euros. This collection has 34 songs in Yiddish, 2 in Judezmo, 1 in Hebrew and 2 in French. Jean Golgevit (Goldgevkht) is a professional choral conductor. Every song has the sheet music for each voice, the text in both Yiddish script and transliteration, and a translation into French. For some of the songs 2 or 3 harmonizations are given. All the songs are well-known in the repertory, such as Di Alte Kashe, Papirosn, or Zol Zayn.

2. Tshiriboym : naye yidishe lider - by Jacques Grober. 162 pages, 25 euros. Jacques Grober was a singer, author and composer of the generation of Paris Yiddishists born after the war, a son of survivors of the Shoah. He died last summer, at the height of his career. For the past 20 years he wrote new songs in Yiddish, which he performed himself. The collection contains 48 songs with contemporary themes and contemporary musical styles. Each song is printed with its sheet music, the Yiddish text, the transliteration and a French translation. At the back of the volume are translations of every song into English.

3. Dovid Umru : A la croisée des chemins (At the crossroads) 289 pages, 25 euros. Dovid Umru was born in Lithuania in 1910 and died in 1941. He was a painter as well as a writer. The volume consists of a French translation of 11 of his short stories. (The original Yiddish text is not given.)

The catalogue of the "Medem-Bibliotek" Publishing House includes 12 titles to date.

Full details at:
http://www.yiddishweb.com/medem/Publications .html

TO ORDER BOOKS: bikher@yiddishweb.com

Gilles Rozier
Maison de la culture yiddish-Bibliothèque Medem
18, passage Saint-Pierre Amelot
75011 Paris

Tel.: 01 47 00 14 00
Fax: 01 47 00 14 47

site: www.yiddishweb.com
Der Bay at the Library of Congress
E-mail from Dr. Peggy K. Pearlstein

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Editor's note: Since this was written, the completed set was sent and they have all issues.
IAYC 11th Conference • Cleveland, Ohio

Orientation Session • August 3, Friday at 2 pm

This is the seventh in a series of reports on the IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007 at the Marriott Cleveland East Hotel. The centerfold has the entire program. These reports are on the website at: http://www.derbay.org/cleveland/

The opening and closing days have been greatly expanded. There will be a full program Friday afternoon with an orientation session and the wonderful entertainment of the Yiddish People’s stage with 5 Acts.

Philip Fishl Kutner: Editor, Der Bay

I Introductions:

II Goals:
   Friendship/Fun
   Information/Ideas
   Sources/Speaking
   Hebrew/Help
   Leadership/Learning

III Registration Packet:
   Conference Journal
   Conference Badges

IV Conference Layout:
   Grande Ballroom
   Lecture/Workshop Rooms
   Hospitality Room
   Vendors/Exhibitors

V Hotel Facilities:
   Spa

VI Program Schedule:
   Day Programs:
   4 Plenary Sessions
   30 Breakout Sessions
   Shabes Services
   Evening Programs:
   Fri.: Katz Family of Milwaukee
   Sat.: The Workmen’s Circle/
        Arbeiter Ring Gala Evening
   Sun.: Concert in Cain Park

VII Vendors/Exhibitors:
   Authors, Performers, Translators,
   Commercial, Organizations,

VIII Meals:
   Table Names
   Time for Sharing

IX Daily Conference Newsletter:

Contact Information:

Co-Chair: Annabelle Weiss..Ph: 216-752-2021
Co-Chair: Marilyn Cagin.....Ph: 216-378-0507
Co-Chair: Harold Ticktin.....Ph: 216-752-1881
E-mail: avvocato@peoplepc.com

Registration: Pauline Leber, Ph: 216-831-4177
   E-mail: paulsam@adelphia.net

Entertainment: Bert Stratton: 216-932-3586
   E-mail: yiddcup@en.com

Programming & Vending: Fishl Kutner,
   Ph: 650-349-6946 E-mail fishl@derbay.org
“A Community Calendar”

Lists of events abound on the Internet, but usually they refer to a particular cultural, “fraternal” etc. organization, or entertainment individual or group. Many have websites with a “Calendar of Events”. But, when someone wants to know “What’s going on when I visit …” it’s another matter. One resource is the local Yiddish or Anglo-Jewish newspaper.

Der Bay’s Internatsyonaler Kalendar has been a resource in the hardcopy, and in even greater detail, on the website at the homepage, Yiddish Events or http://www.derbay.org/calendars/kalendar.html There are listings of 15 regions and 17 organizations. It is updated daily when Fishl’s home.

The latest innovation to the site is the addition of a separate page (section) for Israeli events. This has been made possible with the new reporting of Bella Bryks-Klein of Petsah Tikva, Israel.

Der Internatsyonaler Kalendar serves a dual purpose, for not only is it a boon to people wishing to attend Yiddish events, but also it is a great publicity tool. Best of all it is absolutely FREE.

What information can one learn about events? Once one decides on the region and date/s they would like to attend a Yiddish event, then a look on the website will give the 5 following bits of information:

City
Date/Day
Time
Title of the event/presenters
Contact Phone Number

Where the URL for the website is known, or e-mail address is sent in, it is included as a link so that it serves as a resource for additional information.

Now that we have covered information for attendees, let’s turn our attention to the performers or organizations. Fishl’s mantra is NETWORKING! “Cooperation is the basis of success.”

Get free publicity wherever and wherever you can. Do NOT do it yourself. Your time is too valuable. You are too busy planning and handling the “big picture”. Get a significant other or someone who would be thrilled to be asked to help you.

On a monthly basis send the updated 5 bits of information to Fishl and at least 5 other freebies—better yet, make it 10. Once you have the list and the updated information, it is merely a push of the send key© and you are on your way to greater success.

Fun with Letters:
A Yiddish Club or Class Activity
By Philip Fishl Kutner

Learning the alphabet can be fun at any age. We need to agree on the sequence of letters. If we didn’t have an agreed standard, we could not quickly look up words in a dictionary or names in a phone book.

There are patterns to letters. Our Hebrew/Yiddish letters start out like the Greek letters—alpha, beta, gamma, delta...

We do not use an English alphabet. Our alphabet is the Roman alphabet. The letter M is the middle letter (#13) the pattern of LMN in Yiddish is lamed, mem nun. Another sequence is RST, reysh, sin, tov.

Lamed looks like lightning. Pairs are told apart by little tricks. The gimmel has a gap—the nun does not. The mem has a bottom slit and the tes on top. The reysh gets rounded and the daled does not.

Letters stand for numbers. Alef is 1 beys is 2... Khay (Chai) means 18 because khes is 8 and yud is 10.

These can be done as take home activities to be brought in to the next meeting. Make it optional, for some may not do it, and you do not want them to be discouraged from attending the next meeting.

At the meeting they can be grouped into 2s or 3s.

These games can be used around a letter or sound. Using dictionaries—transliterated ones can be useful. Here is and example of how it is done.

Yiddish Needs the ………
Here is an English example using the Khs

Let’s try a Yiddish sound, the ch sound as in the German ach or Scottish Loch. We use KH as in the YIVO Standard Orthography (spelling).

Yiddish Needs the KH’s
The sound KH is a marvelous sound. That is why Yiddish needs the KH’s. The khes and khof both give this sound.

A Groom is a Khosn,
A Wedding is a Khasene,
Your Child’s Father in law is a Mekhutn
Your Child’s Mother in Law is a Makheteniste
Your Child’s in Laws are Makhutonim

On the next two pages are 100 KH words. They also are on the website at: www.derbay.org/words/index.html
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<th>Yiddish Word</th>
<th>English Word</th>
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I.L Peretz and My MRI
by Harold Ticktin

While undergoing my second MRI in three weeks after an auto accident, I discovered a connection between MRI’s and I.L. Peretz. What, you say, can Magnetic Resonance Imaging have to do with a 19th century Jewish writer of great repute? Obviously an explanation is in order.

I’ll spare you all of the minor details of the crash (a careless left turn in front of me) but it involved a hospital stay for several days, a first MRI to assess possible spinal damage, and then the follow-up three weeks later. Given the glories of modern radiology, I suspect many readers over 25 are familiar with the ordeal of lying still inside a steel donut accompanied by a primitive drumbeat and screeching for at least ½ hour.

As one approaches that unforgiving tunnel, the task is what to do with your mind, flat on your back, arms motionless and straight. I had a half successful ploy, the stock portfolio, good for maybe 15 minutes followed by romantic memories for 10; but still leaving an agonizing hiatus of 5 minutes to RELIEF.

It was during those last 5 minutes that I.L. Peretz came to my rescue with his beloved story, “Oyb Nisht Nokh Hekher.” Recall that the tale involves a shtetl with a problem about its beloved Hasidic Rebbe. It is known that he rises early in the morning and disappears for hours. The devoted Hasidim believe he ascends to heaven to do Talmud with Ha Shem. But a skeptical Mitnagid, being a devotee of traditional Lithuanian Yeshiva learning, bookish and definitely anti-Hasidic, scoffs at the notion and resolves to seek the truth by hiding under the Rebbe’s bed and following him in the morning.

It is precisely here that Peretz and MRI’s converge. The problem with both the Mitnagid and the MRI patient is how to occupy oneself during the time of their respective ordeals. The Mitnagid, splayed under the Rebbe’s bed solves his dilemma. Dedicated to book learning, memory and mnemonic devices to keep it straight, Mitnagdim were what the Talmudic sages called, “baskets of books.” That is, if the subject at hand were a tractate in say, Baba Metzia, Shmuel or Chaim or whoever could simply be called on to recite the entire text, a talent that remained in place after the Talmud was reduced to writing and survived even the printed word. So, Peretz tells us, the embedded Mitnagid simply “did Talmud” while he waited for the light of day, all in his head as if the text were before him.

Lying athwart my second MRI table in 3 weeks, those last five minutes of tortuous waiting were made livable for me by rereading with my “mind’s eye”, Peretz’ charming description of the Mitnagid under the Rebbe’s bed, “doing Talmud.” Waiting for release from the MRI tunnel of steel, I “read” how the Mitnagid follows the Rebbe, who is now outfitted as a woodcutter. He chops some wood and carries it to the hovel of a poor widow with children. He calls out that he has wood available. She responds that she has no money. He tells her that she does not have to pay, leaves the wood with her, and returns to the shtetl in time for morning prayer.

As the story ends, the Hasidim ply the Mitnagid with questions. Does the Rebbe indeed ascend to the heavens? The Mitnagid replies with the title of the tale – Oyb Nisht Nokh Hekher – “if not higher.”

IAYC Conference Innovations

There were a dozen new ideas tried at the Teaneck Conference. Gregg & Stephanie Hudis and the hosting Teaneck JCC Yiddish Club successfully instituted them. This year Harold Ticktin and his committee will add new ideas. They include:

A Litishe un Galitsyaner Tish baym IAYC Konferents

The Cleveland IAYC conference Committee just announced that there will be a separate tish for both Litvaks and Galitsianers where only Yiddish will be spoken. There will be dictionaries available at the tables, but only Yiddish will be permitted.

A Yidish Tish is not unusual at the university level, where staff, and community members can attend. By having the meeting during lunch and as part of the noonday meal, there is no problem with time or location restraints.

A Yidish Lerers Tish

There will be a table designated just for Yiddish teachers. Hopefully the members of the Yiddish online list will be well represented at this table.

Full Schedule on First Afternoon

The first Yiddish Peoples Stage with 5 acts follows the orientation session to complete a full schedule for the first afternoon. Past conferences started in the evening with no programs during the afternoon.
Yiddish Concert in the Park

Workmen’s Circle Concert to be held in conjunction with The IAYC Conference in Cleveland Features “Yiddish Swingtet” 7pm on August 5, 2007

The Yiddish Swingtet is headed by Greg Wall, virtuoso saxophonist/clarinetist. His critically acclaimed release, "From the Belly of Abraham", with Hasidic New Wave and Senegalese master drummers Yakar Rhythms was named one of the ten best CD’s of 2002 by Jazz Times magazine.

The Workmen’s Circle of Cleveland is delighted to have Joanne Borts perform again in our city. She is one of New York’s favorite theater and cabaret artists with a reputation as a performer of Broadway music and the rich traditions of the Yiddish Theatre.

Ms. Borts has performed with Neil Sedaka, The Klezmatics, Khevrisa, the Klez Dispensers, the Klezmer Conservatory Band and Frank London’s Klezmer Brass All-Stars at The Lincoln Center, the 92nd Street Y, The Public Theatre and Carnegie Hall. Joanne recently co-starred with Mike Burstyn in On Second Avenue at the Folksbiene Theatre.

She is the director, co-author and co-star of Kids & Yiddish, the successful annual off-Broadway family show. Joanne has been a member of the teaching faculty at The Usdan Center for the Creative and Performing Arts, KlezKamp and KlezKanada, and has appeared at The Ashkenaz Festival in Toronto and The Monument National Theatre in Montreal.

Another highlight on this star-studded Yiddish Concert is Susan Watts. She is a “double threat” in that she is both an accomplished trumpeter and vocalist. Susan was featured in the Yiddish Concert in the Park of the 2005 performance. Rounding out the Yiddish Swingtet will be Aaron Alexander on drums, Brian Glassman on Bass, and Art Bailey on piano.

This year’s 29th Annual Yiddish Concert in the Park will be held at Cain Park in Cleveland Heights, OH. This historic amphitheater has 1222 seats in a covered outdoor pavilion, plus a lawn that can hold another 1300 people. The Cleveland Workmen’s Circle Yiddish Concert is a free concert endowed by the late Eugenia and Henry Green.

The 2007 Yiddish Concert in the Park will be held in conjunction with the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) Conference to be held in Cleveland, August 3rd-6th. So, in the fullest sense, “Yiddish Culture is to Flourish in Cleveland” this summer in August 2007.

Yiddish Program in Birobidzhan

From August 13-30, 2007

For the first time in the history of Yiddish studies, a program of the Yiddish language and culture is to take place in Birobidzhan, the capital of the Jewish Autonomous Region. Since 1934, Birobidzhan has been the only place in the world where Yiddish has an official status as the state language. Birobidzhan has undergone many political and economic hardships. No one has changed the official status of Yiddish in the Autonomy.

A center for the research of the history and culture of Yiddish is being organized at the Faculty of Foreign Languages of the Birobidzhan Far Eastern State Academy for Humanities and Social Studies. The first undertaking of the center will be this program. It is intended for university students as well as anyone else interested in the subject.

Four language levels are being offered, as well as lectures on Yiddish literature and culture, and workshops on Yiddish cinema and Yiddish Cantorial repertoire (with one of Montreal’s leading cantors). The program will take place daily, except Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Participants will have the opportunity to:
• participate in the ethnographic expeditions covering the Jewish region as well as visiting the pioneering settlements, which bear Yiddish names Birofeld, Naifeld, Valdheim, and Amurzet;
• meet original pioneers;
• meet representatives of the Autonomous Region government;
• visit local Yiddish institutions; the "Birobidzhaner shtern" Yiddish newspaper, the local radio and television, the museums and the Shalom Aleichem Library;
• see a performance by the Kohelet Theater troupe;
• visit Jewish sites in the Autonomous Region capital, the new synagogue and community center, the old synagogue, the closed Jewish cemetery and Yiddish writer’s memorial sites;
• visit Jewish sites in the Autonomous Region capital, the new synagogue and community center, the old synagogue, the closed Jewish cemetery and Yiddish writer’s memorial sites;
• visit the neighboring city, Khabarovsk, which is the center of the Russian Far East;
• travel to the Chinese city of Kharbin, the center of Manchuria, and to acquaint themselves with the Jewish history of the city (optional);
• have a Shabbat meal at local Jewish community.

For more information see http://www.2all.co.il/web/Sites/yiddishproject

Dr. Boris Kotlerman: Bar Ilan University, Israel
Mr. Khanan Bordin: Hebrew University, Israel
Dr. Miron Fishbein: Birobidzhan, Russia
I am organizing a major klezmer/Yiddish song event in conjunction with the Eldridge Street Project for Oct. 11-14, 2007. There will be a gathering of the most influential klezmer artists since the revival began in the mid-1970’s through today in front of the Eldridge Street Synagogue. The synagogue is celebrating its 120th birthday as well as it being fully refurbished.

Just like the fame photo taken in 1954 in Harlem called "A Great Day In Harlem" with all of the jazz greats of that time in front of a brownstone in Harlem, this photo "A Great Day on Eldridge Street" will be remembered for decades. It is significant that the photo will take place in the Lower East Side the cradle of East European Yiddish culture in America.

Besides the photo shoot there will be roundtable discussions with musicians (woodwinds, string, brass, percussion) open to the public, press conference, a march to the synagogue which will be the largest klezmer marching band ever (so me 80-100 musicians from all over the world), erev Shabes services in the Eldridge St. shul, plus 2 evening concerts. The press (TV, radio, internet, magazine and newspaper) will be national and international in scope. Then after this weekend from Oct. 15-21, 2007 13-20 musicians will tour New York state for a week playing in four cities and giving two workshops. These events will be video taped and professionally recorded for an eventual film I am directing. 

In Dec. 7-9, 2007 in La Jolla, CA I will direct a mini version of "A Great Day on Eldridge Street" where we will celebrate the arts of the "Yidishe velt". We will have a photo exhibit based upon the events that took place, and evenings and afternoon with programs consisting of music, comedy, theatre, literature and film. Depending on the progress of the documentary film we might even screen a segment from the new documentary I shot in NYC.

I am writing to see if your institutions would be interested in doing some kind of version of "A Great Day on Eldridge Street" in 2008? I recently was appointed as artist-in-residence at San Diego State Univ. where I teach one class a semester in the Jewish Studies Program. My klezmer band Hot Pstromi just released its 10th CD for Transcontinental Music called "The Absolutely Complete Introduction to Klezmer a companion to the book I edited "The Absolutely Complete Klezmer Songbook. The band is recording a new CD for ARC out of England.

I can be reached at: 619-255-1651
Quorum Sensing and Critical Mass
by Philip Fishl Kutner

Is there a lesson we in the Yiddish community can learn from the research in the physical sciences of Critical Mass (CM) and the biological sciences from the newly developing Quorum Sensing (QS)? They both require a minimum presence of atoms in CM and a minimum number of microbial organisms in QS.

