Pfc. Silver is the only Jew from Rhode Island known to have been killed in the Korean Conflict.

Esther Gold wrote the letter to her son, Herbert.
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Welcome to historic Rhode Island

Tercentenary 1636 May-October 1936

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Although my comments appear at the beginning of each issue, they are usually written after everything else is in place. It's an odd experience: looking backward in order to look forward.

I often ask myself how a new issue differs from its predecessors. This one includes five writers who are current or former board members. Perhaps even more remarkable is the fact that three writers are former university provosts. The current issue is also exceptional because two writers have been leading contributors to *The Providence Journal*, and two writers are U.S. Senators.

In this issue a child is a writer, and childhood is a subject of many articles. Four articles are sticky; they deal in some way with postage stamps. There are also articles touching on Christianity: Christmas, building a Catholic church and, in a more general sense, liberty of conscience. Unfortunately, it is no surprise that the new issue of *The Notes* contains several articles about war: World War II, Israel's War of Independence, and the Korean Conflict.

I believe, however, that learning is this issue's most pervasive subject. There are articles showing the love and influence of parents, friends, neighbors, and teachers, and articles that display the fruit of scholarly inquiry. Many articles reveal diverse sources of learning: books, newspapers, and magazines; extracurricular activities and military service; libraries, museums, historical societies, and visitor centers. Perhaps needless to say, articles also show how learning is acquired: through joyful participation, excruciating hardship, careful observation, and sustained reflection.

Thankfully, my own learning has been heightened by authors and the collaborative process of editing their work; the Association's questioning and encouraging publications committee; my splendid colleagues Bobbie Friedman and Anne Sherman; and the professionals of Signature Printing. I hope that you, our readers, feel as enriched by this issue as I do.
Hal’s father, Henry, and his aunts, Anne and Leda, ca. 1913
TALES FROM AN AMERICAN SHTETL, PART II

HAROLD L. BLOOM

Many readers were moved by the author’s memories of South Providence in our previous issue. No doubt, readers will also feel transported by the following selection of vignettes from his anthology (published in 2004).

Hal began writing as a child. At 86 years of age, he sees no reason to stop. There is a simple explanation: he has never exhausted the people, places, privileges, and predicaments that shaped his life.

This past summer, when I called him at his home in upstate New York to ask a question, he commented that his answer would make a good story. He would soon get to work. Perhaps it will appear in our next issue.

PANCAKES

When it came to reading and writing English, greenhorns—new immigrants to America—almost invariably had trouble early on in using the language of their adopted country. The incidents in which the lack of that knowledge caused misunderstandings and embarrassments among, and between, people are the stuff of legend. The following story is not just a legend—it also happens to be true. It happened to my father-in-law, William Korman, as a newly arrived resident in the shtetl.

Velvel had gone to downtown Providence on some errand, and in the course of the day’s business became aware that he had gotten hungry. As he passed a diner, Child’s (similar to today’s IHOP or Denny’s), he noticed the pictures of items on their menu posted around the window.

While he couldn’t read the names of the items he saw that there was one
that looked temptingly good, a plate of fairly flat, thin, circular shee's, cooked to a
golden brown, topped with a chunk of melting butter and swimming in a sea of
amber liquid. (He found out later that these were pancakes.) He stood for a while,
studying the name of this tempting dish and trying to memorize the shapes of the
letters. Finally, he entered the diner and was seated. The waitress then handed him
a menu and left while he made up his mind.

Much to his chagrin, there were few pictures on this menu, and not one of
them of the item of his desire. He tried to recall the shapes of the letters that had
accompanied the picture that he had seen, and he saw several combinations that
seemed vaguely familiar.

When the waitress returned and asked for his order, he took a deep breath
and pointed to a listing on the menu that seemed most like the letters he had seen
on the window. There was a short wait, and when the waitress returned, she deposed
his order in front of him.

He stared in amazement. He was about to eat his first order: of asparagus
on toast.

**CHAYDER**

While those versed in Hebrew will recognize *chayder* as simply meaning "room," it
meant much more than that to many of South Providence's Jewish children back
when I was a young boy. For us, it was the place where we went, more or less reluctantly, for two hours a day, except for Friday and Saturday, to learn Hebrew, study
Torah, and prepare for Bar and Bat Mitzvah. We sometimes called it our Talmud
Torah or Hebrew school. Our *chayder* was sponsored, I believe, by the South Providence
synagogues, and it was located in an old house on Chester Avenue between Taylor and Broad Streets.

All of us boys were "encouraged" (rather strongly by my folks, in my case)
to start *chayder* at the age of seven. I don't recall whether girls were equally encouraged, but I do know that my sisters, Evelyn and Ruth, and some of my female
cousins attended at about the same age.

The principal, in practice if not in name, was Mr. Miller, a man so well respected and so suited to the teaching profession that I honor his memory to this
day. Most of what I remember today about Torah, *trop* (notes for chanting prayers
and Torah), and Hebrew vocabulary, I learned literally, at the end of Mr. Miller's
right index finger or, sometimes, at the stroke of his ruler.

The other *melahmed* (teacher) at the *chayder*, when I started there, was Mr.
Schneider. He was a rather portly older man, who usually concentrated somewhat
deeply on his book as his pupils studied and recited. That deep concentration, plus the fact that the only bathroom in the building could be reached only by walking through his room, made Mr. Schneider the butt of many of the pranks we kids pulled during classes. He was a relatively quiet man, and he certainly deserved more respect than we gave him.

Sometime after I started chayder, Mr. Rosen was added to the staff. He was a no-nonsense teacher, tolerated few shenanigans from his classes, and was a harsh disciplinarian when it came to mistakes in translations or reading. Though gravel-voiced, he was very accomplished as a Bal Kriah (prayer and Torah chanter). He regularly performed this mitzvah at Tiferetz Israel synagogue.

Still later in my attendance at chayder, Hannah Ross was added to the staff. She had graduated from the chayder a couple of years earlier. Her Hebrew skills and her easy way made her a good choice for starting the youngest children. In my mind, I can still hear their singsong of Hebrew syllables through the thin door that separated Hannah’s classroom from Mr. Miller’s.

The other important person associated with the chayder was Mr. Tatz. His job was to collect the 50 cents per month tuition for each pupil. This he did by riding his motorcycle (I remember that it had a sidecar) to homes and businesses of the pupils’ families and seeking payment. The nation was, however, in the midst of the Great Depression, and even 50 cents were hard to come by. Mr. Tatz would, therefore, accept dime and quarter installments, mark them dutifully in his ledger, and roar off to his next contributor. Since times were tough, there would be times when families could not even pry loose dimes or quarters. In such cases, Mr. Tatz would simply pass up the payment. No child was ever denied access to chayder for lack of tuition.

As for the chayder building, except for a small room on the first floor housing Mr. Rosen’s class, all other classrooms were on the second floor. Most of the first floor was a large room that had been fitted with pews for use as the pupils’ synagogue.

It was there that we came on Friday nights and Saturday mornings for Sabbath services. Only when I grew up did I realize that Mr. Miller sacrificed his chances to worship in peace with his peers in order to provide the guidance for the sometimes-restless children’s services.

For such services, we pupils performed all of the chanting. In my day, the top pupils were Sam Buckler, Jack Pearl, and Leo Zeftel. There was a second tier of chanter, among whom I immodestly count myself. Because this was before “women’s lib” in Judaism, girls played no role in leading these services, even
though pupils such as Shifrah Spolter were well qualified to do so.

The main event of our services occurred on Saturday morning. Was it some special chant? Or a singular prayer? No, it was the distribution, at completion of services, of cupcakes!

Prior to completion of services, Mr. Miller would detail one or two attendees to run down to my uncle Sam’s Modern Sanitary Bakery, about four blocks away, to bring back frosted cupcakes for the worshippers. Distribution of these donated goodies insured devoted attendance week after week.

Aside from the “cupcake caper,” there were two big annual events associated with the chayder—the Hebrew school picnic and the service we presented at one of the local synagogues.

Our annual picnic was a community affair. Businesses from all over South Providence donated food and drink, ice and firewood, decorations and noisemakers. Mr. Hodosh lent his tall, barrel-carrying trucks for the chayder pupils to ride on. The trucks, followed by an entourage of family cars, would wind in a noisy parade through the streets of South Providence before heading off to Goddard Park.

Once we arrived, the major festivities began—feasting and games for the whole community as well as impromptu entertainment. I remember two such performances. The younger Feldman brother, who had a beautiful voice, sang Yiddish songs, including “Dee Greeneh Cuzeeneh.” My 5-foot 5-inch father with his 6-foot-plus cousin, Hymie Bloom, gave a boxing exhibition.

The second big event, though possibly not annual, was one in which Mr. Miller demonstrated his pupils’ skills in a synagogue. The complete Friday night and Saturday morning services were carried out by the chayder pupils. Not only did we perform every bit of the services, including all the Torah reading, but we also read sections of Hebrew literature appropriate to our age levels. In one such session, completed after my first or second year of chayder at the Rushiske Sheel, I read a children’s story, “Yossie Pessi.” When I finished without an error, I looked up and saw my Zaisde Lubin beaming with pride.

Once we pupils successfully accomplished our Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, we were generally ready to stop our chayder training and pursue more of our secular activities. In many cases, such as mine, fathers, grandfathers, and Mr. Miller applied strong persuasion to convince us to continue with our chayder training. In my case, such persuasion was effective for about a year, and then the pressure of high school, the need for part-time work, and the restlessness of youth overcame their logic, and I put chayder behind me.
THE GREAT DEPRESSION
I must have been four or five years old before I was aware of the tough times in which we were living. Not that I thought that my folks were any worse off than anyone else. I just assumed that everyone lived the same kind of life.

At that time (the early 1930s), we lived in the three-floor tenement at 292 Willard Avenue, in the flat just above my grandparents', Golde and Jacob Bloom. Our building and two neighboring tenements, which shared a yard, were heated by coal or oil stoves in the kitchens. Since all six rooms and the bathroom in each flat depended on these single sources of heat during the winter, it was most comfortable in the kitchen. It was not too cool in two of the bedrooms and the bathroom. The living room, dining room, and third bedroom, however, which were farther from the stove and separated by a common wall with a door, were intolerably cold.

Consequently, the connecting door was kept shut during the winter, and the dining room and living room were not used during that time. When I became old enough (nine or ten), I started to use the third bedroom— with two or three blankets and a couple of quilts.

When it was a very cold winter night, Mom would open the door of the stove's oven and hang the children's pajamas on that door and on a chair in front of the oven. When our pajamas were nice and warm, we would slip behind the stove one at a time (no peeking) and change into them. Then, while the pajamas were still warm, it became a mad dash to the beds to snuggle beneath the piles of blankets.

Bathing was quite a complicated process. When we could afford gas heat, Mom would light the Vulcan heater located in the kitchen. It consisted of a length of coiled copper tube heated by a gas flame and piped into the water supply pipes. As the water was heated, convection drove it to a large, vertical, 30-gallon copper tank in a nearby closet. We would frequently touch the tank to assess its readiness for bathing. When the upper third of the tank felt hot, bathing could begin.

There were times during the Depression, however, when we couldn't afford to pay the gas bill. In light of that eventuality, the gas company had provided us, and many of our neighbors, with "quarter meters" hooked into the gas supply line. This meter enabled us, when fed with a quarter, to use a specific amount of gas. When the quarter's worth was exhausted, it would shut the gas off. One quarter allowed enough water to be heated for the entire family to bathe.

Unfortunately, there were occasions, early on, when it was impossible to free up a quarter. On those occasions, Mom would make use of the fire in the coal stove and a large tub to heat enough water for baths. Next, she would set a portable
tin bathtub behind the stove, put enough hot and cold water into it to make a warm bath. Then, we would, one at a time, bathe. Under Mom’s supervision, there was no peeking!

Bathing wasn’t the only use for the hot water and the regular bathtub. For many years, Mom did the family wash in this bathroom fixture. Many a day, she would spend time bent over the tub and the washboard, scrubbing away: sheets, pillowcases, underwear, socks, handkerchiefs, and mountains of laundry generated by a family that included three active kids.

It was years before we could afford the luxury of a commercial laundryman, Mr. Lerner. He would stop by once a week to pick up a large bag of dirty laundry (I seem to remember it was on Wednesday), and he would return on Friday with a bag of clean laundry. Mom’s job then was to find the time to iron many of the items.

The electric company also provided a quarter meter service similar to the gas company’s. It provided essential lighting on most nights.

Our refrigeration was provided by an icebox for a few years, and the water from the melted ice was collected in a large, deep pan underneath. (I inherited the job of emptying the pan, which I learned to hate.) When we finally acquired a gas-powered refrigerator (a Servel, which lasted several decades), I was elated. With the refrigeration provided by other means, electric service was required only for lighting and the radio.

Probably the most important appliance in the house was the stove (coal at first, oil eventually). Used for cooking as well as for heating, it had to be fed constantly. For the coal, it also meant that ashes had to emptied regularly. In the winter, the ashes were used on the yard and sidewalk ice. Otherwise, we collected it in the cellar for yearly pickup and disposal. Before such disposition, however, frugality demanded that we recover any useful content. Consequently, I vividly remember taking the ashes from the stove to the cellar, where we had a large sifter mounted on an ash barrel. After dumping the ashes into the sifter by the shovelful, I turned the crank, picking out any unburned coal and coke for reuse in the stove. Only the remaining ashes dropped into the barrel.

This chore came to an end when my folks had the stove converted to oil (which was kerosene). Kerosene also ended the necessity of lugging coal up, and ashes down, the stairs. The conversion replaced the bin of coal with a tank of oil in the cellar, from which we had to lug two- and three-gallon glass jugs up the stairs to the stove in the kitchen. That was quite a load for a nine- or ten-year-old boy, which I found out when I accidentally bumped a full, three-gallon jug on a step and
broke it. The hallway smelled of oil for months.

A jug, when full, was placed into a reservoir that fed two burners (which had replaced the grates). When the oil in the reservoir was depleted, gravity would force oil from the jug into the reservoir. A pleasant memory I have of that situation is the comforting sound (primarily at night) of the chug-a-lug from the installed jug of oil as it refilled the reservoir.

One thing we never lacked during the Depression was food. Between the butcher shop we had, my Aunt and Uncle Bazar’s Modern Sanitary Bakery, and Zaidee Lubin’s produce business, there was always plenty to eat.

My father also saw to it that we had other necessities. He would let certain customers take meat on credit, and when they ran up their debts sufficiently, he would arrange with them to have appropriate members of our family visit establishments owned by those customers to “buy” such things as groceries, clothing that my mother didn’t make or medicines—bartering before we knew what bartering was.

I remember that my first suit with long pants came from Katzman’s in Olneyville. We obtained our shoes from Kotlen’s on upper Westminster Street. Groceries frequently came from Greenstein’s on Willard Avenue, and medicines from Roazenweig’s Drug Store down the street at the corner of Prairie Avenue. All this merchandise came through the bartering.

During the Depression Mom’s sewing skills were so important. She cut down Dad’s old shirts to make mine, made dresses for my sisters, and did dressmaking for women in the neighborhood to earn cash.

In mid-1938, as we were just beginning to emerge from the throes of the Depression, we moved to 128 Robinson Street—about a quarter-mile away. The rent was a little lower, and wonder of wonders, the kitchen stove was supplemented by a furnace in the cellar. The coal furnace heated a boiler that piped steam to the radiators in our third-floor tenement. Now, all the rooms could be used in winter.

Coal-fired steam heat, of course, had its own user technology. It took some practice for us to develop methods and techniques to make the best use of it.

Our routine was as follows. Dad, who went to work around five or six in the morning, would shake down the ashes of the previous night’s fire, and would revive the furnace fire by shovelling in a sufficient amount of large-size coal to generate enough steam to heat the radiators. By the time I was dressed and eating breakfast, the furnace was ready to be “banked” (that is, its fire partly covered with smaller “pea” coal) so that it maintained an even, lower level of heat for the long period until either Dad came home for lunch or I from school. Then, whoever was
home would shake down the day’s ashes and add sufficient large coal to keep the fire going until evening. Finally, at bedtime Dad would bank the fire for the night.

Of course, developing the method and techniques did, once in a while, produce some interesting results. Once either Dad loaded up the furnace a little too much or I delayed too long before banking the fire. As a result, the steam exceeded a preset pressure limit, the emergency valve on the boiler opened, and the cellar filled with steam. Living on the third floor, we didn’t notice this. The people living on the first floor, however, were somewhat perturbed.

The furnace also provided me with a chance for occasional diversion. One favorite pursuit was to go to the butcher shop, get a lamb chop, run back to the house, spit the lamb chop on an iron rod, and broil it over the furnace fire. Mmm... good.

A TIME FOR ALL THINGS
People seem to exhibit a wide variety of reactions when faced with the prospect, no matter how distant, of their inevitable mortality. Some people withdraw from discussion or state quite bluntly that they would rather not comment about it. I hold in particularly high esteem a person who demonstrates a calm acceptance of his or her eventual death and is comfortable discussing personal views of how, when, and where.

Such a person was Mr. Milner, a tenant in the building that housed the butcher shop owned by my grandfather and father. Our shop occupied the ground floor of the three-story building located near the center of the business part of Willard Avenue, and the other two floors were rented out as living quarters. This, in spite of the fact that the third floor was actually an attic whose ceiling matched the building’s sloping roof, and it had been fitted out with the minimum amenities for a single occupant.

This attic apartment was rented out to Mr. Milner (whose first name I never knew). He was an old gentleman with a shock of pure white hair, a bushy white beard and mustache, and thick white eyebrows. If not for his heavy Jewish accent, he could have been mistaken for Santa Claus. Unfortunately, in spite of his rugged appearance, my father said that Mr. Milner was a man in fragile health. During the few years that I knew him and of him, he suffered a number of “attacks.”

When this happened, often while he was in his rooms, he would pound on the floor with whatever was at hand. The second-floor neighbor would hear it and rush down to the butcher shop, where we had the only telephone in the building. My father or grandfather would telephone Rhode Island Hospital for an ambu-
lance, and they would come to take him away on a stretcher. After several days, he would return to his rooms, ostensibly cured— at least looking better than when he was carried off. When questioned as to the cause of the attacks, his answer was always vague and blamed on indigestion, upset stomach, a little flu, a cold in the chest or other such explanations.

After a while, my father didn’t believe any of that, but because he had become fond of the old man, he didn’t argue with him, but kept a watchful eye on him and asked others to do the same. Whenever Mr. Milner went out to shop, across the street at Wax’s or Lightman’s, my father would intercept him on the way back, take his bundles, and carry them up to his rooms. If the old man shopped at Greenstein’s, either Irving or Julius Greenstein would carry the bundles to the house. So it went wherever he shopped— up the street to Reuter’s Spa or Seltzer’s or down the street to my Uncle Sam’s bakery. There was almost always someone to carry bundles for him.

When Mr. Milner got back from his shopping, my father would have him rest on a chair in the shop before heading up the stairs. Then he would watch the old man as he slowly made his way up, pausing every few steps as if to gauge his progress. This arrangement went on for the few years that I knew Mr. Milner. There was an added feature the last couple of summers of our acquaintance— storytelling.

When it was sunny and warm, my father would place a few chairs out on the sidewalk in front of the store, and we would sit there when there was no business to take care of or cleaning to do. During such times, Mr. Milner would slowly descend the stairs and join us. In this peaceful setting and with only the low murmur of modest neighborhood activity, he would often reminisce about his younger days in Russia, the many adventures he had experienced in his new land, his marriage, and the death of his wife in childbirth so many years in the past. He often reflected on things that might have been, and he speculated on what lay ahead for him.

When he paused for a few moments, either my father or I would step into the shop for several cups and a bottle of soda. A little lubrication, and Mr. Milner would be ready to continue his monologue or to answer a question or two.

One pleasant day, about a week or so after a hospitalization for one of his attacks, he came downstairs carrying a bottle of wine and took his usual seat. He sent me in for cups, and poured us each some wine (a very little for me). After murmuring the blessing for wine, he raised his glass to a loud l’chaim (to life), to which he added a quiet l’movess (to death). As quietly as he said it, we nevertheless all heard it and looked questioningly at him. He took another swallow, cleared his
throat and said, “Yes, to death— not death in general, but to my death.” My father started to protest, but Mr. Milner continued, “I might as well tell you. This time, the doctor said that the next attack could be my last. It never was indigestion or flu or heartburn. It was my heart, all right, but all those attacks were heart attacks. Now, my heart is so weak that I can’t stand another one. The next one will probably be my last one.”

Once again, my father started to say something, but Mr. Milner held up his hand to stop him.

“Look,” he said, “I’m 93 years old.” (My father said later that he had been 93 for the last five years.) “I’ve had more than my share of years. After all, the Torah only promises 70 or 80 years to a man who is strong— and I’ve had 93, so I can’t complain. Remember, Moses only lived to 120, and I’m no Moses! So I don’t feel bad. I’m satisfied.” With that he picked up his bottle and headed for the stairs.

Then he paused and turned. “You have been good friends, and I thank you for all your help. I don’t want you to worry. I’m sure I won’t die very soon. In fact, I feel stronger than ever. We’ll talk about all this later.” Then he went slowly up the stairs.

For the next week or so, we watched as he came down the stairs, attended daily services at Tiferet Isroel, and went back up the stairs, seemingly stronger than ever. Feeling that we had been unduly alarmed, we relaxed.

It was two or three weeks later that the end came, quietly with no ado. There was no pounding on the floor, no neighbor frantically rushing downstairs, and no hurried call for an ambulance. Mr. Milner’s last attack must have come in his sleep. My father said his blankets were not mussed up around him, and his final expression was one of satisfaction.
Born on Lincoln's Birthday, Part II: College, War, Career, and Family

Benjamin Lightman

Our readers will recall that this article began as a recollection about Lightman's Grocery and Delicatessen in South Providence. Though only tangentially about food, Ben's story is both nourishing and zestful. If written as quickly as he speaks, the article took perhaps a few hours to complete. Not bad for a nonagenarian!

Rhode Island State

After graduating from Classical High School in 1938, I went to Rhode Island State College, in Kingston, which had about 800 students. It was just three miles from my beloved Narragansett Pier.

I joined Alpha Epsilon Pi, a Jewish fraternity with about 30 members. I lived on the top floor, which had no heat, so in winter I had to wear a "bunny" suit from head to toe. I loved the food prepared by a Hungarian emigré chef. Of course on most weekends and during summer vacations I returned home to South Providence to work in our family store.

My fraternity brother, Jack Miller, the future husband of my cousin Dorothy Waxman, was the coauthor of a song that expressed our sentiments. A memorable line was: "We're Rhode Island born and we're Rhode Island bred, and when we die we'll be Rhode Island dead..."

Jewish women had a sorority but were required to live in the women's dormitory. Only a few Afro-Americans attended the college. One of them became a frequent and welcome visitor to our fraternity.

The college had no liberal arts degree, but specialized in engineering, agriculture, and business. However, if one made honors after two years, one could take whatever electives were available. The result is that I had a wonderful education. The head of the history department, Daniel Thomas, was a fabulous teacher,
as were other members of the history department. Many of my history courses had only three students, but all of them loved the subject as much as I did. (And professors loved us.) One of them, John Platt, became a close friend, and we attended graduate school at Columbia after the war.

At Rhode Island State we joined ROTC and received some military training. This meant that we became part of the enlisted reserve and would report for duty in the Army if war should come. Of course Pearl Harbor came as a complete shock.

The athletic program was completely revised to make sure that we would be fit for military duty. Its head was Fred Tootell, a legendary figure, who had become the first native-born American to win the gold in the hammer throw at the 1924 Olympics in Paris. We regarded him as a hero. Five mornings a week we would report to the gym area. Weather permitting, we would exercise outdoors beginning with stretching and followed by some 20 push-ups. Then came a race over an obstacle course, including climbing a wall and ending with pull-ups. Then we ran two miles. It would later take the Army about a year to undo some of the fitness I had acquired.

Because of the war, the college decided to have two junior proms to avoid the possibility of having some sophomores miss the affair. I heard that the Duke Ellington Orchestra was one of those being considered, but that nobody on the committee had ever heard it. They were afraid that the music would be difficult to dance to.

Having begun my lifelong obsession with jazz, I had been writing a column on jazz in the student newspaper. So I wrote a piece praising the band and had the prom committee members listen to my recordings.

The prom was held at the Biltmore Hotel, and the event was a triumph. It enabled me to attend a live performance of one of the greatest of all jazz orchestras.

I need to add parenthetically that my fraternity house was eventually demolished. Perhaps this should not have come as a complete surprise, because every public school I had ever attended was also razed. I kid myself about leaving an immense trail of destruction.

THE ARMY
I graduated from Rhode Island State in 1943, and in February 1944, on a snowy winter day, I reported for duty at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. A week later we were sent to Camp Lee in Virginia for basic training. In July a group of us were transferred to Danville, Illinois. We lived in the YMCA while taking classes. I had
taken a test which seemed to indicate that I had some mechanical ability. I found this rather astonishing.

One day each student was given a motor to take apart and reassemble. The instructor then examined the results of our labor. When he came to look at my work, he asked why all those extra parts were lying on the ground. I explained that the engine had not worked with all the parts and that now it did with fewer parts, thus saving the government money. That was the end of my mechanical career.

Decisions on where we would be assigned varied with the Army’s needs. In the meantime, we hiked to keep ourselves in shape. On one such march, an officer led us into a stream, not realizing that many soldiers did not know how to swim. When the water turned out to be deep in spots, chaos ensued. Several soldiers had to be rescued, and a few were sent to a hospital.

After a few months, we got our assignments. A group of us were assigned to form a mobile laundry unit to service field hospitals where the wounded were treated. We were sent to Wyoming to be trained. The units would often have to work around the clock. Blood had to be removed and all clothing and bedding had to be sterilized. After three months, we were sent back to Camp Lee, where we waited to be shipped overseas.

In May 1944, we sailed from New York City as part of a flotilla to Great Britain. The voyage was uneventful except for a drill to help us escape in case we were attacked. My hammock was at the very bottom of the ship. After the first night, I slept on deck for the rest of the trip.

In Britain we were sent to a variety of places while waiting to be transported to France. In July we encamped near Dover and on July 25, 1944 landed on Omaha Beach. We climbed the cliff to the top, where there were massive shell holes from bombardments by the Navy and Army Air Force. We set up pup tents in a field near Isigny-sur-Mer, a small village that had been heavily damaged in the fighting. While waiting for our equipment, we loaded canisters of gasoline onto trucks to provide fuel for General Patton’s breakthrough out of Normandy.

About a month later, our equipment finally arrived. It consisted of three massive trailers, each weighing about two tons. Each unit had its own generator to operate washing machines, extractors, and dryers. Our outfit consisted of a diverse group: some college graduates (including one from Princeton), three skilled mechanics, and a few men from the rural South who had never been to a city.

We were able to set up operations on any lake or river and could also provide showers. We had a huge truck to pull the trailers one at a time. Four of us learned to drive the vehicle, which required the driver to double-clutch in order
to shift gears. The head of our outfit had operated a laundry, and I was second in command.

We immediately set up operations, but because our units towered over the hedgerows, we encamped away from the field hospital. This way the Germans might not mistake our units for mysterious weapons. Bloody bedding and gowns were first washed in cold war to remove the stains. Then very hot water was used for sterilization.

We also offered our services to any outfit—regardless of race—that encamped near us. Having their clothes washed and providing hot showers earned us the gratitude of many soldiers who otherwise had to hand wash their clothing in streams and lakes, an impossible task in winter.

The greatest danger we faced were German bombers that made almost nightly raids on Cherbourg. The antiaircraft fire was so intense that planes often unloaded their explosives before getting near their target to avoid being shot down. One night the bombing was much heavier than usual, and the air was full of acrid smoke from the numerous explosions. I dove into my foxhole but found that the front part had collapsed, leaving me exposed from my hips to my toes. Nothing happened to me, but that day an outfit had set up a camp about 500 feet away. It received a direct hit that killed some 20 soldiers.

We remained in Normandy until December, sleeping in our tents while fully clothed in our overcoats. We still had no sleeping bags. Finally we received orders to move to Reims. We went by train and so did our equipment. Once there, we set up our operations on a river and provided round-the-clock service to an enormous hospital. Renamed the American Hospital, it handled the most serious cases that field hospitals could not.

We remained in Reims until spring of 1945, when we moved to Verdun. Verdun had been a monument to futility during World War I. About 500,000 soldiers on each side were killed or injured, but neither the French nor the Germans gained anything. Most of the area around the city was still surrounded by barbed wire because of mines laid in hills and tunnels during World War I.

One day some of us drove by a hill with an entrance. I took the lead and entered because I had a flashlight. Suddenly my light went out. I stopped to remove the batteries and exchange them for some in the rear. Someone brushed by me. Then I heard a thud. My light came on, and I saw a large opening extending the width of the tunnel. I realized that someone had fallen in, but I could not see the bottom of the hole. I sent a man to drive to a nearby outfit to get a long rope. He came back with a soldier whom we lowered into the hole. We brought up the
victim, who turned out to be the head of our outfit, and rushed him to a hospital.

To everyone's astonishment, he did not have any broken bones. He had hit his head on the opposite side and landed on some mud, which cushioned his fall. However, the fall did affect his personality, and he was sent home. Though only a technical sergeant with five stripes, I received orders to replace him.

The war with Germany ended while we were in Verdun, and we were sent to Soissons, 60 miles northwest of Paris. We set up our units on the banks of the Aisne River, including three tents where we slept and kept supplies. We had the use of German prisoners to do some of the work. Most of my outfit was going to return to the United States, but I was to be sent directly to the Far East to set up a mobile laundry unit. Suddenly, to our utter astonishment, the war was over.

It would take many months to send troops back home, so I was offered an opportunity to study at an American school temporarily established in Biarritz, France, or at another in Swindon, in northeast Wiltshire. I chose the latter because it gave me a chance on weekends to go to London, where I could go to the theater and hear wonderful performances of classical music. I had left France in September and returned to the United States in December 1945, during one of the worst Atlantic hurricanes.

HOMECOMING
World War II changed the lives of most families, and ours was no exception. It was a terrible time for anyone whose loved ones were sent overseas. My brother, Gene, had been drafted in 1942, and his whereabouts and mine were of course secret. My parents never wrote to me about this terrible period in their lives because they did not want to worry me. This was typical of them. I did not know until I returned home how much they had suffered.

After landing in New York City, I took a train to Providence. I called home and spoke to everyone, but then I asked to speak to Rose, my beloved sister. Gene took the phone and told me he would pick me up. When I got into the car, he told me that she had died. The joy of coming home evaporated.

While I was in the Army, my father had informed me that he had sold Lightman's (though it continued to operate until 1950). Without my brother, it was impossible for my parents to continue. In addition, many changes would soon occur that had an enormous impact on shopping. Supermarkets were beginning to emerge. Younger generations of Jews were no longer keeping kosher. Many Jews were moving out of South Providence and no longer did their shopping there. Willard Avenue and nearby streets were taken over by the city for urban renewal.
Although shopkeepers were offered places to be built along Prairie Avenue, my father's decision to retire had been right. The old ways of Jewish shopping had ended.

On a warm day in the early 1950s, I drove to Hilton Street and walked the few steps to Willard Avenue. The street looked exactly the same. There was Lightman's and all of the other stores with their signs intact. The synagogues were still there. Nothing had changed except for the absence of people. I was the only person present. It was very quiet. This was the Jewish equivalent of an abandoned street in the Old West. A short time later, the buildings disappeared and all that remained of Willard Avenue were a few photographs and the memories of those who had once been part of the street's vibrant life.

NEW YORK CITY

In January 1946 I started my master's degree program at Columbia University, majoring in United States history and minoring in European history. It was financed by the GI Bill, one of the greatest legislative acts in our history. I received my M.A. in 1949 and continued for a doctorate. I completed the course work, passed the oral exams, and started work on my dissertation, a biography of Samuel Chase. As a continuation of my master's thesis, this would have taken me about a year to complete. However, I heard that a professor at Princeton was planning to publish a Chase biography, which meant that Columbia would not accept my work. As it turned out, he never published it. At the same time, the job market for American history professors disappeared because veterans were completing their studies. Consequently, I decided to get a master's in library science so that I could work in a historical association library. I completed that degree in 1951.

Before World War II, my family believed that Rhode Island was the place where all of us would live for the rest of our lives. I did not want to leave New York City, however.

I worked for two years as a business librarian at the Brooklyn Public Library, and in 1953 I became a research librarian at Time, Inc. It was by far the largest news library in the world. The staff included 26 librarians, and the collection included over 86,000 books on almost every conceivable subject. There were also hundreds of periodicals and millions of clippings from major newspapers, which were arranged by subject, biographies, and companies. We also had all important U.S. government documents.

The reference librarians provided background information on a countless number of topics to writers and editors in America. Additionally, hundreds of Time
correspondents from all over the world wired requests for information. Every fact published by *Time* had to be verified.

I thoroughly enjoyed answering queries, which I never considered trivial. Here are a few examples that stick in my mind. How long is the gestation period of a cow? 284 days. Do identical twins have identical fingerprints? No. How high is the *Venus de Milo* (actually of Milos)? 80 and 1/3 inches. Do worms swim? Yes. You get the idea.

Yes, I did enjoy watching the TV show, “The $64,000 Question,” which ran from 1955 to ’58. I often knew the answer. Students at Rhode Island State had been so impressed by my photographic memory that they nicknamed me “Argus” (after the camera and the hundred-eyed Greek monster).

The years 1953 to 1990 were a golden age for newspapers and magazines, and I truly loved my work. The *Time* library was open seven days a week from 10 AM until 10 PM and later for *Life* and *Time* closings. When new magazines, such as *Sports Illustrated* and *People*, were published, we added information sources when needed. *Time-Life* books also came under the jurisdiction of the main library. In 1990, after the merger of *Time*, Inc. and Warner Brothers, we expanded our services.

When I began working for *Time*, the library was located in Rockefeller Center. My office overlooked the skating rink, which always reminded me of the hockey skates I received for my Bar Mitzvah. Later, when the library occupied the entire 26th floor of a tower at Sixth Avenue and 50th Street, I had a wonderful view of Radio City Music Hall.

I was appointed head of reference in 1968, and five years later: I became chief librarian. I oversaw a staff of 125 full and part-time librarians. I am particularly proud that I was responsible for raising many salaries. Yes, I did meet Henry Luce on several occasions. I was of course impressed by his business genius even if our political positions were often far apart. Today it would be totally impossible, but in those years I actually voted for a few Republicans.

After 40 years at *Time*, I happily retired in 1992. By then, newspapers and magazines were steadily losing their readers to television and then to the internet. In a strange irony, much of the publishing business, like my family’s South Providence grocery and delicatessen, would disappear.

**NON-RETIREMENT**

Soon after my retirement a new opportunity arose. This requires a few words about my wife, Marjorie. She grew up on Long Island and attended Valley Stream Central High School. In 1961 she graduated from Hunter College. I met her there
while moonlighting in its library. In 1980 Marjorie earned a Ph.D. in ancient Greek and Roman history from Rutgers. Rather than teach, she has her own business as a consultant to not-for-profit organizations.

A friend of ours, who represented authors, learned that a reputable publisher of reference books was looking for someone to write a dictionary of ancient Greek and Roman women. Marjorie, who was fully engaged in her own business, asked me if I would be willing to do the necessary research, write the initial biographies, and she would make necessary changes. I would then have to check these changes to make sure that they were correct. Marjorie agreed to write the lengthy introduction to the volume.

I decided that this project would make for an interesting non-retirement. I certainly knew how to do research, and I had the complete Loeb Classical Library (with the original Greek and Roman texts and the English translations) at home. I had rescued the library when Time-Life books moved out of New York.

By then we were living in Washington, D.C., and I obtained a shelf in the Library of Congress, which held the materials I needed. The book, which took years to complete, far exceeded what the publisher had expected. It was published by Facts on File in 2000 with the title A Biographical Dictionary of Ancient Greek and Roman Women. It contained information on 448 women from the beginning of Greek civilization through the reign of Constantine in 337 CE, including all the Egyptian Cleopatras, who were Macedonian. Each biography contained a list of original sources as well as a bibliography of scholarly books and periodicals. And yes, there were some references to Jews, particularly those who had lived in Alexandria and were mercenaries.

A few years later, Marjorie and I were asked to expand our book by adding biographies through the era of Justinian and his wife and political partner, Theodora. She died in 548 CE. The book was published in 2008 with a new title, A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women. Except for my articles in The Notes, this book ended my career as a writer.

VISITS TO RHODE ISLAND

When Marjorie and I were married in 1960, we moved to Teaneck, New Jersey. There we reared three children: Andrew, Timothy, and Suzanne. Before my parents began to spend winters in Miami, we would come to their Passover seders in Providence.

We also began spending many summer vacations in Narragansett, where we rented a cottage from the Kenyon family on 40 acres of wild land fronting Great
Salt Pond. We would eat dinner at Aunt Carrie’s and buy pottery at Peter Pots.

Sidney and Florence Waxman, both Providence natives, also began to vacation there with their children. We were sometimes joined by my cousin Dorothy Miller, her husband Jack, and their children. My brother Gene and his wife Terry would join us. My niece Jeanne (the daughter of my sister Rose) and her husband George Feldman would come too. We held family reunions at Sid and Florence’s cottage. Aside from weddings, there were few times when we could get together.

One evening in April 1969, I received a call from Terry. My parents had just returned from Florida, but my father had been rushed to the hospital. There was no chance that he would recover. Marjorie and I made arrangements for friends to care for our children. Then we drove to Providence and went to the hospital the next morning.

My father was fully conscious and happy to see us. We arranged that one of us would be with him 24 hours a day. That evening our extended family, including grandchildren and friends, gathered around his bed.

The next day I sent my mother home to get some rest and was sitting alone with my father. He told me that last night had been wonderful. He had been surrounded by his wife, children, sister, grandchildren, relatives, and friends—all of whom he loved. He said it was like a wedding. He also said that he had lived a long, adventurous, and fruitful life and was ready for it to end.

A short while later, he lost consciousness. I held his hand. Suddenly he sat up and took a deep breath. I put my arms around him, gave him a kiss, told him that I loved him, and laid him gently down on the bed.

My father and mother had been married for over 60 years and worked together until the day they retired. My mother lived a few more years, but his death left a void that nothing could heal.

The death of my parents and my brother’s move to Florida sharply reduced our visits to Rhode Island. But there were other memorable vacations.

Many years ago, when our children were teenagers, we spent a week on Block Island with the family of Lois, my sister-in-law. We had a wonderful time exploring the island, which I had never visited when I lived in Providence.

Some years later, my wife and I, accompanied by our daughter Suzanne, stayed at a motel on Ocean Drive in Narragansett.

We returned to Narragansett this past summer, but my most memorable, recent nostalgic visit occurred about three years ago, when Marjorie, Suzanne, and I decided to spend a few days there. We took along a new visitor, Josh, once a champion greyhound, who belongs to my daughter but is my walking companion.
five days a week. We found a bed-and-breakfast that accepted dogs about a quarter of a mile from the entrance to the University of Rhode Island. It turned out to be a wonderful place with a fabulous breakfast and a charming hostess. So we asked her questions about the house.

To understand the story, I have to go back to my first English class at Roger Williams Junior High. When our teacher came into the classroom, I thought she looked like a princess. She turned out to be a wonderful instructor whose warm and caring personality made all of us adore her.

Fast forward to 1941. A group of us at Rhode Island State decided to go to a movie in Peace Dale. Just before the lights went out, I realized that the woman in front of me was my former teacher, and the man sitting next to her with his arm around her was Fred Tootell, my hero who was the former Olympic hammer throwing champion.

Our hostess at the bed and breakfast told us that we were staying at the Tootell House, where my former teacher had lived after her marriage. Having fought for equal rights for women (among many other worthy activities), she had enjoyed the respect and affection of many people in South Kingston.

Moments like this connect me to a past I have never forgotten. They bring back memories of people with whom I shared treasured portions of my life. Those who are no longer with us do not die but continue to live in the hearts and minds of all who loved them. That is why Rhode Island remains so important to me.

1 This song was derived from “I’m a Brown Man Born,” popularized on College Hill around 1903. See George M. Goodwin, “The Brothers of Phi Epsilon Pi,” Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes (November 2003), 136.

ORDINARY PEOPLE,
TURBULENT TIMES, PART II

ALICE DREIFUSS GOLDSTEIN

Although the author and her parents found refuge in America, the harrowing saga of relatives left in Europe continued. Entitled "I'm So Thin, You Wouldn't Recognize Me," this is the eleventh chapter of Alice's concise but deeply moving book published by AuthorHouse in 2008. This chapter documents the heroic efforts to rescue grandparents and other members of the Dreifuss and Valfer families, who were deported from their ancestral homeland, Germany, to internment camps in France and then to the East. Such efforts have probably been overlooked by many Americans—Jews and gentiles alike—who have studied the Holocaust.

During the events described here, which extended over three and a half years, Alice and her parents experienced their own enormous hardships. After sailing from Hamburg to New York City in August 1939, they lived briefly in Washington Heights before accepting menial positions in Bennington, Vermont. A year later, they returned briefly to Washington Heights before relocating to the outskirts of Groton, Connecticut. There they worked for and lived with friends from Germany. Soon thereafter, Alice and her parents moved to New London, where they finally made their home and built new lives.

Alice's account of her parents' efforts is both inspiring and maddening. On the one hand, her German loved ones never seemed to surrender faith or hope (or refused to convey their true feelings). On the other hand, the American government seemed unwilling or powerless to save lives dangling by a thread. By contrast, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and the American Friends Service Committee tried valiantly to abide by endlessly complicated and shifting rules. Needless to say, good intentions were not enough.
In October of 1940, the Nazis tried an experiment to gauge world reaction. They deported the Jews of Baden, Pfalz, and the Saar to internment camps in France. A precedent for such deportations had been established earlier, when Jews of East European citizenship living in Germany had been unceremoniously rounded up and sent over the border of Germany into Poland, and when some 22,000 Jews of Alsace were sent into unoccupied France after the Nazi take-over of northern France. But this was the first time that persons who were German-born were deported to camps in another country.

As the Nazis expected, the world press barely noticed. Attention was focused on the war itself, and even Jewish communities in the free world muted their reactions. Such lack of outrage emboldened the Nazis to further their persecution of the Jews and to eventually develop the “Final Solution.” In histories written of the Second World War and of the Nazi regime the deportations to France receives scant attention and, in fact, is most often not cited at all. For Mama and Daddy, it was devastating news.

On October 22, 1940, in the middle of the holiday of Sukkoth, a carefully planned deportation was set in motion. Jewish homes in Southwest Germany received “polite” visits from the Gestapo, announcing that they were not to leave their homes and to make themselves ready for a journey. They were to take with them necessities to last several days, but no more than 50 kg. per adult and 30 kg. per child. Many were advised to take with them supplies of food. Families were also told they could take with them no more than 100 marks. The Gestapo indicated they would return within an hour. They did not indicate where Jews were to be sent or for how long they would be away, but the action was done quietly so as to keep
the deportees as docile as possible. Many thought they would be absent for only a few days or a couple of weeks at most. Despite the degradations they had continually experienced over the past five years, long-term deportation was beyond the imagination of most. They carefully locked their homes as they left.

In Kenzingen, by October 1940, my immediate family were the only Jews still resident. Thus, three Jews were picked up—my Opa (Grandfather) Ludwig Dreifuss, Tante (Aunt) Bertha Dreifuss, and Tante Sophie Epstein, all living together in the house on Brotstrasse. What a wrenching experience it must have been for them, all elderly people, with no sense of security away from the only home they'd ever known. In Freiburg, where many more Jews still lived, my Oma (Grandmother) Anna Valfer, Opa Sigmund Valfer, and Uncle Siegfried Mayer (cousin Elsie's father) were among the hundreds of men, women, and children gathered at the central railroad station to await the train that would take them to their unknown destination. They must have derived some small comfort from being with many of their friends.

Long trains of third-class passenger cars waited at the main railroad stations, where Jews were first asked to stow their luggage in the baggage cars and then ordered to board and take their seats. As the trains got under way, many feared that their destination was Poland, but as they recognized the names of the towns that flashed by on the stations along the way, they realized that they were, instead, moving south. Trains stopped at Mulhausen in Alsace, where the deportees were told to exchange their 100 mark into French francs (often at a rate well below the posted exchange). In all, the trains took three days and nights (often shunted to side rails while other trains sped by) to reach their destination—Gurs.

Gurs, located in the Pyrénées Mountains of southwestern France about 50 miles from the Spanish border, had been established in April 1939 by the French as an internment camp for defeated Spanish Republican soldiers and others fleeing from Spain to France after the Spanish Civil War. In early 1940, the French also interned there some 4,000 German Jews, whom they had declared “enemy aliens.” The camp had only primitive facilities—large wooden barracks that lacked any kind of furniture, few cooking facilities, and constant shortages of water and food. The barracks were organized into “îlots” (little islands) connected to each other by dirt paths that turned into ankle deep mud during the long rainy season. Only the main road through the camp was paved.

Into this dismal place, the Germans dumped the 7,500 Jews from southwestern Germany. By this time, Germany had occupied northern France, but the south, including the area in which Gurs was located, was under the puppet Vichy
regime and staffed by French officials. The Germans failed to notify Vichy that the Jews were coming, so the internment camp, which was marginally supplied at best, was woefully inadequate to receive the thousands of newcomers. It's hard to imagine how anyone, especially the very old and very young, could have survived. Even though the camp was not designed as a "killing camp," during 1940-41, some 800 detainees at Gurs did, in fact, die, and were buried in the camp's cemetery.

Somehow, the newcomers managed to organize the camp, with central kitchens, some rudimentary medical care, schools for children, religious services, and cultural events. In this they received some help from the French authorities and also from some of the people living in the area. Conditions were more fluid and flexible in France than they were in the camps of either Germany or Eastern Europe. Children were regularly smuggled out of the camp to take refuge with French families, in orphanages or in convents, or to be guided over the Pyrénées on foot for safety in Spain. Adults were frequently moved from Gurs to other camps in the region, where they were often used as slave labor. These camps included Les Milles— an old tile factory turned into a brick factory; Noe and Recebedou, just south of Toulouse; and Rivesaltes, which had been a transit camp for troops in World War I, but which, in 1940-42, was primarily reserved for Jews who had some expectation of emigration. More important, Jews in these various camps were also able to correspond with family overseas, although letters were heavily censored by French and German authorities, and to receive funds from abroad.

As soon as my parents received a telegram with the dreadful news, they initiated whatever actions they could to help my grandparents. The deportation was also documented by the return of a letter that had been sent to my Opa Dreifuss in Kenzingen in May of 1940. It came to us in Groton (the mail followed us from Bennington) toward the end of the year. The envelope showed signs of censorship and carried a small label, "Moved without forwarding address," in both German and French. Except for this envelope, little of the early correspondence with either my grandparents or various agencies in the United States survives, but some chronology can be worked out from the existing documents and from a series of later letters, especially from my grandmother, written during 1941-42.

Avenues of help in America for the interned Jews in France were few, and the process of getting assistance overseas was cumbersome. My parents turned both to official agencies and to family. A natural avenue for help was HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), which had helped in our resettlement and was now engaged in "Rescue through Emigration." They served as a clearing house for obtaining information and forms related to the emigration process. In February
1941, they sent us the forms required by the US Commission on Immigration and Naturalization (CIN) to begin the arduous process of obtaining visas for my grandparents. A deposit of $6 was required. Two months later, CIN had still not responded, and HIAS apparently gave up hope of any action, since they refunded the $6 deposit.

In the meantime, Daddy had also turned to the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), not for visa assistance, but both to enable my grandparents to be transferred out of Gurs, and also to transfer funds to France to help my grandparents survive while they waited for authorization to emigrate. AFSC was helpful. They served as a conduit for funds from my parents to my grandparents, requiring only a $1 fee to cover the costs of the cable. In April, Daddy sent AFSC $45: $30 to be given to Sigmund and Anna Valfer (Freiburg Opa and Oma) and $15 to Ludwig Dreifuss (Kenzingen Opa). At that time, Daddy was also notified that in order to effect a transfer out of Gurs, a guarantee of support would be needed of at least $26 a month. The transfer was not at all certain, but AFSC was willing to try and to notify my Valfer Opa about this.

The funds were augmented for my grandparents from yet another source. Just before we left Kenzingen, our lift, which had been sent for transshipment by freighter, had been delayed in Hamburg, and failed to leave Europe before the onset of hostilities in September 1939. The freighter was able to reach Rotterdam, Holland, and there it was stuck. The contents had to be downloaded and stored (for which we were charged a storage fee). By the spring of 1941, the stored contents could no longer be held, and they were auctioned off. After all the fees were paid, the contents of the lift netted 235 Dutch florins. Daddy asked that the funds be transferred to Gurs: 70 florins to Ludwig Dreifuss, 70 florins to Sigmund Valfer, and 95 florins to Anna Valfer. (Hereafter, when I speak of Oma and Opa, I will be referring to my Valfer grandparents; my Dreifuss Opa will be specified as such.)

Not surprisingly, the process for individuals to transfer from Gurs was not so simple. AFSC notified Daddy that their Marseilles office had received the request and funds, and had notified my grandparents. But more was needed:

It is almost necessary now, however, for the persons themselves to know some people— French Nationals— who will undertake to appeal to the prefects of the departments in which they live on behalf of the internees. Do you know whether your parents-in-law are acquainted with any one in southern France who might arrange for them to live either with them or in the home of someone in the community?
Before more contacts could be made in Gurs, the AFSC lost track of Opa’s whereabouts. He had been transferred to Camp Les Milles, apparently because he was considered still strong enough to serve in the slave labor unit there.

Daddy also took advantage of the family’s international dispersion to contact Alfred Faller, a distant cousin, in Zurich, Switzerland. Faller worked for a bank and devoted a considerable portion of his energies and wealth in assisting a wide assortment of relatives and friends who had fallen victim to the Nazis. Although I have none of the correspondence that passed between them during the war years, I do know that as of July of 1941, my parents sent funds to Faller’s account in Zurich. During that first half year alone, they sent at least $210 to Switzerland, to be transferred to my grandparents in France. Given a monthly salary of only $90, the sum sent overseas was a substantial part of their earnings during that time. Most of that money seems to have reached my grandparents, since it appears to have kept them healthy enough (allowing them, among other things, to buy food to supplement the camp rations) to survive the first year of deportation.

Exchanges of letters between my parents and grandparents occurred within a short time of the deportation, as did the one-way stream of funds and packages of food and warm clothing, although some of these were routed via Switzerland. Many of the packages failed to arrive or were tampered with en route. For example, three tins of sardines (high calorie and therefore especially welcome) were sent by my Aunt Meta (my father’s sister-in-law, who was still living in Düsseldorf, Germany), but only one tin was in the package that reached Oma. Mail was very erratic and letters were often lost before they reached their intended address. Apparently, several of the early letters were never delivered in the United States; the first letter that has survived is dated September 25, 1941. It was written from Gurs by my Oma, especially to note my birthday. She reports that all the immediate family are well (including Oma and Opa, my Dreifuss Opa, Aunt Sofie, and Uncle Siegfried), and also tells about a variety of more distant relatives and friends with whom she has contact, either by mail, word of mouth from others, or personal visits within the camp.

The letter also describes that first Rosh Hashanah away from home:

Alice’s parents
For (the holidays) I went to the Kulturbaraue (a barrack in Gurs set aside for cultural events) and services were very nice. Cantor Israel prayed very movingly and a choir of men and women sang beautifully. After the service, we went to the Feldgottesdienst (services held in a large outdoor space), where Rabbi Ausbach gave an excellent sermon, after which we heard the shofar blown. Among the many hundred people gathered there, I doubt that an eye was dry; at that point I was truly overcome by homesickness.

A very slow stream of internees were able to leave the camp for safer destinations: some, like Aunt Sofie, were able to gain entrance to Switzerland; a few found haven in Cuba; and some heard from the American consulate in Marseilles that their documents were in order and that they were authorized to emigrate to the U.S. The wait must have seemed endless and the disappointments constant. In the meantime, the internees at Gurs were being shuffled around the various other camps in unoccupied France. By the end of 1941, both my Opa and Uncle Siegfried had been transferred to Camps Les Milles, where they were used as laborers making bricks. The separation between my grandparents was very difficult for them to bear. My Dreifuss Opa was transferred to Noe. Other internees were allowed to move out of the camp into a transit hotel in Marseilles if the consulate indicated that their papers were being processed.

By December, both my Valfer grandparents were out of Gurs, my Oma having been transferred to the transit Hôtel Bomport in Marseilles upon authorization from the American consulate. One of the real benefits of the change in residence was that my grandfather was allowed two days’ leave from the brick factory every three weeks, so that he could visit my grandmother in Marseilles. They also managed to communicate on an almost daily basis through letters hand-delivered by various internees of Les Milles who were on a different leave schedule. Their new quarters and all the communications they had had with the American consulate caused considerable optimism and hope that they would soon be reunited with us in the United States. As my grandfather wrote in January, “Daily, we await news regarding the trip and regarding the willingness from Washington. I am firmly convinced that we’ve done all we can, and now simply need to have patience.” Rumors about procedures to simplify and speed up the emigration process circulated among the internees and fueled their sense of hope.

By the end of the winter, as the weather improved, hope eroded. Mail was very erratic, and many of the letters sent in either direction between my parents
and grandparents failed to arrive. My Oma wrote that a large bundle of letters arrived at the hotel from the USA in February, but she wasn't among the lucky recipients. “We're happy as children to hear from you, and will continue to hope and bear up patiently until this difficult time is passed and we have lived through it.” But conditions continued to deteriorate. “I can't assure you that we are all well. Hunger plagues us and it's impossible to buy food since we don't have ration cards.” Even the funds my grandparents received from Switzerland were only of little help. “If we must be here much longer, eating will be catastrophically difficult, since one can buy almost nothing, even with a lot of money.”