What has this to do with Yiddish? Are there any real constructive analogies that can be drawn from this? Can we apply any of the principles in these sciences to fostering Yiddish?

In each of the above cases there is a minimum amount of mass to have a reaction. Is there a minimum number one needs to have a successful leyenkrayz, shraybkrayz or shmueskrayz? Likewise is there a point where a group gets too large and unwieldy?

It appears that in entertainment it is possible and even desirable to have groups of a thousand or even several thousand and it can still work well. There are clubs where many of the members come just to listen and not participate. This does not lead to a vibrant situation. History shows us that after a while the leader becomes tired or disillusioned at the lack of cooperation and leaves.

Experience has shown that a lower limit seems to be the minimum for a viable club situation. There is always a leader—if only for scheduling or calling. Seldom will everyone attend sessions. It may be a seasonal situation and the group meets only during the winter as they do in warmer climes.

- Six participants seems to be the lower limit for a shraybkrayz. (Yugntruf seems to have the only vibrant shraybkrayz.)
- Six also seems to be the lower limit for a leyenkrayz.
- Ten to twelve seems to be the lower limit for a shmeskrayz (the vast majority of clubs fall into this category. Groups with attendance in the 20-50 range seem to be the most successful.

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A shneyfoygl is a snowbird—one who comes down south to Florida, California or Arizona for the “season”. A shneyele is a snowflake—one who comes down but only for several weeks. These seasonal groups are often ephemeral.

The longer “vacationers” remain in their temporary home, the greater is the chance that they will attend a Yiddish club.

Klezfest St. Petersburg 2007

The Center for Jewish Music of the the Jewish Community Center of St. Petersburg is proud to announce "KlezFest St. Petersburg 2007," an international seminar on the traditional music of Eastern European Jewry, to be held July 8-12, 2007 in St. Petersburg, Russia.

"KlezFest St. Petersburg," now in its 11th year, is the oldest klezmer seminar in Russia. The 2007 festival will include master-classes on Yiddish folk songs and klezmer music, workshops on Yiddish folklore and Yiddish dance, lectures, concerts, and two excursions: "Jewish St. Petersburg" and "Rivers and Canals of St. Petersburg."

Our staff will include world-famous musicians -- from New York, the violinist, accordion player, vocalist, ethnomusicologist and the world’s leading expert on Yiddish dance, Michael Alpert; also from New York, the vocalist from the famous Klezmatics group, Lorin Sklamberg; from Zaporozhie, Ukraine, the Yiddish folk poet and singer Arkady Gendler, and others.

"KlezFest St. Petersburg," dedicated to bringing klezmer music and Yiddish culture back to the land of their birth, includes Jewish musicians from the vibrant centers of the Jewish renaissance throughout the former Soviet Union.

This year again we are pleased to announce a very special program for lovers of Yiddish music and culture from other parts of the globe. We are asking for a contribution of $550. This sum will include food and lodging in St. Petersburg for 5 days and the entire seminar program, including interpreters when needed, concerts and two excursions. Participants will pay for their own transportation to St. Petersburg.

For more information, please contact the Jewish Community Center of St. Petersburg via e-mail <frenk@lea.spb.su> or visit our website at: <www.klezfest.ru>.

If you wish to have advice on travel and visa arrangements, contact our American sponsor, the Jewish Community Development Fund in Russia and Ukraine. It is a project of the American Jewish World Service (New York), via: telephone: (+1-212) 792-2916, or e-mail: <jcdf@ajws.org>.

Join us at "KlezFest St. Petersburg" this summer! If you haven’t been on the Neva River during White Nights with Russian klezmorim, you haven’t lived!
The IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007
Lomir shpiln ma zhon

The IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007 at the Marriott Cleveland East Hotel is history. It goes into the books along with the other ten. Each one has been in another venue. They have been at universities, hotels and conference centers. Some of the highlights now follow.

Each night my Sally told me of the exciting people she met and the things she did. Imagine playing mah Jongg in Yiddish! Along with Varda Ginspan, Sydney Turk Porter and presenter Ruth Goodman they used the Hebrew/Yiddish terms for the major points of the compass. Naturally the Jews in Eastern Europe did not have bamboo so you can guess what word they used.

Charles Gruenspan led the Saturday morning Hebrew services. The instructions and portion were in Yiddish by presenter and IAYC Board member, Professor Refoyl Finkel. They made sure that we all followed along and participated.

All 3 of our keynote speakers were superb and used just enough English so that those with a lesser knowledge were able to follow along. Dr. Motl Rosenbusn, Prof. Kathryn Hellerstein and Gerry Kane.

There was a full schedule of entertainment that included:
• The Yiddish People’s Stage with five acts,
• The team of Reuben and Dorothy Silver
• Bert Stratton’s Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band
• The Workmen’s Circle Gala with Zalmen Mlotek, Adrienne Cooper, Joanne Borts and Heather Klein

• The Concert in the Park at Cain Park
• Cantor Kathryn Sebo in Concert

There were 30 different presenters in 30 different lectures and workshops—no repeats!

This year’s recipient of the Yiddish Lifetime Service Award went to Simon Swirsky. In her introduction Annabelle Weiss recounted the many Yiddish activites that Simon was involved and gave of his. Simon is a worthy follower to last year’s awardee, Chana Mlotek.

The IAYC trustees and officers were announcement for 2007-8. The officers are:

President: Paul Melrood – Milwaukee, WI
V. P.: Dr. Motl Rosenbush – Kensington, MD
Secretary: Lenora Zimmerman – Skokie, IL
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E-mail: avvocato@peoplepc.com
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Co-Chair: Annabelle Weiss..Ph: 216-752-2021

Registration: Pauline Leber, Ph: 216-831-4177
E-mail: paulsam@adelphia.net
Administrator: Kristen McLoughlin

Entertainment: Bert Stratton: 216-932-3586
E-mail: yiddcup@en.com
Programming & Vending: Fishl Kutner, Ph: 650-349-6946 E-mail fishl@derbay.org
"Jerusalem of Lithuania"
Editor: Milan Chersonskij

The newspaper "Jerusalem of Lithuania" was born during the wave of restoration of independence in Lithuania and national revival of all peoples living in Lithuania, including the Jews. The newspaper’s first issue was printed in November 1989.

The title of the newspaper reminds of the glorious community of Litvaks that thrived in Lithuania before the Holocaust. Lithuanian Jews made significant achievements in many fields of human activity. Among the Jewish Diaspora the 18th-20th century Vilnius was renowned as the most important Jewish cultural center. That is why it was called the “Jerusalem of Lithuania”.

"Jerusalem of Lithuania" belongs to the Jewish Community of Lithuania, which has fewer than 5,000 members. During WWII about 250,000 Lithuanian Jews were murdered. The newspaper is issued in four languages: Yiddish, Lithuanian, English and Russian. This is unique in the Jewish press – no other Jewish publication is printed in four languages.

"Jerusalem of Lithuania" reports about all major events in life of the Jewish community of Lithuania, contains information about life of Lithuanian Jews in Israel and other countries of the world and acquaints the readers with the rich history of the Litvaks.

For us it is a way to offer information about ourselves and to express opinions about events in our country and in the world. Our eight-page newspaper appears four times a year. “Jerusalem of Lithuania” does not receive any support from the state institutions and is published thanks to the donations of our sponsors and readers.

Your subscription is a support for us. We also very much would appreciate any donations to our newspaper. The cost of an annual subscription is $USD 30, $USD 40 in two languages).

To subscribe to the “Jerusalem of Lithuania”, please send a check and indicate your address and language (languages) in which you would like to receive the newspaper. Our address is:

"Jerusalem of Lithuania",
Pylimo Str. 4,
LT-01117 Vilnius,
Lithuania
Ph: (370-5) 212-79-17
Fax: (370-5) 212-79-15
E-mail: jeruzale@litjews.org

Richard Kaiser Writes

I was delighted to meet you in the Cleveland Marriott East Hotel in Cleveland at the Eleventh Conference of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs. I especially found interesting the presentation of Daniel Galay’s update on renewed attempts to bring the Yiddish language back to Israeli society.

He spoke (in Yiddish, of course) of using the language:
• to broaden the Israeli perspective,
• to encompass a multiplicity of ideas from Jews in Israel and abroad.

He reasoned that by the society becoming more inclusive as a result of Yiddish re-introduction, this would potentially increase the prospects for peace through greater understanding.

Mr. Galay did recognize, as do we all, the current demographic situation regarding the aging Yiddish speaking community as a whole. He emphasized that advanced Yiddish studies at the university level are insufficient. Academia alone cannot revive a language.

To be reintroduced into common usage, the younger generation must become actively engaged. Thus, Mr. Galay expressed renewed interest by many Israeli Sabras in the language of their parents and of their grandparents. I believe he said that the year 2003 may well have been that turning point. We shall see if this is so.

My own belief, which I expressed at the conference, is that the media is crucial. Television programming in Yiddish, with Hebrew subtitles, is vital. Small amounts of Yiddish programming presented consistently over a long period of time, with program content geared to different, especially younger audiences, may prove to be quite effective. The change would be subtle but over-time pronounced.

At any rate, I also am writing to ask you to please include my name as a Yiddish translator. I do read Yiddish script in addition to printed material, and I have translated letters for others on numerous occasions.

Richard Kaiser
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Solon, OH 44139
Ph: 440-248-7788
E-mail: richard.kaiser@adelphia.net
All International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) member clubs can avail themselves of FREE advice from the parent organization. The officers and trustees are a true cross section geographically as well as ability and interest. They are at your service both at the conferences and by e-mail.

Let us be specific as to what is needed to have a successful club or how to start one. We shall call the starting point the business plan, for the analogy is very close. When one goes for a loan to the lending institution, one is always asked for this plan. It not only shows that there are sufficient financial resources to warrant a loan, but that there is know how and personnel for a successful venture.

Plan your work and work your plan

When there are many eager buyers (potential members) word of mouth will bring success. When there are many eager buyers the product doesn’t have to be superior. However, when the market is lean and the product is only average, then the plan becomes crucial.

Many startup clubs soon run out of steam. The excitement of the newness soon disappears and club attendance diminishes. The key word is sustainability. Whether it is a clothing store, a klezmer band, a Yiddish teacher or a Yiddish club you must be prepared for change. It is like reading the market. As the styles, clients, students, or members change you must be prepared beforehand to adapt and adopt new styles, and new methods.

If your club is transitioning from young (under 60) to middle age (over 60), you need to change from evening to daytime meetings or events. If your group is becoming less knowledgeable in Yiddish, you may wish to introduce transliterated material. These changes likewise will determine the type of guest speakers or entertainment.

Many club members were born before or during the Great Depression or overseas. Their interests and knowledge is entirely different than those who came later.

One major change has been the mass usage of the Internet. My data show that in the last 5 years the growth in computer literacy in the relevant population has grown from 33% to 66% and still growing. This has led to access to Yiddish oriented websites, Yiddish general and specialty lists like Mendele and Yiddish teachers, and the large growth of cyberspace brif fraynd.

How IAYC Membership Can Help Your Group

This is the first in a series. Each issue will carry another phase of club formation, vitalization or revitalization. These are time-tested methods and procedures that have been gleaned from successful member clubs. This first facet essential for a successful club deals with a question that all clubs need to tackle at every meeting—“What is the Program for Next Month?”

- Programming - Many of the more successful clubs have developed programs or ideas that you can adapt to your own needs. Co-operation is the basis of success. At the last conference Roz Baker had a workshop on Sharing Club Ideas.

Alvin Dink Holzman’s Milwaukee based club uses holidays to showcase Jewish foods. Members bring in their specialties and share recipes.

Eda Zimler-Schiff and Helen Smolkin’s Toronto based Friends of Yiddish publishes Dos Bletl. This club newsletter has run a series by Etke Patt called kokhlefl. It has recipes in Yiddish and English. Portions of club meetings can be set aside to study words relating to foods and preparation and then a lively discussion on the merits of the recipe.

Raquel Leisorek’s San Diego based club made a video of a Yiddish version of My Fair Lady that has been used by several clubs with great success.

Ed Goldman wrote a series of comic bible scenes that are 1-2 page skits in transliteration with English translation immediately after less-know words. Each person is given a copy and the group reads it over for meaning. The skits are then performed in front of the group—no memorization is required. Copies of these skits are free to member clubs by sending a self-addressed stamped #10 envelope (regular business size) to Fishl with your request.

So contact us whether you are a member club and losing steam or need help starting a new group. You don’t have to reinvent the wheel. Likewise if you have ideas that you would like to share, send it in to your editor. If you have special areas that you wish us to cover, let us know.

One of the future topics will relate to membership. We shall cover suggestions on each of the 3 phases of club membership—acquisition, indoctrination and retention. Getting new members, welcoming them and keeping them are ongoing processes. 
The Best Little Website in the West
By Philip Fishl Kutner

WhyWeWill.be.the.IAYC.org is the best little website not on the Internet. No Yiddish website can compare to The Best Little Website in the West.

There are Yiddish sites with graphics and links. Just look at the Folksbiene and listen to music. Go to the Klezmer Shack and learn all about our wonderful bands. Enjoy Refoyl Finkel and his Baveber Yid. Don’t forget to read the Forverts online. Remember to visit the Freedman collection at the University of Pennsylvania Library. How about Der Bay’s website? We could go on and on and on with all the great links at: http://www.derbay.org/links.html

While all of the above is true and can be verified by the almightyees, there is none that can touch the depth and breadth of WhyWeWill.be.the.IAYC.org

Website addresses are called URLs (Uniform Resource Locators). So where is this site? If it is not in cyberspace or on the Internet, does it actually exist? The term Virtual Shtetl refers to the imaginary group of people who communicate online in lists like Mendele. By virtue of a group of several thousand, who follow and occasionally post, there exists a shtetl-like environment in cyberspace.

Someday, somehow, somewhere, someone will get somebody, sometime in someplace who will do something so that The Best Little Website in the West will be a reality.

The first step was taken here in Der Bay newsletter by creating the URL for this site. Now your editor has tossed out the challenge to someone who will get somebody, sometime in someplace who will do something someday, somehow, somewhere to actually create this ultimate Yiddish website.

The second and final step to bring this to fruition is to actually convince someone, someday who will pay somebody, at sometime, to do something, somehow somewhere in someplace, to actually create this ultimate Yiddish website.

Reshime fun Some Verter

Somebody - emetser
Someone - emetser
Somewhere - vi es iz
Something - epes
Somewhat - epes
Sometime - a mol
Somewhere - ergets
Someday – eyn tog

Bialik Hebrew Day School

Bialik Hebrew Day School in Toronto, Canada is seeking a teacher of Yiddish language and culture.

This is a unique opportunity to work in an exciting, dynamic Jewish educational institution with a history of academic excellence and a strong commitment to the State of Israel and to Jewish heritage and culture.

Rooted in the Labor Zionist Movement, Bialik serves some 800 students from Junior Kindergarten through Grade 8. Our students learn Hebrew, English, Yiddish and French within our Jewish and General Studies programs.

Candidates for the position of Yiddish teacher will be fluent in all aspects of the Yiddish language. They will have experience with teaching children, and will have a strong desire to impart Yiddish language and culture to Bialik students.

di bialik shul in toronto zukht a lerer fun yidish shprakh un kultur.

dos iz an eynslne gelegnheyt tsu arbetn in a dinamisher yidisher dertsings-institutsye, velkhe iz yorn lang bakant far ir akademisher oysgetseykhntkeyt un shtarker ibergegebunik keyt tsu erets isroel un tsu yidisher kultur un yerushe.

bialik iz ayngevortslt in der arbeter-tsionistisher (poley tsion) bavegung un hot an erekh 800 shilers fun kindergorn biz klas 8. di talmidim lernen hebreish, english, yidish un frantsoyzish in di yidishe un velekhke programen

kandidatn far dem postn fun yidish lerer veln zayn flisik in ale protim fun der yidisher shprakh, veln hobn derfarung in lernen kinder un veln hobn a shtarkn viln ibertsugebn di kinder fun bialik a libe tsu der yidisher shprakh un kultur.

farinteresirte kandidatn darfn shikn a briv, an iberblik fun derfarung un referentsn tsu:

Simona Dayan,
Principal of Jewish Studies

Ph: 416-783-3346

E-mail: simona_dayan@bialik.on.ca.

Bialik Hebrew Day School
2760 Bathurst Street
Toronto, Ont. M6B 3A1
Once upon a life a little girl, born in a small Jewish village in Belarus, left for America and arrived at the beginning of the Great Depression—with all of her family, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends with whom she had spent her childhood years together with all the people of her town who were murdered during the horrors of World War Two.

She found it hard to let go of what was and become a “Real American Girl,” which was her dream. A learning disability did not allow her to enter “The University” until the age of 56. She had a heart full of stories. The storytelling community opened its arms to her and saw within the laughter of her tales the tears lurking underneath. I have no words to express the gratitude I feel for this great honor that you have given me.

How can I convey what it means to me to receive this recognition since what I have tried to convey was the memories of a world that no longer exists, a culture, a language, and mostly a people who disappeared with out a trace. When I tell my stories, and you hear them, they live again if only in my tales. My stories are sad, funny and loving because that was how I experienced them. Many of my stories are about an immigrant child lost in a strange new world with a strange new language. Many times this world was a hostile one.

When I was about ten years old, my parents sent me to a Jewish cultural folk school, after coming back from public school. There I appeared in several theater productions. In one of them my part was to stand on a soup box and say in Yiddish, “Akh sara shand, in a land fun gold un broyt un vayn zuln hungerike zayn.” (Oh what a shame in a land of gold and bread and wine there should be hungry people).

I never forgot those sentiments and some of my stories attest to that. Several others are about having a learning disability, scarred throughout a lifetime, yet finding other ways of succeeding. And some are about New York City and the happenings that could only happen there!

I wanted you to see the love, humor and humanity of the hardworking Jewish people among whom I grew up. I wanted to share our laughter, foibles, goals, our view of life where there was, and still is, the wisecrack hiding the hurt that came across the ocean with the first Jewish immigrant. When I was able to feel good about whom I was, I was able to see you and yours in the humanity we all share.

I always have said that it is hard to hate those whose story you know. Therefore I have stressed the importance of telling personal stories that incorporate the surrounding culture in which the character and action take place. After hearing the story the audience must feel that they know more about the characters and the situation of the story than the teller has told them.