Meanwhile, my Dreifuss Opa fared even worse. For someone who was attached to familiar surroundings and people he knew, being uprooted three times within a year: first from his home in October 1940, then from Gurs in the spring of 1941, and finally from Noe in the fall of that year for internment in Recebedou—must have been a dreadful burden and quite bewildering. He could not survive in such strange surroundings for very long and died December 19, 1941. Oma told us the news in a letter that failed to reach us; she reiterated it in a second letter sent from Marseilles in early January 1942: “Sadly, dear father Ludwig died in Recebedou.” The news was confirmed in a brief note from HIAS in early February, apparently the result of an inquiry from my father.

The winter of 1941-42 must have been especially hard for my Oma and Opa. They were able to see each other regularly, but not as often or for as long a time as they would have wished. Les Milles was an hour's walk from Marseilles, an arduous trip in the cold months. In addition, Opa had a flare-up of kidney stones that had been diagnosed several years earlier, but only treated with medication. Fortunately, he was able to get medical help in Aix and was able to buy the necessary medicines. In the process, he used most of the funds that had been sent to them for food and daily living expenses. “The end result is that, thank God, the stone passed.” Oma wrote, “You can imagine that this also lifted a stone from our hearts.”

Daddy continued his efforts to obtain the needed documents for Oma and Opa to immigrate to the United States. This was especially difficult since the rules kept shifting. In February 1942, he was informed by the State Department that “developments incidental to the war have made it necessary to reexamine certain aspects of this case (the visa of my grandparents)”. Three weeks later, HIAS informed him that persons in unoccupied France might be able to pay their own passage if they can get the francs and have them converted into dollars. Daddy turned to the AFSC for help, and they advised him they had channels to their office in Marseilles through London, so send money to London! But without visa autho-
rization, no action was possible, so this avenue was put on hold.

The summer brought a bit of relief from the biting cold of the winter, and with it came a bit of hope as well. The American consulate issued authorizations for emigration with some regularity, although still at much too slow a pace, and never for Oma and Opa. The lack of authorization was particularly painful for them since only those with appointments at the consulate were allowed leave from Les Milles. Thus, Opa was unable to come to Marseilles for many weeks. The regular stream of letters in the spring and early summer of 1942 were full of gossip about relatives and friends, about the urgency for funds, about the longing for an end to the war. In late May, Oma wrote, "The main thing is that we, thank God, are satisfied with our health, although you probably wouldn't recognize me any more since I've lost so much weight...but there's no point in being upset, we simply have to endure." "Just now, the weather is already quite warm, with cool evenings and mornings. The nature is quite beautiful, though we take no pleasure in it; only faith in God helps us to keep up our hope."

During the spring of 1942, more and more internees were shipped out of Gurs to the other camps in France and, of course, East. Oma indicates that the hotel was getting more and more crowded, with women in every possible space. Often, the new arrivals were acquaintances from Gurs and brought with them news of still others. With so many newcomers, food became scarcer than ever and also much more expensive. To stretch their meager funds, Oma tried to work as often as possible in the kitchen. "Then I receive a double ration of soup and somewhat more Lechem (bread), all on the q.t. I try to send some of the bread to dear Sigmund, so that we can save a bit since it's enormously expensive to buy anything."

An indication of the systematic depopulation of the camps and the planned closing of Gurs came in a letter dated August 17:

Unfortunately, I have to share with you now the news that on the 12 of August 1942, dear Siegfried (Elsie's father), along with hundreds of men and women, was transported from here to a destination unknown. You have probably heard about it already via radio and news reports. I'll desist from describing the scene for you, we've had so much of this that we need to quiet our nerves. We can only hope that dear Siegfried will have a lucky fate and get sent back. I don't know more; the terrible situation is so frightful.
The fall of 1942 was full of hope and despair. Daddy received a letter from the State Department indicating that advisory approval had been granted for immigration visas for Sigmund and Anna Valer. The office in Marseilles was being notified. He was also informed that “The American Consul will withhold a visa from any applicant who fails to produce proof of overseas transportation.” Daddy acted immediately. He contacted HIAS and sent them the funds necessary to pay for ship’s passage: $1,040 for the two tickets plus $3,50 to cover cable charges. The $520 charge per person was quite an increase from the $111 we had had to pay just three years earlier. The total amount was more than the cash we had available, so Elsie transferred funds originally set aside for the passage of her father, Siegfried. By October 29, all the funds were in place and only final authorization for immigration to the US was needed.

Meanwhile, Opa had been sent to Naxon, an internment camp near Limoges that imprisoned mainly Jews over age 60. The change was very difficult since it meant that my grandparents could no longer see each other. (Naxon was over 100 km. from Marseilles). Still, some hope remained, especially after Oma received communications from the American consulate that her case was being reviewed. “Still, there is no Visa de Sorti, and we hope that it will yet arrive. In any case, this connection provides me with some advantages and has a calming effect.”

The approval from the State Department and the payment of funds came too late. The authorization could never be issued. On November 7, 1942 Allied troops invaded North Africa for a first direct encounter with Hitler’s army. The Vichy government was immediately suspended and the Nazis occupied all of France. All borders were closed. Emigration through official channels became impossible. Only trickles of mail, very sporadic, still kept connections alive.

Within a week of the invasion, Jews living in the transit hotels in Marseilles were being transferred elsewhere. Oma was sent to Naxon, which meant a grateful reunion with Opa. Her letter of November 21 indicates, “We are very glad to be together, no matter what happens; we can see and speak with each other every day, and each can help the other. If only dear God would also help. I would not have thought that we’d have to go back into a camp, but what can we do.” Stoically, Oma was grateful for continued good health. Her letter is full of news about relatives, concern that they hadn’t heard from Siegfried (did they really not know about the death camps?), recognition of the High Holy Days and of family birthdays, and great delight in the news about our activities in America, especially my own progress in school.

It was the last letter we received from them. Airmail that had taken four to six weeks in either direction now took even longer. In desperation for word of
my grandparents' welfare, my parents turned to the Red Cross for help. A message was sent in January 1943; three months later, the return was delivered, with yet another address: Camp de Masseube. Apparently, the Jews still remaining in southern France were being shunted from place to place, especially after Gurs was closed in November 1943. But the reply held some reassurance: “Lines gladden us. Both well. Faller takes care of us. We hear nothing from Mayer. Hugs, kisses, especially Alice and Ilse.”

My parents sent a second message via the Red Cross in September, which elicited a reply in February 1944. The reply was similar to the earlier message, but again, the address had changed, this time to Hôtel Beau Seyour, Albuissière, Ardèche. Regularly in 1943 and sporadically until mid-April 1944, Oma and Opa continued to be sent mail from Alfred Faller, both francs and small packages. How much of this they actually received is not known. For us, the last communication came from the Hôtel Beau Seyour. Within a month, Oma and Opa were shipped to Drancy (a transit camp close to Paris, used as a gathering point for further transport to camps in the East), and from there, on April 7, 1944 made their final journey by cattle car to Auschwitz. Official records put the date of death as December 31, 1944, but it is doubtful that they survived even the initial selection on their arrival in Auschwitz. Most likely, they were sent immediately to the gas chambers where they were turned into smoke and ashes.

May their memory be for a blessing.
"MY LIFE AND CAREER AS A ZIONIST, PART I: ISRAEL'S BIRTH AND INFANCY"

IRVING KESSLER

The author’s passing at 88 years was noted in our previous issue. He and his wife, Greta, had retired to Newport, her hometown, in 2001. Though Mr. Kessler was only briefly a Rhode Islander, he was a distinguished leader of world Jewry, who merits a place of honor within our local history. Because Rhode Island did not produce a professional of comparable stature, his early life in greater Boston is worthy of close examination.

The following essay, written in 1998, represents only one chapter in Mr. Kessler’s lengthy and gripping memoirs, which will be published shortly. I am grateful for Greta’s assistance with this excerpt and for summarizing earlier chapters on which the following sketch is based.

Natives of Ritzev, a village in northern Ukraine, Mr. Kessler’s parents emigrated to Philadelphia before World War I. With the assistance of his cousins, Myer and Celia moved to Somerville, Massachusetts, where he and his partner, Ben Parker, opened Quincy Cash Market, near Sullivan Square. Myer became a butcher and also handled all orders and deliveries.

In 1922 Myer and Celia helped found Temple B’nai B’rith, a Conservative congregation on Central Street, which also served the larger Jewish communities of Medford and Arlington. Both parents were deeply involved in Jewish causes. Myer, who was devoted to public affairs, belonged to Farband and was a socialist Zionist. Celia was a leader of Pioneer Women.

Irving, the first of three children, was born in Somerville in 1922. He was a Bar Mitzvah at B’nai B’rith, where his and Greta’s children would be named. Irving attended local schools and graduated from Somerville High in 1940. He was active in the debating team and stamp club.

Throughout his youth, Irving worked at Quincy Cash Market. He also found time for Boy Scouts and the American Zionist Association. He particularly enjoyed his summers as a counselor at Camp Avoda in Middleboro, Massachusetts.

Irving enrolled at Tufts College, a mile-and-a-half streetcar ride from home. He joined the campus Reserve Corps, but was soon drafted.
Shortly after his 21st birthday, in February 1943, Irving reported to Fort Devens. A year later, after completing training as a radar specialist (to guide planes and hunt submarines), he was shipped overseas to join the Eighth Air Force. Subsequently, he graduated from the Ninth Air Force’s Troop Command School for Pathfinders. Following D-day (June 6, 1944), Irving was sent to France.

TUFTS
I came home to Somerville in August 1945, the day before fall registration at Tufts College. A phone call provided me an appointment with the dean of the School of Engineering. He was impressed by the record of Air Corps schools I had attended, but insisted that a bachelor of engineering degree could come only after another two-and-a-half to three years of study. “No thank you,” I said, and quickly learned that the same courses he had discounted were acceptable for more than a semester in the regular college. I could expect a bachelor of arts degree in June 1946. Wow!

There were few vets on campus, known as “The Hill.” In September and October I first wore my uniform, then my “ruptured-duck,” an honorably discharged veteran’s pin (with an eagle design) to distinguish me from the 4-F’s and youngsters on campus. But it became easy to slip back into civilian activity: good food at home, dates, and the occasional all-night catch-up reading for an exam.

While I was away, a Hillel chapter had been organized. Not only was I an awe-inspiring member in ’45, but I also received a so-called fellowship in the amount of $300 to serve as an advisor to the same AZA group in Medford where I had once, so long ago, been elected to its highest office. I had made a speech to an AZA regional conference on December 7, 1941. Was this the first recognition that my world had changed? Four years later, almost to the day, I agreed to my first paid assignment as a Jewish communal professional.

During these months I still dreamed of becoming a member of the United States diplomatic corps or a similar institution in Palestine, if a Jewish state could be created. Both Mom and Dad were Zionists. Dad had joined the Labor Zionist Order-Farband before his marriage. Indeed, he had the distinction of being a member of its first American branch, in Philadelphia. In 1945 and 1946 Mom was actively involved with a newly organized Pioneer Women’s group in Somerville and
Medford. For years I helped her to count Jewish National Fund blue box receipts.

While I made no attempt to found a Boston labor Zionist group that year, I did help to create a student Zionist unit of the Intercollegiate Zionist Federation in America on the Tufts campus. Milly Katz, later Guberman, was then the national secretary of AVUKA, before it folded into the IZFA structure. It was designed to create a strong Zionist voice on American campuses.

I had a surprisingly good grade on my Graduate Record Exam because Air Corps schools had strengthened my skills in physics and math. My close relationship with my American history professor, Ruhl Bartlett, further promised admission to Tufts' Fletcher School of Diplomacy. Dr. Bartlett, who became dean in 1946, assured me a place—but not that year. There were too many GIs (with former admission promises) who returned in 1946.

In the meantime, Dr. Bartlett had a challenge to offer. He insisted that, as an excellent teacher, I could handle a year as a lecturer in American history at the American University in Athens. There was only one fly in this ointment: Greece was involved in a civil war with a well-armed Communist guerrilla movement. I couldn't convince Mom that I wouldn't be anywhere near the fighting. Pointing to her already white hair, she noted her deep concern for the health of my younger brother, George. It was a very persuasive argument. There was also a part of me that said "enough" to a war front. But I've always been convinced that I would have followed a very different career road had Mom not raised her strong objections.

The Tufts graduation in June 1946 was anticlimactic. Few whom I knew in 1943 were there beside me. Only the presence of Sir Lawrence Olivier, who received an honorary degree, made the day memorable.

Mom and Dad tried to make much of my graduation, but Sis's wedding to Bernard Triber, who had returned from the war earlier that year, was a far more joyous event, at least for me.

Dad bought his first auto, a Kaiser. Before, all our autos had been owned with Ben Parker, his partner in a store, Quincy Cash Market. The Kaiser made dating much easier. As a veteran with a disability, I had money in my pocket as well as all tuition paid.

COLUMBIA AND STUDENT ACTIVISM
I had also applied to graduate schools at Penn and Columbia, and both sent me acceptance notices. I chose Columbia for its reputation and its proximity to Boston.

The $105 government stipend I had received in Somerville didn't go very far in New York after paying for bus fare and rent. My breakfast was rarely more
than coffee and a donut, and lunch was a nut and cheese sandwich at Chock-full-o'Nuts on Broadway at 117th Street. A date had to be Dutch treat if I was to pay for a bus ride home every month or two. Uncle Ben did introduce me to an accommodating niece who had no expectations beyond a walk in the park. Somehow my initial lack of friends played no role in my decisions.

At the end of the first semester, at the urging of Rhoda Cohen (she was married to Rabbi Jack Cohen, who became head of Jerusalem's Reconstructionist synagogue), I ran for the presidency of Columbia's chapter of the Intercollegiate Zionist Federation of America (IZFA). My opponent, Herzl Fishman (later a rabbi), was an electoral pushover. I'll never know how many in the hundred plus membership voted for my eloquence or against Herzl's long-winded and boring presentations.

In the winter of 1947, I had the responsibility of fighting for a Zionist presence on campus. The Jewish chaplain, a leader of the Council for Judaism, displayed his displeasure at any agitation for Jewish statehood by trying to block our attempt to sign up for a meeting space. I spent many hours trying to convince him that the struggle for the Jewish homeland, after the horrors of the Shoah, was not inimical to good citizenship. He argued that meeting space in the student religious center had to be limited to religious or philosophical discussions and that Zionism was political. When we could present Abba Eban (at that time, Aubrey Evan) or Moshe Shertok (later Sharrett), I sought a larger hall, claiming public interest, and prevailed.

Surprisingly, there was little or no opposition from Arab or pro-Arab groups on campus. Most of my arguments were with Council for Judaism types, who, like the chaplain, wanted nothing to do with Jewish nationalism. Usually they limited themselves to stating (by flyer or letters to the editor of the student paper) that American Jews had no interest in the creation of a Jewish state. They were members of a faith group, not a national entity; therefore, Zionist claims for a land to live in had no validity, certainly not to American citizens of the Hebrew persuasion.

I spent much more time debating with members of our IZFA chapter, who
represented what later became the Herut party, central to Likud. A screenwriter, Ben Hecht, was buying newspaper advertising and holding mass rallies to raise money to fight the British occupation. The World Zionist leadership, while building the Haganah, centered its overseas efforts in Aliyah Bet, the so-called illegal immigration to Palestine. Britain, with hundreds of thousands of survivors living in refugee camps all over Europe, still limited movement to Palestine to a few thousand.

Word came to me that Navy veterans were needed to man ships being bought in the United States. As IZFA president, I received phone calls from individuals announcing themselves as Haganah representatives. After they were indeed able to produce a big-name speaker like Golda Meir, I learned to listen and not ask too many questions.

These were heady times. A few of us ate lunch together almost every day and talked about nothing else but the drama of 1947: the United Nations Commission on Palestine, British actions against the Jewish Agency, Irgun activities, ships being bought in the United States and their runs to the Palestinian coast. We debated our roles in reaction to every headline.

There were professors for a Jewish state, and others who felt it was wrong or premature. My advisor was Philip Jessup, who became the United States Delegate to the United Nations. (He ended his illustrious career as a justice of the International High Tribunal in The Hague.) More than once, Dr. Jessup, in light of fierce Arab opposition, cautioned that my Zionist friends were biting off more than they could chew. If Zionists couldn't come to terms with the British empire, then he would support turning over the mandate for Palestine to the United States. What he wanted to avoid, at all cost, was open warfare that could only, he felt, destroy the existing Jewish presence in Palestine.

In retrospect these were exciting encounters. Indeed, I went head-to-head with one of the finest minds in our century whose wisdom I did not fully respect at that time. Of course Dr. Jessup proved to be wrong, even though he was able to predict the wars to follow.

I became a close friend of the editor of a short-lived quarterly, The Student Zionist. (It succeeded the esteemed campus magazine, The Menorah Journal, but had only one focus— the creation of the Jewish state.) We talked endlessly, discussing articles that had to be written or printed. Many rebuked the undisciplined demands of the Betariks and Ben Hecht supporters who picketed the British or sought to bomb their consulates. They also wanted to purchase arms or fight with Arab students.
It wasn't easy chairing a meeting when *Robert's Rules of Order* was seldom followed. Many of my skills in assuring acceptance of a predetermined plan for a mass meeting or a poster campaign were honed in this arena. IZFA also became my social and much of my scholastic existence.

**UNITED NATIONS**

In midsummer of 1947, one of my professors, Salo Baron, the distinguished Jewish historian, asked me if I could give some time to a research task for the Zionist delegation to the United Nations. Professor Baron's colleague, Dr. Jacob Robinson, was a former justice of the Estonian Supreme Court. As the international law advisor to the Jewish Agency leadership, he requested helpers to prepare the formal presentation to the United Nations delegates. Professor Baron had also approached Herzl Fishman. Together, we used Columbia's excellent International Law Library to find references backing Dr. Robinson's claims. These were about the correctness of the United Nations to implement promises made by the League of Nations in prior decades. He also wanted every citation regarding the British mandate's requirement to support the creation of a Jewish homeland.

My contribution, described in an article I wrote for *The Student Zionist* of September 1947, was a "Request by the United States State Department." The British Foreign Service was asked to protect American Jewish citizens visiting their Jewish homeland. We overloaded Dr. Robinson with paper and apparently fulfilled all of his needs for assisting Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver's major address. This was in support of the United Nations Commission's recommendation to partition the remainder of the Palestine mandate (after the British tore off what is now Jordan) into Jewish and Arab states. I listened to the UN speeches on the radio, but later had to see almost half of the Homeland lost.

The vote to partition was a close one. Later I found out from a girlfriend's father, Mr. Gindine, how a small group of Haitian Jewish businessmen had protected a financial investment, which "bought" their country's United Nations' vote. I was never certain that Gindine's report was accurate, however. He told me in some detail how the Jewish businessmen kept their UN delegate in a New York hotel, learning that the Haitian dictator of that day had been bought by Arab money to vote against partition. Gindine mentioned that the hotel entertainment was very costly and that they had to seek help. Gindine insisted that Haiti's vote was extraordinarily important because it came in the middle of the roll call and could influence other small nations' delegates. The Jewish businessmen succeeded in bringing the drunken, sexually sated delegate to the General Assembly before he
heard from Port au Prince, and he voted as requested.

I had confirmation of this story more than 20 years after its occurrence. In 1974, on taking over the reins of the United Israel Appeal, I dined with my predecessor, Gottlieb Hammer. Among the tales he told of his early years there was a call from the Jewish Agency delegation to withdraw $10,000 from the United Israel Appeal account. The cash was brought to Jews staying with the Haitian UN delegate in a small New York hotel. I guess it really happened. How important it was to the final vote I can't know, but that's how great events are shaped!

The birth of a Jewish state was very uncertain. Those closest to the center of leadership knew how unprepared the Yishuv was for the wars to follow. While we danced in the streets downtown that evening in November 1947, we knew that May was months away and much could happen. I should also note that I wrote an article, "Background to Decision," which appeared in the winter 1947-48 edition of The Student Zionist, before the UN vote.

I remember that Chava, my paternal grandmother, and Dad and Mom were voraciously interested in everything I did to help with the creation of the Jewish state. My grandmother seemed to understand, better than my own mother, the needs and small details of our campus struggle, and she was overjoyed by my own modest contributions. Except for my long reports to her, I used the occasional weekends in Somerville to eat and sleep. There was no compulsion to study, and somehow I did fairly well on occasional exams.

CAREER PLANS
During this period I took the federal civil service exam and received a perfect mark. When five points were added for my service-connected disability, I had an unbeatable 105 points. The civil service offered me jobs that would begin immediately in 1947. I could join the Navy's history team in Washington, DC, or take my pick of personnel office positions; two were then available in Massachusetts (one at Boston's Army base). Earlier I had played with the idea of seeking a State Department internship. Professor Jessup promised I would have no problems, but he cautioned that Jews might not have an easy time in these surroundings and times.

Because of my work with Dr. Robinson, Professor Baron gave me the name and address of Walter Eytan in Jerusalem. I still have Eytan's response to my inquiries. He invited me to join the first class of a new school to train diplomats for the Zionist state. It seems that my recommendations were good enough for admission. There was only one hitch— I had to be fluent in Hebrew.

Somehow my failure, as a boy, to master anything other than the Shema
left me very uncertain about my ability to learn Hebrew well enough for the entrance requirement. At any rate, there was so much to do in New York that month. Why burden myself with plans for the future? In retrospect, of all the missed opportunities, this was perhaps the most important. I must admit, however, that a move to Jerusalem in early 1948 may not have resulted in my becoming Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom. I certainly would not have met my wife or had our children. Nevertheless, Eytan's offer made me feel more obligated to the cause. I wasn't living that well. My stipend of $105 a month from the Veterans Administration didn't stretch very far, even when I was the most frugal.

When I began to attend joint meetings of student Zionist leaders in New York City, I eagerly agreed to every assignment and worked at them diligently. Rallies needed many hands, but then came the presentation of Land and Labor for Palestine, which hinted at more exciting roles to play. Land and Labor was the brainchild of Teddy Kolleck, who was in the United States to organize the purchase of arms and the recruitment of technical personnel for Haganah. His efforts were to become the armed forces of the new state.

We, as young leaders, were asked to be on the lookout for veterans who could help build a national military establishment, based on the already experienced Haganah. After one of these meetings, a very kind-looking, portly gentleman, Dr. Samuel Kurland, asked for a private chat. The organization needed someone to man a recruiting office in Boston, which would enlist pilots and navigators to fly transport and fighter planes. Spring was near, and I asked him for time to finish the semester. There was no way that I could write the required master's thesis in the remaining months, but I did want to complete my courses.

During this entire period, I found my studies difficult to get into. Professor Baron's courses were a delight; he could go off on a flight of fanciful, yet thorough, description of a shtetl, which created a vivid picture of a destroyed way of life. His view of Jewish history, beginning with the Temple's destruction, was much more than a succession of catastrophes. It was hopeful and inspiring. As a people, we had created an economy and a separate culture wherever Jews lived. He spoke with vigor, his leonine head glowing as his words wrapped around us, his talmudim.

I also had a professor for "The History of the Law of Nations" who held me riveted with convincing arguments that civilized people create their own laws of intercourse with their counterparts. Usage, he argued, was the essence of international law; if countries accept rules of behavior, such as those governing ships on the high seas, then these become basic laws. Even the horrors of the recent wars in Europe and the Pacific were mitigated, at times, by internationally accepted rules.
for civilian rights or the treatment of prisoners of war. In fact, the Munich trials, with the first-ever International Tribunal, were based upon and actually created new laws among nations.

ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE

Nothing, however, was as important as my personal involvement in the birth of Israel. The early months of 1948 were a mélange of formal meetings and constant guessing, planning, drafting, and arguing about the state to be born. As noted, Dr. Jessup, who had moved to the United Nations, favored Senator Aiken's proposal that the mandate be taken over by the United States, which would then try to mediate between Arabs and Jews. There was the promise that the British-imposed blockade would be lifted, but Zionist leaders understood the Arabs would never countenance open immigration. In two sessions with Dr. Jessup, I used Holocaust arguments so effectively. He challenged me to write my thoughts as essays (but I never seemed to have the time, even then).

May 14, 1948 was a most memorable day. The United Nations General Assembly was meeting in Flushing Meadow, the site of the 1939 World’s Fair. I had a pass from the Jewish Agency delegation and traveled early by subway to hear every word. The debate opened with an American motion to declare Jerusalem an open city. The Arab Legion of Transjordan threatened the western part of the city, which was cut off by local Arab bands and volunteers from Syria and Iraq. On the same day, 500 miles away, Arab armies were already on the move, confident they would quickly crush the fledgling country.

On the floor of the United Nations, Arab delegates were talking endlessly about the impossibility of a Jewish state or Zionist entity. Their purpose was to bring the British mandate to an end at noon in New York City. Then they would claim that the United Nations had no jurisdiction to impose a cease-fire on Jerusalem. (Later that year, when they were eager for UN intervention to stop the fighting, they got it.) On this day, however, their maneuver prevailed; no resolution was voted on when the magic hour passed.

The day was highlighted, however, by Dr. Jessup’s request for the podium. I remember his mounting the steps very purposefully and in a dry voice he announced that President Harry Truman had asked him to inform the General Assembly that the United States had, in this hour, given de-facto recognition to the existence of the new State of Israel. Pandemonium broke out in the visitors’ section. I could see Abba Eban hugging Moshe Sharett. Only minutes later I shook Eban’s hand, then joined other young people in dancing our first hora on the birthday of Israel.
That night was a long series of celebrations in a large hotel and on the street. I don't remember drinking, or, for that matter, eating anything, but the very air was intoxicating! To this day I can't recall my companions that evening, but I do know that I was not lonely, and it was very late when I got back in my 125th Street apartment.

Years later I had the opportunity to be present in Petach Tikva when its mayor presented Sharrett a medal for exemplary service during the War of Liberation. By then, Ben Gurion had fought with Sharrett, making his first term as prime minister a long misery. Few seem to have remembered that Shertok, as chair of the Jewish Agency’s Foreign Affairs committee, had designed and managed the United Nations’ phase of Israel’s struggle for independence. Without him, so many things could have gone wrong. While Ben Gurion had brought the Jewish state to whatever territory we could negotiate, it was Sharrett’s steady wisdom and constant attention to detail that made it possible! Of course Sharrett served as Israel’s second Prime Minister, but he was succeeded by Ben Gurion.

Eban, then a beginner in the field of international debate, was already showing his classic brilliance as a spokesman. In later years I had the opportunity of introducing him to large audiences, sitting next to him at head tables, and exchanging chatter with him at receptions. Each time I introduced myself with the comment, “We’ve met many times.” Eban always had a puzzled recognition in his eyes. Yes, he knew me, but never seemed to remember that it started in 1947 on the Columbia University campus or that I was one of the many shaking his hand in 1948 at Lake Success!

While we danced in midtown Manhattan, the survivors of European Jewry began to move from the closing detention camps on Cyprus and ports along the Mediterranean. But also on the move were the main armies of seven Arab states. There were battles in the Galilee, on the Jerusalem front, and with a rapidly moving Egyptian army in the south. I never even considered the possibility of a Jewish defeat, but I was also blind to the horrific cost in lives that the War for Independence would bring.

A few years later, Major Amos Chorev (later a general) took me on a tour of the battlefields along the road to Jerusalem. We walked on the battlefield of Latrun single-file because he knew where mines were still buried. Here, Amos reported, hundreds of new olim were killed, many carrying guns without ammunition or shells of the wrong caliber. They came right from their immigrant boats, untested or trained for battle, and they ran into the concentrated fire of the British-led Arab Legion. Latrun was not taken until 1967, but Amos secured the road to Jerusalem...
in a daring move.