A storyteller is more than a teller of tales. We all know that a storyteller is part oral historian, part entertainer and part folklorist. We must tell our folktales, fairytales, literary tales, as they share the wisdom of the world with us, but it is our personal stories that bring us together and blend our laughter and tears into our mutually braided lives.

You know stories do not stop unless you stop. Growing old is not as it used to be. I admit you have to spend quite a bit of time for the maintenance of your aging edifice, but with a little help from modern medicine, and some stamina, you’d be surprised how long you can keep going. And if your head still works it’s great to be around. I would, therefore, like to inform this prestigious gathering of young friends that I have not as yet retired. In fact I recently have created a body of stories called “Life in the fast lane when old age is running after you.” You would be surprised what they’re about.

Lastly, I want to say ‘thank you’ to all the wonderful people who have gone out of their way to make this evening possible. I have a very special thanks for Jim May who was the first Festival Coordinator to recognize my ‘extraordinary’ talent and Steve Sanfield who has been my loving friend and listener all of these many years. I love you all and thank you for making ‘the bottom of my cup so sweet,’ as Lillian Openhimer, an old wonderful friend of storytelling once said.

And if this is not enough, I have recently become a great grandmother. Also, a book of all my stories is at the publisher right now and is due to greet the world in the winter of 2008. Several of the stories of my childhood will appear in illustrated versions for children. I would say “My cup runeth over!” wouldn’t you?

Editor’s note: Roslyn has presented at an IAYC conference, as has her sister, Phyllis Berk—a well-known Yiddish singer. During the winter they are snowbirds in Deerfield Beach, Florida. We hope to have them back at a future conference.
The Yiddish Committee of Winnipeg and Winnipeg’s Yiddish History

The Yiddish Committee of Winnipeg provided Winnipeg’s new immigrants with the Yiddish cultural programmes so vital to them as they adjusted to life in an unusually strange country.

For decades Winnipeg has been recognized as a major centre of Yiddish cultural activities—and not only in Canada. It is interesting to note that the minutes of the Winnipeg Congress Council’s meetings from 1942 through 1948 were written in Yiddish only.

Right through until today members of the Yiddish Committee continue to organize the annual Yarzeit for the Holocaust victims. This traditional observance is held at the B’nai Abraham Synagogue and children from the Jewish schools participate.

In addition, the Yiddish Committee has always been a staunch supporter of the Jewish Public Library, and until recently, provided a modest annual stipend from its own limited budget.

It has been an important cultural outlet for the community, although the scope of its programming has been somewhat reduced in recent years because of the gradual shrinkage in the Yiddish-speaking population. Oscar Antel, who took over the chairmanship of the Committee from past chairman D.L (Itzie) Victor, is very protective of the core of Yiddishkayt in Winnipeg.

The emergence of a young adult group called the Chaverim far Yerushe (The Group for Yiddish Heritage) is likely to strengthen and expand that core. This group grew out of the Winnipeg branch of Yugentruf (Youth for Yiddish) organized in the early 70’s by Sheva Zucker, one of the very first graduates of a Jewish school in Winnipeg. She trained in a Jewish Teachers Seminary in New York with the help of a scholarship established by Congress in 1968 to alleviate the acute shortage of Jewish teachers in western Canada.

In 1984 more than 1200 people attended a reception that was convened by the Chaverim far Yerushe on behalf of the Jewish community in tribute to Yiddish broadcaster and newspaper columnist Noah Witman.

He was the host for the past 31 years of an hour long Sunday afternoon local Jewish radio show and likewise for 14 years he had a weekly half hour evening television show that was both in Yiddish and English.

The first Yiddish daily newspaper in Canada was Winnipeg’s The Canadian Israelite, later renamed The Israelite Press. It generated much of the rich and varied cultural life enjoyed by the early European immigrants who settled in western Canada.

Fivel (Frank) Simkin became the publisher in 1914 and Ben Sheps was a strong supporter of the paper. The paper’s two editors, H.E. Wilder and S.M. Selchen were deeply involved at the time in the movement to establish a Canadian Jewish Congress.

The Israelite Press followed a consistently non-partisan editorial policy and because of its bold advocacy of Jewish rights and its championing of creative Jewish life on the Canadian scene it became a powerful influence in molding Jewish opinion in the Province of Manitoba and Western Canada.

The advent of Anglo-Jewish newspapers in the late twenties did not immediately affect the circulation of The Israelite Press, but by the fifties the paper was encountering serious financial problems. All attempts at rescue proved unsuccessful, including the period of 1965 to 1968 when Winnipeg printer, Harold Margolis and his wife, Doris, became the publishers and owners of The Israelite Press, (or Yiddish Press, as it had come to be known) with Noah Witman as editor.

For a few years after the Margolis’s relinquished the paper Congress undertook to keep it afloat, but in spite of valiant efforts by Fivel Simkin and a few other diehards, the Yiddish Press ceased to exist in the early seventies.

Current Yiddish Activites

- **Yiddish Vinkl** – The Yiddish portion of the Jewish Library. It has 6000-7000 books.
- **University of Manitoba Yiddish Program** – One to two years of Yiddish language. Rochella Secter is the instructor.
- **J.L Peretz School Endowment Trust** – Supports Yiddish programs in Winnipeg like the Annual Yiddish Film Festival.
- **Gwen Secter Yiddish Women’s Reading Circle** Jeanette Block is the leader.
- **Yiddish Radio Program** – It is a half hour, Sunday afternoon program. This was run by Osher Kraut and now by Rochelle Zucker.
- **Yerushe Group** – The Leader is Rochelle Zucker
- **Mameloshn** – The leader is Fred Narvey
The 7th Annual Leah Todres Yiddish Song Festival took place in Cape Town, South Africa at the Baxter Theatre Centre. The title was Sholem Songs from the Heart. The talented performers, musicians, director, teachers and researchers stage a different show each year. The audience keeps expanding as rave reviews convince the younger people that it’s not music for the older generation only.

The publicity began with a presentation on Fine Music Radio—the local classic and jazz broadcaster focusing on Eastern European Music and Yiddish Song. World Café is a weekly program presented by Sylvia Bruinders, a music ethnicologist based at the University of Cape Town. Together with Fay Singer, also a music ethniclogist at that university, and Dragana Jevtovic, a singer originally from Belgrade.

Fay Singer researches the repertoire. Dragana Jevtovic was the guest artist. She has a degree in music from the University of Belgrade and although not Jewish, sang with a Jewish Choir for 10 years. The artists in Sholem – Songs from the Heart are Aviva Pelham and Beverly Chiat. They were joined by Ivor Joffe and David Gordon.

Each year students from Herzlia, the Jewish Day School, enthusiastically get involved. The choir of children, 7 - 10 years old, under the direction of Sandy Segal, make a spirited and charming appearance. They have developed a repertoire of songs and have their own slot, when they perform in the lobby pre the show. A talented corps of grade 6 and some teens have been formed into the Herzlia Ensemble. These gifted and spirited young people are great performers and bring the house down.

Matthew Reid and Fay Singer have been the Musical Directors since inception. Matthew Reid directs the Playing With Fire Klezmer Band, who provided the accompaniment. Irma Kesler, who is in charge of staging, pulled the whole production together. The Yiddish Song Festival is a true celebration of life, in the universal language of song. It is in aid of the CJSA the Cape Jewish Seniors Association.

FAY SINGER’S intimate knowledge and love of Yiddish Song is invaluable. Together with Matthew Reid she has contributed to developing programs for each festival. Fay has established the South African Jewish Music Centre, which is affiliated to the Jewish Music Institute, University of London. She is at UCT College of Music, working on her Doctorate.

DRAGANA JEVTOVIC was born in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, and obtained her BA, specialising in the vocal arts at the Belgrade Faculty of Music Arts. She also sang at concerts in the USA and in Europe, and has recorded for Yugoslavian Radio and Television. She has been active in the performing and visual arts and focuses on her native Balkan folk music.

AVIVA PELHAM has appeared as soloist in Rotary Pops, Divine Divas, Summer School, Queen at the Ballet, Navy Band at Dry Dock, Aviva & Friends, Every Woman Deserves an Oscar and Viva the Voices. Aviva was nominated for Woman of Worth, Jewish. She lectures at the UCT Opera School.

BEVERLEY CHIAT completed her studies at UCT Opera School. Post-graduate studies took her to England where she received the prestigious Peter Moores Foundation bursary. Beverley has performed with KZNPO in the “Bravissimo Opera Highlights” at the Durban Playhouse Theatre and with the CTP at the Cape Town City Hall.

IVOR JOFFE has served as Cantor and Choirmaster to the United Orthodox Hebrew Congregation, at the North Eastern Jewish War Memorial Centre and Mizrachi Shuls in Melbourne. He has performed in South Africa, Australia, and Jewish Music Festivals in Israel, England and the USA. Currently he is the Cantor of the Green & Sea Point Hebrew Congregation and co-ordinates the Jewish Music Programme for the United Herzlia Schools. Ivor trains the young stars of the Herzlia Ensemble.

DAVID GORDON is choirmaster at the Green and Sea Point Hebrew Congregation. David has been singing in Shul choirs for 25 years. He has performed in many community musicals and has been involved in the Yiddish Song Festival since 2002.

MATTHEW REID was musical Director of the Yiddish Song Festival for the seventh year. He started the Simcha Klezmer and Playing with Fire Klezmer Bands. An award winning clarinetist, Giora Feidman sparked his interest in Klezmer music. He was invited to the 2007 Grahamstown Festival to be on the Main Stage Program.

IRMA KESLER has a Licentiate in Speech & Drama. In Cape Town she runs a school, boasting three full time teachers. She has been involved in staging shows to help raise funds for Jewish organisations. She staged the Purim Wedding Shpiel.
Child Survivors of the Holocaust
Anna Andlauer andlauer@onlinehome.de

I am looking for child survivors of the Holocaust who lived in Kloster Indersdorf, near Dachau, Germany, right after the war (1945-1948), before they were transported to other countries.

There were three different DP Children’s Centers at Kloster Indersdorf: The first DP Children’s Center Kloster Indersdorf, Germany 1945-1946 was led by UNRRA Team 182 (Principal Welfare Officer Greta Fischer). The second center, the 'Jewish Children’s Center Kloster Indersdorf' lasted till 1947 and was led by UNRRA Team 1066 and had different Kibbutz organizations from Poland and Hungary.

The IRO and Kibbutz Dror were in charge of the last 'Jewish Children’s Center' until 1948. Who can remember this time in Kloster Indersdorf?

FSYSNA Fellowship Announced

The Friends of the Secular Yiddish Schools in North America Collection At Stanford University Libraries, Department of Special Collections is accepting applications for its Annual Research Fellowship 2007-2008

The sum of $3000-4,000 to be awarded to the applicant who will commit to at least a 2 month in-residence period (of choice) using the impressive multilingual resources (Yiddish, English and Hebrew) of the extensive SYSNA Archival Collection. Fluency in reading Yiddish is required. A substantive publishable paper or project in any of the three languages is a goal of this fellowship.

A distinguished panel of scholars in Jewish/Yiddish Studies, Education, Bilingualism and Ethnicity will review all applications.

The deadline for submission of applications (in triplicate) is October 15, 2007. Notification of award will be no later than November 15, 2007.

For further information contact: Joshua A. Fishman joshuaafishman@aol.com

Mailing address: 3616 Henry Hudson Parkway #7B-N, Riverdale, NY 10463

Yiddish at a Phoenix, High School
by Morrie & Tybie Feller

As I promised, here is a report of our week of Yiddish at this high school. Unfortunately due to certain circumstances, the five days were cut to 3.5 days. We managed to teach reading of Yiddish, and also my wife, Tybie, did an outstanding job in teaching five Yiddish songs of which "zog nit keymol" was the most dramatic and impressive.

We started by reading the special Yiddish greetings from Tsuguya Sasaki (Tsvi Sadan) from Israel, and from Paul Melrood, President of the IAYC. Then we read the excellent article which described the development of Yiddish over the centuries, and which I previously had sent to you.

In addition to the reading lessons, I provided the students with Yiddish proverbs, excerpts from the textbook "Learning Yiddish in Easy Stages", a list of universities that offer Yiddish courses. Also I provided them with a list of words of Yiddish origin that are found in the Oxford English Dictionary. This list was greeted with "ohs" and "ahs".

At the last session we had a show and tell. I showed the new construction at the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst Massachusetts, and talked about all the books that had been saved and which had been digitized. They will be put on the Internet so that one can download them.

I also showed a copy of the National Yiddish Book Center’s Pakn Treger, and of the Forverts which was celebrating 110 years of continuous publication, and handed out copies of the first pages of the translations into Yiddish of the famous children’s books: "Winnie the Pooh", "The Little Prince", and Sholem Berger's very delightful Yiddish version of Dr, Seuss’s "The Cat in the Hat".

We hope that there will be some lasting interest in Yiddish on the part of these graduating students and perhaps even become active.

Editor’s note: Morrie & Tybie Feller attended 8 IAYC conferences. Morrie was the treasurer and still is a key member of the IAYC Board. He has taught Yiddish and Hebrew. Morrie is very interested in using Yiddish on the computer and is very knowledgeable in the area.

Hannah Pollin teaches Yiddish to students in Los Angeles under a special Spielberg grant.
Before entering the marvelous chambers of the alimentary canal we shall step back a moment and get a better perspective of the overall digestive system. Food and beverage have not only nourished the Jewish People, but have played important roles in holidays and ceremonies.

This is not an assembly line like in an auto factory, for all the raw materials go in and issuing out the other end is the valued merchandise. In our Yiddish Alimentary Canal (henceforth referred to as YAC), the tasty goods go in and only waste goes out. It is the many processes occurring in YAC that counts.

YAC also cannot be compared to the famous man-made Suez or Panama Canals, for in the canals, what goes in comes out exactly the same. The sole function is to move goods and people from one place to the other intact.

An excellent example is a coal furnace where the shiny black metamorphic rock called anthracite is placed into the belly of the beast and out comes smoke going out the flue and ashes down the pit. These are worthless by-products. However, it is the energy released in the form of heat that is the desired product.

The role YAC plays is in the digestive process—a journey of 10 yards in adults. It is the conversion of the ingested food and beverage into a form that can be transferred into the blood-system that then takes it to all of the organs of the body. Nutrition for the eyes, muscles, fingers, and feet all are able to perform from the renewable energy that YAC produces.

We have a cultural aversion in referring to the end waste process and by-products of YAC; therefore, in this article reference will not be made to them, but we leave you to the wonderful Yiddish dictionaries—should you wish to further your Yiddish vocabulary.

Food and beverage are and have always been important to Jews from the first time of spiritual offerings up to today. We have many blessings and holiday rituals with food and beverage as vital constituents. We shall refer to them in a future article.

Let us now enter YAC and learn the Yiddish aspect of the AC and see why mama always encouraged her children to “es, es mayn kind” or tell her guests, “nu, trink a bisl”. Was it because so many of our immigrant ancestors never had the copious supplies found at our modern super markets, or the gelt to purchase the myriad fresh, wrapped, canned or frozen items?

The Yiddish Alimentary Canal (YAC)

Even before we start to discuss the ingestion, digestion and elimination processes of YAC, we must realize that there are a multitude of associated blessings and procedures. We say, we sing, we chant—all to give thanks for the growth and life-sustaining processes related to eating and drinking. We even start with the blessing of washing our hands before eating.

There is a wonderful list of 121 Yiddish foods and beverages under the word list “kitchen.” They are in transliteration and English at Der Bay's website: http://www.derbay.org/words/index.html

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This can be used in a wonderful Yiddish club meeting. It could include recipes in Yiddish. The newsletter, Dos Bletl, of the Toronto Friends of Yiddish has carried recipes both in Yiddish as well as in English.
Nu? Oder Nu!

Nu happens to be one of my favorite Yiddish words. It has a special ring to it and can be said in different tones and thus will carry different meanings. This happens to be especially so when one can see the other person and note the facial expression and the hand gestures.

No, you would never say nu and show your palms facing in a stop position. On the other hand it might have a shrug of the shoulders. This beautiful variability is why I love the word nu.

I have a friend whose favorite word is tsi. This is a man of very few words. He happens to favor brevity and does not like hesitation, indecisiveness or flip-flopping. His favorite saying is, “I may be wrong, but I’m never in doubt.” What has all of this to do with this issue of Der Bay?

Each month is my favorite issue. It is like giving birth to a new baby with its own personality. This month our readers have come up with a wonderful, varied set of articles. I hope you will enjoy them as much as I have in doing the formatting and then sending this issue out to you—my loyal readers.

It is also the month that we said goodbye to our favorite Canadian reader and friend.

Some of these articles were inspired by our unforgettable last IAYC conference in Cleveland. Still others are reminiscences of the author’s childhood experiences.

What is your favorite Yiddish word? Is there an interesting story behind it that you would like to share? Does that word remind you of a particular person, or perhaps an incident that occurred long ago? It might be in your childhood or even during your courting days.

We have favorite songs. Sally and mine is the Anniversary Waltz.

Oh, how we danced on the night we were wed we vowed our true love though a word wasn’t said The world was in bloom, there were stars in the skies except for the few that were there in your eyes.

Dear as I held you close in my arms Angels were singing a hymn to your charms Two hearts gently beating, murmuring low Darling, I love you so.

The night seemed to fade into blossoming dawn the sun shone anew but the dance lingered on Could we but relive that sweet moment sublime We’d find that our love is unaltered by time.

Thanks to Chana Mlotek, our renowned YIVO musicologist and winner of the first IAYC Yiddish Lifetime Service Award, we were able to track the Yiddish words to this song.

Mendele, the premiere Yiddish online, discussion list had a series of postings on this song. These are reported later in this issue.

Once again, your editor asks—no, challenges you to write about your favorite Yiddish author, book, story, poem, word or play.
From New Orleans

My Dear Fishl,

I received Der Bay today and sat right down to read it cover to cover. It made me so lonesome for you and your family and all the other yiddishistin. This paper is just excellent, and I appreciate your continuing doing it and better and better.

I turned 90 but continue doing my volunteer work at the hospital every week, do my swimming three to four times a week which means 50 laps in the pool, 100 times of front bicycling and 100 times backward along with much else. If I don’t do this, I can expect to not be able to walk at all so I push.

I had to give up my Yiddish class in transliteration because of deaths, sickness and found myself with the Cantor who reads and sings Hebrew but knows no Yiddish. Interesting eh? The only other one I had was a boy who thinks he is actually Jewish but is brilliant and was doing so well. I was having a bad time physically and they both are in touch with me.

The truth also is that we have quite a few Jewish people living here but they are Southern Jews un es ligt zey nisht in kop. They really make me angry when I have such a love for the language. I have my ups and downs and find that my mind is strong but the body won’t listen. I push though even if it means lying in bed more than I did.

I really enjoyed the paper today and I hope and pray that I can and will make the next conference. I’m so jealous at what I missed there lately. Please be well and remember me to your whole family. Shalom my “Chaver”, Tsip

Tsip Levitov
E-mail: tsipl@aol.com

Editor’s note: Tsip attended IAYC conferences in Los Angeles, The 4H International Center in Chevy Chase, MD and the in Baltimore. She continued on a Yiddish group in New Orleans after Fanny Yokor could not remain there and moved to Atlanta, Georgia.

Tsip is dynamo and multi-talented. Among her many interests is chocolate. She has traveled all around the world searching information about it and has written a book, The Chocoholic Traveler published in 1999. It is not a cookbook—not a single recipe! It is full of her observations of chocolate. Tsip rates the top 3 chocolate countries as Israel, Switzerland and Belgium.

Toronto Jewish Folk Choir

by Ben Shek

The Toronto Jewish Folk Choir, Canada’s oldest continuing Jewish performing group, begins its 82nd season on October 3, 7:30 p.m. at the Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Avenue (5 blocks north of Lawrence, just east of Bathurst).

The choir has soprano, alto, bass-baritone and tenor sections. Music reading ability is a plus, but those with good voice are also welcome.


Annual fees are $150.00, but exceptions are made for low-income singers. For more information, e-mail the Co-President, Enid Moscovitch, at: emoscovi@sympatico.com (tel: 416-593-0750), or Ben Shek: b.shek@utoronto.ca (tel: 416-489-7681)

Our choir has a long and glorious history. It reached its peak under the direction of Emil Gartner, a gifted Viennese musician and singer who was our director between 1939 and 1959. In that period, the Choir had more than 100 singers; filled Massey Hall here with concerts featuring Paul Robeson, Jan Peerce, Regina Resnick, Jenny Tourel, Earl Robinson, etc.

We have commissioned many works from Jewish-Canadian composers, and were closely related to the Jewish Music Alliance in New York. (Our choir, in its history, repertoire, and general outlook, resembled the U.S. members of the Alliance, and especially that of the NY Jewish Philharmonic Choir, which is led by Binyumen Schaechter.

We number 30-35 singers and carry on with our established traditions. We are more of a community choir than one that was closely related to the left within the Jewish community, as it was in the past.

Ben-Zion Shek is Professor Emeritus of French, University of Toronto and a member of the Royal Society of Canada. He authored two books on Québécois literature as well as being Former Assoc. Editor of the "University of Toronto Quarterly".

Prof. Shek is a graduate and former teacher in the Morris Winchevsky Shule of Toronto.
We Remember Bess Shockett

The news about Bess Shockett saddens us greatly. She was a great lady. She helped me tremendously when I was chairman of the Congress Yiddish Committee. She was also a dear personal friend.

Oscar Antel, Winnipeg, MB, Canada

It saddens me profoundly to have to tell you that our dear friend Bess Shockett has passed away. Words cannot describe the loss many of us feel.

Eda Zimler Schiff, Toronto, ON, Canada

This is indeed sad news. Bess was a most effective supporter of Yiddish. I remember well the great conference in Toronto that she chaired and her group, the Friends of Yiddish.

Morrie Feller, Phoenix, AZ

I am so sorry. Bess was an iron lady; she was very feminine; yet, she was as tough as nails. Her intellect was keen. She grasped a situation a great farther and longer than people that were many years her junior.

Barbara Goldstein, Houston, TX

I, too, am extremely saddened by the news of Bess’ death. She was, indeed, one of my favorite people. She lived a long and interesting life. We shall all miss her very much.

Dr. Allan Blair, Columbus, Ohio

Len and I Just read about the passing of Bess Shockett—what a darling lady and such a loss to Yiddish. She will be missed by all of us on the IAYC Board and the Greater Yiddish Community.

Cookie Blattman, Tamarac, FL

Sally and I first met Bess and Barry in our home in California in 1993. It was before the founding of IAYC. At that time Barry was the editor of Dos Bletl, the newsletter of the Toronto-based Friends of Yiddish and along with Sunny Landsman o’h we represented 3 of the 4 Yiddish club newsletter editors in North America. The fourth was Yiddish of Greater Washington that sponsored the first club conference at the University of Maryland.

Bess and Barry traveled here regularly to visit their daughter Elka and her family who live just across the San Francisco Bay. This continued until Barry passed away. Even afterwards Bess continued to visit, but less often.

After the first conference Bess stepped forward and said that she would chair the second conference which took place October 7-10, 1994. Barry had slowed up, and Bess really was the spearhead of the committee. We used the old JCC downtown on Bloor as well as the new one. Meetings also were held at OISE so the logistics were a challenge, but Bess handled them adeptly.

Just about this time Bess told me about Phil Givens with whom I developed a wonderful relationship. It was especially during the time that he came to Southern California for his winter vacations.

Bess and Barry were the first Canadian contact of The Yiddish Network. She new everyone and had a story to tell. It was through her that we made contact with the wonderful Winnipeggers and Montrealers. She told us all about her former position and about the Committee for Yiddish. To us she represented Mrs. Yiddish Toronto.

Dos Bletl arrived regularly and we followed the events in Toronto. Most memorable were the cooking columns by Etke Patt called Kokhlefl. I have some 3-dozen, and hope that they will be put out in book-form. Then there are Marvin’s artistic greeting cards that we hope will be reissued. The book and cards could be a wonderful memorial to Bess and Barry.

As time went by she was the go-to Board member when it came to writing criteria and standards that the Board had set up for the operating procedures for the IAYC and the conferences.

Bess spoke in a soft manner, but her advice was always full of insight and clarity. Most of all, she will be remembered as a dear friend and a first class Yiddish problem-solver.
Fishman Foundation 2008 Grant

The deadline for applications requesting funds for new projects that aim at strengthening Yiddish among young children and adolescents particularly in the USA, during 2008 is October 15, 2007.

Applications must be sent in Yiddish, and must supply a description of the intended project, a detailed budget (up to $2,500) and a letter of agreement from the tax-exempt agency agreeing to receive and monitor the expenditure of any funds that may be awarded.

Projects are judged on a competitive basis. In order to receive a checklist that covers all the necessary details of an application, please contact (in Yiddish) at the address below:

E-mail: fishmanfundatsye@aol.com

Aaron & Sonia Fishman Foundation
3616 Henry Hudson Parkway
Suite TB-N
Riverdale, NY 10463

What’s in a Name?

Jordan? Yes, there are four men in Der Bay’s U.S database with the first name of Jordan. That is not significant; however, what is so surprising is that 3 of the 4 are klezmorim. They may not even know of each other’s existence, for they live in Los Angeles, California; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Teaneck, New Jersey and Columbia, Missouri.

Two Letters to the Editor

We greatly need a transliterated version of the book 201 Yiddish Verbs, by Rockowitz. Do you know of anyone who is working on one, or who is interested in working on one? Members of our Yiddish Clubs would appreciate being able to use a book like that. I’m working on transliterating (Can this word be used as a verb?) more Yiddish jokes. I’ll send them on to you when they’re ready.

Miriam Stein, Arlington Heights IL

I’m sending an update on the next screenings of my Yiddish documentary for your calendar. The big news is that it will be released in NY, LA and Tel Aviv in November! I am very excited and wanted to thank you for your support on this long journey we’ve been on. Hopefully I’m sending it enough in advance to make it to your paper edition as well as the online one. Ravit Markus, Ph: 323-939-3261, E-mail: Ravit@newlovefilms.com

Yiddish Goods & Services

Der Bay is compiling a master list of Yiddish resource outlets. It will not include individual Klezmer groups or authors. Ideally it will be a list where the outlet should have a catalog/website. Some maybe listed in more than one category

Below is a list of areas that may be included. Please send in other major areas.

Publications, Stores, Organizations, Major Events and Institutions

Below is an initial list. Please send in additions. They will appear on Der Bay’s website which already has a large group of over 150 Yiddish resources. There is also a list of—Other Jewish Resources. This is a start. Obviously many very significant ones need to be added. Please send them in. Be sure to check the online list to be sure it is also listed on the website.

Algemeiner Zhurnal
Arbeter Ring
Congress for Jewish Culture
Dora Teitelbaum Center for Yiddish Culture
Ergo Media
Folksbiene
Forverts
Freedman’s Yiddish Cong Archives
Hatikvah Music International
IAYC
Kadimah
Klezmer Shack
League for Yiddish
Leyvick House
Living Traditions
Medem Bibliotheque
Mendele
National Center for Jewish Film
NYBC
refoyls yidish veb-bletl
Sadie Bronfman Yiddish Theater
Simcha Sales
SYSA
The World of Yiddish
Virtual Shtetl
Yiddishkayt LA
Yiddish Voice Radio
YIVO
Yugntruf
Yung Yidish

We have a Resource List of People in various fields—teachers, performers, lecturers, etc. as well as klezmer groups all on Der Bay’s website: http://www.derbay.org
As a child, I could have learned Yiddish from my grandparents or even from listening in on the conversations and disputes that occurred among my neighbors, most of whom were immigrants from Eastern Europe, but at that time I wasn’t at all interested.

Now, having arrive at the age of 75, I truly have discovered the joys of Yiddish, however, now it is with a brain that is much less malleable. Back then, on Sundays, it was my job to deliver bagels, onion roles, bialys, and the Yiddish newspapers to my grandparents, just a few blocks from us in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn.

I collected the Daily Mirror and the Brooklyn Eagle for Uncle Abe, who lived with them after he came back from the navy. Later in the day, the extended family would assemble at my grandparents’ home for herring, boiled potatoes, tea served in yortsayt glasses, loud discussion, and, for the battle-tested, a spirited game of pinochle.

Not everyone would play. Uncle Abe would be on the town by then; my father didn’t enjoy the rough and tumble of the game. Uncle Joe would be reading or dozing, waiting for Uncle Meyer so they could discuss the grocery business. Uncle Meyer and Ann-Meyer’s would arrive, their Pontiac parked on the street, and also Seymour and Ann-Seymour’s (I was an adult before I realized that “Ann-Seymour’s” and “Ann-Meyer’s” were not proper names).

Uncle Ben and Tante Chaika, my grandfather’s sister, came scattering coins for the children and baked goods for the adults in unstated but determined competition with my grandmother; then there might be some Yiddish spoken. I didn’t pay attention. I was eating mandl broyt and counting my coins.

The kids, of my generation, would be wandering around the small apartment. How did we all fit in? I recently heard of a young couple with one child who bought a huge house – 6,000 square feet on one floor.

I can’t imagine living in all that space. How would they find each other to fight or argue? In a game of hide-n-seek, the seekers would soon be hidden and the poor child who was “it,” still crouched behind one of the numerous sofas, could be missing for days. Too much space is like too much freedom, a plague rather than a blessing.

Yiddish was spoken sparsely at these gatherings. They were just a few words by my elders to each other, never to the other adults, all American born, or us grandchildren.

Later in the week, when it was just my grandfather and me he again became a tailor rather than a pinochle card sharp. “Shtey glaykh!” he muttered through the pins in his mouth, down on his knees, as he made marks with his soap chalk and pinned the fabric that would become my trousers. I didn’t know the words, but I knew that I had better be still or I would endure a pinprick or, worse yet, his exasperation.

“Shtey glaykh” is the Yiddish expression I recall most vividly, because it was spoken by my beloved grandfather and directed to me. I also knew from my grandmother and Tante Chaika that I was a “bubele,” “ziskayt,” “mieskayt,” “kluge yung,” “longa luksh,” and a “khalaria,” and that all of those meant I was someone special.

While I was growing up, Yiddish newspapers sat along side Italian papers on the newsstand at Izzie’s candy store. Shops along 18th avenue had notices posted in Yiddish. I overheard it in the market and on the subway and the trolley that ran along New Utrecht Avenue.

On Passover, I would recite the “Fir Kashes” in Yiddish to tumultuous applause. The applause was only partly for my performance. At our highly abbreviated seder, the recitation of the Four Questions also meant that the seder had come to an end and that the chicken soup would soon be on the table.

The rabbi at our small, orthodox shul gave sermons during the High Holy Days in Yiddish and I have a faint recollection of giving my bar mitzvah speech in Yiddish. I didn’t understand the Rabbi or my own speech. I would love to have a copy of that speech now.

Italian was ubiquitous in our mixed neighborhood. I loved the sound of Italian much more than Yiddish. Italian was a “romance language” and I yearned for romance. Yiddish was the Mama Loshn at a time I was trying to break away from Mama, it was the loshn of the ancient rabbi in my synagogue, of places long left behind, destroyed, abandoned. I chose not to learn Yiddish. Or at least I thought I did.

In 1954, married for a year, I left Brooklyn to do doctoral studies at the University of Iowa. A fellow
student taught me a few chords on the guitar and I became devoted to folk music. Mixed in with my recordings of Josh White, Burl Ives, Richard Dyer-Bennet, Hudie Leadbelly, and the others were a few vinyl discs of Mark Olf singing Yiddish folk songs (They are available from the Smithsonian Institute). With these and Ruth Rubin’s collection, *Jewish Folk Songs In Yiddish and English*, I learned several Yiddish songs.

I learned the words in transliteration with approximate translations. I was bold enough to give an informal concert of Jewish music to the Jewish community in Iowa City. I blush now thinking of what my Yiddish (and my playing) must have sounded like.

It was many years and we had addresses in North Dakota, Kansas, and Minnesota before I again became occupied with Yiddish. In 1976 my family and I went to Israel for the first time. I was on leave from the University of Minnesota for four months and had arranged to teach at Tel Hashomer Hospital.

My children had studied Hebrew in the Minneapolis Talmud Torah and to my delight and surprise – and theirs as well, the two older children discovered they could converse, carry out transactions, ask for directions and attend classes in Hebrew.

My wife had won a Hebrew medal while she attended in New Utrecht High School and both of us had made efforts to learn some Hebrew in preparation for our trip, but it was hopeless. We could utter a few words of Hebrew and then were drowned by the deluge that came back at us. In the *shikun* where we had an apartment there were neighbors who could speak half a dozen languages, but English was not one of them, we were lost, mute, cut off.

But not entirely—we discovered that some of the Yiddish that had swirled around us as children had lodged in our minds. We visited Eileen’s uncle and aunt in Haifa for a long weekend, and spoke Yiddish, or rather listened as they aired grievances against family members in the States who, they complained, had abandoned them after they immigrated to Israel from Poland. No matter. It was Yiddish that we heard and we nodded in Yiddish in return.

I discovered relatives too, my grandmother’s nieces and nephews who had come to Israel from Europe or had come by way of South America. They saw my grandmother in my face, and I saw her in theirs.

Our first encounter took place in the hospital ward where Bluma was recovering from eye surgery. Several of us gathered around her bed, exclaiming with boisterous good will.

A nurse chastised us to keep it down, to remember that there were other patients on the ward. We couldn’t. Our joy and enthusiasm were too great. The nurse admonished us once again, harshly, and Bluma, in a Yiddish that I could fully apprehend, said dismissively, “Zey zaynen nit undzere Yidn!” These are not our Jews.

We returned to our home in Minnesota after completing the sabbatical, I was caught up in family and work. Computers had invaded the academy and I was busy trying to master that language. Nevertheless, something in me had been stirred. Though imperfectly, and with effort and frustration, I had actually communicated in Yiddish.

And so, when I saw an announcement that Sol Awend would be offering an introductory course in Yiddish at the Minneapolis Talmud Torah, I signed up. And soon after, my University colleague Maurie Kreevoy told me about the Yiddish Vinkl, a club that meets monthly at the Minneapolis Jewish Community Center.

Maurie induced me to do a program of songs and I dug out the old song sheets. That began my immersion in the Vinkl. I collected songs into a book that is distributed at each meeting and now regularly lead our members in Yiddish song, adding new ones as I learn them. In addition, my wife and I joined a *shabes khavura* and I have introduced Yiddish songs among the zmiros we regularly sing.

Maurie also set me on a new and exciting path—learning to read Yiddish. We each prepare the text we are working on at home and then meet at the University Campus Club every Wednesday at noon to read to each other.

Diners at other tables, professors of chemistry or mathematics or history, come near to discover what exotic linguistic exercise we are engaged in, or to tell us that they had heard Yiddish in their youth. It might take me an hour of preparation for a page as I look up numerous words in my Weinreich dictionary (now fallen apart and replaced with a hard cover version).

But I am reading classical literature—in Yiddish! Maurie has a far better vocabulary than I, but I help with the interspersed Hebrew expressions and the continued on the next page
references to ritual practices that had escaped Maurie because of his secular upbringing.

We read Peretz and Sholom Aleichem, and are now slowly working our way through *East River* by Sholem Asch. It has been a real thrill, a joy, a farganigen.

My involvement in Yiddish activities has increased. Every year the Chicago Jewish Community Center, with Helen Schechtman, hosts a three-day retreat in the Wisconsin Dells. It is devoted to Yiddish with world-class artists performing Yiddish theater or music. I have been to five of these retreats.

I have attended conferences of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs held in Milwaukee as well as the one in Baltimore, and also helped organize the conference when it was held here in Minneapolis. At all of these international meetings I hear a level of Yiddish that is erudite, beautiful, and far beyond my ability to speak -- but not my ability to kvel and appreciate.

Now I, though still a learner, have become a teacher. On Shabes after services I meet in the library of our shul with two other congregants who want to learn to read Yiddish, one younger than I and one older.

My older “student” has an extensive vocabulary but never learned to read Yiddish, and I have the joy of passing that skill along to him. And so in a modern, progressive, Conservative shul, where Yiddish has rarely been spoken in recent years, Yiddish words join with the echoes of Hebrew and Aramaic once a week.