In New York we marveled at the military equipment we were able to smuggle through an American blockade encouraged by continued British complaints. A few of our Zionist youth colleagues had the misfortune to see hidden arms fall out of a dropped wooden lift on a Newark dock. They were our heroes, though none served a jail sentence.

**LAND AND LABOR**

Finally, I was ready to take up Doc Samuel Kurland’s request to mount a recruiting operation for aviation personnel in New England. I went home to Somerville in May 1948 without a graduate degree and without replying to either civil service offer of specific jobs in Massachusetts, or proceeding with a final application to the State Department’s internship program. It was Shabbat, and on Monday I presented myself at 17 Commonwealth Avenue, Back Bay, for work. I was now a full-time employee—my pay was $35 a week—from the Israeli government, which was Land and Labor for Israel.

I had been introduced to Land and Labor in New York. Its involvement in the illegal movement of small arms was well known to those of us in the Zionist network. How I was to go about recruiting airmen, no one told me. There were three of us in the Zionist House at 17 Commonwealth Avenue. Our office was under the eaves, where we stayed away from prying eyes. One employee, Max Rothschild, was preparing for aliyah in September. He and I worked ostensibly under the director, but he had even less understanding of the task than I did.

After a few days, during which I introduced myself and my mission to the local Zionist leadership, I came up with a strategy. I had observed that most combat flight crews were awarded the Air Medal, and lead pilots were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross after a set number of combat missions. A kind community leader suggested that the Jewish Welfare Board, since it served Jewish servicemen, might have such a list. To my great pleasure, I found that JWB had published a book of all Jewish medal winners in World War II. It was only a few days of labor to develop a list of New England Air Corps medalists.

Now I had to find a secure, yet obvious way to approach them. It didn’t take long to print stationery for a phony company, which I named the Middle East Air Forwarding Company. It could have also been called the Middle East Transport Company. I never kept a copy of the stationery.

Much of my time was spent finding addresses and setting up a network of recruiting aides. These were rabbis or Zionist leaders in the communities where
my targets lived. While I never asked that my letter be followed up by a contact, it's obvious that this was indeed done. Word of these efforts must have spread, because soon I was admonished by the office chief; it was necessary for me to be very circumspect and more careful. Calls to applicants or local contacts were not to be made from the office telephone, which we assumed was being monitored by the British Secret Service. Everyday, therefore, I could be seen walking down Commonwealth Avenue, jiggling a pocketful of nickels. Though I rarely wore a tie or jacket, I always used the public phone in the lobby of the St. Regis Hotel around the corner. For a few weeks I became a fixture in the morning, earnestly explaining to prospects that our company was civilian in nature, and that I would have to meet them face-to-face.

The most memorable incident in this period was an overnight stay at Boston's Manger Hotel to interview applicants anonymously. To assure secrecy, I registered as M. Relsek, then had a good meal and proceeded to toss and turn in attempted sleep. In the morning, while raising the blinds to let in a little light, I proceeded to pull hard enough on the rope so that it came crashing down, thus tearing not only my coat jacket but also my shirt, and causing a fairly deep scratch on my upper arm. A call to the desk soon produced a doctor who succeeded in cleaning and binding my wound. The manager then suggested that I leave my jacket to have it repaired and accept certificates for free hotel stays. There I was un-
der an assumed name and with a phony address on my registration slip. Quickly I assured the manager that I was not really hurt, didn't want the coupons, and would arrange to have my coat rewoven if he could tell me where. No one in the hotel business ever encountered an abused, injured guest who was more accommodating.

That day, I met three possible volunteers; two of them were pilots. Both seemed sincere enough, and after I revealed the true nature of my mission, they were ready for the next step, a visit to Land and Labor headquarters in New York. Years later, I spotted a paperback book written by one of my candidates. It described his role ferrying arms from Czechoslovakia to Israel, later that summer of 1948. Another volunteer, Harold Freedman, who was on the crew of the second B-17 that left for Israel, became a good friend.

The story of the bombers bought from United States surplus by Al Schwimmer of Bridgeport, Connecticut, is worth telling. One B-17, whose first pilot was a gentile, left an airfield in New Jersey amidst a flurry of publicity. Local newspapers reported that a Bostonian, Harold F. Reedway (actually Freedman), was on the plane. Our government had to react and sent requests to neighboring countries to arrest the crew. Stopped in Nova Scotia, the pilot requested permission to take a short, check-flight before heading back to New York under control of a federal marshal. Convinced that the crew had to return for enough fuel to go anywhere other than Canada or the United States, the marshal permitted the test flight.

The plane immediately set off for the Azores, however, arriving with less than a whiff of gasoline in its tanks. Unfortunately, American pressure on the Portuguese government overrode the $10,000 in bribes offered the airport director. The crew was arrested and flown to Miami, where the B-17 was parked at the end of the runway for the next 40 years. The pilot's confession that the Azores flight was all his idea exonerated his colleagues. He was sentenced to a prison term, but served only a few months.

I write these words in 1998, as we anticipate celebrating the 50th year of Israeli Independence. During the two years before statehood, dozens of American ex-servicemen volunteered, many risking their lives. Some, like Colonel Mickey Marcus, sacrificing theirs. Hopefully, we'll remember those like Harold Katz, who introduced me to Greta, and served as the first mate of the Aliya's Bet ship, Hatikva. Many Bostonians who joined the Machal volunteers fought in the Israeli armed forces during 1947 and 1948. I had the responsibility as the local representative of the Israeli government to hand out $400 in cash as thank-you payments as well as to arrange for the continued medical treatment of one returnee who had been injured.
While working for Land and Labor, I found that the Labor Zionist/Histadrut campaign office at 333 Washington Street could be counted on to cooperate fully. The campaign's Executive Director was Abe Hamlin, and there were several part-time staff. Phil Baron looked after Labor Zionist matters while Ed Parsons and Hy Sanderson were part-time aides to Hamlin. The campaign had also hired a young worker, Ed Tumaroff. Saul Cohen and Mel Seifer, young Labor Zionist leaders, were usually in the office every afternoon following their classes at Harvard.

The summer passed quickly. Max and his family left for Israel. A truce was declared in the War of Independence, and United States government pressures on Land and Labor leadership made our efforts more and more difficult. When Labor Day weekend came, I was invited by Eddie Parsons to join a Young Labor Zionist retreat at Camp Avoda in Middleboro, Massachusetts. Since this was the very place that I had spent the three summers as a camp counselor before joining the Army, I quickly agreed.

On the last evening there, Eddie took me for a walk on the lakefront. He explained that the Parsons, Barons, and Sandersons would be leaving for Kibbutz Kfar Blum, in the Galil Elyon, by October. They had decided that I should replace them in the office, with the new title of Director of the New England region of LZOA-Poale Zion. My mind was in a whirl, although I had given some thought to aliyah, even though the war seemed over and I had already ascertained that the Israeli Air Corps had no need for a radar navigator at this stage.

Here was a perfect way for me to give myself time to sort out my options and make decisions. It also set a pattern for all my changes in employment. Every position in my career, which is now approaching 50 years, has come looking for me. I’ve never applied for a job; all were offered to me for consideration.

The following months were a period of turmoil while closing the Land and Labor office. Its activities are fully described in the book, The Pledge, by Leonard Slater. But I had grown close to many colleagues. Dr. Sam Kurland, who was introduced to me at the LZOA Labor Day retreat as the brains behind Land and Labor, became my friend and mentor during the years I worked for the Labor Zionist movement. Hyman Sobell, also of the national office, and the Kurlands became my close friends. (They ran to Israel a few months later, in fear of prosecution by United States authorities for actions that contravened the neutrality laws.) The Saul Cohens also became close friends. Mel Seifer proceeded to marry a young woman, Goldie, whom I had dated during this period. The Max Rothschilds see my wife, Greta, and me regularly.

In 1968, Major Wesley Aaron, who had run the Land and Labor operation,
visited me while I was the Director of the Hartford Jewish Federation. He came on behalf of Neve Shalom (Oasis of Peace), an Arab-Jewish village experiment that he founded.

LZOA-POALE ZION YEARS, 1948-51

These were easy times to recruit membership. We focused on expanding existing Labor Zionist branches like Fel Coop (Fellowship Cooperative) and creating new ones in Jewish neighborhoods like Malden and Chelsea. The Katzes of Malden were close friends of my parents. They had lost a son during the war but their daughters, Milly and Naomi, were already Zionists. I had the nucleus for a branch around Naomi and her fiancée, Elly, plus Hal Friedman and his high school friends.

Soon, the Histadrut Labor Zionist office was filled almost every evening with volunteers who printed flyers and called prospects. This created my first crisis with New York headquarters. Dr. Beryl Frymer, the national Executive Director, visited Boston to speak at a mass rally. Before the meeting, he checked my office expense accounts and mumbled something about the high phone bill. After the meeting, when a visitor complimented him on his presentation, he asked me to hand that person a membership application. I shamefully admitted that I hadn’t brought them with me. Frymer proceeded to berate me in front of this prospect, who had been attending every Zionist event without joining any of the sponsoring groups.

Two days later came the real punishment. A telephone company worker proceeded to exchange my desk phone for a wall pay phone on orders of the national office. After listening to my complaints, Frymer proceeded to explain that the chaverim and I could use nickels to make our calls, so we’d understand that the movement wasn’t made of money!

I did get even! A year later, because Boston was the city with the fastest-growing membership, the Labor Zionist Executive Committee decided to hold the national convention there. It selected the very same Manger Hotel of Land and Labor fame. This was my first experience managing a truly large event. We met for a full weekend, with seminars, meals, and a mass...
meeting. I leaned on Abe Hamlin for advice, and had Saul Cohen, Mel Seifer, and Ed Tumaroff helping; but I alone checked every single item. At this gathering, I learned to appreciate Murphy's Law: if something can go wrong, it will. Fortunately, my compulsiveness paid off. All hotel arrangements were carried out meticulously. Attendance was great; Abe had helped obtain the kind attention of Yiddish radio shows and the local Jewish press.

After the last meeting, the President, Baruch Zuckerman, asked me to walk him to his suite. Then he sat me down and proceeded to interrogate me about my family and my plans. Then came the shocker: "Would I consider taking Frymer's place as the national executive director?" I was dumbfounded; at 27 years old I was hardly a veteran in the field.

Perhaps I panicked. "No," I replied, "I'm not ready!" Zuckerman asked, "At least would you consider coming to New York to run these key regions and be closer to me and other top lay leaders?" I agreed, and at the meeting of the Executive Committee the next morning, he made the announcement to Frymer's obvious surprise.

To put the cherry on the cake, I was elected the youngest member of the Labor Zionist executive committee. I was overjoyed to find that Sam Kurland was also a member. Sam sat near me at many meetings and helped interpret some of the technical Yiddish phrases used by Zuckerman and Chaim Greenberg, the editor of The Kempfer and Jewish Frontier. Later Saul Cohen joined me, taking away my distinction as Der Yingal ("The Boy")!
A SCIENTIST COLLECTS STAMPS
ABOUT SCIENTISTS

MAURICE GLICKSMAN

The author has been a stellar member of the Brown faculty, a nationally renowned academic leader, and a pillar of our Jewish community. Who imagined that he also found time to be a world explorer (though often on a miniature scale)?

Maurice Glicksman earned his bachelor's degree in engineering physics at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and his doctorate in physics at the University of Chicago in 1954. For 15 years he conducted and administered research at the RCA Laboratories in Princeton and Tokyo.

In 1969 Dr. Glicksman came to Brown as a University Professor and a professor of engineering. He taught undergraduate and graduate courses in engineering and physics as well as courses on the role of science and technology in the development of China and Japan. He also served as president of Brown's Phi Beta Kappa chapter and Dean of the Graduate School. From 1978 to 1990, Dr. Glicksman was Dean of the Faculty and Provost, the first Jew to hold such senior positions. In 1997 Brown awarded him an honorary degree, Doctor of Science.

A prolific writer and reviewer of manuscripts, Dr. Glicksman is also a Fellow of the American Physical Society and a Life Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers. Dr. Glicksman has lectured on many continents and has chaired the Center for Research Libraries, the National Council of Academic Officers, and the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory.

Judaism has always been central to his identity. Previously active in the Princeton Jewish Center and the Jewish Community Center of Japan, Dr. Glicksman has served and led numerous Rhode Island organizations, including: Miriam Hospital, Lifespan, Bureau of Jewish Education, Jewish Seniors Agency, Tamarisk Assisted Living, Brown-RISD Hillel, Federation, and Temple Emanu-El.
My parents’ families emigrated from Poland to Canada, settling in Toronto, Ontario. I was born there in 1928, but the following year my parents and I moved over one hundred miles away, to St. Thomas, Ontario. My father seized an opportunity with two partners to open Detroit Auto Supply, providing St. Thomas and Elgin County with new and used auto parts. Despite the Depression of the 1930s, the business thrived, until chain store competition appeared post-World War II.

Growing up in St. Thomas provided many opportunities. But with only 20 Jewish families and one other Jewish kid my age living in town, life had to be ecumenical. I built radios and even an airplane in our basement (the fighter plane was one-quarter scale and had to be dismantled to reach daylight!) and enjoyed membership in local clubs. My 20-mile commute on the electric train to the big city (London, Ontario) was to attend heder in preparation for my Bar Mitzvah at the Orthodox synagogue B’nai Israel, which is now a Conservative synagogue, Or Shalom. But as a teenager I continued to go to London for AZA and Jewish youth group meetings. In St. Thomas I was recruited by the local Anglican youth group to play on its basketball team; I attended Sunday group meetings, but left when the other members went upstairs to attend church services.

INITIAL EFFORTS AND SPECIALTIES
My interest in collecting postage stamps started with cancelled Canadian stamps. Morrie, my one-year younger Toronto cousin, also collected, and we decided to have a joint collection. But when Morrie started high school he lost interest, and I bought out his half-interest in our collection for a dollar or so. Initially, I added any postage stamp I could find. But I learned about quality and became more discriminating. It took over 20 years, however, before I replaced one of my first acquisitions—a 20¢ Canadian stamp from the 1930s showing wheat harvesting—with a copy that had perforations on all four sides. My first sample had a “straight edge” (no perforations along one edge) and was cheaper.

In my freshman year of high school I took a course in “shop” offered at the Vocational High School, not too far from my home Collegiate Institute. One of my projects was to make a set of wooden covers for my stamp album. The front cover had a number of stamps glued to it, with clear shellac brushed over them for preservation. Although it ceased being an adequate holder for my collections more than 50 years ago, it survived until our 2009 move from Barrington to Providence!

A fancy word for stamp collecting is “philately.” I have been and continue to be a stamp collector; my interest is in the stamps themselves, their appearance and content, and not in the processes of their manufacture, or the varieties of paper.
or methods of separation or errors of production. For many years, I collected the stamps issued by Canada, other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations (British colonies and dominions), the United States, and Israel. My goal was to amass as complete a collection as possible.

When I realized that my resources were insufficient to complete the collections, I looked for new types of collections in which it was financially possible to satisfy my curiosity and interest—and not go bankrupt in the process. Several years ago I sold my country collections: the British Colonies collection to a new collector in London, England, the British Dominions collections to a New York dealer who sells country collections, and my United States and Canada collections to an agent for a dealer living in Europe. I kept my Israel collection, and it is going to one of my grandchildren, who is not yet a collector but offered to take it.

My new collecting area is thematic or topical collecting. The theme or topic can be any subject which appears on at least one postage stamp somewhere in the world. There can be common interests shared by several collectors, of course, but one's interests and particular ideas or bent can be satisfied. This type of collecting has grown in popularity over the past few decades.

The sources of information about stamps issued in the past are the stamp catalogues of the world. I have primarily used an American publication, the annual *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*, which requires six volumes, each about 1,500 pages, to list and illustrate (in color) the stamps of the world. The 2012 edition, also available on CDs, is its 168th! However, the editors require that every item listed must have been available and acceptable for use in the mail at some time. The German *Michel Catalogue* (first issued in 1910) covers the world in some twelve volumes. It also publishes specialty catalogues.
raising the total number of published volumes to about 40. It does not restrict its
coverage to items that have been accepted in the mail, nor does it omit items for
political reasons, and hence is a more complete source of information about possi-
able items for a thematic collection.

There are popular topics (birds, animals, and space), but I chose subjects
which few other collectors pursue. I started out with scientists honored or men-
tioned on stamps, and soon expanded that single category to include engineers,
inventors and explorers: creative individuals whose interests were in the natural
world. A quite closely related group of creative individuals whose interests deal
with the human mind (scholars of philosophy, history, and literature, and artists,
poets, and writers, for example) could also make a fine thematic collection topic.
My own scientific training and interests led me down the path I chose.

The oldest stamps in my topic are those honoring one of America's found-
ing fathers, Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), an active statesman and civil servant
during our colonial period and the early days of our new nation. But Mr. Franklin
was also a physicist and inventor, curious about nature, and noted for his experi-
ments with natural electricity and his invention of a stove and the lightning rod.

When the United States started to produce postage stamps in 1847 (the
first postage stamps were produced by Great Britain in 1840, as a result of the
activities of inventor Rowland Hill (1795-1879)), they chose to engrave a portrait of
the first United States postmaster, Benjamin Franklin, on those early stamps. I do
not have that stamp, which has a large price tag on it. The oldest stamp in my col-
lection is the first stamp issued by Chile, in 1851, showing a statue of Christopher
Columbus (1451-1506).

Over the years my topical collection related to scientists, engineers, explora-
tors and inventors has grown to over 19,000 postal items: individual stamps, sets
of stamps, sheets of stamps, and covers (i.e., envelopes carrying cancelled stamps)
honoring almost 3,700 individuals. According to my study of catalogues, the items
I own include over 85% of the stamps which have been issued honoring these cre-
ative people. I still have the challenge to make the collection more complete!

My topical collections also include six other categories: institutions of
higher education, scientific associations, libraries and archives, museums, nation-
al parks and zoos, and research institutions. The close to 7,000 items in these six
collections represent about 85% of the stamps belonging to these six topics.

Many topical collectors choose a particular theme with a limited number
of potential items and study those items in detail. My approach was broad and
open, expanding rather than limiting, and that led to a large corpus of items and
the continuing excitement of learning new things. I was also able to indulge my penchant for data-development, which extends into many areas of personal life.

A SEARCH
One of the excitement of collecting is the search for and the finding of a particular item. The following account serves as a useful example.

The Comoro Islands, situated off the east coast of Africa, have a population of over one-half million and an area of under one thousand square miles. They emerged from French rule and protection in 1975. In 1977 they issued six stamps honoring Nobel Prize winners (two for physics, and one each for chemistry, physiology and medicine, literature, and peace), and a souvenir sheet illustrating the Nobel medal. Each stamp showed four or five prize winners.

The Comoro stamps were assigned Scott Catalogue numbers 254 through 260, and I acquired copies in 1998. The Michel Catalogue assigns numbers 346 through 352 for the same stamps. Michel notes that the Comoro Islands also issued small souvenir sheets (not illustrated) containing the stamps number 346 through 351, but Scott makes no mention of these, presumably because they were not used in the mail. Michel assigned numbers Block 91 through 96 to these small sheets.

Dr. Gwen Prout, a correspondent of mine who lives near Vancouver, British Columbia and collects stamps related to medicine, informed me she had examples of these sheets and sent me a color copy of one. It showed many more Nobel Prize-winning scientists and piqued my interest. When I asked where she obtained them, I learned that a friend of hers had bought them from a dealer in Amsterdam some years earlier, but she had no further information about sources. My stamp suppliers in this country did not have a complete set of those sheets, although I was able to purchase copies of two of the group in 1999.

In 2002 I was scheduled to attend a board meeting of OCLC, an international non-profit organization servicing libraries, which was held in Paris. After the meeting my search for these sheets in several stamp shops in Paris yielded no fruit. I knew there was a stamp bourse involving many French dealers, held on Fridays just off the Avenue Champs-Élysées, and I headed for it to look for the Comoro stamps among others. Most of the dealers had no interest in the Comoros stamps, and one dealer was even irate that I asked him for what he called “illegal” Comoro souvenir sheets, since they were not listed in his “bible” catalogue, the French Yvert et Tellier! I struck out looking for these items in France.

After the board meeting, my wife Yetta and I, along with our son Howard and daughter-in-law Lois, took an auto trip to Belgium and the Netherlands. My
fruitless visits to stamp dealers in Antwerp and Brussels were not appreciated by my family, so that when we got to Amsterdam, they said “no” to my plea for a search there. I had to be satisfied with culling the telephone directory for the e-mail addresses of dealers, and I copied six such for use later.

Once at home, I sent my requests for information on the Comoro sheets to the six Dutch firms. Only one replied, noting it had none in stock, but gave me the e-mail address of another Dutch dealer who occasionally carried a stock of these items. That Dutch dealer responded, noting that he was out of stock, but that he knew of a Swiss dealer who, he was sure, had stock. The second Dutch dealer was right, and the Swiss stamp dealer supplied me with examples of the sheets I had been seeking, charged to my Visa credit card. I was also amused at what had happened to the price of the set of six sheets: what had cost Gwen $100 some years earlier was now available for $36.

**SCIENTISTS AND SCIENCE**

Scientists and science have played an important role in the United States, but the postal authorities have not often shown this with their choice of individuals and things to honor. The first American to win the Nobel Prize (in physics) in 1907, Albert Abraham Michelson (1852-1931), has been honored by stamps issued by the Comoro Islands, Gambia, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar and Sweden, but not by the United States. Michelson won the prize for his establishment of the velocity of light, c, as a fundamental constant.

Michelson was born in Poland and his family immigrated to the United States when he was four. His father's business operations were first in California, then in Nevada. Young Michelson was interested in studying at the Naval Academy, but his application for a Nevada position in the Annapolis class was rejected. He appealed to President Grant for a presidential appointment, and one of the letters of recommendation on his behalf noted the growing importance in the political process of Jewish businessmen in the West. He got the appointment. In Annapolis he excelled in science, but not in seamanship. He did
his stint in the Navy and then took successive academic positions, maintaining a continuing interest in determining the value of $c$ to a high precision. He and colleagues also demonstrated that $c$ was a constant, in the process eliminating the concept of a pervasive ether in which the Earth was supposed to be traveling.

A well-known physicist who made good use of Michelson's results is Albert Einstein (1879-1955). Einstein was born in Ulm, Germany, but spent the last 23 years of his life at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. I believe there have been 97 countries which have issued stamps honoring him; the United States did so in 1966, as part of the Prominent Americans Issue and in 1979, on the centennial of his birth. Israel was the first to honor him with a stamp in 1956. My mounted collection includes 271 (out of a possible 309 items) on more than 120 pages devoted to Einstein stamps, and is still growing in size.

I was not privileged to know Einstein. I arrived in Princeton (to take a research scientist position at RCA's David Sarnoff Research Laboratory located there) in December 1954, and accepted the invitation of Robert Oppenheimer (1904-1967) to attend the physics seminars at the Institute for Advanced Study. I started going in early 1955, but did not see Einstein at them. I heard he was in failing health at the time; he died in April of 1955.

But I was invited to a party on April 18, 1956 by one of the humanities professors at the Institute, who had been a good friend of Einstein. When I arrived at his home, he informed me and the other guests that that day was the anniversary of Einstein's death, and that he hoped for our cooperation in his plan to try to communicate with Einstein's spirit! About a dozen of us sat around a table in a room closed off with drapes over its doorways, holding hands and trying to think good thoughts of Einstein. As far as I knew then, there was no claim of communication, but good thoughts of the friend of some and idol of all. Our host was undaunted, but I was not invited again on a subsequent anniversary.

I had a good friend and colleague at RCA, Egon Loebner, whose life was enhanced as a result of meeting with Einstein. Egon was a Czech Jew who survived the Holocaust as a young boy, and won a scholarship after World War II to attend the University of Buffalo. His course of study had been set as engineering, but after he started the program he wished to change to physics. When he approached the granting agency, it insisted that he must continue to study engineering or lose its support. Noting that Einstein was listed as a member of the board overseeing the scholarship, Egon wrote to him to solicit his support. Einstein invited Egon to
Princeton to meet with him, and spent several hours walking and talking with him. He then wrote a letter supporting Egon's change of major, and Egon was allowed to change to physics. Egon had a distinguished career, including important studies of the optics of the frog's eye, and he also served for a time as the Science Attaché in the U.S. Embassy in Soviet Moscow. His daughter graduated from Brown University on her way to a medical career.

There are a number of scientists beside Benjamin Franklin who appear in my collection but are better known for other accomplishments. Moses ben Maimon (1135-1204), known as Maimonides, was a medical scientist as well as a scholar of Judaism. Fifteen countries have honored him with stamps, including one from Guinea in 1985. Guinea's population includes about 85% Muslims. Israel has honored him twice with stamps, in 1953 and in 2005.

John Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) was a botanist as well as a poet. Thirty-one countries have issued stamps honoring him, with 32 (out of the 88 total devoted to Goethe) issued by Germany and the former German Democratic Republic.

I have had the pleasure of knowing some of the people honored on stamps in my collection. One of those was Enrico Fermi (1901-1954), who worked with me in a joint research project when I was at the University of Chicago as a graduate student and post-doc, from 1949 to 1954. Fermi came to the United States in 1938, leaving his native Italy and picking up his Nobel Prize on the way. His wife, Laura, came from a Jewish family and was in danger of being caught in Hitler's genocidal policy. Ten countries have honored Enrico Fermi with stamps, including the United States in 2001, on the centenary of his birth. I was also privileged to be one of the speakers at the conference, which was part of the commemoration.

Brown University Professor Leon Cooper (1930-) appeared on a stamp issued by Guinea in 2002. I received a call in 1972 from "Eli" Burstein, who told me that Leon's Nobel Prize in Physics, to be given to him jointly with John Bardeen (1908-1991) and Robert Schrieffer (1931-) for the theory of superconductivity, was to be announced the next day. He also asked me to keep this information secret, and that he was telling me so that I could arrange a suitable party for Leon the next morning, after he had received his call from Stockholm. I did so. The American physicists who worked with materials had been waiting for years to see the Nobel Prize committee recognize the outstanding accomplishment of what is known as the BCS Theory of Superconductivity. The award of the prize had been delayed because of the committee's reluctance to give a second Nobel Prize in Physics to the same person, John Bardeen. John had won in 1956 for his work jointly with

Two other scientists have won two Nobel Prizes in the sciences. Marie Skłodowska Curie (1867-1934) won in Physics in 1903 (jointly with her husband, Pierre Curie (1859-1906)) and in Chemistry in 1911. Frederick Sanger (1918-) won in Chemistry in 1958, and in 1980 (jointly with Walter Gilbert (1932-) and Paul Berg (1926-)). A third, Linus Pauling (1901-1994), won the Chemistry Prize in 1954 for his studies of chemical bonding, and the 1962 Nobel Peace Prize for his work on arms control.