Wait, there’s more, as Sholom Aleichem might say. I write stories, often with a Yiddish theme. A member of our Vinkl, Joe Rozenberg, a native speaker of Yiddish, translated my story about Hanukkah into Yiddish and I read it aloud at a Vinkl meeting, from Yiddish script, and not transliteration. *Nu,* isn’t that a true Hanukkah miracle?

I did not teach Yiddish to my children, nor did I to my grandchildren, for I had come to it too late. They have studied French and Hebrew and Spanish.

One of my grandchildren is so eager to learn Latin that she is taking a course via the Internet. This is because it is not offered in the high school that she attends. Despite the fact that they love languages, they have lived in an environment where the only Yiddish spoken consists of a few words or expressions. Still, they have learned some of my Yiddish songs, seen my awakening love of the language, and know that something special awaits them if they choose to learn more. When we are together I tease them with phrases designed to whet their curiosity, even as we do at the Passover seder.

Not long ago, when I was visiting my family in New York, my uncle heard that I had been studying Yiddish. He too had become interested in the language his parents had spoken. He gave me an audiotape of Yiddish expressions that he had somehow acquired. He assayed a few sentences with me and, for the first time, he and I had a conversation in Yiddish. I was thrilled. My uncle and I continued to speak until we ran out of vocabulary and grammar.

“Shtey glaykh” my grandfather said as he patiently pinned my trousers. I loved him dearly. He saved my hide on more than one occasion by mending torn trousers so that the rips were not visible. He fed my fantasy life by regaling me with the plans for our trip to the moon, just the two of us; he chastised me for playing ball in the streets rather than listening to fine music.

Now that I’ve opened my heart to Yiddish, his, “Shtey glaykh” means something different to me than it did when I was a child. I imagine he was telling me to stay firm, to keep my Jewish identity, to persevere, remain committed, and to continue to learn and to cherish our beautiful, expressive language.

Of course I wish now I could speak Yiddish with him but in his absence I continue to find my own ways to honor his memory, and to discover the joys of Yiddish.

**Editor’s note:** Dr. Gerald M. Siegel was born in Brooklyn, New York more than 75 years ago. He was educated on 77th street, as well as the New Utrecht High School. His undergraduate degree was earned at Brooklyn College. Then he went on to the University of Iowa where he earned a Ph. D. in Speech Pathology.

Dr. Siegel taught at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis for almost 40 years and retired 10 years ago. He is an active member of the Minneapolis Yiddish Vinkl and loves to lead the group in Yiddish music. Another one of his loves is to write, and his "Road to Chelm" was published in an earlier issue of *Der Bay*.
Along with his wife of 54 years, Eileen, they have four grandchildren, two of whom live in Boulder, Colorado, and the other two in Minnesota.
No “word” in the English language better describes my people than the word “tele”. It has changed from my childhood through adolescence and maturity. In fact, it is still continuing to change. Yes, historians and linguists alike will some day write about my peers, for we are the Tele Generation.

As a child a “tele” was a dish—in our house we did not pronounce the reysh.

When we got older we learned that a “tele” is a woman who works in a bank.

Of course “tele” was sometimes used as if it actually were two words. Pop used it when he wanted me to give some information to mama.

Times changed and “tele” was no longer a word but a prefix. When I first heard the word prefix, I could not understand how one could repair something before it was broken. Nevertheless, there was a time when many things became “tele” this and “tele” that. Later generations can’t remember when “tele” was a word all by itself—that’s why I think of my friends as the Tele Generation.

It all started with the telegraph and used the Morse Code. I remember learning E I S H and T M O. They are one dot, two dots, three dots and four dots. Then it went one dash …. A telegram was something rich people sent or what you received on very special occasions—good or bad. Itst af di alte yorn lern ikh beryl, avu an A un numer 1 zenen eyn pintl.

- **Telephone**: It was something outside of our Bronx apartment and down the hall or downstairs in the candy store. What you held in your hand was only the receiver and you could not walk around with it. When you finally got your own telephone, you were on a party line. It never made sense to me why it was called a “party line”. One could hear other people talk and it often meant a wait until the others finished their call.

This piece of equipment has graduated to something that was kept in a cradle, and could be used not too far away, to something you can carry around in your pocket or purse anywhere you go. It is now called a cell phone and no more “tele”.

- **Television**: Before TV, as a child I huddled around the radio to hear great programs like the Shadow. His eerie voice saying, “The Shadow knows, heh, heh, heh” was spine tingling—especially when the lights were turned off.

Today, our television is a TV set and it even is in Technicolor just like in the movies. It has gone from two feet deep to being so thin it can be hung on the wall like a picture. If we are still around, there will be a change, and we shall need to get an HDTV (high definition TV).

- **Telemarketing**: It is the annoying thing that sweet young ladies do, over the telephone in the evening, to pester me while I am eating, punching keys on the computer or making love.

Telemarketing in its inflected forms can be used as a noun a verb or an adjective. It has developed a culture of its very own. Telemarketing is what the telemarketer does when he develops a telemarketing system to telemarket to the public.

- **Telepathy**: This is communicating without using our 5 senses. This has nothing to do with this article, but I know some of our readers will write in and ask about it.

Weinreich’s English-Yiddish, Yiddish-English Dictionary has 8 English words beginning with “tele” while the Random House Unabridged English Dictionary has some 5-dozen such words. Here is the list of Weinreich’s 21 Yiddish “tele” words.

**Weinreich’s יישלא ידיש Words**

- To wobble – telebenden
- To guide by remote control – telegidirn
- Telegram – di telegraf
- Telegraph – der telegraf
- To telegraph – telegrafirn
- Wire service – di telegraf agentur
- Television Set – der televizor
- Television – di televiziye
- Televise – televizir
- Teletype – der teletip
- Telescope – der teleskop
- Telepathy – di telepatriye
- Telepathic – telepathish
- Telephone – der telefon
- Telephone Operator – der telefonist
- To telephone – telefonirn
- Talk on the telephone – telefonish
- Remote control – der telekontroll
- Plate – der teler
- Saucer – dos telerl
- Flatterer – der teler-leker

So, tell me! Do you agree that we can be considered the Tele Generation?
How Do You Say ....?
by Dovid Kunigis

With the reawakening of interest in the Yiddish language and literature by many Jewish students, there is a newfound need to seek historical, cultural and linguistic roots. This interest is also reflected among middle-aged and senior citizen groups. It is a very healthy and positive phenomenon.

There is hardly a social gathering, concert, lecture or walk where I am not confronted with the questions 'How do you say ..... in Yiddish?' or 'What is the translation of ....?' Invariably, it stems from a certain group of words that seem to stump people and I get the distinct impression that they participate in some sort of trivia game, where these words seem to circulate and astound them.

"On the prodding and encouragement of our editors, I consented to do a column on the most frequently asked about words and expressions. The following words do not follow any particular sequence or reason. I shall try to list as many synonyms and examples as possible, including their English transliterations. If you have any words or expressions you wish to have translated, please send them to our editorial office and we shall try to include them in a future column."

Editor’s note: In the next column is a list of legal terms that represents one of the many columns that Dovid had published. These columns were in a publication that he wrote when he was the Yiddish editor, of a little periodical, called, "Attitudes". The editorial board had asked him to write these columns.

Dovid Kunigis lives in Cote St. Luc, PQ, Canada and can be reached at: DOVIDK@videotron.ca

The modern version of this is VZMAY, an online activity of Binyumen Schaechter. In addition to this work, he conducts the Jewish People's Philharmonic Chorus (JPPC). His children are being raised speaking Yiddish and perform with him.

Binyumen’s father was Mordkhe Schaechter o’h, the renowned founder of the League for Yiddish. Binyumen lives in NYC and can be reached at: BSchaechter@nyc.rr.com
Yiddish Must Thrive—Not Just Survive!

Basic Tenets

Yiddish must have a base. This requires membership. There are people in charge. We need leaders and not just managers.

Every Yiddish organization is important and serves a purpose.

For Yiddish to thrive and not just survive there has to be growth.

- The intellectual aristocracy is needed for research and to act as information resources.
- A repository is essential to collect, store and save Yiddish books.
- Jewish and Klezmer music has to be recorded and expanded.
- Bookstores and dealers have to sell the many Yiddish items.
- Writers and publishers must create Yiddish material.
- Yiddish publications newspapers, journals, newsletters & magazines play a critical role.
- The translator’s task is to make our rich heritage available in understandable form.
- Actors/actresses in our Yiddish theater, are interpreters through their performances.
- Yiddish/Jewish storytellers pass on the rich Ashkenazic heritage.

The Role for IAYC

With so many other organizations and groups why is the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) pivotal in the thriving of Yiddish?

There is no central clearinghouse for Yiddish publications, Yiddish/Jewish music, writers, translators, poets, actors/actresses or singers.

What exist are major groups like NYBC, YIVO etc. and small groups like the Jewish storytellers at the 92nd Street Y, online lists of Yiddish teachers, Yugntruf, League for Yiddish, AAPY, groups mainly in Paris, Israel and of course Mendele online to mention only a few.

Here is where the role of the IAYC comes in. It is the only one itself that is made of groups in many regions, and is the only one that has a different venue for each conference.

It is the only one that is a grassroots movement without a central headquarters, paid hierarchy or charismatic leadership.

IAYC long ago realized for it to flourish it must encompass all areas of Yiddish and reach out. It must and has been willing to both accept aid and work with all other Yiddish organizations. That is why it is especially appreciative of the aid it has received from the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring—the only fraternal organization that fosters and supports Yiddish.

We look forward to acting as the vehicle for Yiddish teachers to organize and have their own central clearinghouse.
Editor's note: Linda belongs to the Madrid Yiddish Club that is a member of the IAYC. Linda was at the last conference with her mother from Syosset, NY. She has a radio program and recorded interviews.

Here are the instructions for listening to the program: go to www.radiosefarad.com Then click on "modem" (for a dialup connection) or "ADSL" (for a high-speed connection). When you get the program, scroll down to "RS en otros idiomas" and click on "English Corner".

If you want to hear previous ones, after clicking on "modem" or "ADSL", you'll get the current program. Then, click on "archivo" in the upper right-hand corner and on the drop-down menu "secciones", click on "English Corner" and then "buscar" and you'll get all the programs in chronological order. Or if you want to look for something specific, you can write it in the space on the left (for example, your name, next week after the program is no longer current).

I hope you enjoy it.

We met with the committee from the Council of Europe on Wednesday. It's the "Committee of Experts" under the "European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages". On the 12-13 of Sept they held their bi-annual "on the spot visit" in Spain, speaking with people about regional languages, but also about other minority languages. They wanted to know about how many Yiddish speakers there are in Spain (very few--only about 40-50--we think--in Madrid, we don't know about other parts of Spain, but there aren't any other "vinkls").

Yiddish is considered a "non-territorial" language under their charter and the speakers of these languages can ask the authorities in each country for help in preserving the languages. (The request has to come from the speakers themselves.) They were very interested in this at the radio, because they're planning to do something with Yiddish (I don't know exactly what), and maybe can get some sort of financial aid. Also Rhoda Abecassis, the leader of our vinkl (and translator of various books directly from Yiddish to Spanish), who was also at the meeting, is hoping to get a subsidy to be able to bring speakers and/or entertainers here.

One of the interesting things that the Committee said is that they've found an upsurge of interest in Yiddish in...Finland!

Der Bay’s Abbreviated Edition—Now Online

The abbreviated, October online mailing was the first issue of Der Bay to go out over the Internet. It had 8 pages of the 16 in the hardcopy. These are quickly expanding since there is no charge and contributions are appreciated but not required.

Anyone interested in receiving the shorter version online may do so by sending a request to: fishl@derbay.org and include address and phone number. If you already are in Der Bay’s database it is unnecessary to do so.

Primarily it is being done to expand the foreign distribution. With overseas postage alone being $1.80 per issue as against $1.00 for Canada and 58¢ for the U.S. one soon realizes how important it is. It is hoped that as more information is received from overseas, that there may be a separate foreign edition.

When one sends an e-mail to someone for the first time, it is often not recognized and removed as spam. Thus when you send a message, it permits your editor to respond knowing that it most likely will be received and not rejected.

Der Bay never has accepted paid ads. All material is evaluated and no publication, CD, etc. is mentioned unless it has at least an acceptable rating. Negative reviews are not published—why waste space!

E-mail is checked several times a day and a response will be given usually within 24 hours. Articles sent online are particularly welcome as well as review books and CDs.

Meanwhile the website is still a rich resource with its larger der internatsyonaler kalendar, briv fraynd, lists of Yiddish resources, suggestions for Yiddish clubs and over 30 transliterated wordlists.

Der Bay purposely is not copyrighted. The editor’s intention is to have the material distributed as widely as possible with the least amount of inconvenience as possible. Clubs are welcome, even encouraged to copy articles for club use. Rarely a contributor will ask to have their contribution copyrighted and of course it is honored and marked accordingly.

Our policy is to treat all incoming calendar listings alike when it comes to including events in the calendar. The online calendar always is available in an unlimited manner, but the hardcopy has to be limited to a single column or a page.
Yiddish Club Leadership
by Philip Fishl Kutner

Leadership in general may take its form in varied styles from dictatorial to overly permissive. Neither extreme is desirable. A healthy mid-ground will permit one to temporarily move up or down without losing sight of the aim.

First we shall deal with advisable actions—as I see it. Then we shall be specific for a Yiddish vinkl in its varied formats. While the ideal is the aim, reality necessitates adapting realistic goals.

Advisable Actions

- Give them choices that are acceptable to you. Never ever have to say, "Take it or leave it."

- If possible, try to give them what they want—it’s easier and you can work to change it slowly later on.

- Give them credit for ideas or actions. One cannot receive too many deserved compliments. Don’t have an ego that constantly needs to be fed.

- Show them how they can save money by sharing books, newsletters cassettes/CDs, etc. start a lending library.

- Show them how they can save time. By using many Yiddish sites on the computer one can get information much faster.

- Say “we” or “us” whenever possible and try to use “I” or “me” as infrequently as possible. When a difference arises, try to sit alongside of the person and not across. Think of the problem as the adversary and not the other person.

Being Practical

When starting a new group you have to have a meeting day, time and place that best suits your needs. In the publicity ask people if they cannot make the meeting to let you know their first, second, and third choices of the above. A key decision at the first meeting is to discuss alternative day/s time/s and place/s—these may not be final decisions, but meets your needs and that of as many other potential members as possible.

The type of group can vary from a high level in a leyenkrayz (reading circle) or shraybkrayz (writing circle) to the opposite extreme of “entertain me”. The group as a whole can be modified only slightly as time goes by. However, if you, as the facilitator or leader, have certain strong needs or feelings, you may wish to work with a smaller group.

Dealing with a prima donna (Italian for first lady—of course it could be a gent) is often tiring and can have a negative effect on the group. First, compliment him/her deservedly and then assign a task. Often this will quiet the member or cause that person not to return. If the member is a good worker, then you have a gem.

Ask members to volunteer for assignments. If some members do not feel capable of running a meeting, have them form groups of 2 or 3—never more. For the others let them choose to handle refreshments, publicity, be on the sunshine committee to contact members who are ill or who have had a loss, take attendance or be on the phone squad.

Another task might be the one in charge of looking up a word in the dictionary. Be sure to have a Yiddish dictionary, or several different ones, at meetings. They may be Weinreich’s Yiddish-English/English-Yiddish Dictionary or one in transliteration.

A good leader always has someone ready to step in during an emergency. There are times when the leader cannot make a meeting—personal illness, family emergencies or family business.

If the leader has prepared properly, the alternate leader should be able to step in and take over for a single meeting or even longer. Many clubs have fallen apart when the leader is no longer able to carry on.

A good leader is able to answer every conceivable question. There will be many occasions that a question is asked that the leader either does not know the answer or is not sure of it. NEVER ever fake it. Instead say, “that is an excellent question” or “hmm, no one has ever asked me that” or “you know that is something that has puzzled me”. Then say, “Let me see if we can’t find an answer to it. Perhaps someone in the audience knows the answer or will help us find it.”

Most of all know your strengths and weaknesses. Capitalize on your strengths and use the time to work on your weaknesses or get someone in the group to help in those areas. Use Der Bay’s website for assistance—it’s free.
My Yiddish Background

I can’t remember what mix of languages my parents spoke in our home when I was growing up. I know they spoke Yiddish—not as many parents spoke Yiddish, only at times when they didn’t want their children to know what they were talking about—they spoke Yiddish.

It was their mameloshn (mother tongue). But I’m sure they also spoke English and some German since my parents had lived in Germany for over 20 years.

From the time we came to the U.S. in 1934, I always spoke to my parents and brother in English. As a result, to this very day, I have an excellent understanding of Yiddish but can barely speak it.

I grew up in the Catskill Mountains of New York State where my parents ran, first, a kokhaleyn (rooming house) in Woodridge, and, later, a 25-bungalow colony in Monticello. The Catskills were, of course, known as the Borscht Belt, where many Jewish comedians got their start.

The Catskills are about 100 miles from New York City, and we frequently drove into the city to attend the Second Avenue Theater and enjoy the comedy of entertainers like Menasha Skulnick, singers like Miriam Kressyn, and composers like Sholem Secunda.

I would look around the theater during these performances and everyone seemed to be in their sixties, seventies, and eighties while I was in my early teens. Now, were I to go, I would fit right in.

In July 1990, I spent a wonderful month at Queen Mary and Westfield College in London’s East End studying Yiddish at a program run by Devra Kay, who had gotten her Ph.D. at Oxford University’s Yiddish program run by Professor Dovid Katz. (The Oxford program is now located in Vilnius, Lithuania.)

Yiddish Speakers

Reports of the number of current Yiddish speakers vary significantly. The web site of the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University states:

“It is estimated that there are about a quarter million Yiddish speakers in the United States, about the same number in Israel, and another 100,000 or so in the rest of the world. That’s a lot less than the peak number of Yiddish speakers—11,000,000—on the eve of the Holocaust.”

Paradoxically, as Emanuel Goldsmith, a Queens College professor, has pointed out, “As Yiddish has declined as the language of Jews in America more Yiddish terms have been absorbed into English.” I have noticed in recent years that newspapers like the Washington Post don’t even bother translating Yiddish words when they use them any more.

Be that as it may, I love Yiddish and it is a significant subset of my passion for Judaism. Like every language, Yiddish has unique words and idioms that cannot be translated into any other language. It represents the Jewish way of looking at the world.

International Association of Yiddish Clubs

In the years that I lived in the Washington, D.C., area, I was a member of the group, Yiddish of Greater Washington, an organization that belongs to the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC), which has annual conferences in different cities.

I attended a number of the IAYC conferences and was one of the speakers at the tenth conference in Teaneck, New Jersey, last year and the eleventh conference in Cleveland, Ohio, this year. I also had a booth and was a vendor for the sale of my memoir, Eat First—You Don’t Know What They’ll Give You, The Adventures of an Immigrant Family and Their Feminist Daughter.

Philip “Fishl” Kutner, who was one of IAYC’s founders, is on its board and is responsible for site selection, programming, entertainment, and vendors at the conferences. Although he is legally blind, Fishl is also the editor and publisher of Der Bay, a newsletter with news of interest to Yiddishists around the world, and the webmaster of its online version.

At this year’s IAYC conference at the Cleveland Marriott East Hotel, dining with us at my luncheon table was Professor Yoshiji “Yoshi” Hirose, who is in the English Department of the Notre Dame Seishin University in Okayama, Japan. Professor Hirose, who has a diploma in Jewish Studies from the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, is
an expert on Jewish-American literature, translated one of Isaac Bashevis Singer’s books into Japanese, and is the founder and president of the Jewish Literary Society of Japan. He spoke to me in Yiddish; I responded in English.

Vivian Felsen, a Toronto, Canada, translator and visual artist, met Yoshi when she visited Japan and was responsible for his attendance at the Cleveland conference and for his being one of the speakers.

During her own talk she told us that there’s another Japanese professor with an interest in Judaism who had left Japan, moved to Israel, teaches Hebrew Linguistics at a college or university there, and converted to Judaism.

Yiddish Vinkl

When I started coming to Sarasota as a snowbird in 1994, I was delighted to learn that there was a Yiddish Vinkl that met monthly at the Jewish Community Center, and I attended whenever I could. Initially, the course was taught by Fred Ellin. Then Lin (Linette) “Leah” Schlossman joined him as a co-teacher. When Fred died, Lin took over the class. She also led the Yiddish Tish (Table), a group that met monthly at various restaurants in Sarasota and spoke Yiddish.

On October 31, 2006, I moved from the Washington, DC, area to Sarasota full-time. That December, I was saddened when Lin, who had cared for her sick husband for the last few years, died, only a few months after his death. Thereafter, the Leyenkreis, a group that met weekly to read Yiddish poetry and literature, which Lin also led, continued under the leadership of two of its members, Natalie Forman and Bina Nadler; the Yiddish Vinkl and the Yiddish Tish did not. I decided to see if I could restart the Yiddish Vinkl.

Fun with Yiddish

I discussed this with Fishl, who encouraged me, but my main problem was I did not have a teacher. Some years ago, I had spoken at the Yiddish Vinkl in St. Petersburg and I now called Phil London, my contact there, to see if there was someone at that Vinkl who could come to Sarasota to lead a monthly course here; he told me that the Yiddish Vinkl in St. Petersburg no longer existed.

I was able to start putting together a list of people who might be interested in attending a program on Yiddish if I could put one together. One of the people I contacted, Delores Lustig, volunteered to help me—and was a great help thereafter. Sim Lesser, co-president of the Congregation for Humanistic Judaism (CHJ) in Sarasota, to which I belong, gave me an assist by having a sign-up sheet at CHJ’s September 8, 2007, Meet and Greet program. But I still had no teacher.

And then lightning struck. At a Women’s Equity Day luncheon in Bradenton, Florida, on August 18, I was sitting at the table of my friend, Gini Hyman, who introduced me to another woman at the table, Orna Nissan. Orna is an Israeli who’d recently joined the staff of the Jewish Federation as outreach coordinator and has a background in Jewish education. In chatting with Orna, I told her of my efforts with regard to a new Yiddish Vinkl, and she suggested I contact Betty Silberman, who has taught Yiddish. I’d met Betty some years ago through a mutual friend, but I knew her only as an entertainer and singer.

I contacted Betty, who graciously and generously agreed to lead the course. We are so fortunate to have found her. She is an effervescent young woman, a singer, actress, and a highly qualified and experienced teacher of Yiddish.

Delores suggested a new name for our group—Fun with Yiddish. Then, Betty, Delores, and I began to contact synagogues, temples, libraries, and various organizations in our search for a room in which the group might meet. Betty hit pay dirt when she contacted Howard Tevlowitz, executive director of the Jewish Federation. He offered us the use of the Desenberg Room at the Federation for our meetings.

Fishl immediately made Fun with Yiddish a member of IAYC and sent us a packet of helpful informational material.

And so we are to begin. Betty will be teaching elementary Yiddish—vocabulary, phrases, diction, and grammar. The class, which will also cover light poetry, songs, and music, will be interactive.

Our program will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 9, and meet thereafter every second Sunday of the month. Proficiency in Yiddish is not required for attendance—just an interest in Yiddish.

The program will generally end at 11:30 a.m. but on December 9, we will continue with a discussion from 11:30 a.m. to noon.

Anyone in the Sarasota-Manatee, Florida, area interested in attending should contact me at spfuentes@comcast.net or phone 941-379-6215.

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Yiddish is More Than

Yiddish, Just a Language and a Culture
By Philip Fishl Kutner

It is a way of life.

It is a thread to our family background.

It binds us together from all walks of life and from many countries.

For our readers, Yiddish brings back memories of a bygone era. It is full of nostalgia, mama’s phrases of endearment of lullabies and humor. It is full of aromas of mama’s kitchen on Friday nights and holidays.

Yiddish is the language of struggle, of pogroms and the Holocaust. It is the language of our immigrant ancestors, the sweatshops, Delancey Street, Second Avenue and the old delis, candy stores and kosher butcher shops.

We cannot replace our millions of murdered kin, but we can marvel at their creative talents. It was their family pride, their love of learning, their abiding traditions, and hope for a better future for their children and grandchildren that sustained them day-to-day.

For those of us who care about our Yiddish heritage, how does it manifest itself? For some of us it is in the stories, poems, plays and songs. Their variety is almost endless. We can read or hear about tragedies, lovers, scholars, jesters, fools and heroes.

We may read it in the original, in transliteration or in translation. While our aim should be to read in the original, every level has its rewards. Just as in sports we have the little leagues, college sports and the pros, so too are these levels of proficiency in the language.

Another way we show our dedication is by attending a Yiddish club, Yiddish play, Yiddish lecture or a Yiddish concert. These are enriching and support the work of those others who feel as you do.

Editor’s note: It is essential that we record our thoughts and feelings for later generations. It is in publications like the Forverts, Pakn Treger and newsletters like Der Bay, which are preserved in university libraries and the Library of Congress, that this record will be preserved and hopefully read. Please send in your comments, opinions and even advice.

Yiddish, Storytelling, Genealogy & History

Bobi, Zeydi—what was it like when you were a kid?

Many of us have heard this uttered time and time again. Each generation searches for its roots. What seems to us to be self-evident because we have lived it is an unknown arena for our offspring. A perfect example of this is the tremendous interest in film series like Roots.

Many of us have a rich heritage of terrible conditions in our youth and the challenges of making it in a new land. For some it is our experience for others it is their parents or grandparents.

This article is a when-to, what-to and how-to share your rich background of exciting ventures and adventures you have encountered and witnessed first-hand.

When-to

It is never too early to share stories. Many of us have had the experience of babysitting, and then we have a wonderful opportunity without distractions. As the children get older there are times when you will be approached about certain stories related to your past. It may be on a visit to the old hometown/country. It also may be part of a project for school.

What-to

This is almost unlimited. Most of the activites our young people today confront are quite different from what we experienced.

One of the most changed areas is in communication. Today we deal with the cell phone and the computer as against the wall phone and party lines of the past.

When considering transportation, the old cars had running boards and some had a rumble seat and even the hand shifting of gears.

How-to

Develop a style—make it your own. You have to feel comfortable with it. I call mine the “Triple Play” I ask the child or the audience to select 3 items animals or people and then weave an unusual story about them. One exciting “Triple Play” was about a puppy with a lame leg, a set of tfilin, and a young boy whose father was a shoykhet.
In Der Yiddish Vinkl
By Stanley Siegelman

My favorite Yiddish word is "Oy". Is "Oy" a word—or is it an expression? To me, it's a word. I tried to capture this sentiment in a poem I wrote for Der Yiddish Vinkl in the Forward. The poem is entitled, "An Ode to Oy". It's in English, but there's a Yiddish version written by Dr. Joan Braman. Your description of Mama as a "recycler"—the newspapers on the mopped floor every Friday night, etc.—was poignant. It described the situation in my childhood home.

An Ode to Oy

Of all sad words that we employ
The saddest one of all is "oy!"
For centuries this plaintive groan,
Accompanied by rueful groan
Embodied, by hyperbole,
The wailing of humanity.
Primordial, this mournful note
Its origin: a Jewish throat!
(The Jews propelled by pain and fear,
Soon coined the phrase "Oy vey iz mir!")
But "oy" alone conveyed the raw
Eruptions: hurt and shock and awe
And indignation, irony,
Astonishment, uncertainty,
Revulsion, anguish, and dismay
—All sentiments we feel today.
So here's to "oy!" You've served us well!
You're quintessential nonpareil!
You're genuine, you're non-alloy.
You're mameloshn's pride and joy!

Ode Tsu 'Oy'

Fil yidn, yung un alte layt,
Bahltn zeyer yidishkayt;
Ober ven s'kumt fun moyl an "oy"
Veyst men shoyn s'iz nit kayn goy.
Far khidish, freyd, rakhmones, glust
"Oy" iz dos punkt gezogt "mot juste";
A vort an oysnam, me ken derkvikn.
Ober ven mit "vey" oder "gevald" geshrign
Dos meynt der umshtand iz a shlekhs;
Un ven me git dertsu a krekhts,
Farshteyt zikh hot men ergets a veytik.
In glik un tsorets "oy" iz neytik;
Primal geshrey fun oys di kishkes
Dos veritl hot a langen yikhes;
Fun yidishn kop amol oysgetrakht.
Geveyknt in laydn un in shmakht.
A dank dir "oy" du bist fil musik
(Un tsom glik, du bist nit shmutsik!)
"Oy" hot harts, neshome, soul
A perfekter yidisher parol!

Yiddish (Pirsem) Publicity
by Philip Fishl Kutner

This article is geared to those of us who are interested in publicizing. At one time or another everyone is interested in publicizing something. How can I get FREE publicity in Der Bay or other publications? This will be covered in this article.

Is Yiddish publicity different than any other type of publicity? If not, then what can Yiddish clubs, klezmer groups, authors, lecturers, book dealers or translators learn from the general art of publicizing their event, service or product.

By definition publicity encompasses all of the means by which information is dispersed to the public—your consumer. It includes, radio, TV newspapers, magazines, flyers, billboards, e-mails and websites.

Publicity can be divided into active and passive. Active publicity is the type in which the reader or listener initiates the search for information. Passive publicity is what is foisted upon you as in watching TV listening to the radio, highway billboards and subliminal advertising.

Practical Ideas and Suggestions

Don't pay for publicity if you can get a human interest story published free—or get paid for it.

Compile a short list of outlets; newspapers, magazines, and bulletins. Get the name, address, e-mail and phone number of each editor.

Place this information into your computer and put the e-mail addresses into a group.

On a monthly basis send them an updated list of events including the following information.

- Day and date of the event
- Name of the event. If it is a klezmer group and no special event, use the name of the group "In Concert"
- Time of the event. Be aware of time zones. Places like Arizona may not be like nearby areas.
- Location of the event
- A contact phone number
- URL (Uniform Resource Locator) of your website if you have one. Be sure to update the events regularly.

In order of length, Der Bay has calendar listings. Second is a letter to the editor. Third is a human-interest story or reviews of books, CDs or DVDs.
My Mama Never Served Us *Ized* Milk
By Philip Fishl Kutner

I was the milk “man” on our chicken farm 8 miles outside of Flemington, New Jersey. Dad bought the farm in 1937 during the depression. It was my job to milk the cow/s every morning and night—we always had at least one milk-producer. My favorites were Betty, a Jersey-Swiss cross, and Nodgie a purebred Swiss. Betty’s milk was very creamy and Nodgie gave more milk. I wondered how Nodgie ever got her name or what it means.

After the milk was strained to remove any straw or flies that fell into the milk pail, it was mama’s milk. She worked wonders with every drop of it.

We always drank fresh milk. What was left over was separated and the cream rose to the top. Mama skimmed the cream off. We had it on our cereal, and over compote or rice and bread pudding. The rest was set aside to be churned into butter. We boys hated the tedious job of churning. It was wonderful when finally the golden butter emerged—separated from the buttermilk. The buttermilk was fed to the chickens in the wet mash. We spread butter on the bread almost a quarter of an inch thick.

Meanwhile the skimmed milk turned sour and separated into custard-looking curds and pale-green watery whey. The whey also went into making wet mash for the chickens. I always wondered why Little Miss Muffet sat on her Tuffet and ate curds & whey.

Mama poured the curds and whey through a cheesecloth funnel and the curds dripped until it became pot cheese. We had the pot cheese in blintzes, mixed with vegetables or with buttery noodles.

Mama’s milk was never “ized”. Mama never gave us homogenized or pasteurized milk. Actually that was served to the city kids. City kids wanted only milk that came from a bottle. Every morning during the summer when mama had roomers and boarders from the City she filled several milk bottles with the milk I brought in and put them in the icebox. The city kids thought city milk was cold milk from a bottle.

As long as we milked the cows, they gave milk. That is, until the unborn calf grew larger and consumed more of the cow’s energy and production. When the calf was first born, it took the milk, for the first milk after birth is too rich and we could not use it. If it were a bull calf, it shortly was sold for veal. Every few years we raised a heifer to replace one of the “dry” cows.

My mama never served us “ized’ milk.

My Mama Never Did...

Mama NEVER thought her shnir were good enough for her 4 boys—except the last one.

Mama NEVER raised her voice except when she was angry with papa.

Mama NEVER hit her boys—except when Fishele asked, “What do you do with that (a kontshik)?”

Mama NEVER liked anyone in papa’s family—except her shver—after he died.

Mama NEVER thought papa was a good businessman—except when he took her advice.

Mama NEVER thought teachers were wrong—except when they gave Fishele a B on a report card.

Mama NEVER spoke Polish—except to our hired hand.

Mama NEVER spoke Russian—except with the woman from the farm across the creek.

Mama NEVER drove a car—except when we moved to the farm.

Mama NEVER ate treyf—except when she met papa’s folks—and she didn’t know it until later.

Mama NEVER talked to her boys about sex—except to tell her boys that nice girls don’t do IT.

Mama NEVER ate on Yom Kippur—except when she was pregnant with one of her boys.

Mama NEVER stopped lifting very heavy weights—except after Semele was born.

Mama NEVER voted for a Republican—except when John F. Kennedy ran for president.

Mama NEVER went into a church—except when one of her grandchildren got married.

Mama NEVER stole anything—except little onion rolls—when we ate at Ratner’s on Delancey Street.

Mama NEVER thought kids should eat candy—except her grandchildren.

Mama NEVER said Xmas was good—except when Semele had a good season in the shoe store.

Mama NEVER missed lighting Friday night candles—except when she got very, very old.
The Czernowitz Conference

With next year marking the 100th anniversary of the first-ever Yiddish conference this theme will pervade many of the Yiddish conferences, institutes and programs.

It is an opportunity for Yiddish clubs, as well, to have at least one meeting based on this theme. The twelfth IAYC conference in 2008 will be based on this historic event - August 30 to September 3, 1908.

While the proceedings and famous, key figures have been written about and covered in many articles, the significance of the event must still be considered to be monumental.

What has transpired in the last century was totally unexpected and surely unpredictable. Who in 1908 would have foreseen:

- the horrific loss, in numbers and the manner in which it occurred of the Yiddish-speaking community between 1939 and 1945. It far surpassed the Inquisition and pogroms,

- the realization of an almost two millennium dream to return to the Jewish homeland and “next year in Yerusholaim” – the founding of Israel in 1948.

- the start of the Space Age and the opening of Cyberspace. With the advent of the home computer it now was possible for everyone to be able to communicate with other Yiddish speakers in distant places forming a “Virtual Shtetl”. Led by the online list, Mendele, the number of groups has grown as well as the wonderful Yiddish websites.

IAYC and Czernowitz

In addition to incorporating it into the theme of the 2008 conference, IAYC member clubs will be encouraged to have programs that will cover the significance of this event.

Der Bay now is putting out a call for all other interested Yiddish organizations/groups to have this historic Czernowitz Conference in at least one of their programs during 2008.

We shall include these events on the website in Der internatsyonaler kalendar where the world is divided into 14 regions. If enough events occur in a given region, that region will be subdivided.

This announcement is being sent to Mendele, the major online Yiddish list. “Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the Caernowitz Conference (August 30-Sept 3). We hope that your organization/group will stress this historic event in your programming.”

Mendele was started by Prof. Noyekh Miller and published today with the assistance also of Victor Bers and Iosif Vaisman, the editor. If you are not receiving this wonderful mailing, send a 1-line message: sub mendele first_name last_name to: listproc@lists.yale.edu

Der internatsyonaler kalendar on Der Bay’s website is acting as the worldwide clearing-house, so as to avoid as many conflicts as much as possible. Major events also will be listed in the separate listing: www.derbay.org/calendars/kalendar.html
LARP – Live Action Role Play

LARP is not the Linear Accelerator Research Program. It is an interactive role-playing fun or serious way of creating real or fictional situations. This article tells how this might be used at Yiddish club meetings.

Suppose you were to create an imaginary scene of a shtetl and a list of characters. Then create a situation such as farmers’ market where the shtetl-folk are going around shopping for different items and the bargaining begins. The conversation a butcher would have in buying a cow would be far different than a farmer selling a sack of potatoes.

What if you were to create a scene of a shadkhn in the home of a young girl’s family who is being visited by a young yeshiva bokher’s parents. Think of all the characters that may be present. It might even include the grandparents living in the house. Try to recreate the banter going on during the visit with the negotiations between the two parties, and then the money to be paid to the shadkhn.