In 1953, while Enrico Fermi and I were working together on our experiments, Enrico received a call from his secretary, saying that Linus Pauling was trying to reach him by phone. Enrico asked her to tell Pauling he was too busy to talk to him then. Enrico then told me that Pauling had been trying to get Fermi to join him in some petition related to arms control, and that Fermi did not want to be thrust into the politics of the moment.

John Bardeen has been honored on stamps issued by five countries, including the United States in 2008. On one of my annual recruiting visits for RCA to the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, John invited me to lunch with him, a pleasant contrast to our normal 15 minutes of conversation about his graduate students and post-docs. John had a favor to ask of me. Could I convince my colleague, Robert Parmenter, to make his mathematical approximations more rigorous? He noted that Bob's intuition was outstanding, but that when he was carrying
out calculations, he was not sufficiently rigorous!

Bob had told me of his discouragement over the extensive criticism he had been receiving when he submitted his manuscripts for publication, and that he suspected that Bardeen and his group were refereeing them and turning them down. Bob was right. I went back to Princeton and gave John Bardeen's message to Bob. Bob's response was to do his theoretical work with superfluids instead of superconductors, and those papers went through the review process with no difficulty.

Many of the people identified on my stamps have Jewish backgrounds, and this led me to check—as best one can—on the distribution of religious preferences among the scientists, engineers, explorers and inventors in my collection. One group that is well documented includes the individuals who were honored with Nobel Prizes. The *Who’s Who of Nobel Prize Winners 1901-1995*, edited by Bernard S. Schlessinger and June H. Schlessinger (3rd ed.; Oryx Press, 1996) does contain a religion-identifying entry for each prizewinner. Of the 453 with religious identifications, 115 (26%) are identified as Jews. If I look only at the science winners (including economics), the fraction is almost as large even when the list is expanded (with
guesses on religion) to include winners of prizes through 2010. Because there is no known religious bias in the process and conditions of the prizes, this number is indicative of the extensive contribution by Jews as leaders in the sciences.

BROWN
I had the privilege of being invited to consult with Emory University when an Atlanta couple wished to donate some of their collections to the University. Sol Singer had amassed an outstanding collection of the stamps of Israel, complete with full sheets of the first set (labeled “Doar Ivri” [tr.: Hebrew post] because they were prepared before the name Israel had been chosen); Judaica items reflecting references to Judaism and Jews; and sets of Jewish National Fund labels. I spent a full day poring over the wonderful items he had collected, and they now make up the Sol Singer Collection of Philatelic Judaica, housed in the Emory library.

My invitation to advise Emory was in part due to the fact that Brown University has outstanding collections of stamps in the Special Collections of the John Hay Library. Colonel Webster Knight (Class of 1876) donated his collection of United States blocks of four, error stamps and revenue stamps; the Hay also has the George S. Champlin Memorial Stamp Collection of international issues, the Peltz and Morriss Collection of special delivery stamps, and the Robert Galkin (Class of 1949) worldwide collection, the latter kept in some 120 albums. The university has funds to grow and maintain the collections, and a stamp committee of outside experts that advises on the collections.

When I wore my Dean of the Faculty hat at Brown, I insisted on meeting with each faculty member approaching retirement. I did so to ensure that he or she was adequately prepared with appropriate activities to maintain a good life in retirement. I did the same for myself, and tending to my stamp collection was third on my list, after research and volunteer service. As I approach 20 years of retirement, it has become my major interest and I devote several hours each day to it.

I continue to organize and fill in my topical collections, working to find the 10-20% missing; I continue to produce albums displaying and identifying the items, while the bulk of the stamps are stored in stamp stock books in my study. Brown will eventually receive these topical collections, and I hope to be able to have them in an easy-to-look-over form for future reference and use.

This hobby, which I played with for 60 years, has given me great pleasure and a full-time “business” to pursue during the rest of my retirement.
THOSE WHO SERVED:
KOREAN WAR STORIES, PART I

GERALDINE S. FOSTER

The proud and courageous record of Jews in the American military has been a recurring topic in our journal. Articles have focused on servicemen and women in the Civil War, the World Wars, and the Vietnam War. There have also been studies of Jews who served gallantly in the British and Russian armies; civilians who struggled to survive in Europe, Asia, and South America during wartime; and Americans who have defended Israel. Perhaps the strangest story of an American Jew in combat involves a volunteer in the Spanish Civil War.

Fortunately, Jerry Foster has finally righted a historical wrong by recognizing the selfless and heroic roles played by American Jews in the Korean War. Although enemies signed an armistice in Panmunjom nearly 60 years ago, a peace agreement never ensued. A new Korean War, threatening much of the world, could erupt at almost any moment.

Most likely, articles about Jews, the military, and warfare will never disappear from these pages. There is no way of knowing when Isaiah’s prophecy will be fulfilled.

Early in the morning of June 25, 1950, units of the well-trained, well-equipped army of North Korea (the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) crossed the 38th parallel in a surprise attack on South Korea (the Republic of Korea). The South’s army, ill-trained and poorly equipped, could not withstand the overwhelming force. Within three days, Seoul fell and the defenders were in full retreat.

Although June 25 marks the official start of the Korean War, the roots of the conflict may be traced far back in history. For centuries Korea’s neighbors—Japan, China, and Russia—competed for control of the peninsula. Early in the 20th century Japan won out and retained its power until the end of World War II.

Seven days before the end of World War II, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan, and its troops entered Korea. By agreement, the Russians accepted the surrender of the Japanese troops in Korea above the 38th parallel; the Americans
accepted the surrender of Japanese forces below it. The north contained most of the industry on the island, while the south, with more than twice the population, was mostly agrarian.

The Soviets, having sealed the border dividing the country, installed a civilian government run by communist officials they had trained. The Americans supported an unpopular military government in the south. Efforts at reunification failed, as did attempts by the United Nations to hold free elections. Elections were held only in the south. The north declared itself the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with its capital at Pongyang. When the Russians began to withdraw from North Korea late in 1948, they left behind a Communist dictatorship and a trained, well-equipped army. When American forces withdrew from the Republic of Korea in 1949, they left behind a weak government and an inexperienced, ill-equipped ground force.

The United Nations Security Council's call for an immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of the North Korean invaders was ignored. Two days later, the Security Council asked UN members to come to the aid of South Korea. Fourteen nations, in addition to South Korea and the United States, responded. All American forces, including air and naval units, were under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, who was also the commander of all UN forces.

The Korean War was overshadowed by the more deadly and dramatic events of World War II. Although an armistice signed on July 27, 1953 became the basis for peace talks, a treaty was never signed. North Korea claimed, however, that it won the war. Without the glory of victory, the Korean War is too often called the Forgotten War by Americans. It is a war whose ramifications still plague the Korean peninsula and the United Nations.

This article will highlight the experiences of 18 Jews who were Korean War veterans. Some were native Rhode Islanders, and others settled here. Eleven of these men enlisted; seven were drafted. The seven draftees will be presented in the second part of this article. Many of those who served were sent to Korea; others remained stateside or were posted to Europe, the North Atlantic or North Africa.

Among all Rhode Islanders who served in the Korean War, there were 149 casualties. Only one of these servicemen was a Jew. Arthur Silver, a draftee, will be profiled in the next issue of The Notes.

However they entered the military or wherever they were stationed, all who served during the Korean War merit our respect and gratitude. They are not forgotten.
ACTIVE UNITS
Harold Jacober enlisted in the Army in September 1948, on the same day as his friend and neighbor, Martin Goldshine. Both young men knew they would soon be drafted; they wanted to choose the branch of the Army in which they would serve. After basic training, they were separated. Jacober became a surgical technician and was assigned to the Army hospital in Osaka, Japan.

Before Jacober’s two-year hitch was due to end in August 1950, the Korean conflict began. He was sent almost immediately to Korea as a member of a mobile army surgical hospital (MASH) unit, which later became the 46th Surgical Hospital. His unit had the distinction of being not only the first MASH sent to Korea, but the first to make a beachhead landing and be present at the invasion of Inchon in September 1950.

Jacob was in Korea during the height of the combat, but he later spoke very little about his experiences.

He did tell his wife, Gladys, that many bodies were brought in and he shed a tear for each. When it was a Jewish soldier, identifiable by his dog tags, he shed an extra tear and said Kaddish.

Harold Jacober returned home one year later than he had anticipated.

Lewis Weinstein always wanted to be a Marine. He got his wish one month after the North Korean invasion, when he enlisted rather than wait to be drafted. He was sent to Parris Island, South Carolina, for 10 weeks of basic training. Parris Island was known for the swarms of gnats that made their home there. “You could not touch them. You had to stand there among the gnats and take it,” Weinstein recalled.

Following basic training “that made you a Marine,” Pfc. Weinstein was sent to Ammunition and Demolition School at Quantico, Virginia, for seven or eight weeks. He learned how to defuse or blow up a bomb, but mainly about the kinds of ammunition needed at the front.

Finally at Camp Pendleton, in Southern California, Weinstein underwent combat training. Every Marine, even a cook or a radioman, he stated, had to be ready for combat. Everyone has an MOS (Military Occupation Specialty) but must be qualified for combat.
Combat-ready, Weinstein sailed with units of the First Marine Division Ordnance Company from San Diego to Kobe, Japan, where they dropped off their sea bags before going on to Inchon. In Korea his unit had no fixed stations. Weinstein explained: "We moved here, we moved there. We pushed the North Koreans all the way to the Manchurian border. Then the Chinese came in and pushed us back, and then we pushed them back the other way. Then Truman fired MacArthur." (General MacArthur, an American in command of UN forces who should have remained apolitical, contradicted the Truman administration's policies. He was relieved of his command on April 11, 1951.)

When asked what he remembered most about Korea, Weinstein replied, "It is hard to explain. You lived a life people don't understand until they have lived through it. It is taking a shower every two or three weeks. It is changing your socks when you can. You washed them at night, and then tied them around your waist to dry. It is the combat, the fighting. It is a life I cannot explain. I could talk about it only with Heshie (Harold Jacober) because he lived it too."

A recurrent memory of all who served in Korea was the bitter cold of winter. The wind swept down from the mountains and across the treeless plains of South Korea. Weinstein recalled the extreme cold. When a meal was finished, the mess kit was washed immediately. Three large pails with flames underneath heated the water. The mess kit was dipped into the first to get the food off, into the second to wash it, into the third to rinse it. "If you held the mess kit up in the air after taking it from the boiling water, the water froze."

Weinstein further explained, "At the front there were no latrines, just a box over a hole. There are two kinds of grenades, phosphorous and fragmentation. To clean out the waste, a phosphorous grenade was used because it burned everything. One day a young man mistakenly used a fragmentation grenade.

Sgt. Weinstein spent eight months and 13 days in Korea and came home on Mother's Day, 1952. He was assigned to inactive reserves. He joined his father in the furniture business.

Benjamin Eisenberg graduated from Brown in 1951 with a degree in psychology and planned to go into his family's clothing business in Woonsocket. Aware that he would soon be drafted, he applied for Officer Candidate School in hope of getting into the medical corps. One of his psychology professors, a recent Air Force retiree, had included half a semester about military testing in his course.
This was intended to help students achieve their military preferences. Several days after submitting his application, Eisenberg received word that, unfortunately, there were no openings in the medical corps. Would he take the infantry?

Knowing that in any event he would be drafted and shipped to Korea after 18 weeks of basic training, Eisenberg decided to accept Infantry OCS. He entered the service in September 1951. After basic training and eight weeks of Leadership School at Fort Dix, New Jersey, he was sent to Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia. Because second lieutenants were being shipped out to Korea immediately after graduating, a large number became casualties due to their inexperience. The Army brass later decided that six months of combat training were necessary for an overseas assignment.

Eisenberg wanted a posting in New York or New England. Failing that, he opted for California, preferably Camp Roberts near San Luis Obispo.

After a 30-day leave, Eisenberg received orders for Korea. The number of Army troops would soon reach its peak, however. Because combat troops were not needed as much as military police and intelligence troops, there was a three-week delay until he received his final shipping orders.

After 17 days on a troop ship and a three-day stopover in Japan, he reached South Korea. He was ordered to report to Jeju-do, an island south of the mainland port of Pusan, where some 30,000 Chinese and North Korean troops were interned.

There was some sort of miscommunication, however. Eisenberg's ship was not expected and was instead sent north to Inchon. Inchon has abnormally high tides, so the ship could not come into port. The troops had to be transported by landing ships, but they waited an additional three days until flat-bottomed boats arrived. Then came a train trip south to Pusan, but when he arrived there, he found that there were no boats available to take him to Cheyu-do. So he spent another 19 days in Pusan awaiting transportation.

When Eisenberg finally arrived at his destination, the company commander asked, “Where were you? We expected you a month and a half ago. You’re late and you are going to be even later. We just got word that all Jewish personnel are to report to Pusan for Rosh Hashanah services.” They were to return to base and then leave again for Yom Kippur.

Once again there were problems with transportation, so Eisenberg remained in Pusan until the High Holy Days were over. He was finally put in charge of Koreans who worked as housekeepers, until he was sent up north to relieve the 45th Division of the Oklahoma National Guard. It was only a brief stay because he
was due for discharge and return to the United States.

Eisenberg’s trip home took 33 days because his ship was routed through the Panama Canal to drop off Colombian troops for discharge. The ship then proceeded to New York City, where members of the 45th Division participated in a parade on Fifth Avenue.

Eisenberg was discharged from Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. Although he lived in Woonsocket, he spent eight years in the active reserves in Providence. Each year he was sent to Camp Drum, New York, for two weeks of training. Then family responsibilities took precedence, and he left the service as Captain Benjamin Eisenberg.

**Herbert Meister** In June 1952, in the midst of the Korean War, Herbert Meister, a native of Hartford, enlisted in the Air Force. He knew he would be drafted, and he preferred to choose the branch of service. He was sent for basic training to San Antonio, Texas, where the temperature reached 105 to 108 degrees.

The Air Force decided that a good job for him would be a weapons mechanic, an armorer who worked on guns, rockets, and bombs aboard planes. When asked to explain what this entailed, Meister said, “The planes had guns used for offense and defense. There had to be maintained. The bombs had to be fused. The rockets had to be fused and set up with
the physical contacts."

Meister was sent to Denver, Colorado, for two to three months of training, and from there to Laughlin Air Force Base in Del Rio, Texas. "It was very hot, in the middle of the desert, close to El Paso," he explained. "We often went across the border to Mexico."

Meister worked in a training squadron, where pilots learned to fly and use guns. In one exercise, a lead plane, a jet, dropped a target. Pilots in their jets were supposed to hit it with their machine guns. To differentiate among the "attacking" planes, the 50-caliber bullets were dipped in various colors of wax. When training officers counted the colored holes, they could tell who had hit or missed the target.

"It was very hot and very boring," Meister reiterated. He was there 18 months, from 1952 to 1954, before he was sent to K14, Kimpo Air Force Base in Korea. It is now Seoul airport.

Planes were on alert at all times, and they had to be maintained. They were F-86s, the famous Sabre jets, Meister said. Every time they flew or went on a mission, the pilots test-fired the guns to make certain they worked; if not, they returned. After each mission, one or two of the weapons mechanics would be at the end of the runway to clear the guns when the planes landed. The crew took out the ammunition or the belts so that the guns could not fire, and then the pilots brought the planes over to the revetments. The planes were parked between two man-made hills to shield them in case they were strafed. They were then made ready for the next mission.

Meister was at K14 six months when his squadron was transferred to Honshu province in northern Japan. He never experienced combat on the ground.

As his term of service began to wind down, Meister thought about his life and his need for higher education. Late in 1955, while in an enlisted men's club, he saw a magazine article for Bryant College in Providence. A degree in two years appealed to him. He returned to the United States by ship. At the urging of a friend he went to the East Coast by bus with stops along the way to visit relatives. Meister went to Bryant under the GI Bill.

**Edwin Z. ("Bunty") Wattman**, who was born in 1923, enlisted in the Navy twice. In 1942 he joined as an apprentice seaman and was enrolled in the V-1 and V-12 programs at Brown University, Newport Naval Hospital, and the University of Pennsylvania Dental School. He was discharged in 1947.

Five years later, during the Korean War, Wattman enlisted once again. A practicing dentist in civilian life, he was commissioned a lieutenant in the Navy...
Dental Corps and was assigned to the Fleet Marine Force at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He served with the 155th Battalion, 2nd Marine Division.

His work at Camp Lejeune gave him a real sense of accomplishment, as he was able to use the full range of his knowledge and skill. It was also a learning experience for him. He often said that the base was the best practical dental school in the world because he was faced with thousands of incoming Marines who never had dental care. He also enjoyed the camaraderie and the easy relationships he developed with patients and coworkers.

Dr. Wattman was discharged in 1954. In later years, his niece Caryl-Ann Miller Nieforth wrote, Bunty came to appreciate his military service as one of the most significant accomplishments of his life.⁸

THEY WERE ROTC

The Morrill Act of 1862 provided Union states with federal land to sell for the creation of land-grant colleges. Each college had to teach military tactics (though instruction was not mandatory) as well as agriculture and mechanical arts (engineering) “without excluding other scientific or classical studies.”

In 1863, Brown University, Rhode Island’s only institution of higher learning, received land-grant designation from the state legislature. It then received 120,000 acres of federal land in Kansas, which it soon sold for $50,000 with the intention of providing instruction in Providence. With Congress’s passage of the Hatch Act in 1887, states could establish agricultural experiment stations in connection with land-grant colleges. In 1890, although Brown still intended to teach agriculture, the state opened its own station in Kingston.

Two years later, with the passage of the second Morrill Act (which also provided federal land to the former Confederate states), Rhode Island used funds to transform the Kingston station into the Rhode Island College for the Agricultural and Mechanic Arts. Brown sued for the use of these funds, which were denied by a U.S. District Court. In 1894, Brown and the state reached a financial settlement, and Rhode Island College in Kingston became a land-grant institution.⁹ In 1909 its name became Rhode Island State College (and in 1951 the University of Rhode Island).¹⁰

As a result of the National Defense Act of 1916, Rhode Island State established an ROTC program. Military training became mandatory for freshmen (males only). Of course military training for all male students increased during World War II. Admission to ROTC was always considered an honor, however.
Jacob (Jack) Fradin was not only selected to participate in ROTC at Rhode Island State, but he received the Outstanding Platoon Leader Award and was commissioned a second lieutenant on April 20, 1949. An excellent student, he was also elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Fradin went to New York to start a master’s program in statistics, but returned to Providence less than a year later because he knew he would be called to active duty. In the interim he worked for the Gereboff accounting firm.

Fradin entered the service at Fort Dix, New Jersey, on June 12, 1951. He was sent to Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, for 15 weeks and then to Korea, where he served in the 2nd Infantry Division. He was commissioned a first lieutenant in Korea on March 24, 1952.

Like many Korean veterans who had been actively engaged in the front lines, Fradin would not talk very much about his experiences. According to his wife, Estelle (Goldsmith), when Chinese forces surrounded the whole company, he was grateful that he was able to bring his whole platoon out to safety. Despite his reticence, he was profoundly moved by the event. It affected his outlook and his values. Fradin was awarded the Commendation Ribbon with Medal Pendant for Meritorious Service: July 19, 1952 to March 23, 1953. He was discharged on April 29, 1953.

In civilian life, he founded a successful accounting firm and became an honored professor of accounting at URI. For 14 years he served as treasurer of our Association.

Banice Bazar Five Bazar brothers served in the Armed Forces, four of them during World War II. Pfc. Martin Bazar was seriously wounded in the landing on Bougainville, in the Solomon Islands, with the 3rd Marine Division. Sgt. Meyer Bazar was in a medical battalion, part of the 43rd Armored Brigade of General George Patton's 4th Army. Paul and Ira Bazar enlisted in the Navy. Both were stationed in the Pacific theatre; both achieved the rank of petty officer first class.

The Bazars' youngest brother, Banice, graduated from URI in 1951 with a degree in chemistry. He also completed four years of ROTC but did not receive a com-
mission.

The newly minted chemist was 22 years old when he was hired by the federal government as a civilian to work at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. Since the Korean War had begun and he had not heard from his draft board, Bazar went to the general at the base and told him about his situation. "Don't worry, Bazar," he was told. "With the work you are doing for the government, you do not have to worry about the draft." The general wrote to his military district to explain the importance of Bazar's work. Within a few days, however, the civilian received notice to report to Fort Hays in Columbus, Ohio. He then returned home to prepare to go into service.

Bazar was told to report to the Chemical Warfare School at Fort McClellan, Alabama. In December 1951, he informed his fiancée he had orders to go to England. They should get married, he said, because she would be able to join him there. They were married, but his orders changed. He was sent to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Three months later, in 1952, he was in Korea, a brand new second lieutenant assigned to a smoke generator company.

One of his first duties took him to Pusan to meet a ship. He was tasked with training its decontamination company to become smoke generators. The first two soldiers he saw debarking were two close friends from home: Stanley Fine and Martin Fish.

Bazar was happy to be assigned to a smoke generator company instead of serving as a forward observer, his military occupation specialty (MOS). He was officer in charge of the 2nd platoon of the 388th Chemical and Smoke Generator Company. Then he learned that his platoon would be stationed in the Punch Bowl area, in the northernmost part of South Korea, where the winds come mainly from the north.

After arriving at his forward position, incoming shells forced him to seek cover. He and his driver ran to the first protected place they saw, where they were met with laughter from the other soldiers. Their place of safety was an ammunition bunker the North Koreans were trying to hit.

Although his platoon was part of a battalion, Bazar had no one to report to except the Eighth Army's general. The general, however, did not know he existed. Fortunately, Bazar recounted, "I kept my head enough to get my people out of the terrific bombardment we were getting from the North Koreans. I grew up fast there." He retains the painful memory of fellow soldiers dying.

The mission of Bazar's platoon was making chemical smoke to blanket the Mad Mile, a main supply route for American forces, day and night. Every time the
Army tried to bring a vehicle down that road, there was a good chance of losing it because the North Koreans had every inch of it within their sights. Thus the need for the smoke cover.

Although they were in the coldest spot in South Korea, the platoon had only light blankets and lightweight uniforms. “We were freezing,” Bazar said. He was told at his supply depot that they were not authorized to get winter clothing because they were considered supply, not combat troops, even though they served on the front lines. Bazar left the depot and returned with two of his men. He threatened “to shoot up the place” unless he received winter clothing and heavy sleeping bags for his men. His request was granted.

When Bazar was replaced and recalled to headquarters, he became a supply officer, actually a chemical officer acting as a supply officer. It was his duty to pay the troops in all three platoons each month. It was a terrible experience, he said, because he had to drive over terrible roads and mountains.

Bazar spent a year in Korea and left with the rank of first lieutenant. He gave up chemistry for a career in business. He returned to South Korea several times, but did not recognize any of the landmarks.

At a special ceremony in August 2007, Bazar was awarded a Bronze Star for service from September to November 1952. “I guess the original medal got lost in the mail,” he said.

Stephen Brown and Herbert Gold knew each other from their days at Hope High School. Both were members of the same fraternity at URI. They had degrees in business administration and ROTC commissions when they graduated in May 1953. It was in the service that they became close friends.

Brown and Gold had hoped to be selected for the quartermaster corps rather than the infantry, which received most ROTC graduates. After graduation, when new second lieutenants were assembled, they were asked which branch of service they preferred. Gold explained that when the officer in charge called out the various branches—tank corps, artillery, infantry—he sat quietly. When the medical corps was mentioned, up went his hand to volunteer. Brown also received orders for this corps.

Both young men were activated on July 1, 1953 and posted to the 34th Battalion of the Medical Corps. They were already taking basic training at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, when a truce in Korea was declared on July 27, 1953. Although their service had just begun, they would be considered veterans of the Korean War.
Their training at Fort Sam Houston, the home base for the Medical Corps, lasted two months. It included a basic rundown of medical procedures to prepare them to become field medics able to perform first aid and maintain life until a patient could reach a medical unit. The two friends were separated when Brown was sent to Fort Lee, Virginia, and Gold received orders for Camp Polk, Louisiana.

After a leave, Brown flew to Seattle, where he boarded a troop ship for Sasebo, Japan, and then sailed to Inchon, Korea. Gold was sent to San Francisco and awaited further orders.

Brown was stationed with the 34th Medical Battalion, east of Seoul. American forces assisted in the rebuilding of Korea and sought to establish good will by helping the civilian population. As he had not yet received his assigned posting, Brown was given the task of supervising the building of a new Catholic parish church in Yang Pyung. The villagers provided the labor, the Army supplied most of the materials, and Brown oversaw the project. He made certain that the supplies arrived and called for technical help when it was needed. He remembered how women and children of the village carried stones to the site and the crude tools at their disposal. Even after he was transferred to the north and the 44th Surgical Hospital, his devotion to the task continued. At the dedication of the stone church in September 1953, Brown was honored by a plaque affixed to its facade, which testified to his role in its construction. A citation from the Roman Catholic Vicar Apostolic of Seoul read in part: "Those who pray here will remember you forever as their dear benefactor." Brown's actions in behalf of the small Catholic congregation were also cited in a booklet, Are You Fair to the Jews? by Rev. John A. O'Brien.

Brown was later assigned to a MASH unit located only a few miles below the demilitarized zone (DMZ). It was quite large with several Quonset huts and many tents. Brown was the administrative officer in charge of all non-medical troops and personnel. A physician administered the medical unit, which included eight or nine doctors and a complement of orderlies and nurses.

The MASH unit cared for soldiers injured by local skirmishes, sniper fire, land mines or accidents. It served American soldiers and UN troops, which included primarily Greeks and Turks (who were traditional enemies). The language barrier caused problems with some of the wounded troops. Because there was little major shelling, casualties were more the result of carelessness. When there are thousands of men with

Stephen Brown + Herbert Gold
all kinds of weapons, people get hurt even without fighting. The unit was always busy. After initial treatment, the seriously wounded or ill were transported by helicopter to Seoul.

However, there were dangers of another sort—land mines planted by North Koreans before they retreated. Brown always warned his subordinates to drive only on roads. Nevertheless, one day his driver decided to take his jeep on a shortcut across a field that was mined. His death is a very painful memory.

For his return home in April 1955, Lt. Brown sailed from Inchon to Seattle and then took a train to New York City and finally to Camp Kilmer. He was discharged on Herbert Gold’s birthday.

Without informing his parents, Brown rented a car to drive home as soon as possible. At the same time his father decided to surprise him and drove to the base to meet him. They met when his father returned home.

Brown, who enjoyed photography as a hobby, returned from Korea with a wonderful pictorial record of his service, the land, and its people. He became a banker and eventually served as president of our Association."

Herbert Gold While his friend, Stephen Brown, was trained to become an administrator of a MASH unit, Herbert Gold was sent to Quartermaster School (after training in the Medical Corps). He was then flown to San Francisco, where each day he checked to see his further orders. One day he saw his orders pop up for New York. That meant he was headed to Europe! His joy did not last long, however. When he reported to the USNS General J.H. McRae, he was informed he was assigned to the ship as a medic. He was going to Korea, but not directly.

The McRae sailed to Puerto Rico to pick up a battalion of American troops who spoke mainly Spanish. The next port of call was Cartagena for a contingent of Colombian troops to join UN forces. Gold’s ship sailed through the Panama Canal and across the Pacific to Hawaii, where it remained two days. The McRae reached a staging area in Japan and then its final destination, Korea. In other circumstances this would have been a wonderful cruise.

Gold and Brown were able to reconnect in Korea. After investigating where his friend was stationed, Gold traveled to the church construction site in Yang Pyung. Surprised, Brown thought Gold was supposed to be in Europe.

Gold had charge of the 567th Ambulance Company in the northern part of South Korea. It supported all divisions, including the Marines. Each division had its own clinic, which included an ambulance for the emergency evacuation of troops and civilians to a hospital. None of the ambulances came under fire because
the truce was in effect. Drivers used only roads cleared of land mines.

Under the truce, the Army wanted to consolidate its forces and train South Koreans to take care of many of the duties performed by Americans. This meant that Gold had to teach South Korean soldiers how to drive and maintain vehicles. Most of them had been farmers who had never been in a vehicle—let alone driven one.

Through an interpreter Gold explained the necessity and seriousness of maintaining an ambulance company. Driving classes were held every day. Ultimately he was successful, and South Koreans took over the duties and the equipment of his unit.

Gold was reassigned to the 618th Medical Clearing Company. Its clinic treated injuries and evacuated serious cases to Seoul.

One emergency incident stands out in Gold's mind. A soldier clowning around was stabbed with a bayonet. Most of the emergency medical personnel were away. The doctor covering the facility called Gold and told him to put on a mask and wash his hands. He was going to assist. As the doctor sutured the cut, Gold cut the sutures after they were tied.

Gold spent a year and a half in Korea, and he was discharged on his birthday at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Melvin Zurier As has been explained in detail elsewhere, Melvin Zurier graduated from Harvard College in 1950. Although he did not participate in ROTC, he received a commission as a second lieutenant in the Air Force Reserves based on other governmental service. Zurier was allowed to delay his activation in the Judge Advocate General's Department until he graduated from Harvard Law School in 1953 and passed both the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Bars, but he was then required to serve three years of active duty. Following advanced legal training at bases in Alabama and Virginia, Zurier was sent to Sondrestrom Air Force Base in Greenland, Mitchel Air Force Base on Long Island, and Hamilton Air Force Base north of San Francisco.

THEY WERE AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Bernard Levy At the urging of his late brother's friend, Bernard Levy joined the Air National Guard's 102nd Air Control and Warning Squadron. World War II had ended two years before; it was a time of relative peace, but young men were still subject to the Selective
Service Act of 1940. Levy wanted to serve his country, but he also wanted to choose the branch of service he would enter.

Levy decided to bring his cousin, Leonard (Lazar) Labush, and some of his Jewish friends with him into the Guard. These included: Gerald Coken, Irving Covinsky, Harvey Eugene, Irwin Hassenfeld, Robert Kadsivitz, and Aaron Shatkin. They were all part of the same unit.

The Guard’s regular meetings required marching and marksmanship. Levy also enjoyed the camaraderie. Given his knowledge of office work, he was assigned to communications.

Once the Korean War began in 1951, Levy and his friends were activated and assigned to Otis Air Force Base on Cape Cod. When the rest of his unit shipped out to North Africa, he remained at the base. Levy was so good at his tasks that officers in charge did not want to let him go and have to train someone else. He was trusted with figuring the payroll, going to the bank, and making certain that everyone was paid and received his vacation time. In sum, he had full charge of the office. He was promoted to staff sergeant and loved to hop a flight and “go wherever.” He served until the end of 1952.

Coincidentally, Levy’s uncle and aunt, Kalman and Dora Chernick, were tailors on the base. They fixed his uniforms and made certain he was well turned out.

Leonard (Lazar) Labush was a student at Brown when Bernard Levy persuaded him to join the Air National Guard. The idea appealed to him because students were being drafted. Before being activated, however, he was sent to Medical Technical School at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. At Otis Air Force Base he worked in the dispensary with Dr. Eugene Felderman.

After activation and training at Otis Air Force Base on the Cape, his unit was sent to Libya. It set up the radar network for all of North Africa. One group, including Aaron Shatkin, went to Benghazi. His friends Gerald Coken, Irwin Hassenfeld, and Robert Kadsivitz went to Tripoli. Labush, a medic, was sent to Misrata, a desert outpost. He called it “a hell hole.”

The dispensary was small with only one bed. “I did everything at the dispensary, I even drilled teeth,” Labush said. Civilians as well as troops received treatment. The most serious cases were sent to the base hospital in Tripoli, where Dr. Felderman was a member of the staff.

In addition to giving shots and providing routine medical procedures,
Labush checked the latrines and brothels and made sure that the food supply was untainted. One day a shipment of hams was brought in. Having noticed something resembling mold on the meat, he condemned the entire shipment. Evidently cooks knew to scrape such protective covering off the hams, but he did not. The medic knew nothing about non-kosher meats.

Labush held a top-secret clearance. Everyone who was sent to the Middle and Far East went through Wheelus Air Force Base near Tripoli. When vaccinations were required, the facility at Misrata supplied them. Labush could tell by what was called for where troops were going.

At Pesach, Jewish families in Tripoli invited Jewish troops for Seder. The flavorful menu was quite different from the Eastern European food familiar to Labush and his friends. His Sephardi hosts served a very sweet raisin wine and spiced tuna rather than gefilte fish. "It was a nice community," Labush said. "Jews spoke English or Italian as well as Arabic."

Labush's unit spent about a year overseas. He took advantage of free flights on Air Force planes to Europe.

At the end of his two-year hitch, Labush returned to Brown and then entered graduate school in podiatry at Temple University in Philadelphia.

THE FOLLOWING NOTES ARE THE EDITOR'S.
1 The 14 other nations with military detachments were: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, and the United Kingdom (which sent the largest number of troops). The five nations that sent medical troops under UN auspices were: Denmark, India, Italy, Norway, and Sweden. During the course of the war, South Korea provided approximately 40% of ground forces, the United States approximately 50%, and the nations under UN auspices approximately 10%. Spencer C. Tucker, "UN Command Ground Forces, Contributions to," in The Encyclopedia of the Korean War: A Political, Social, and Military History, ed. by Spencer C. Tucker (3 vols., 2nd ed.; Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 890.

2 The American Army's peak strength during the Korean War was in 1952, when there were approximately 1.6 million active troops, including Reservists and National Guardsmen. The Army maintained 20 active divisions (each with approximately 17,700 troops), though only eight were sent to Korea and only six at any time. Thus, the Army's active strength in Korea was never more than 275,000 troops at one time. The Air Force, Marines, and Navy maintained their active troops in Korea. David T. Zabecki, "U.S. Army" in Tucker, ed., 907.

3 American military involvement in the Korean War was both extensive and costly. Unfortunately, there is continuing disagreement regarding the numbers of deaths, prisoners of war, and troops missing in action.

The following figures are derived from: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: Data on Veterans of the Korean War (Assistant Secretary for Planning and Analysis, Office of Program and Data Analyses, 2000). Between June 27, 1950 and January 31, 1955, 6.8 million Americans (in-
cluding 86,300 women) served in the military (though not necessarily in Korea). In Korea there were 54,200 deaths, including 33,700 in combat. There were 7,140 American prisoners of war, including 4,418 who were returned, 2,701 who died in captivity, and 21 who refused repatriation. In 2000, approximately 100,000 veterans (from every era) were living in Rhode Island. Approximately 16,600 were veterans of the Korean War era.

According to a Department of Defense study in 2000, the number of American deaths in Korea from all causes was 36,574. This number includes 19,585 battlefield deaths and 4,544 troops who later died of their wounds. The number 36,574 also includes 2,730 prisoners of war who died in captivity and 8,177 who were missing in action. Thus, 1,538 deaths fall into other categories, which presumably include accidents and illnesses unrelated to combat. The number of American troops wounded in Korea was 103,284.

Excluding South Korean and American troops, nations under UN auspices suffered 3,960 deaths and 11,528 wounded.

Statistics for South Korean, North Korean, and Chinese deaths can only be estimated. South Korea claims that it suffered 257,000 military deaths and 244,000 civilians deaths. The UN believes that South Korea suffered 900,000 civilian deaths, which, in addition to combat, were caused by disease, exposure, and starvation. Further, 300,000 civilians disappeared after June 1950 and are considered still missing in North Korea.

North Korea has never revealed the number of its troops and civilians who died. South Korea claims that its enemy suffered approximately 295,000 deaths. Estimates from Western nations are 2.5 million deaths, including military and civilian.

In its Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum in Pyongyang, North Korea claims that it inflicted 405,000 casualties on American troops, 1.1 million on “puppet” forces (presumably South Korea), and 31,000 on other nations under the UN.

China claims that it killed more than 500,000 American troops and wounded a comparable number. China also claims that it lost 370,000 troops, including 152,000 in combat.


5 A new draft in 1948 followed a one-year extension in 1947 of the Selective Service Training Act of 1940, which had been America’s first peacetime conscription in 1940. The new law required registration by all men 19 to 26 years of age. A new draft law enacted on June 19, 1951 lowered the age of registration to 18.5 years and extended the length of service from 21 to 24 months. Approximately 1.5 million men were drafted during the Korean War. Approximately 1.3 million men and women volunteered. See: Charles F. Howlett, “Universal Military Training and Service Act” in Tucker, ed., 927.

6 Six out of seven American troops reached Korea by sea. The Navy’s Military Sea Transport Service carried more than 4.9 million troops to and from Korea and within the Asian theatre of operations. The distance was 5,000 nautical miles from San Francisco; the distance from the East Coast ports through the Panama Canal was more than 8,000 nautical miles. See: “Troopships” in Tucker, ed., 850.

7 The Navy’s V-1 program was for freshmen and sophomores who had joined the Navy before March 1943. They were placed on inactive duty. The Navy’s V-12 program, which involved active duty, did not begin until July 1943. Brown also had a Naval ROTC program, which had begun in 1940, and an Army Enlisted Reserve Corps. See: Martha Mitchell, Encyclopedia Brunoniana (Brown University, 1993), 586-87. Aaron Cohen, Edwin Wattman’s exact contemporary, completed

8 For information about Dr. Wattman's family, see: Beatrice Wattman Miller, "Memories of the East Side and Riverside," Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes (2008), 331-38.


10 See: http://www.uri.edu/home/about/history-timeline.html.

11 Stephen's wife, Susan, wrote about her family and her life in "Escape from Germany to Colombia and Rhode Island," Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes (2004), 261-80.


13 Most members of the Air National Guard, 84% or 45,000 troops, were activated during the Korean War. By contrast, 34% or 138,000 troops of the Army National Guard were activated. Members of the Army National Guard's 43rd Infantry Division, which included troops from Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Vermont, were alerted for activation on July 31, 1950 and received their activation orders on September 1. Initially, troops of the 43rd were sent to Europe to reinforce NATO forces. See: Uzal W. Ent, "United States National Guard" in Tucker, ed., 9:8.
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Services in Pusan, December 1953.
Back row: Ben Eisenberg [6th from left]; Center row: Noah Temkin [4th from left]; Herb Gold [5th from left].
National Singles Champion Whitney Reed and Jules at Forest Hills, 1955
A traveler along Blackstone Boulevard in Providence in 1956 might have spotted a big-framed man jogging in army boots and a Yale tennis jersey. Assuming even a passing knowledge of The Providence Evening Bulletin sports pages, the observer would have immediately recognized the burly runner as one of the finest amateur athletes in Rhode Island history. From the mid-1950s to '60s, a great era in amateur tennis, Jules Cohen, from 286 Hillside Avenue in Pawtucket, was among
the best New Englanders to wield a racket.

Built for football, largely self-taught in tennis, bright, affable and Jewish, Jules Cohen played a clay court power game that earned him the 1954 New England Championship in singles. With his partner, Larry Lewis, another Jewish boy competing in an elite, Yankee-dominated sport, Jules also won that year’s championship in doubles. Jules went on to be one of the top-ranked New England amateurs for the next half-dozen years as well as an unbeatable Rhode Island netman for ten years. Perhaps most significantly, he played strictly for fun and recreation while focusing on his education, family, business career, and many avocations.

Jules first touched a tennis racket at age six in 1939 at the Clarendon Recreation Area, along Lake Michigan, in Chicago. His next tennis memories are of playing anyone available at the East Side Tennis Club in Providence during the 1940s, and of entering summer tournaments at age 15 or 16 at Falmouth Heights and Woods Hole in Massachusetts. As a young teen, he took a few lessons on net play from Carl Clem on Cape Cod and from Ed Reid at Agawam Hunt Club. (In 1954 Reid would become the world’s top-ranked squash player.) Otherwise, Jules’s game was forged by hours upon hours of play, often ten sets a day, and by studying accomplished players.

A gifted natural athlete who excelled in multiple sports, Jules did not play competitive interscholastic tennis until his sophomore year at Providence Country Day School. He lettered in baseball, basketball, and football before his tennis talents developed. Despite a late start, Jules became New England Junior Champion and was undefeated in high school. At Yale he spent much time on the handball and squash courts and gained recognition as a nationally ranked fencer, another sport he mastered remarkably quickly despite being six feet one and a half, over two hundred pounds, and previously untrained.

Jules inherited his physical gifts from his father’s clan. His dad, Herb, who was Jules’s greatest athletic influence, blocked for Red Grange at the University of Illinois. His great uncle, Jack Cohen, was a Chicago boxer (who knew Al Capone). Jules’s uncle, Buddy Cohen, was a catcher for the University of Wisconsin while his uncle, Len Cohen, was a hoopster.

Family lore traces the Cohen line to Russia and Poland and Jules’s maternal ancestry to Romania. Herb moved from Chicago to Rhode Island after World
War II to work in B. Cohen & Sons, the woolen “rag business” started by his grandfather that reprocessed remnants from the garment industry. Jules early determined that this trade was not for him.

Herb Cohen encouraged his son’s interest in sports but did not push him. The father’s only demand, which related to sportsmanship, was uncompromising. Having seen the petulant behavior of several spoiled young tennis competitors, Herb conditioned his permission for Jules to play in New England tournaments on his son maintaining the highest standard of conduct, an admonition that never had to be repeated. Opponents and fans still cite Jules’s graciousness, good cheer, and humility as distinctive qualities that marked the entirety of his tennis career as well as his warm and likeable off-court demeanor.

Herb was too nervous to watch his son’s athletic contests, however. That duty fell to his mother, Rosaline (Goldberg) Cohen. Partly due to her Orthodox upbringing, Rosaline had no background in sports. She was pleased that Jules, who was born sickly, played end in football “so he could get out of the way quickly.” She presumably enjoyed seeing him help the other boys up after he flattened them, although PCD coach Walter Sharp found such magnanimity maddening. Rosaline watched Jules captain the Country Day basketball team, amass tennis victories, receive the school’s top academic and leadership awards, and graduate first in his class. In 1956 he was inducted in the school’s Athletic Hall of Fame.

Of his time at Country Day, Jules remarked, “It was all good, the whole experience. I have great memories of the teachers, who really counseled you, and Headmaster Ed Lund and Assistant Head Gerry Woodruff. I enjoyed the discipline of Latin and math and preferred the teaching style at Country Day to the big college lecture halls that followed. There were only a few Jewish students in PCD’s upper school. These included three more Cohens—Avram (no relation), my brother Bob, and our cousin Carl—as well as Lenny Rumpfer. But I felt no anti-Semitism at PCD.” Jules graduated in 1951 and prepared to study industrial administration—a combination of engineering and management—at Yale.

During the summer tournament season that preceded college, Jules garnered an upset win over the Canadian Davis Cup doubles champions. His partner was Bill Cullen of Vermont (who went on to coach at West Point). At 18 and feeling invincible, Jules confidently accepted an invitation to play in the Newport Casino Tournament. That was the first foray on the tricky grass court surface for Jules and his doubles partner. They were pitted against future Wimbledon champs Vic Seixas and Tony Trabert, resulting in a humbling defeat (“one courtesy game”).

Jules played singles and doubles for a great Yale team. His doubles partner,
Richard Raskin (later Dr. Renée Richards) was ranked third in the East. Additional teammates included Slan Engleman, who ranked fifth in the East, and Yale's number one player, Billy Cranston (who died tragically in a car crash shortly after college). The team captain was Sam English, the champion of Louisville, Kentucky.

This Yale squad, which twice won the Ivy League Championship, elevated Jules to the highest levels of off-season tournament competition. One of his toughest and most thrilling contests was a respectable showing against nationally top-ranked Whitney Reed at Forest Hills. Another notable adversary was the famous Gardner Malloy.

The Jules Cohen style of play, honed at Yale, simply outmatched opponents who were predominantly baseliners (hitting almost exclusively from the backcourt). His powerful American Twist kick serve had so much topspin that it often jumped to the returner's forehead. He struck a classic backhand but a more open, modern forehand, which set up quickly and generated great velocity. To finish points Jules attacked the net with uncommon speed, great footwork, adroit volleys and a devastating overhead. Dick Ernst, the current dean of Rhode Island tennis, who lost to Jules in five state finals, described him as "a tremendously gifted athlete with great eye-hand coordination. The footwork of fencing carried over to his volley. People loved to watch him." Ernst added, "Cohen was a tremendous sportsman with a jovial, easygoing demeanor on the court. He gave his opponent a lot of fun. It was a pleasant experience while he was destroying you."

Emblematic of Jules's sportsmanship was a competition where he insisted that his injured opponent take all the time he needed to recover before the finals. In this case, the hiatus was three weeks.
Ginny Mahoney of Barrington, a fellow New England Tennis Hall of Fame, observed Jules’s game as a younger tournament player. She states, “He was very graceful in his movement and seemed to float around the tennis court. He moved so effortlessly.” She added, “Jules was always a very modest person and genuinely interested in other people.”

In 1955, during his senior year at Yale, Jules was named Rhode Island Jewish Athlete of the Year by the Jewish Bowling Congress. Shortly thereafter, he entered the Army and became an artillery officer in South Korea. He took his magnificent game with him and managed to win the 8th Army tennis tournament in Yokahama as well as a tournament in Seoul against South Korea’s top player. Tennis brought him in contact with generals and admirals and opened doors to great overseas adventures.

When Jules returned home after two years, he played some marathon matches in New England tourneys, including two, five-set contests against top-ranked Henry Salauin, each of which lasted four hours in intense heat. The score of one set was 21-19 because tie breakers were unheard of during this era of tennis purity.

The tournament circuit was held primarily at exclusive country clubs, where Jules was never restricted from playing in the match draw, but was sometimes treated differently thereafter. He explained, “The club management would be hospitable during the weekend tournament but I was not always welcomed in the pro shop on Monday.” At one event, an elaborate winner’s presentation and celebration were cancelled when Jules unexpectedly won the tournament. At another venue, trophies were withheld.

Notable exceptions to some anti-Semitic tournaments were those held in Norwich, Connecticut. Jules’s following of enthusiastic young fans included “Little Susie Martin.” Better known as Susan Haberlandt, she went on to become Head of School at Jules’s beloved alma mater, PCD, where she served from 1998 to 2011. With the support of his tennis groupies, Jules won the Norwich event several times.

Paralleling his extraordinary tennis career was Jules Cohen’s remarkable professional life. He earned a master of business administration degree from Boston University and joined the company that became Leesona Corporation. He worked...
ten years as its first data processing manager. An avid student of the new field of computers, Jules applied technology to manufacturing and business operations with great success. He followed this experience with a rewarding period of consulting, publishing, and teaching, rounding out his career as a faculty member at Rhode Island College, where he remained for 14 years until 1998. He taught systems analysis and design and secured and supervised valuable internships for scores of students.

Meanwhile, he reared three children—Joanne, Stuart and Peter (PCD '83)—who live in Georgia, West Virginia, and North Carolina. The boys were B'nai Mitzvah at Temple Sinai in Cranston. After his first marriage ended, Jules married his high school girlfriend, the former Dede Kane. Rabbi Leslie Gutterman officiated at Temple Beth-El. After 27 years of marriage, they still act like honeymooners. Jules and Dede share a love of gardening, intellectual pursuits, and community service.

His sons' participation in Boy Scouts drew him into the Narragansett Bay Council, where he has been active for decades. In addition to serving as president for four years, he chaired the Jewish Committee on Scouting for 18 years. The committee kept busy promoting scouting for Jewish boys and supporting the efforts of Rabbi Sol Goodman, Yawgoog Scout Reservation's chaplain.

Jules deserves a merit badge for staying productively busy. He looks forward to Yale alumni events with classmates such as Renée Richards and the historian David McCullough. He is the reunion ringleader for classes of the 1950s at
Providence Country Day. After knee and shoulder surgeries ended his tennis days, Jules focused on his golf game. For 20 years he has been the director of handicapping for the Rhode Island Golf Association and currently leads the 215-member senior golfers’ association. In his few sedentary moments, Jules collects stamps (with a trove of Israeli items) in his den. These are surrounded by family photographs, art, books, and stamp magazines, but a noteworthy absence of trophies and awards. In keeping with Jules’s humility and enthusiasm for his present activities, such mementoes are out of view.

The private trophy room, however, presents unequivocal evidence of a great champion. His honors include: ten Rhode Island closed wins (only for Rhode Islanders), four Rhode Island open wins, two Metropolitan championships (to determine New England rankings), and events throughout New England and New York against the best players of his era, many of whom he defeated, including the great Ned Weld.

“You could make the case that Jules Cohen was the best male tennis player in Rhode Island over the past 50 years and the best all-around player in New England from the mid-‘50s to the early ‘60s,” remarked Ed Shein, a friend and fellow player who presented Jules for induction in the New England Tennis Hall of Fame at the Newport Casino. “The tougher the match, the better he played. He could have turned professional.”

Jules characteristically replied that tennis was a wonderful hobby that he pursued purely for fun. He considers himself the luckiest guy in the world, married to his high school sweetheart, with a rich, fulfilling, and active life that once involved tennis. Clearly an understatement, Jules Cohen’s accomplishments in tennis are unmatched.

Dede + Jules at induction ceremony.

ENDNOTES
1 B. Cohen & Sons was first listed in Woonsocket’s business and residential directory in 1936. Later known as a wool dealership, it stood at 20 Privilege Street (at the corner of Winter Street) for more than three decades. Herb Cohen first appeared in the directory as a “wool grader” in 1946. By the 1960s he served as secretary and treasurer, and by 1970 he became president (succeeding his brother, Harvey). At this time Herb and Rosaline resided at 160 Emeline Street in Providence.

2 Elias Victor Seixas, Jr., who was ten years older than Cohen, became one of the country’s first Jewish tennis stars. He grew up in Philadelphia, was an Air Force pilot during World War II, and played for the University of North Carolina. As doubles partners, Seixas and Trabert won the Davis Cup, two French Opens, and one Australian Open. Seixas also won four mixed doubles championships (with women partners) at Wimbledon. In 1971 he was inducted in the International Tennis Hall of Fame.

JULES COHEN
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FUN, FUN, FUN:  
FRED KELMAN'S PHOTOS OF THE 
JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

Though he never considered himself a historian, Fred Kelman created an enduring record of Rhode Island Jewry during the decades following World War II. Not only a skillful photographer, he was a proud member of our community. As is evident from his vast legacy (including this selection belonging to our Association), he was essentially a humanitarian.

The youngest child of Russian immigrants, Fred was born in South Providence in 1920. He learned Yiddish at home and was educated at Congregation Sons of Abraham on Prairie Avenue. After graduating from Hope High School in 1938, he began his lust for travel by hitchhiking to California. His first job in photography was sweeping floors at a studio in Los Angeles, where his older brother, Jack, was employed.

During World War II, Fred served in the Navy. Though he had been accepted at Rhode Island School of Design, he learned his craft with the Seabees and became a photographer first-class. He later built a darkroom and an office in his home on Stanwood Street, in the Elmwood neighborhood of Providence, where he lived for more than 35 years with his wife, Libby (Lorraine Medoff), and their children, Daniel, John, David, and Gloria.

Fred shot countless B’nai Mitzvah, Confirmations, and weddings. Indeed, he was proud of recording a succession of simchas for many families.

Fred also photographed dozens of Jewish organizations. In addition to Temples Beth Israel and Tora Yisrael, where he served on the boards and chaired the house committees, he was particularly
fond of the Jewish Home and the Miriam Hospital. Fred and Libby donated a room to each. She predeceased him by a year, but before his own death in 1997, he had planned to endow a fund to support a number of local Jewish organizations. The Kelman children established such a fund in both parents' memories at the Jewish Federation (now Alliance).

Because he often photographed events and meetings on weeknights, Saturday nights, and on Sundays, Fred might have been unable to enjoy leisure time with family and friends. This was not the case. In addition to imparting a love of photography to his children, he was a leader of their youth groups, including Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and United Synagogue Youth. He also loved sailing with his kids on Narragansett Bay. With Libby and the four children, he traveled by motor home in California and took trips to Europe and Israel.

A left-handed tennis player who thrived at doubles, Fred played on outdoor and indoor courts from East Providence to Cranston. He was a backyard gardener who pickled tomatoes and made strawberry rhubarb jam. His handiwork was further displayed in a light box he made from fire-damaged windows at Beth Israel. This memorial was installed at Torat Yisrael.

That Fred admired the formal portraits of heroes and dignitaries taken by the eminent Canadian, Yousuf Karsh, sounds a bit out-of-character. Displaying his love of spontaneity, especially in the portrayal of children, Fred may have done some of his best work for the Jewish Community Center.

He often remarked, "Time does not stand still." Fortunately for us, time has proven him wrong.
"Party-of-the-Month,"
Parents' Association, April 1955
"Matzo Ball,
April 1955

"Award Nite,
May 1955

Purim Carnival,
March 1957
"Radio Players," Spring 1955

"Party-of-the-Month," Parents' Association, April 1955
MY HOMETOWN:
THREE VIGNETTES

STEPHEN LOGOWITZ

The author and your editor have been friends since 1966, when they
enrolled as freshmen at Lake Forest College in Illinois. Stephen, a
Bar Mitzvah at Temple Beth-El and a Classical High School alumnus,
became well known as a campus wit and photographer. His design
of the 1970 yearbook (actually a box containing photos and numerous
objets d'art) remains the most astonishing in the college's history.

After earning a master of fine arts degree at Yale in 1973,
Stephen became a Boston-based designer. Initially a partner in
Logowitz + Moore, he leads his own firm, Logowitz and Company.
Both companies have specialized in graphic design for programming,
institutional branding, and fundraising. His clients have included
a wide variety of corporations, government agencies, healthcare pro-
viders, educational institutions, and museums. Indeed, Stephen
met his wife Dorothea, a Brown graduate and a printing production
manager in Boston, while making last-minute changes to a share-
holders' report for Providence's Outlet Company.

Stephen, who resides in Newtonville, has served on the
boards of the All Newton Music School, the Newton Historical Soci-
eity, the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, and on the council
of Boston's Society of Printers.

A talented clarinetist, he devotes considerable time to musi-
cal studies and participates in workshops throughout New England.
Think of this article as a cadenza for a vanished era.

MONKEY BOY, SUMMER, 1953
Dusk settles softly over Gorton Street, the center of The Known World in my quiet
little corner of Providence. The air is thick, warm. Windows open all around. You
can hear the china rattling from the Winograds', our neighbors to the right; the
Grossmans', across the street; and even the Meyers', next door to them. Dinnertime.
As a hot weather treat, our little family assembles—somewhat uncharacteristically—at an improvised dining table on our back porch, hard by our newest acquisition, a rotisserie, which hums importantly on the sideboard. There we sit: myself, two older sisters, my mother, and my father. A classic nuclear family.