Perhaps we are at a baby naming or bris - consider the role played by the father, mother, grandparents and the “professionals”. There is an excellent discussion on the Internet at: www.aish.com/literacy/lifecycle/Pidyon_Haben.asp of the Pidyon Ha’Ben.

Maybe the scene is in a home preparing for peysakh with all the cleaning and preparing the food or sitting at the seder table. This type of a program is a possibility for any holiday and the special food could actually be brought in.

Another possibility is to create a pogrom. What kind of problems might a family encounter? What might you do to protect yourself and your family? Who are the men that are out to inflict punishment? Think of the wonderful curses you might heap on those who wish to do you harm. One source is Words Like Arrows a Treasury of Yiddish Folk Sayings by Shirley Kumove.

How about a trip to America? What might it be like preparing for the trip? Who and what might we encounter on our journey? What would it be like going through customs? What would our first day in America be like?

Let’s re-enact night school learning a new language. What words might we have trouble saying /spelling. This would also include our interview for a job. Perhaps we might go to work in a sweatshop. What conversation might we have with a co-worker about joining the labor union and the trip home on the subway?

LARP in Action

Why is Der Bay and Fishl so excited about the potential of LARP for Yiddish Club meetings and at future IAYC conferences? One of the major concerns we hear about our groups is that they come to our meetings and all they want is to be entertained or sit around and just talk.

Getting members involved requires them to have choices. Assigning does not give choices. Ask them, “Which of these would you wish to do or do you have a better suggestion?” A member who does not participate and only eats consumes your coffee and cake is worthless in the building and maintaining a vibrant and dynamic club.

In the column to the left we discussed situations that can be created for a program. Before we cover the how-to, let’s see how mainly younger people utilize this very popular style of game play.

Wikipedia has an excellent discussion of LARP. It lists several genres. A form our clubs could use would be historical. Our children and grandchildren find games using dragons and dungeons exciting.

How to LARP

Much of the success of a LARP encounter depends on the leader. It is up to her to set the stage (scene and time) and the house rules. The column to the left gave several possible scenarios. At a prior meeting the theme should be announced and volunteers are asked to assume roles of their choice.

At the day of the meeting volunteers (role payers) may wish to come in wearing descriptive clothing or even signs naming the roles being played.

After the scene is set and the players, performers, or participants are introduced the LARP is ready to start. We begin by drawing a closed card from 1-6 or role a die. Number I is terrible news or information and 6 is wonderful news or information.

The role of the leader is critical. If done properly the meeting can be very exciting. It is the task of the leader (forzitser) periodically to insert changes into the situation to make it more interesting. It is done to make the event more lebedik.

Please write to let us know of any experiences your group had, if you LARP. Include the name of the club, the scene, the players and any special exciting events that took place during the LARP.
The First Conference for the Yiddish Language, also known as the Tshernovits* Conference, opened on Sunday, August 30, 1908. The Conference was convened to discuss very important topics formulated in the ten point Conference agenda.

To what extent the Conference succeeded in finding the solutions to any of these ten problems has been a subject of discussions (sometimes quite fierce) ever since. A simple look at the agenda is sufficient to see that many issues have yet to be resolved:

1. Yiddish spelling
2. Yiddish grammar
3. Foreign words and new words
4. A Yiddish dictionary
5. Jewish youth and the Yiddish language
6. The Yiddish press
7. The Yiddish theater and Yiddish actors
8. The economic status of Yiddish writers
9. The economic status of Yiddish actors
10. Recognition for the Yiddish language

It has become a good tradition in the Yiddish world to celebrate the anniversaries of the Tshernowits Conference. Today Mendele joins the celebration of the ninetieth anniversary with a series of special issues dedicated to some of the Conference’s highlights and the figures of several key participants.

*Note: The names Tshernovits (Yiddish), Czernowitz (German), Cernauti (Rom), Chernovtsy (Russian), Chernivtsi (Ukr), and their spelling variations in other languages, all refer to a single entity - a town in Central Europe at 48° 18' N latitude and 25° 56' E longitude. Capital of Bukovina, the land that shunned sovereignty for more than ten centuries, the town at various times was a part of Galician-Volhynian Principality, Principality of Moldavia, Poland, Lithuania, Walachia, Ottoman Empire, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Western Ukrainian National Republic, Romania, Soviet Union, and Ukraine, which partly explains the toponymical assortment.

Every morning and afternoon in the late 1960’s, walking with one of my parents to and from kindergarten in a quiet residential neighborhood in Chernovtsy, I passed by a stately building on the Ukrainska Street that at the time housed the City Teachers’ Club. Built for the Ukrainian National House at the very end of nineteenth century, in a fashionable then pseudoclassical style, the structure did not make the list of the city’s most important architectural landmarks.

Not until much later did I learn that the building occupies one of the most important places on the map of the Yiddish Universe. In that building, from the podium on a slightly raised stage of the Assembly Hall, ninety years ago Yiddish was proclaimed a national language of the Jewish people.

The beginning of my love affair with my hometown easily can be traced back to my father’s influence. He never missed an opportunity to talk about Czernowitz’s rich history and splendid architecture during our walks. Why didn’t he tell me that the Yiddish Language Conference, which was a topic of many of our conversations, took place in the building we saw twice every day? Because, like many others, he thought that the Conference was held in the much larger, centrally located and seemingly more appropriate for the occasion, Jewish National House.

Organizers of the conference planned to have it held in the brand new, imposing Baroque building whose entablatures are supported by four Atlantes. They were in various stages of straightening up their backs. Born in 1908, these Czernowitz Jewish Atlantes, on their way from the house of slavery to the redemption in the new old Homeland, perhaps were the first major architectural manifestation of the Zionist aspirations.

I don’t know whether it was the architect or the community leaders who decided to employ polytheistic deities as a symbol of the revival of the Jewish people, but the facade of “Das Judische Nationalhaus” was not a bit more oxymoronic than any other detail of the Czernowitz Jewish landscape.

Hosting a Yiddish language conference did not at all play well with the Czernowitz Jewish establishment (creating a precedent for many Jewish establishments for many years to come).

Under the pretext of unfinished construction, the Jewish House was closed. As a result, the conference started in the Concert Hall of the Czernowitz Music Society on Rudolfplatz and then moved to the Ukrainian National House on Josefgasse.
Why did the conference take place in Czernowitz? This question seems to have earnestly interested scholars and commentators for nine decades. Many answers based on geographical, political, and other serious considerations were offered, and most of them are definitely valid. Czernowitz was very conveniently located.

People in Czernowitz enjoyed much greater political freedoms than their neighbors across the borders. The proportion of what we would call "middle class" in the Czernowitz Jewish population was several times higher than in any other major Jewish center in Europe.

Czernowitz was famous for what was known as "Czernowitz Toleranz", which can be illustrated by the fact that by 1908 Czernowitz was the only city in European history, where the mayor, the city's representative to the Parliament, and the Rector of the University, were Jews.

However, one very important reason escaped most observers. Czernowitz has always had an ability to produce and attract a disproportionate number of "unconventional" personalities, people, for whom Yiddish has borrowed a wonderful word "tshudakes". Unlike the English "eccentric" that incorporates negation, "tshudak" shares the root with the word "chudo", which means "miracle"...

The list of Czernowitz "tshudakes" is long. A grandson of the Great Maggid, the last of the great hasidic masters and a distinguished expounder of the Torah, who surrounded himself by the ceremonials and luxury unheard of among the hasidim, and was known as a "king in Israel".

The most gifted of his six sons, who ran away from home, and for a time joined the militant maskilim in Czernowitz. One of the founding fathers of modern molecular biology, known for the discovery of the rules of DNA composition, is also known as an astute cultural and social critic and also as an excellent poet.

A grandson of the Czernowitz Chief Rabbi, who became one of the foremost Muslim theologians and ideologues of this century, close friend of Saudi royals and a cabinet minister in the newly independent Pakistan.

An outstanding psychologist, whose attempts to combine world revolution, cosmic energy of orgasm, and capitalist business practices ended tragically for him. He was a brilliant Yiddish poet, who played not only with words, but also with his own identity.

Nathan Birnbaum

He was the mastermind of the 1908 Conference, and deserves a place in this enumeration. A product of an intermarriage between a galitsian hasid and a daughter of a mitnagdik rabbi, Birnbaum during his life embraced many disparate views and persuasions.

Birnbaum was a towering intellectual figure, a political leader who coined both the terms Zionism and Yiddishism and founded the movements described by these terms, he played a pivotal role in shaping the Jewish ideological and cultural landscape of this century. Birnbaum’s move to Czernowitz in 1908 and his decision to convene the Conference there was not an accident. He had chosen the place that was fit for the task.

The Czernowitz Conference significantly influenced Jewish nationalist movements in Bukovina and Galicia, in particular in Czernowitz. Jewish students at the Czernowitz University started registering as "Jews" by language and nationality, although Austrian laws did not recognize either of those (Yiddish language and Jews as ethnic group).

Violators were punished and sometimes expelled from the University, but this did not stop the campaign. A mass demonstration in support of Yiddish was staged during the Census in 1910. All three major Jewish political forces (zionists, liberals - Jewish People’s Party, and socialists) called for indicating Yiddish as a "spoken language" ("Umgangssprachen") in the Census forms, despite the ban on using "unrecognized" language and severe intimidation by the government.

The greatest success the demonstration had in Czernowitz: 75% of the Jews indicated Yiddish as their language (cf. Cracow - 25%, the whole Galicia and Bukovina - ca. 50%, S. M. Dubnov, 1923).

In the 1920’s and 30’s Czernowitz had lively and diverse Yiddish cultural, literary, and political activities. Twenty Yiddish periodicals served as an indicator of this. It boasted the largest in the world number of titles of Yiddish periodicals per capita of Jewish population: 3.9 titles/10,000 (Vilna had 3.4 (18 titles) and Warsaw - 2.4 (83 titles), L. Dobroszycki and B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1977).

Editor’s note: Prof Vaisman is a leading authority of Yiddish on the Internet. His website, Virtual Shtetl is a must to visit. He will be presenting the Sunday morning plenary lecture at the IAYC conference in La Jolla Oct.24-27. This article is at: www.ibiblio.org/yiddish/Tshernovits/iiv.html
"Der Mordkhe Shekhter-
Ondenk-Numer"
funem gezelschaftleh-literarisn zhurnal
Af'n Shvel,


In dem numer gedenken bney-mishpokhe, gutefraynd, kolegn un studentn Mordkhe Shekhtern. Derin gefine zikh artiklen fun:
Tevye Boyrd,
Dovid Braun,
Gele Shveyd Fishman,
Hershl Glezer,
Beyle Shekhter-Gotesman,
Märk Kaplan,
Brukke Lang Kaplan,
Yitskhek Niborski,
Rakhmiel Peltz,
Dovid Roskes,
Sheva Tsuker,
Gitl Shekhter-Vishvanat,
Shoshana Balaban-Volkovitch, un
Zuni Zelitsh.

Der numer nemt oykh arayn frier nit-gedrukte zikhroynes un a vogikn lingvistishn artikl, "Der khilek tsvishn 'Litvish Yidish' un Litvish Yidish," beyde ongeshribn fun Mordkh Shekhtern.

Der unikaler band kost $15 oyb m'iz nit kin mitglid fun der Yidish-Lige. Mitgliedershaft in der organizatyse kost nor $36 ($18 far studentn un $50 far institutsyes) un nemt arayn an abonement say afn Af'n Shvel vos geyt aroys dray mol a yor, say af VZMAY - "Vi zogt men af Yidish" - an elektronishe post-reshime vos tsilevet tsu farshpreyt in dem banis fun verter, spetsayl naye verter, vos me ken nisht gefine in di shoyn eksistirndike yidishe verter-bikher.

Oyb ir vert ist a mitglid vet ir oytomatis baksun dem "Mordkhe Shekhter-Ondenk-Numer."

Tsu bashteln dem numer oder vern a mitglid, zayt azoy gut un shikt arayn ayer tshek tsu:
League for Yiddish,
45 East 33rd St., Suite 203, New York, NY 10016.
Oyb ir vilt batsohn elektronish, geyt af undzer vebzayt www.leagueforyiddish.org

<http://www.leagueforyiddish.org/>. Oyb ir hot kashes klingt on tsu (212) 889-0380 oder shraybt undz af info@leagueforyiddish.org.

"The Mordkhe Schaechter Memorial Issue" of the Yiddish literary/cultural magazine Af'n Shvel is already out. This 72-page issue, published by the League for Yiddish, is devoted exclusively to Dr. Mordkhe Schaechter, long-time editor of Af'n Shvel, founder of the League for Yiddish, legendary teacher, prolific linguist and passionate Yiddish activist.

In this issue, Schaechter is remembered by family, friends, colleagues, and students. Among the contributors are:
Prof. Thomas Bird - Queens College
David Braun - MIT Doctoral Candidate
Marc Caplan – Baltimore Hebrew Union
Brukke Lang Kaplan - Baltimore Hebrew Union
Gella Schweid Fishman – Yiddish Teacher
Prof. Paul Glasser - YIVO
Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman - Mordkhe’s Sister
Prof. Yitskhoj Niborski – Medem Bibliotheca
Prof. Rakhmiel Peltz - Drexele
Prof. David Roskies – Jewish Theological Seminary
Shoshana B. Wolkowicz - Mordkhe’s Secretary
Binyumen Schaechter - Mordkhe’s Son
Gitl Schaechter-Viswanath - Mordkhe’s Daughter
Dr. Zuni Zelitch – Former League for Yiddish Pres.
Dr. Sheva Zucker - League for Yiddish, Exec. Dir.

The issue also includes previously unpublished memoirs and a linguistic article on "Litvish Yiddish," both written by Mordkhe Schaechter.

The cost of this special volume is $15 for non-members/subscribers. If you are not a member of the League for Yiddish, annual membership in the organization is only $36 ($18 for students and $50 for organizations) and includes a subscription to Af'n Shvel, published three times a year, as well as to VZMAY ("Vi zogt men af Yidish?") an electronic "Yiddish Q & A" mailing list which seeks to promote the use of words and phrases, especially new ones, not currently found in existing Yiddish dictionaries.

If you become a member now, you will automatically receive "The Mordkhe Schaechter Memorial Issue."

To order your copy or to become a member, please send your payment to: League for Yiddish, 45 East 33rd St., Suite 203, New York, NY 10016. For online payment, please go to our website at <http://www.leagueforyiddish.org/>. If you have questions you may reach us at (212) 889-0380 or at info@leagueforyiddish.org.
Ode to a Vanishing Language

Participating in the 11th Conference of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs
by Yoshiji Hirose, Ph.D

The 11th Conference of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs took place (August 3 - 6, 2007) in Cleveland, Ohio U.S.A. Yiddish scholars and Jewish cultural figures, mainly from America, Canada and Israel, attended daily lectures and workshops from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Each evening was filled with entertainment until 9:00 as dinner was served between performances of Yiddish music by several Broadway singers invited to the conference.

The main purpose of this conference was the exchange of knowledge and ideas about the Yiddish language and literature. At the same time, this conference plays an important role in searching for ways to keep the Yiddish language, spoken mainly in Eastern Europe and Russia before World War II and heritage, alive and well not only for the present, but also for future generations.

Mr. Philip Fishl Kutner, the program chairman, personally invited me to attend and present at the conference as an Asian scholar of Yiddish Literature. Whenever I present in Yiddish in America or Canada, the majority of audience members are Jews who speak, or whose parents speak, Yiddish as their mother tongue. Because of this, I think a certain amount of bravery and audacity (or is it insensitivity?) is needed. Given this, it may have been more sensible of me as a careful researcher to politely turn down this request to present.

However, courage got the better of discretion and, as usual, I readily agreed without being deeply worried. The thought that now may be the only time I can directly learn the vanishing Yiddish language from people who speak it as their mother tongue is a powerful one that always helps me forget any worries I may have. This is my personal meshugas (craziness).

Early in the morning of August 3 at New York’s LaGuardia International Airport, as I was waiting for my flight to Ohio, I happened to meet Boris Sandler, author and editor of the Yiddish-language newspaper Forward. It turned out we were both going to the same conference. In his case, he was attending on very short notice as a “pinch hitter” for another presenter. Since I had taken his Yiddish Literature class at Oxford University decades ago, it was a very nostalgic reunion for me. He is a very good-hearted and genial human being who did not once make a wry face at my clumsy Yiddish.

At the Cleveland Hopkins Airport, a taxi that had been arranged for us was waiting, and 30 minutes later we arrived at the Marriot Hotel. The receptionist, smiling soon after seeing my face, offered words of welcome along with a bag containing a program booklet and a nametag with my name and country written in big letters. After receiving notification of my arrival, the program chairperson, Mr. Kutner, a mild-mannered and congenial person, came to greet me. Even though it was our first time to meet, I felt as if I had reunited with an old friend.

I went to an orientation session that was being held in the main hall a little after 2:00. The lady sitting in the seat in front of me glanced backwards with a slight look of surprise on her face. She then said to me rather suspiciously to me, “You are also participating in the conference?” When she saw my nametag, her facial expression suddenly brightened as she overly expressed her surprise saying, “Oh! Professor! You’re the professor from Japan, aren’t you?” I got the impression that she had remembered seeing my picture and introductory essay in the program. After this, the demeanor of the people around me began to ease. They seemed to quickly become less nervous and came over to shake my hand. At the opening greetings, I was introduced by the program chairperson and, somewhat embarrassed, stood up and bowed.

After the orientation, several attendees gathered around me. Being the first-ever Asian participant in the history of the conference, I was a most unexpected visitor. They all started asking a variation of the same questions: “Why did you begin learning Yiddish?” and “Where did you study Yiddish?” Laughing, I dodged their questions by responding, “I have to save that answer for my presentation. Please be sure to attend.”

Thirty presenters were invited to the conference meaning that five different presentations would occur simultaneously at different locations. I must admit that I was secretly thinking to myself how lonely I would feel if the lecture room were empty—especially after all the effort I had put in to preparing it.