My dad is in shirtsleeves but, as is his custom, his tie remains firmly in place despite the heat. My mother, hair pulled back smartly in a bun, serves moist chicken along with the usual warnings about spillage, elbows on the table, napkin use, the rest. The aroma takes it from there and we all begin to dig in quite happily, peppered by small talk about everyone's day.

I am five years old and have my motor skills down pretty well now. I can climb, jump, hop, even run like lightning when I want to. On a good day, I can even tie my own sneakers (or, at least one of them, anyway). Lately, I've been circulating in a wider venue, too: the neighborhood.

As a matter of fact, I hear voices outside right now. They are high-pitched, possibly even a little quarrelsome, talking over each other. It's the gang!

Having completed six mouthfuls of chicken and mashed potatoes (along with approximately one string bean), I begin to slither down in my chair, deftly sliding under the glass tabletop, passing by two pairs of legs and then out to the other side. Free! Yes, there are a few words of protest but, as mentioned, I am five. They know. They understand.

I am through the side screen door in seconds, as it snaps with a bang. Down the driveway, past our rounded black '49 Plymouth now at rest on the crunchy gravel like a large beached whale. And there they stand: Ricky Grossman, swarmed by his younger-siblings-in-motion, Nancy and Scotty; Charley Meyers and his brother, Victor; Peter Davis; and the strangely exotic Peter Dwares, hailing from a land unknown somewhere beyond Sessions Street. Scotty and Peter are still chewing: they, too, appear to have made quick getaways.

My sister Nancy slowly saunters out of our house. Ten of us now. We have
the makings of a team for sure. Captains are anointed—the usual suspects: Ricky and my sister (the two best athletes of the bunch). With great gravity, the two assume a familiar posture: wide stance, one leg slightly ahead of the other, as they prepare to buck up for sides. One...two...three...shoot! Fingers lunge out—two from Ricky, three from Nan. Ha! Her pick first.

Teams are chosen, the key determinants being ability and body mass—in no particular order of preference. Little Scotty (he is nearly four, tonight standing barefoot clad in nothing more than underpants) and I remain. A sorry selection, surely, but the baseball gods are kind tonight and our siblings rise to the occasion: as Scotty dutifully follows Ricky's crowd, my sister and I trudge out to the field. Let the game begin!

Monkey-at-the-Bat is the evening's game of choice. Simple enough, even for the most unsophisticated among us. A single batter (the monkey) wallops a ball as far as possible downfield in a straight shot (in this case, the field being the hard-topped surface of Slater Avenue), skillfully avoiding such perils as picture windows, overhanging tree limbs, and the occasionally bothersome streetlight globe. The lucky fielder who retrieves it must fling the ball back skillfully enough so that it ends in a skittering roll that targets a baseball bat now at rest on the roadbed in front of the batter. Hardly a sure thing, it's made even worse by the unique texture of the gently curving Slater Avenue, a surface not unlike broken coal—bumpy and wildly unpredictable. (The joys of smooth asphalt eventually reach our neighborhood but, alas, not in time for us).

The game commences. And for awhile, all proceeds reasonably well. A few artful catches far down Slater, the usual misses on the long rolls, all the while mosquitoes slyly moving in, gradually becoming more evident all around as the twilight slowly fades around us and crickets begin to chirp.

It's becoming hard to see. Scotty, once nearest me, appears to have wandered off. I can make out a few white T-shirts signaling the remnants of my teammates, but the rest is getting hazy. Quite suddenly: a whack, followed by a continuous dribbling sound. It's getting closer. No, now farther. Oops! My ball? I sense a rumbling from nearby. In the faint light, a shape moves closer, talking with agitation. It's a large, unfriendly shape; nameless, at the moment. I can just make out a few words it utters, which—even in my five-year-old world—do not strike me as particularly complimentary. The warm evening is suddenly getting hotter.

"St-e-e-e-v-e-n-n-n!"

My mother's yell. The grimly familiar bedtime call, the one I always flee. But not tonight! As the loud-talking shape grows ever closer, I see my opening.
Suddenly transformed, I am The Dutiful Child. I must go when called. My alibi is foolproof. I turn on one Ked, and I am off like a shot and soon home free, the shape’s faint stirrings fading far behind in the heavy night air.

THE CATCH, CA. 1959

“Ouch,” my wife Dorothea yelped. I had kicked her. Inadvertently, of course, but I was running fast for a long fly ball which, as I noticed in its approach, was eluding me more and more rather than less and less. A guy’s gotta’ do what he’s gotta’ do: outa’ my way, woman!

As it turned out, though, we were in bed: my own private field of dreams. My spouse had been sleeping soundly and I, more fitfully, it seems. But the memory was true enough: I was positioned in an outfield somewhere I knew well long, long ago.

On this particular day, my friends and I stand poised in a tight cluster within a large, forever-named “This-Space-Available-Will-Build-to-Suit” vacant lot situated hard by Brown’s old Marvel Gym on Elm Grove Avenue. (Fast-forward a few decades and the lot becomes Providence Hebrew Day School. And that cluster of little boys? One a cardiologist and eventual medical school dean; another a lawyer and foundation head; a third, a professional adviser to a folk idol of the Sixties. For now, though, it’s just The Guys.)

We are all modest in talent, although none would admit to this. What we lack in shared ability we counter in enthusiasm, grit, and determination. But way behind us, standing alone in our lot, there is one fellow— a nice, sweet kid— for whom ability, enthusiasm, grit, and determination are all unequivocally absent. This is known to us. Nevertheless, it’s always helpful to have someone like this around when trying to even-up sides. So there stands Albert.

Meanwhile, we are all staring straight-up. It’s a high pop-up fly all right, drifting slowly back, back— seemingly carried by some unseen zephyr. Clearly beyond everyone’s reach. Except...

Albert, true to form, has inexplicably brought a catcher’s mitt for outfield play. No one bothers to comment. He has chosen to position himself in a spot so improbably far behind the rest of us that it can only suggest the triumph of sheer optimism over absurdity.

He has already assumed his usual stance: legs together, body lightly swaying, form mysteriously turned 45 degrees from home plate. In short, incapable of snagging anything more than a stray horsefly. Nevertheless, there he gamely stands, a strange sight to behold, with eyes squeezed tightly closed, both arms
outstretched precisely 90-degrees to his torso (as if in supplication to the baseball gods above), body rotated away from anything remotely pertaining to a batter. Waiting hopefully.

The rest of us, realizing the error of our collective judgment, begin to move backward at a mighty clip. It's now apparent that this ball is sailing much farther back than anything we've ever seen. We're moving faster and faster, and on the verge of gaining more speed—until we hear the familiar thud of baseball into soft leather.

Everyone stops. We look around warily until we spy the object of our interest, some yards behind us: it is the astounded Albert. In his still-outstretched right arm, a baseball, now nestled snugly in an oversized mitt. On his face, a look so unfathomable as to defy description. In a sequence like stages-of-mourning-reverse, we all watch his expressions morph before our eyes: from surprise, to awe, to delight, and finally to pure glee. This is truly a moment to savor.

Albert will go on in life to become a senior executive for a major auto maker. But that is not what matters today. The point is this: he has at last snagged a big one. We all saw it. It's the stuff of sandlot legend now. None of us will ever look at him quite the same way again.

THE OUTLET COMPANY
During a recent visit to my hometown, I was stunned to discover the pristine campus of an entire university plunked in the middle of downtown. Where did THIS come from? It seemed vast—classrooms, dormitories, a library—they were all there, gleaming in the sun, so fresh and perfect that I felt as if I were walking onto a movie soundstage.

I meandered around the place, taking its measure, eventually reaching the perimeter. Trying desperately to orient myself to the Providence that I once knew so well, I searched for familiar reference points: Weybosset, Eddy, Pine, Garnet Streets. They were still there, all right, but that was about it. Only when I happened to look downward did I truly understood where I was. Quietly ribboning the Johnson & Wales campus were the faint gray remnants of an old foundation. There had been a building here once. An enormous one. And I suddenly had a very good idea what it was.

The Outlet Company (known as "Rhode Island's Largest Department Store") once dominated this spot—a series of conjoined structures so large that they
occupied a full city block. New York had its Macy's; Chicago its Marshall Field's; St. Louis its May Company. We had The Outlet.

Although conceived in the shadow of its more storied big-city counterparts, the company did not disappoint: founded by a larger-than-life figure, Joseph Samuels (known as “The Colonel”), the Outlet was a phenomenon unto itself. It served as the venue for the state's first transatlantic phone call; it hosted the amazing Harry Houdini, as he sprang free from one of the company's packing crates; it fielded its own baseball team; it established its own radio broadcasting facility and, much later, the region's first television station; it twice erected its own multistory commemorative arch outside its doors, on the top of which a couple wed and under which an ebulliently campaigning Franklin Roosevelt once passed; it even owned Alice, an official company elephant.

Into this mix of show business and commerce came my father, Kenneth, in a most unlikely pairing. A quiet, thoughtful man from a modest Russian-immigrant background, he began his career at the Outlet as a teenager, working after school as an office boy. Neither flashy nor dramatic, he eventually trained by night as an accountant, finding greater comfort with numbers than with retailing theatrics. More than once he was advised that, if he hoped to make good in a “Yankee” company, he would be wise to change his surname to a more “American” one.

The name stayed, and so did my father. In a quintessentially American tale, he worked hard, remained loyal, and was ultimately rewarded beyond all expectations with his appointment as President and Chief Executive Officer. His retirement marked the end of more than a half-century of service to the Outlet organization.

As his only son, I enjoyed a ringside seat for about half his career. More often than not, we would discuss the events of his workday during the evening, typically over dinner. His experiences ran the gamut: from corporate intrigue to malfunctioning mainframe computers; from labor contracts to customer outrage; from new construction litigation to proposed acquisitions. Dinners were never dull.

My most vivid recollection? Certainly the day after Thanksgiving, when my dad would march downstairs early, amid a still-sleeping household, and stride purposefully to the back door. In a gesture not unlike Punxsutawney Phil, he would cast his face outside— and upward. If there was a chill in the air— with luck, perhaps even a few snowflakes— he would beam, for it meant a strong shopping
day launch for the pending Christmas season; if, however, it was unseasonably warm (or worse—raining), he would have the look of doom about him. To a retailer, Christmas was indeed "a magic time of year," where months of losses could be completely offset by end-of-the-year economic gains in a matter of a few short weeks.

Just as the company became the center of my father's life, it also overtook my own. Virtually everything I had came from "the store": shirts, pants, socks, and underwear as well as a watch, a Boy Scout uniform, a bike— and a Davy Crockett coonskin cap. It was all Outlet, all the time. (Corporate loyalty was a strong motivator, of course, but the 15% employee discount certainly provided an added incentive.) The store more or less catered to every need: hungry? Try the soda fountain; heels worn? Head to the basement for Sir Allo's white-U-wait shoe repair; eyes bothering you? Stop in to see Dr. Graubart, the resident optometrist.

Going "down to the store," as my mother would put it, was not a casual event in our household. Perhaps it was out of respect for my father's position, or perhaps it was simply the times in which we lived (the 1950s and '60s), but one was expected to be presentable and to represent the family with dignity. Out went the jeans and on went the dress-up trousers; unruly hair was tamped down; proper shoes were laced up. We were heading downtown!

Like the famous voters of Chicago, my mom shopped early and often, frequently with me reluctantly in tow. More of my childhood than I would like to recall was spent wandering the endless aisles of "Misses Dresses," "Foundations," and "Notions." As my mother shopped, I invariably found myself lost among hundreds of racks of unfamiliar garments. Boredom ensued. Sometimes feeling particularly courageous, I would slip off to the Toy Department; other times, I might be found watching daytime television in Appliances.

Typically, such moves required the services of an elevator, all of which were operated by women—generally wisecracking African-American ladies—their gloved hands flying through the air as they expertly manipulated the machinery. More than a few times they were the ones who carried the message that the little boy missing from floor two could now be found on floor four.

I not only passed endless amounts of time in the Outlet; I also spent a good deal of time right outside the front doorway, usually lingering around the Garnet Street entrance, awaiting my father's triumphal exit from another long day's work. He was often—quite literally—the last person to turn out the lights. Although my father generally traveled home by bus when his schedule allowed it, many nights he found himself running late due to an impromptu conference or an emergency.
In such instances, my mother and I would frequently hop in the car in hopes of preemitting a cold dinner. She would wait in the vehicle; my job was to run inside. Over the years, I knew virtually all of the the night watchmen by sight, and they knew me.

By the time I reached high school and was old enough to enter the workforce, my association with the Outlet Company became more formalized. My father was a full-fledged executive by then, and therefore “a boss.” I was sent to Personnel, had an interview, filled out a series of incomprehensible forms, and waited. Eventually, the call came: report for work on a given Saturday before Christmas.

If my hiring smacked of nepotism, more likely the opposite was true: the Personnel staff seemed to go out of its way not to favor me, just as it had with my siblings (one sister recalled dusting telephones on the fifth floor week after week). In a scene right out of “Miracle on 34th Street,” my first assignment was to sit at a small table in a corner, fountain pen in hand, answering letters to Santa Claus. (Like the film, some were addressed to “Santa at the Outlet Company,” others simply bore the inscription “Santa/North Pole.”) Whatever their provenance, they all ended up with adolescent me, in the airless anteroom of the Personnel office, where I—a sixteen-year-old Jewish kid—did my level best to channel Santa to his minions.

Once the letters were exhausted (as was I), my next posting was in the basement. I had apparently succeeded so well that this time I found myself stationed right next to the seat of Christmas power—Santa himself—working as a helpful elf, keeping cranky kids in line, eventually placing them on The Great Man’s lap. It wasn’t bad—until the photo session—when every child was given a free photo session with Santa. Every child—and there were hundreds. All day long. This ensured that each time I turned toward Santa—pop! A huge flashbulb would discharge directly in my face, eliciting wails from an unsuspecting child and momentary blindness for me. My career as an elf, although memorable, was happily brief.

The Greeting Card department operated on a much slower pace: a little on the dull side, true; but no screaming kids, no flashbulbs—mostly elderly patrons this time. I managed to hold my position there for an entire Christmas, with the particular delight of hearing my own father’s voice over the public address system, as he delivered his annual holiday greeting to all employees (which I had written).

Summer found me in the Advertising Department, that nexus where obstinate buyers and grizzled admen (there were few adwomen) came together each day to do battle with deadlines, column inches—and each other. Both sides were under tremendous pressure: buyers had to make their numbers, for they had piles
of goods ordered months before that they now had to move along. A weak ad or bad timing could mean the difference between profit and loss. An adman knew precisely how much time was required to go from ad concept to printed newspaper placement— a period more often than not about twice the time actually available. Somehow, in spite of everything, he had to make the ad happen— on time, within budget.

"I hate it!" "Too small!" "Rework it!" "We've moved up the deadline: I need it tomorrow!" would shriek the buyer, with the now-smoldering Production Manager firing back, "There's nothing wrong with this!" "I can see it perfectly well!" "It looks fine as is!" "Tomorrow? Impossible!" Voice levels would continue to rise; the office would be tense. As a summer trainee, I would often be standing close by while this was happening, saying nothing, all the while my mouth probably agape as the elderly female Foundations buyer did battle with her by then red-faced Production assailant.

The rest of the office culture, however, was generally fine: we'd talk as we worked (sketched, wrote copy), clown around now and then (the glass of lemonade I was given on the hottest day of summer turned out to be anchovy juice), brew coffee or tea constantly. I often did errands, running off to the crosstown typesetter with a last-minute correction or shepherding a final proof down to a buyer's office. It took me the entire summer, though, to discover that scribbled notes to "Matti" at ReproStat House were not an actual person but, rather, a request for a photographic paper finish (matte). I clearly had much to learn.

With my Saturdays generally free during the academic year (because religious school was on Sundays), hints were dropped that it was time to begin earning my own keep at home. Back down to the Outlet I went, this time landing in the fifth-floor stockroom with a school chum, the son of a buyer, where we served under the tutelage of a woman famously known to all as "Big Kate." And she was. All six feet of her. When she summoned a stock boy to retrieve a carton or deliver a product to a lower floor, he hopped to it. But my pal and I did have our moments, as we thrilled to revving up the service elevator between floors to the greatest speeds available.

Buyers from Below occasionally entered our happy little sanctum, prowling the stacked aisles for this or that specialty item. The most serious of these were the men working in handbags and ladies' shoes; they were absolutely no-nonsense as they went about their business, checking the available stock and luxuriating in their trove of purchases.

While my "professional" association with the Outlet Company eventually
tapered off after I left for college, my father continued to rise through the ranks, becoming more and more visible to the public as he and his colleagues moved to open new branch stores, acquire radio and television properties, and expand far beyond Rhode Island's borders. Socially, though, he remained a marked man: he could not buy a quart of milk or attend a party or get a haircut without someone—accosting him about a suit missing a button, a washing machine that was delivered with a slight dent in a rear panel, a radio caller who offended. It never, ever stopped, although he always seemed to accept it with good humor and grace. The story of the Outlet Company's eventual demise, years after my own father had settled into a gentle retirement, is long, complicated—and a little sad. In many ways it parallels what occurred with many regional department stores around the nation, as cost pressures and competition wore them down, leaving the landscape dotted only with the mighty few—mostly colorless big-box behemoths offering cheaply-made goods from abroad at low prices.

The Outlet Company's reach throughout the region had been huge: for many, it was the place they went to buy a first suit, a toaster, a bedroom set, a needle and a thread, snow tires, and a shower curtain. And if you didn't make a purchase at the Outlet, you certainly either heard or saw it every day as you hummed along with WJAR-AM radio or curled up and watched WJAR-TV. Everyone, it seemed, had his or her own Outlet experience.

The closing of the flagship Weybosset Street building, of course, was saddest of all. For years it sat vacant: an empty hulk, mockingly reflecting the broader decline of Providence itself. Where generations had once shopped, celebrated, paraded...there was silence.

More than a decade later, my retired father—now in his spry eighties—began receiving odd phone calls. Although they occurred with some regularity, they were not malicious, merely peculiar, with the unidentified elderly voice on the other end of the line unfailingly polite. "Mr. Logowitz," pleaded the caller, "Bring back the Outlet Company. Please. Bring back the Outlet Company..."
LONG BEFORE E-MAIL:
MARCIA + SHERRI

Recently, when the Bureau of Jewish Education planned to get rid of some old books, I selected a few for the Association's library. One volume seemed particularly intriguing: Rabbi Lee J. Levinger's *A History of the Jews in the United States*, first published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (the Reform movement) in 1930. A standard text for teenage religious school students, the Bureau's copy, representing the twentieth edition, appeared in 1961. In the fifth chapter, "A Thriving Jewish Community Before the Revolution," no fewer than seven pages were devoted to Newport. A color filmstrip with 36 frames, "Judah Touro—Friend of Man," was listed as an audio-visual aid.

The following handwritten letter was found between the book's front cover and title page. Quite likely, the sender and recipient were students at Temple Beth-El. The letter was written after October 1967, when the Midland Mall (later known as Rhode Island Mall) opened in Warwick. The reference to Crestwood was probably to the country club in Rehoboth, which had opened in January 1961.

Marcia-

Well, I have a nice little story to tell you— you know my kind of new shoes with the chain across the top well the side of them broke off & the fake wood that surrounded the back started peeling & on Friday I went with my mother and she went shopping and as I was walking and the heel fell off & I almost broke my neck.

Well, Friday nite my mother & me went back to Bakers at Midland Mall & she had such a fight with that manager that people crowded around to see what was going on. Well, finally the manager gave her her money back.
Marcia-

Well, I have a nice little story to tell you. You know my kind of new shoes with the chain across the top and the side of them broke off and the fake wood that surrounded the heel started peeling. On Friday, I went with my mother and we went shopping and as I was walking to and the heel fell off and I almost broke my neck. Well, Friday night my mother and me went back to Bally's at Midland Mall and she had such a fight with that manager that people crowded around to see what was going on. Well, finally the manager gave her her money back.

So it was 5 minutes before the Mall closed and we went to Shepards and I got this gorgeous pair of shoes. They are kind of fancy. They have a black patent leather toe with holes on the leather and the heel is black patent leather with holes. The rest is regular white leather (not patent) and there is a strap the same size as yours which is white. I could have gotten a pair of Weejuns. But I am afraid to wear them to skool. Do you wear yours to skool?

Sherri

We are going to Crestwood for dinner tonite.
Envelopes, stamps, and cancellations from the first day of issue: May 4, 1936
PROVIDENCE MYTHSCAPES
WILLIAM S. SIMMONS

The author, a modest man, is a scholar, academic administrator, and communal leader. A Providence native and a graduate of Classical High School, he earned his bachelor's degree at Brown in 1960 and his doctorate in anthropology at Harvard in 1967. Although a specialist in the Indians of North America, he has also conducted field work among the Badyranke people of Senegal.

Dr. Simmons spent 28 years on the anthropology faculty at the University of California at Berkeley. In addition to chairing his department, he served as Dean of the Division of Social Sciences and was curator of California ethnology at Berkeley's Hearst Museum of Anthropology. He is a former president of the American Society for Ethnohistory.

In 1998 the author returned to Brown as a professor of anthropology and as Executive Vice President and Provost. He later chaired the anthropology department. Dr. Simmons has continued to teach and write extensively about religion, folklore, American pluralism, and higher education. His current writing projects include a study of supernatural events in King Philip's War and a study about modern research universities.

The author has been a stalwart and sachem of many Rhode Island organizations. Currently president of the Providence Public Library, he also serves as vice president of both the Providence branch of the NAACP and the Rhode Island Historical Society. Reared at Beneficent Congregational Church on Weybosset Street, he is now its co-moderator.

You may have caught a glimpse of Bill near his home on the East Side or on campus. He's the quiet man wearing cowboy boots and a broad-brimmed hat, who befriends strangers as well as students. It is fitting that his office overlooks Hope Street and is a short stroll from his beloved Narragansett Bay.
Mythscapes exist but not in the dictionary, thus giving ample freedom for definition. A mythscape is subjective— but real to the subject. A mythscape is to the landscape as Mount Ararat is to mountains or an eruv is to electrical wires. The older generation teaches it to the young. It connects a community to certain values and definitions of reality that are not individually constructed but collectively transmitted. It moves us in some deep and largely unconscious way that is both felt and moral—it guides and reminds with a certain force. To a degree, it is coercive, and learning it requires discipline. It separates the sacred from the profane, the enchanted from the disenchanted, and one’s community from others. One can describe it as a landscape seen through the eyes of one’s culture.

Communities create mythscapes by projecting their symbols, memories, and meanings into the places they inhabit. They do this in numerous ways, in creation myths, local legends, place-names, sequestered relics, monuments to important people and events, sacred architecture, displays of communal symbols, protected places, fences, walls, boundaries and gates, even musical sounds (such as parish bells) that stand for the community. Mythscapes possess distinctive ways of measuring time and partitioning the year and its rituals. Mythscapes express but are not confined to religious communities and are commonly associated with educational, civic, military, and other institutions. Mythscapes and their symbols vary as communities vary, but they exist in some form as a universal dimension of collective life.

Colleges and universities cherish their mythscapes, even if they have long been secular institutions. Brown University’s Van Wickle Gates are an excellent example of how an educational institution announces through its symbols that the place one is about to enter is a worthy and out-of-the-ordinary place, a meaningful and elevated interior apart from the world. Roman Catholic dioceses and parishes (as opposed to most Protestant congregations, for example) have clearly defined boundaries that in aggregate map the entire city, state, region, and globe.

Providence’s official civic symbol depicts Roger Williams with his group of English settlers at the moment their boat touched shore on the Providence side.
of the Seekonk River en route to their final landing by what is now the Roger Williams National Memorial on North Main Street. On the left side of the seal design, several (probably) Narragansett people wait to greet them on the large slate rock at water’s edge; to the right, from the boat, Williams reaches out to join hands with the Indian leader. Above them are the words “What Cheer.” At this emblematic encounter, according to Providence legend, the Indian spokesman greeted the English with the friendly words, “What Cheer Netop.” What Cheer was a seventeenth-century English greeting already known to the Narragansett. Netop was their word for friend or kinsman, already known to Williams. This sentence combining the two languages, with the scene of the encounter, became the official symbol for Providence. Rhode Islanders who moved away took this symbol with them, as in What Cheer, Iowa, and What Cheer Bed and Breakfast in Newport, New York.

Providence itself, now approaching the 400th anniversary of its founding, is a composite mythscape, containing many layers that constitute its present, a heterogeneous whole that shapes and is shaped by the imprints of many communities. Williams gave Providence its name in 1636 when he and his party of English found a freshwater spring near the river’s edge and knew this would be a good place to live. Before it became Providence, this place was and in certain interesting ways still is a Narragansett Indian mythscape, with an estimated 750,000 previous generations having lived here over some 15,000 years.

To the Narragansett, as with Native American communities throughout North America, the earth had been prepared for their arrival in a series of creations, the final one having been the work of a culture hero, known in the Narragansett language as Wetucks. Roger Williams wrote of Wetucks in his unique book, *A Key into the Language of America*, published in 1643: “They have many strange Relations of one Wetucks, a man that wrought great Miracles amongst them, and walking upon the waters, &c. with some kind of broken Resemblance to the Sonne of God.” When Wetucks completed his work, and people appeared, the geographical features of their territory, hills, waterways, islands, rock formations, cliffs, and the like were already named and their origins explained in the oral accounts of creation. Sakonnet, for example, was named for Wetucks’ wife (translated by Williams to mean the woman’s god), who turned into the stone known today as Sakonnet Rock. Such accounts also described the extent, boundaries, and ruling lineages of their local tribal chiefdoms. When
the Narragansett conveyed the original Providence tract to Roger Williams, it was
mythscape, inhabited by many gods and spirits with territorial boundaries that
they defined with precision. The geographical vocabulary in terms of which they
described their mythscape included such names as Seekonk, Pawtuxet, Pocasset,
Mashapaug, Moshassuck, Woonasquatucket, and Nutakonkanutt, that carried over
into the vocabulary and geography of colonial and contemporary Rhode Island.¹

Williams introduced a novel argument regarding the original ownership
of Indian land; that the tribes rightfully owned the land where they lived and not
a King or Queen in Europe nor the Pope in Rome. Only their sachems had the
authority to give land or trade it away. In accepting the Narragansett site of Provi-
dence designated by the Narragansett sachems, Williams accepted the geographical
names and bounds that spoke for their rightful tribal authority. Providence, a
Hebrew concept embraced by English Puritans, meaning to them God’s blessing,
was physically coterminous with the Narragansett mythscape. The cultural, in this
case, colonial layering of mythscape underpinning Providence had begun.