There were a variety of exhibits at the venue on each day of the conference. In one corner of the spacious hotel lobby, sales of books, CDs and the like were going very well. The Ohio State University, which is very active in Jewish studies and Yiddish research, is not too far from Cleveland. Due to this and the large Jewish community in the area, many local residents participated in the conference as helpers and volunteers. This led to the number of people being involved in the conference totaling close to 300. While the Marriot Hotel certainly isn’t small, it certainly felt like most of the people there were there for the conference.
My presentation was scheduled for the third day of the conference, August 5. Until then I thought I would get my ears used to Yiddish by speaking it to as many of the attendees as I possibly could. It is hard for me to get the feel for a foreign language that I do not use on a routine basis unless I live in the language for a couple of days. Yiddish is especially difficult since I only use it when I come to America. Since there was no use in complaining about it, I became determined over the first two days to make best use of the limited time I had.

August 5 – the day for my presentation had come. Since my presentation was not scheduled to start until 2:30 p.m., in the morning I attended a lecture of a local Hasidic Rabbi, Rabbi Yossi Marozov. Dressed in black attire with traditional long sidelocks (payes), Rabbi Marozov stressed as the theme of his lecture the importance of Jewishness in domestic upbringing. He gave three reasons why Jews have been able to endure and overcome persecution throughout history: language, clothing and names.

By protecting these elements, Jews have been able to carry through without perishing. More specifically, Hasidic Jews, even while living in American society, continue to speak Yiddish and read the Jewish Bible in Hebrew.

Hasidic men wear suits in dark colors with distinctively long jackets while women, even in summer, wear long, conservative skirts with long sleeves that do not expose any skin. Moreover, they eschew English names and make use of Jewish ones instead.

After his lecture, I spoke to him in Yiddish. Surprised, he said to me, “Just as I thought / I thought so. You’re Jewish?” He was amused when I replied laughingly, “No, I am Japanese, but we do have something in common. We share the same name – Yoshi.”

I spoke half in English and half in Yiddish. My topic was the Symbolic meaning of Yiddish in works of the modern female Jewish author Pearl Abraham. Perhaps it was the effect of the earlier teasing, but the hall for my lecture had so many people that there weren’t enough seats. Chairs were brought in. I felt a little tense because I wanted to be remembered for more than being just an “unexpected visitor”. Since the joke I made got a few laughs from the audience, I was able to comfortably begin my lecture.

Throughout Yiddish literature the names of many small towns in Poland and Russia appear. They are so uncommon that even Jewish-American scholars mispronounce them. Whenever mistakes were made in pronunciation, even in the middle of a lecture, audience members that were natives of those towns pointed it out and corrected it. This also occurred during my lecture several times. The audience seemed to enjoy how I used jokes to humorously get past this during my lecture. To me it seems that audiences in America take pleasure in this kind of mid-lecture interaction.

After the lecture, the question and answer session was ever so fulfilling. The “True Jewish Voice” that I had been searching for was there. Several people raised their hand to ask questions. While directing traffic, I tried to politely answer their questions and mix in a little humor as well. The 30 minute time limit was over before I knew it and at the end I received a completely unexpected extensive round of applause. Soon afterwards, there was a stream of radio interviews, newspaper photographs and the like. This was all set up by Mr. Kutner because he believes strongly in the survival of Yiddish.

The people who attended this conference hold a deep love for Yiddish. Simon Swinsky, an elderly gentleman who was a large contributor to the conference, is also such a person. Over the years, (current age: 92) he has made countless contributions to the Cleveland and national Jewish community. After my lecture, he took hold of my hand and wouldn’t let go. Despite his age,

I was overwhelmed by the firmness of his handshake. I could feel his overflowing love for his mother tongue as he grasped my hand and spoke with a Polish-accented Yiddish. It was a moment that strongly made me conscious of the fact that it is the enthusiasm of people like this that sustains my academic endeavors.
Some of the Yiddish Groups Online

Groups

53  1-YiddishForum
41 Members, Archives: Membership is required.
This is for both learning and writing elementary
Yiddish. The Keywords at this site are: Jew Jews Judaic
Judaism Yiddishisms language Kodesh Israeli Israel
Israelite Israeliites Israeli communication Torah
Holocaust

88  yiddishafyiddish
36 Members, Archives: Public
All messages should be in Yiddish and in Yiddish
(Hebrew) letters. If you need help to read and write
using Hebrew/Yiddish letters on your computer, see
http://www.shoshke.net/uyip/blitspost.htm Set
the Encoding to UTF-8. Yahoo groups let you send
messages in Yiddish

89  yiddishhumor
35 Members, Archives: Public
Here's the forum for Yiddish humor, jokes, etc. I
have a great old book of Yiddish Jokes which I'd love
to share here. This is the place and time for some
laughs

93  shmues
64 Members, Archives: Membership is required
The aim of this mailing list is to provide interested
Yiddish learners with a forum where they can try out
and improve their linguistic skills. Interacting over
the Internet will do this. You are urged to use
whatever Yiddish you know and participate in
informal chats. We use YIVO Romanized Yiddish in
the transcription

95  yidisheloyshnenyidentim
76 Members, Archives: Public
It's for anyone who is interested in the Yiddish
language, or would like to speak it and about
Judaism.

115 Yiddish
95 Members, Archives: Membership is required
It is The Yiddish language group on the Web

A barikht fun a zeltenem klas
by Archie Barkan

Every Wednesday afternoon a group of people
meet at Santa Monica Emeritus College, California
—to read Yiddish literature in the original. We are
currently digesting Sholem Asch's "Motke Ganev".
We just finished I. B. Singer's classic short story,
"Gimpel Tam". In the past, this group of 20-25 has
delved deeply into Peretz and Reyzin short stories,
I. J. Singer's colorful narratives, Moishe Nadir
humor, the complete "Motl Peyse dem Khazn's" of
Sholom Aleichem, Perets Hirshbein's "Grine Felder"
and Raboy's "Yiddisher Cowboy" were of special
interest.

This class has been in existence for more than 19
years; the first two "madrikhim" were Abe Friedman
and Marion Herbst, z"l. For the past six years plus,
it has been under my aegis. It is "shvire arbet"
preparing the handouts, copyng, collating and
stapling—but—for me a "nakhes ruekh!...."

Some students enroll with just the most rudimentary
reading ability and pass up their turn to read for a
while—until they decide one day to give it a whirl.
Another Yiddish reader is on board, and this
incredible group of "heymishe mentshn" burst into
a rousing round of welcoming applause.

If you live somewhere in the vicinity and would
like to join us in these free classes, make new
friends in "an emeser yiddisher atmosfer", please
call me for details: Archie Barkan, 818-999-0433,
or e-mail archiefromca@webtv.net

Sonia Pressman Fuentes Writes

Thought you'd like to see this excerpt from an e-mail
I just received from Ann Stanton, the researcher and
writer on the pioneer Jews of South Dakota, whom
I'm trying to bring to Sarasota to speak, with the help
of some of you. I believe the "Adams" to which she
refers is the museum in Rapid City, SD.

"Yesterday was amazing. Went to the home of a
couple who stumbled upon a cache of the letters
and papers of Sol Star, six-term Jewish mayor of
Deadwood, SD. We will work with the Adams to
organize this priceless material to make it useful.
As is, it is useful only to the owners. What a thrill
to see BOXES of long-hidden Deadwood history."

Editor's note: Ann has been published in Der Bay,
and is The Yiddish Network contact for her area.

“Borsht with Bread, Brothers”: Klezmer

by Yale Strom

I hope this CD gives the listener a sonic sense that the Jewish music we love and call klezmer has been influenced by the folk music of the Jews’ indigenous hosts, while still being based upon the DNA of klezmer: the Middle Eastern modalities and ornamentations heard in the vocal music.

One point I want to make on this recording is to give the listener a window into the symbiotic relationship between the Rom (Gypsies) and Jewish musicians, particularly in the regions of the Carpathian Mountains, Transylvania, Moldavia and Bessarabia.

These ethnic groups have been the pariah of Europe for nearly 1000 years and singled out for extermination by the Germans during the Holocaust. These people often found solace in their respective folk musics.

The Rom and Jewish musicians often were itinerant and would meet in inns and on the roads between jobs. Many of them did not let negative stereotypes get in the way of forming close and lasting friendships.

I met Rom who had played so much with Jews that they spoke a fairly decent Yiddish, and I met Jews who had played in Rom bands and spoke a passable Romani. When there were no Jews left (due to death and emigration) in these towns of Eastern Europe. It was usually only the Room musicians who remembered the pre WWII klezmer tunes. The tunes range from the lilting Oberek Palota, the spiritual Ki Onu Amekho, bluesy Szol A Kakos to the wild and raw Svalava Kozasahok. Enjoy these beautiful and haunting klezmer melodies.

Hot Pstromi

In 1981 I trekked throughout the former Eastern Bloc countries searching for unknown, unpublished (and usually, unwritten) klezmer and Yiddish tunes. Many of my informants - Jewish and Rom Holocaust survivors - had never met an American. Upon my return to the US, I formed Hot Pstromi. The band has performed throughout Europe, Canada, Mexico, the United States and in Hong Kong.

The klezmer musicians, from well before the Holocaust, were playing old and contemporary melodies, and understood that this art form must serve and educate the public. Though, Jewish culture is constantly evolving as humanity evolves; so too must klezmer delve into new sonic realms while still honouring the past music and its practitioners.

When you hear the musician improvise, you hear him thinking out loud. And when he improvises using these idioms and anacient modalities, this is my idea of spontaneous religious praying. Without improvisation, the music does not speak to one’s spiritual consciousness. When you listen to the cuts on this recording, you will hear improvisation from all the band members - the arrangements here are spontaneous, unique and pay tribute to the past while creating something fresh and new.

Yale Strom

I play the violin and am a composer, filmmaker writer, photographer, and playwright. I am a pioneer revivalist in conducting extensive field research in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans among the Jewish and Rom communities. Initially, my work focused primarily on the use and performance of klezmer music among these groups. Gradually, this focus increased to all aspects of their culture, from post-WW II to the present.

I have composed New Jewish music, combining Klezmer and music jazz classical, Balkan and Sephardic motifs. These compositions range from quartets to a symphony, which premiered with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

My 12 CDs run the gamut of traditional klezmer to “new” Jewish music.

The CD Garden of Yidn in the Top 20 of Canada’s major music critic’s poll. His CD toezmer Cafe Jew Zoo was released by Naxos World Records in June of 2003 to international acclaim. Strom has performed with many world renowned musicians including Andy Statman, Mark Dresser, Marty Ehrlich, Mark O’ onnor, Alicia Svigals, Salman Ahmad, Adam DelMonte, the band Muszikas et al.

My research has resulted in photo documentary books, documentary films, as well as CD recordings. I am author of “The Book of Klezmer History, The Music, The Folklore - from the 14th Century to the 21st (2002 A Capella Books), a 400 page history with original photos and sheet music gathered by Strom during his ethnographic trips to Central and Eastern Europe.

A Wandering Feast: A Journey through the Jewish Culture of Eastern Europe” written in collaboration with his wife, Elizabeth Schwartz, is part cookbook, part travelogue (Jossey-Bass, 2005). He is also the author of “The Absolutely Complete Klezmer Songbook” (Transcontinental Publishing, 2006),
which includes the sheet music of all the tunes on this CD, except tracks 3 and 2.

At present I am artist-in residence of Jewish Studies at San Diego State University. If you wish to learn more about my work, you will find it at: www.yalestrom.com

I continue to dig up artifacts of Jewish music, introducing audiences to something they might have missed.” - San Diego Jewish journal "Yale Strom and his klezmer band Hot Pstromi, kinetic energy flying in all directions. - Time Out, New York City.

**Songs on Borsht with Bread Brothers: Klezmer**

1. Svalava Kozatshok (Ukraine)
   This was a Ukrainian male folk dance in 2/4 time, popularized by the Cossacks (military border guards). Men performed this physically challenging dance to show off their athletic skills. The listener should imagine him or herself having stumbled into a Rom tavern.

2. Mermelshteyn’s Nign (Slovakia)
   The arrangement, with its more refined opening and raucous "B" section, suggests the duality in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, between the salons of Vienna and the villages of eastern Slovakia.

3. Szo A Kakos Mar (Hungary)
   (Hungarian: When the Rooster Crows) This is the most popular khanidic song among all Hungarian Jews and especially the Hungarian khasidim (i.e. Satmar, Klausenberg). The lyrics are in Hungarian and Hebrew. The song is attributed to Rabbi Yitskhok Isaac Taub (1751-1821), the founder of Hungarian khasidism, and the rabbi of Nagykallo, Hungary, for some forty years.

4. Stoliner Shers I & II (Belarus)
   The sher was a kind of klezmer square-dance that was popular even among the local Belarusians, Poles and Ukrainians. Here, one sher moves into another as it would at a dance. Stolin is a town in Belarus: a Khosid is an orthodox Jew who follows a specific philosophy of Judaism.

5. Mayn Nign (Germany)
   (Hebrew: Refusal Melody) This melody is the only one on this recording from Germany. The custom was that a bride and groom could be standing at the wedding canopy and still have the opportunity to refuse the marriage. Many people might not realize that klezmer Yiddish instrumental dance music originated in the Rhine Valley region – the same area where the Yiddish language and Ashkenazic culture were born.

6. Vemen Veln Mr Dinen, Brider (Russia)
   One of the lasting influences the military bands had on klezmer music was the instrumentation of the bands. Before the 19th century there were not many brass or woodwind instruments in a band. This arrangement is militaristic, particularly as the drums and other instruments swell up over the lone violin, which was the Jewish voice. The vocals mimic the clarinet in its typical glissandi and sighs.

7. Oberek Palota (Slovakia)
   This tune came from a Slovakian village called Palota, near the Polish border. Later Slovakia was separated from the rest of the country and became a fascist German puppet state in March 1939. One can hear the influence of polka in this syncopated waltz.

8. Ki Onu Amekho (Poland)
   (Hebrew: We Are Your People). This melody was a Gerer nign. It was sung by Rabbi Icshe Mayer during the High Holidays in Gora Kalwaria, Poland, known by the Jews as Ger. Up to the eve of World War II, the largest khaidik sect in Poland were the Gerer khasidim, led by their charismatic rebe, Rabbi Abraham Mordecai Alcer.

9. Bughici's Khosedl (Romania)
   In the Moldavia-Bessarabia region before World War II, there were several well-known klezmer kepelyes. They were the Lemesi, Bughici, Gocd and Sigally kapelyes. A khosidl (Yid. small khosid) was a medium tempo khasidic dance in 2/4 either danced in a circle or a line.

10. Kalarasher Bulgar (Moldova)
    We start the piece off as a bulgar, one of the most common dance tunes in the popular klezmer repertoire of southern Ukraine and Bessarabia. Then we change the rhythm to a fast freylekhs, the most common klezmer line dance played at weddings in Eastern Europe.

11. Ver Es ken Kese Tseyln (Ukraine)
    (Yiddish: Who Can Count in Order) This Yiddish song comes from the town of Cernerivci (called Tshimerovits by the Jews). This wedding song is enhanced by the addition of batkhones, the art of improvised rhyme singing and talking that was traditionally sung by the batkhn (wedding bard/jester) at the wedding reception.

12. Ben Avrameni (Romania)
    This is a melody I composed based upon music that I had heard played by Rom musicians, who often were the only purveyors of klezmer music in the towns and villages in the Romanian province of Moldavia and in the country of Moldova after the Holocaust.
Everyday Jews: Scenes From A Vanished Life
by Yehoshue Perle

I am writing to let you know of a new book that may be of interest to your readers, Everyday Jews: Scenes From A Vanished Life, by Yehoshue Perle.

Because of the relevant content, I am contacting you in hopes that you would review the book, or note it in your newsletter. I will send a review copy.

The URL is: http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/book.asp?isbn=9780300116373

Juliann Phelps
Yale University Press
Internet Marketing Manager
302 Temple St.
New Haven, CT 06511


When Everyday Jews was first published in Poland in 1935, the Jewish Left was scandalized by the sex scenes. I. B. Singer complained that the novel was too bleak to be psychologically credible. Yet within two years Perle’s novel was heralded as a modern Yiddish masterpiece. Offering a unique blend of raw sexuality and romantic love, thwarted desire and spiritual longing, Everyday Jews now is considered Perle’s consummate achievement.

The voice of Mendl, the novel’s 12-year-old narrator, is precisely captured by this artfully simple translation. Mendl’s impoverished and dysfunctional family struggles to survive in a nameless Polish provincial town. In his unsettled world, most ordinary people yearn to be somewhere else—or someone else. As Mendl journeys to adulthood, Perle captures the complex interplay of Christians and Jews, weekdays and Sabbaths, town and country, dream and reality, against a relentless and never-ending battle of the sexes.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Yehoshue Perle (1888-1943) was one of Poland’s most popular, controversial, and prolific Yiddish novelists of the interwar and wartime-period. In his introduction to the novel, David G. Roskies, Sol & Evelyn Henkind Professor of Yiddish Literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary, opens up Perle’s tragic life and undiscovered oeuvre to a new generation of readers.

Shpil ma zhon af yidish
Play Mah Jongg in Yiddish
By Varda Grinspan

Tiles: Kakhel (kakhlen) Pieces

Vint Winds
There are four winds each one has four tiles they come to the Yiddish language from Hebrew

4 Tsofn     North
4 Dorem     South
4 Mizrakh   East
4 Mayrev    West

Drakonen Dragons
There are three kinds of dragons
4 Royte Drakon  Red Dragon
4 Grine Drakon  Green Dragon
4 Zeyf oder Vays Soap or whites, (also is used as zero)

8 Blimen     Flowers
8 Zhokers    Jokers

4 Pintlekh   Dots
4 Bambu      Bams
4 Shpaltn    Cracks

Oysdrukn Expressions
Pasn di Drakonen  Matching Dragons
Shpaltz mit royte Drakonen  Cracks with Reds
Pintlekh mit vayse Drakonen Dots with Whites
Bambu mit grine Drakonen  Bams with Greens
Lomir shpiln      Let’s play
Di shpilers       The players
Di baleboste      The hostess
Tsumish di kakhlen Mix the tiles
Makh a vant       Make a wall
Mir shpiln umzeygerdik  We play counter-clockwise

Nem a kakhl      Take a tile
Varf avek        Discard
A Por            A Pair
Pung: Dray zelbe kakhlen  Pung: 3 like tiles
Kong: Fir zelbe kakhlen  Kong: 4 like tiles
Makh a to’es     Make a mistake

Each year a new card is sold that shows the year, and different game (hands) are on those cards to make it interesting to play.

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