The degree to which the English of Providence adopted Indian place-
names is unusual in the American colonies, and had something to do with Will-
liams’ world-view and the reciprocal character of intercultural relationships estab-
lished at that time. I asked a Narragansett tribal member who reads and thinks
extensively about her tribal history how she understands the persistence of Narra-
gansett place-names in Rhode Island. To her, it reflected the marginal identities of
Roger Williams and his followers. They valued freedom of conscience and for this
reason were out-of-place in the orthodox Massachusetts Bay Colony. She believed
that Williams and his associates were descended from English Jews who in order
to remain in England had converted to Christianity. Their attachment to religious
freedom derived from this heritage, and explained why they were less deaf to and
more accepting of difference, and thus why they were more likely to adopt rather
than erase the place names of those with whom they had permission to co-exist.
An original and fascinating thought.

Williams grew after his death into a culture hero whose reputation along
with that of Providence and its industrial achievements reached an apotheosis as
the nineteenth century neared its end. At this time, the East Side (the site of the
original settlement) with its College Hill, Brown campus, shaded streets, and old
brick and wooden houses, had acquired a mystique that one had to experience to
truly appreciate. Williams’ descendant, Betsy Williams, who died in 1871, willed
her farm, ponds, and woods, the largest remaining piece of the Williams family an-
cestral property, to the people of Providence for use as a park with the requirement
that the City build a statue there to his memory. On the occasion of the dedication of this statue in what by 1877 had become Roger Williams Park, some 20,000 people, including a chorus of 1,500 schoolchildren, gathered for the unveiling—hosted by Providence Mayor, Thomas A. Doyle, a Protestant of Irish descent. A remarkable procession of dignitaries, officers, Masonic groups including the What Cheer Lodge and the Roger Williams Lodge, and various civic organizations marched in order from Exchange Square to Broad Street, to Elmwood Avenue, to the park at the Providence-Cranston line. There, distinguished speakers celebrated the ideals that Roger Williams had come to symbolize—separation of church and state, freedom of conscience, and Native American rights to their land. The following excerpts from Ceremonies at the Unveiling of the Monument to Roger Williams speak from this occasion:

The City of Providence, founded by Roger Williams in 1636, had seen more than two centuries of prosperous life, had increased till it numbered more than 100,000 inhabitants, had become the second city in New England in wealth and importance, and yet had secured no large public park, and had erected no statue in memory of its founder. Happily, a portion of the farm given to Mr. Williams by his friend, the sachem Miantunnomi, was still in the possession of one of his descendants, and she, his great-great-great-granddaughter, Miss Betsy Williams, in whose character an affectionate veneration for the memory of her ancestor had always been a prominent trait, determined to honor his memory and benefit the city founded by him, by bequeathing to it this tract for a public use.

The farm comprises about 100 acres of plain and woodland, and has many natural advantages for a public pleasure ground. It is the place where the family of Roger Williams lived for many years, where the old homestead still stands, and where many of his descendants lie buried in the ancient Williams burial ground (Ceremonies...page 5).

The Reverend Ezekiel Gilman Robinson, seventh president of Brown University, noted in his prayer of dedication that Williams had contributed not only to the formation of Rhode Island but also the character of the nation:

We bless thy holy name, O thou eternal God, that thou taughtest him to teach thy people reverence for the sacred rights of conscience; that thou madest him to discern and enunciate true principles of religious liberty; that these principles, which seemed so strangely erroneous to those who first heard them, are now the familiar truths of all good government; that these principles going forth in their simplicity and majesty, have to-day become part of the organic laws of every state in our broad land (Ceremonies...page 21).
Brown University Professor of History and Political Economy, Jeremiah Lewis Diman, gave the closing oration, in which he emphasized Williams’ theory of native right to possession and repeated one of his well-known passages regarding the separation of church and state and freedom of religion:

What more fitting site could have been selected than a spot which thus recalls the estimate in which he was held by the original possessors of the soil? (Ceremonies...page 26).

The territory belonged to him alone. In obtaining it he acted on the principle which he had so earnestly avowed, that the Indians were the rightful proprietors of the lands they occupied, and that no English patent could convey a complete title to it (Ceremonies...page 36).

Thus, for the first time in history, a form of government was adopted which drew a clear and unmistakable line between the temporal and the spiritual power, and a community came into being which was an anomaly among the nations (Ceremonies...page 38).

To determine the standard of belief the civil authority must itself be infallible; if permitted to regulate conscience, the magistrate will only make his own views the standard of truth (Ceremonies...page 40).

He affirms that civil society is necessary to the happiness of men, and that to ensure its protection, a sufficient amount of power must be confided to its rulers. But the object of such a society is simply the promotion of civil interests. Still the civil and the spiritual interests of man are so inseparable that even the civil magistrate has duties with reference to religion. If the religion be that one his own conscience approves as true, he is bound to honor it by personal submission to its claims, and by protecting those who practice it; on the other hand, if the religion be false, he still owes it permission and protection. But should a man’s religious opinions lead him to practices which become offensive to the peace and good order of society, the civil magistrate is bound at once to interfere. So long, however, as this line is not passed, not even pagans, Jews, or Turks should be molested by the civil power; or, to quote his (Williams’) own words, “true civility and Christianity may both flourish in a state or kingdom, notwithstanding the permission of divers and contrary consciences, either of Jews or Gentiles” (Ceremonies...page 41).

Betsy Williams’ will included some interesting proscriptions regarding use of this park. As befits a site so sacred to many, she insisted that it not be defiled:

That said farm shall never be sold...it never shall be used for any special punitive or reformative purpose, or for a hospital for any contagious or infectious disease; that no slaughter house, piggery, bone or fat boiling establishment, or any repulsive trade or occupation be allowed thereon; that any public purpose for which the said Farm shall be used shall be named in honor of Roger Williams, as “Roger Williams Park” “Roger Williams Cemetery,” &...
that the city shall maintain a good and becoming fence around the said Burying Ground, and keep the grounds within the enclosure in proper order (Ceremonies... page 6).

By 1877, the time of this dedication, Providence had become a destination for numerous ethnic and religious communities seeking new lives. In their "Introduction" to The Jews of Rhode Island, Ellen Smith and Jonathan Sarna suggest that Rhode Island's early reputation for freedom of conscience may have positively influenced Jewish immigration to Rhode Island:3

Some of the ideas that underlay Rhode Island's creation would, in time, have dramatic impact on Jews. Roger Williams hinted at this in 1644 when, on a visit to England to obtain Rhode Island's original charter, he argued for according Jews liberty of conscience and sided with those who advocated their readmission into England. Subsequently, Rhode Island's 1663 charter became the first in North America that provided for religious liberty as part of a colony's organic law (page 1).

Shalom Goldman, in his essay, "Christians, Jews, and the Hebrew Language in Rhode Island," also in The Jews of Rhode Island, thought it likely that Williams' Hebraic interests and theological views set a positive direction for Rhode Island's cultural and religious development:

Though the leap made by modern authors from Hebraism to philo-Semitism is often too easily made, in Williams' case it would seem that the leap is justified. His abiding interest in the biblical languages and his advocacy of the admission of the Jews to England set the stage for the admission of Jews to Rhode Island. Williams thus set the tone for Rhode Island's cultural and religious future; the ideological function of Hebrew in Williams' thought was later manifested in Rhode Island cultural life.

Cultural institutions which developed in eighteenth-century Rhode Island, among them Newport's Redwood Library and Brown University, demonstrated an unusual connection between Hebraism and the Jewish community. The Jews of Rhode Island played a role in the formation and growth of these institutions (page 133).

Solomon Pareira, the first known permanent Jewish resident of Providence, arrived in 1838. By 1849, he and others created a Jewish cemetery on Reservoir Avenue (then known as the New London turnpike) in Cranston, inches from the Providence line, on the edge of Mashapaug Brook, the original boundary. This cemetery served several early congregations, including B'nai Israel (1854), Sons of David (1870), and the merged Congregation Sons of Israel and David (1874), which became informally known after 1911 as Temple Beth-El (231–33). Beth-El, which subsequently moved to the East Side of Providence in 1954, still owns and
operates this cemetery.

Of the several early Jewish neighborhoods in Providence, Willard Avenue in South Providence is by far the best known. Eleanor F. Horvitz' essay, "Old Bottles, Rags, Junk! The Story of the Jews of South Providence," also in The Jews of Rhode Island, captures in detail (including street numbers of homes and businesses) the intensity of family, religious, and commercial life in this neighborhood in the early to mid-twentieth century:

For the first families who settled in South Providence, there were no synagogues. Sadie Jacobs spoke of her family having to travel to What Cheer Hall on North Main Street for the High Holidays (page 47).

Sarah Webber has vivid memories of an Orthodox service to which she was taken by her grandfather when she was a very small child. The High Holiday service was held in the upstairs rooms of the What Cheer Hall.

"My grandfather was one of the oldest present. There were great big tall candles, taller than I was, very large in circumference, and they would be stuck in sand. My grandfather would be the head reader at the lectern, and he would be wearing a white wool kittel that covered him from head to foot, and he would wear white wool stockings and no shoes. The smell of camphor intermingled with the smell of spice and citron which the women carried, because they were fasting, and they kept it handy in case they might faint" (pages 48-49).

People would congregate at our house before daily services. It was because we had a big seven room house, whereas so many had only three rooms. We owned the house at 205 Willard Avenue. It was a large six-terement house, and my family occupied the middle floor (page 41).

There were at least four-to-a-bedroom, ten in our house. In addition there were always one or two strangers in the house who had just come to the country, and you had to take them in (page 42).

From Plain Street they came, and Prairie Avenue and Robinson, Dudley and Blackstone Streets, from all the neighborhood homes to the little red brick building on Gay Street. It was a public bath house, and Friday was the busiest day. There were two entrances, one for men and one for women (page 42).

Came Sunday, who could afford to go out anywhere? Berman, the butcher, had a horse and buggy and would pile in the family and go to Roger Williams Park... Most people did not have a buggy, so they went with a man named Ehrenkrantz, a mover, who had a long moving van (horse-drawn) with seats on both sides (page 45).

Harold L. Bloom, in his essay, "Tales of an American Shtetl, Part I," provides several vivid accounts of the interweaving of religion, work, time, and cleanli-
ness in Willard Avenue life:

In preparation for Saturday night, my father would let himself into the shop as soon as the first shadows of evening heralded the end of the Sabbath.... Moving at top speed in semi-darkness, he would have it all ready in time for 'lights on' when full darkness set in.

When the lights were turned on, the shop would shine like a new dime. Almost everything was white and spotless. (I knew because I was there scrubbing on Friday before we closed for the Sabbath....) (page 606).

Whether it was... my father's passion for cleanliness, or a requirement of the... religious organization that oversaw the maintenance of kosher standards... the object of the cleaning process was to remove any trace of our product from the work area (page 607).

Although Willard Avenue lives for now in memories and has been recorded in writing and photographs, no physical memorial or commemorative event marks the place, largely obliterated by urban renewal and blight. Street signs, some tenement buildings, and a closed synagogue--but no living Jewish neighborhood--exist there today. Little sense of the emotional connection felt in this place was transferred to the place itself (in the form of monuments, historic house signs, etc.). When the congregations left, they took what was holy with them and located it in its new home. George M. Goodwin noted, with respect to Temple Beth-El's move from Broad Street to Orchard Avenue, that "several liturgical objects and plaques" were conveyed to the new building. Of the old temple building, Goodwin noted: "Who knows what will become of this once imposing and celebratory structure? Jewish tradition contains no provisions for burying deconsecrated buildings."6

Ezekiel would have understood. While scattered from their place, Israel, the synagogue, not the place, was their sanctuary. "Thus saith the L-rd G-d; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.... I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel" (Ezekiel 11: 16-17).

Another large Jewish neighborhood existed on North Main Street, essentially overlapping the northern half of the original Providence settlement, including Williams' old neighborhood and spring. The property with the spring passed into Jewish hands and was then given back to the City of Providence in 1931 by J. Jerome Hahn, "in Memory of His Father Isaac Hahn the First Citizen of the Jew-
ish Faith to be Elected to Office by the Voters of Providence." French ethnologist Marcel Mauss wrote an important essay, "Essai sur le don," translated into English as a book, The Gift, in which he made the point that societies are held together by the power of the gift—things given and received and trust built by the obligation to return. Had Mauss known of this exchange in Providence, he would have seen it as an affirmation of his point.7

These vignettes represent just a few of the religious, ethnic, and educational communities that constitute the meaning of Providence. By mythscapes, I mean the values, habits, and symbols that characterize these communities and the culturally specific ways in which they adapt to and identify with the place. The variety of distinct mythscapes in Providence past and present is stunning. This takes us to the larger issue of what kind of people we think we are, not only in Providence (which is an excellent metaphor for the whole), but on the scale of a nation. The ideal limits of such thought are assimilation into the melting pot at one extreme and erecting boundaries that safeguard specific values, habits, and symbolic commitments at the other. Our national genius (or as the Romans would say, our genius loci) allows us to do both. Williams early on envisioned a key to the social logic necessary for people with diverse values, world-views, and sacred symbols to govern themselves while differing on primary religious fundamentals. He imagined a civic order that would make other more explicitly religious mythscapes possible. No wonder then, that his name and symbols are widely present in the civic sphere—schools, parks, public monuments, names of streets, businesses, banks, and civic organizations, commemorative coins, and most visibly, the city's seal. I'm guessing that he would have been proud to know that early Jewish residents of Providence observed High Holiday services in What Cheer Hall on North Main Street, his old neighborhood.
ENDNOTES
1 Roger Williams’ A Key Into the Language of America, published in 1643, is largely about the language and culture of the Narragansett of seventeenth-century Rhode Island. It is the first systematic English language account by one who understood the native language written about a Native American people. In it he ponders the ways in which their customs resemble those of the ancient Israelites. This is an extremely rare book but has been reprinted. Both the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University and the Rhode Island Historical Society Library on Hope Street own copies of the original 1643 edition. For further accounts of Wamquins, and other myths and legends known to the Narragansett and other nearby Algonquian communities such as the Pequot, Wampanoag, Mohegan, and Massachuset, see my book on this subject, Spirit of the New England Tribes: Indian History and Folklore, 1620-1984 (University Press of New England 1986).

2 A detailed account of this dedication and the accompanying orations appear in Ceremonies at the Unveiling of the Monument to Roger Williams Erected by the City of Providence with the Address by J. Lewis Diman, October 16, 1877 (Providence: Angell, Hammett & Co. 1877).


4 Harold Bloom’s essay appears in Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes 15(4): November 2010, pages 600-11. Other essays in this volume also illuminate the remembered Willard Avenue community.

5 This passage appears in Goodwin’s article, “The Manifold Meanings of Synagogue Architecture” in the “Opinion” section of The Providence Journal, Wednesday, August 3, 2011.


PROVIDENCE MYTHSCAPES
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IN THE LAND OF THE JONNYCAKE:
MY ROGER WILLIAMS

MICHAEL FINK

Though not quite as well known as Williams, Mike has become a Rhode Island and Jewish institution. Wherever he wanders, RISD students, alumni, friends, and neighbors eagerly greet him. While listening to his wit and wisdom, they note his sartorial splendor and graceful gestures.

Unlike many professors, Mike is intrigued by what he does not know and can never know. He likes questions better than answers and perhaps poetry better than prose. French sounds like his native tongue.

Though Mike eats very little, he is an omnivorous consumer of cinema. There is hardly a film he has not seen. Images of Garbo, Dietrich, and Zsa Zsa dance through his memory and imagination. Given his love of chivalry, it seems quite natural for Mike to address his youthful wife as "Lady" Michael.

So why has he chosen to write an ode to Roger Williams? Because he gravitates toward ghosts and gypsies? Because he likes celebrations, and this year is Providence's 375th birthday? Because Mike is an ornithologist, and Williams was both a dove and a hawk? Whatever the reasons, Mike thanks the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, which helped sponsor his odyssey.

The name "Roger Williams" was imprinted upon my earliest memories. I was born, in 1933, at the edge of Roger Williams Park. My mother strolled me in a wicker carriage from Verdale Avenue into the green world with the 1877 bronze statue of the founder of this realm looming high above its merry-go-round, its aviary and zoo, its Eden and Noah's Ark among the carefully tended trees, its lakes and gates, its museum of natural history.

In 1936, Providence celebrated the three hundredth anniversary of its establishment as the "shelter for the distressed." I have a commemorative half-dollar of that event, and the federal government issued a Roger Williams Tercentenary stamp (3 cents). That same year our family moved to the house in which I still live. In those days, neighborhoods, like small satellites, kept their own histories. My, our, house, with its brick gable, tall chimney, oft-used hearth, was but a few footsteps from the grammar school on Summit Avenue. In that kindergarten we first
learned the details about the legacy of Roger Williams. More than Rhode Island's founder, he was held up to us as a secular saint.

It was already the time of war in Europe— a religious war— in which Jews were scapegoats and victims. Here in Rhode Island there was a quite different tradition.

"Soul Liberty"— the prelude to the Bill of Rights, the separation of church and state— was the succinct credo of Roger Williams. In 1939 his statue was dedicated in Prospect Park, hands stretched in protective blessing over the city he had founded to uphold freedom of conscience. Not for himself only, but for all. It honored "one who recoiled from the oppressions, the scourgings, the banishment, the purging, of a world where force held sway and reason was unfree," in the words of the unveiling. Not that Rhode Island and Providence Plantations held a unique record or tradition of tolerance, but that we had aspired to that ideal.

There is, of course, no record of Roger Williams's face and form. Artists have tried to create versions of his countenance and profiles of his journeys on foot
or by boat. Legend, myth, imagination— the projection of the artist or viewer upon
the renowned words of his extensive writings— are what we have.²

This story is about my own pursuit of the Roger Williams in whose paths I
have passed most of my own pilgrimage, in Providence and elsewhere. I put pen to
paper with some anecdotes, and with photographs taken mostly by Alan Metnick,
to gather and submit to readers for their own considerations of the charm, the nos-
talgia, the charisma, the power, not only of Roger Williams, but also of the legacy
of which we are all happy and still struggling heirs.

My report includes visits to the actual historic routes and spots marking
the flight from Massachusetts and the pitching of tents and the digging of wells for
the new colony, the promised land pledged by the pastor. "After you have got over
some foul brook of bondage, tear not down the bridge after you, leaving no pittance
for the souls that come after you."

My project also concerns the paintings, sculptures, and an engraving
created by designers and dreamers who discovered the prophetic wisdom of the
Williams personality and character (and who were eager to benefit from it). My
research was done on foot and with a camera, a literal rather than a virtual or schol-
arily voyage. I revisited the stone icons and markers, the bronze statue at Roger
Williams University in Bristol, and even the plaster half-statue given by the Roger
Williams Savings and Loan Association to the Roger Williams National Memorial
on North Main Street. I looked for signs on avenues and alleyways bearing the
names of Roger and his descendants.

I also revisited two paintings of Williams, both mid-nineteenth-century de-
pictions of his journey to the land of the jonnycake. The first was Alonzo Chappel's
painting of 1858, The Landing of Roger Williams, in the RISD Museum. Upstairs
in Pendleton House, I stood before my favorite small painting in the museum and
took note of every detail of that treasure. The artist showed deep courtesy
to the Narragansetts, who offered a peace pipe and fresh
vegetables and fruits to the English outcasts from Mass-
sachusetts. Both groups include women and children at
the meeting. The colors of the sky and of the settlers' cos-
tumes are somber and sober, while the people who greet
them are colorful and stately. The Indians have a bird, per-
haps suggesting peace, on the wrist of the sachem.

How accurate is Chappel's version? Curators
claim the bird is not native, and the Narragansetts reflect a
romantic view of native peoples of the Caribbean. Further,
the scene is derived from Benjamin West's famous painting of 1772, *William Penn's Treaty with the Indians*, which belongs to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Nevertheless, the allegory, the metaphor, shows clearly what Roger Williams had experienced, and had witnessed, of his reception. That it was a rescue, a redemption, a reminder of the courtesy and freedom due to all peoples and all languages.

The second painting I revisited was Peter Frederick Rothermel's of 1850, *The Banishment of Roger Williams*, which belongs to the Rhode Island Historical Society and is stored in its John Brown House Museum. "Roger" looks not at native hosts but at the artist or viewer. He bears a traveler's stick, wears strong boots, and moves through a forest of ancient trees. It is more like a romantic's symbolic stride through nature toward a private pact within himself.

Park Rangers at the Roger Williams National Memorial on North Main Street, opposite where Williams's home once stood, speculate that he knew John Milton, who may indeed have based the personality of Satan in *Paradise Lost* in part upon the difficult, proud, strongly individualistic nature of Roger Williams. Ranger John McNiff, in his public talks and chats, also asks whether Williams read Shakespeare; was a cousin of Oliver Cromwell; and how he both contributed to and reflected the influence of other major intellectual figures of his time.

Thanks to the extraordinarily knowledgeable, lively, and eloquent McNiff, I also found out about the Roger Williams statue in Geneva. It is one of ten stone statues portraying founders of the Reformation, which were erected in 1917 on the grounds of the University of Geneva (which had been founded by John Calvin). This summer, after teaching at the RISD campus in Rome, I flew to Geneva to snap a shot of that statue. Williams carries a Bible, book or personal journal, with the two strong words "Soul" and "Liberty," and the year 1636 carved into the pedestal. The Reformation monument expresses the pride of Geneva in its tradition of welcoming free thought and open discussion, as well as something of the hopes in the postwar period in Europe that those newly declared freedoms had something

*La Montagne's statues at Roger Williams University*
of a birthplace in Geneva.

Earlier proof that Roger Williams no longer belongs exclusively to local lore is found in Washington, DC. In 1870, when Congress authorized the creation of the National Statuary Hall, each state was invited to commission and donate two statues of its famous citizens within the Capitol. Rhode Island’s first marble, portraying Nathanael Greene, was carved by Henry Kirke Brown and deposited in 1870. The second marble, portraying Williams, was carved by Franklin Simmons and deposited two years later. (A bronze version of this statue is the basis for the monument in Roger Williams Park.) Beginning in 1933, however, due to overcrowding, many marbles and bronzes have been removed from Statuary Hall and displayed elsewhere in the Capitol. As a result, the Greene statue is now visible in the Crypt, and the Williams statue has been relegated to a niche on the second floor of the Senate wing. In a sense, Williams has become the victim of another banishment.3

The thrust of my Williams pilgrimage was to obtain direct contact with things: an adventure of time and effort, to get not just the facts but the impressions of the facts. So in Providence I also went to the John Carter Brown Library to hold in my hands the actual book, The Blowy Tenant of Persecution (1644), in which Williams first put forth on brown paper his attack upon the intolerance of European religions. The librarians carefully set up the tiny volume upon a pillow by a lamp. I posed with the book in my hands as a symbol of the physicality and drama of my pilgrimage.

With each encounter of Williams, there was also some humor and a few touches of surprise. Is it true, or myth, that when the sculptor Armand LaMontagne searched for a face for his bronze statue of Williams, at Roger Williams University in Bristol, he actually used Red Sox champion Ted Williams’s countenance? For the pun of it, or the fun of it? Did other artists actually interview some of Roger’s descendants to make a guess as to his features and expressions?

I went to meet Margaret Devoe Gidley, my Hope High School classmate of 1951, who claims descent not only from Roger, but from “every street name on the East Side.” (Her nickname was “Dazzle,” and her sister’s was “Razzle.”) I remembered Margaret as a forceful as well as friendly young person, with strong opinions and a definite voice in school elections. Was she, even after all those generations, still the bearer of the energies and eccentricities of her ancestor? I wanted to include her photograph among the images I mix and combine in this montage and article.

My summer retreat in Middlebridge, also known as Wakefield or South Kingstown or Saunderstown, is directly across Pettaquamscutt Road from “Treaty
Rock"—a dark craggy tor overlooking the entire river system from the Gilbert Stuart Birthplace in North Kingstown to the dunes in Narragansett. South Kingstown dedicated it as a park in 1958, the summer of my first semester as an instructor at RISD. I climbed the miniature cliff with my mother, and took snapshots of the rocks, the scrub pines and, of course, the plaque, featuring the name Roger Williams. In 1637, probably at this site, he and William Coddington met with a group of Narragansett sachems to purchase the land that became Providence and Aquidneck Island. "Roger"—the name derives from the symbol of a spear— but our Roger bore instead the pen of peace, respect, and justice.

Perhaps of most importance and relevance for The Notes, I mention the Loeb Visitors Center in Newport, which shares a garden with Touro Synagogue. There is a large reproduction of an engraved portrait of Williams by Frederick W. Halpin. The original engraving was made in 1847 and belongs to the New York Public Library. Williams is given major credit for the very existence of a Jewish community in Newport.

He is also recognized as a powerful influence on the evolution of George Washington's famous letter to the Newport congregation. The first president promised that the new country would give "to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance." No matter how often one reads or recites those phrases, they still resonate, resounding through the centuries.

Roger Williams has followed me from the high hopes of the Depression era into which I was born, through the Four Freedoms for which my uncles and

Williams descendants at Roger Williams University, 2003: quindicennial of his birth
cousins fought in World War II. Roger also seemed, in my life, to be a welcoming figure when I first returned to Rhode Island in 1957 after my years of study abroad and among other cities and states of our America. I remember thinking, at each well and wall, at each painting and sculpture, "If this my friends but knew," they would not forget me or pass me by. Williams is a true friend of the distressed, in whatever shape distress may take, then, now, or ever.

There is a legend that an apple tree absorbed Roger Williams's remains. It reminds me of the Torah story about the mandrake that rescued Leah from neglect and her distress and brought her good fortune. But the Roger Williams-apple tree root, preserved by the Rhode Island Historical Society, is displayed in the former garage of its John Brown House Museum.

Perhaps this allusion to a garden of good will is why J. Jerome Hahn, Rhode Island's first Jewish judge of the Superior Court, gave the Roger Williams Spring on North Main Street to the City of Providence for use as a park. The gift was made in 1931 to honor Hahn's father, Isaac, the first Jew elected a state representative. The park became the seed for the Roger Williams National Memorial.

At a fine dinner attended by Israelis and Holocaust survivors, the age-old question was asked, "What is a Jew?" I said, in response, "Anyone who loves or helps the Jews is a Jew." So, mostly in modest jest, I confer upon Roger Williams all the blessings one owes to a Hebrew prophet.⁴

Of course, to Rogers' portraits we have to add a Yankee and a Jewish trait. He was an argumentative and zealous soul, who rowed his bark along all of Rhode Island's rivers and estuaries to contend with friend and foe alike.

THE FOLLOWING NOTES ARE THE EDITOR'S.

1 The federal government has issued the following 15 stamps related to Rhode Island: 1871, Oliver Hazard Perry (90 cents); 1894, Oliver Hazard Perry ($1); 1936, Nathanael Greene and George Washington at Mt. Vernon ($1); 1940, Gilbert Stuart (1 cent); 1953, Matthew Perry and the opening of Japan centenary (5 cents); 1960, Providence, first automated post office in the country (4 cents); 1968, state flag of 1775 (6 cents); 1976, state flag (13 cents); 1978, George M. Cohan (15 cents); 1979, windmill (15 cents); 1982, Touro Synagogue in honor of 250th anniversary of George Washington's birth (20 cents); 1982, Rhode Island red rooster and violet flower (20 cents); 1988, ratification of the Constitution (Rhode Island the last state, 1790) (25 cents); 1990, bicentenary of Rhode Island with scene of Slater Mill (25 cents); 2002, greetings from Rhode Island (34 cents). The federal government has also issued seven pieces of postal stationery and postcards (1980-99) related to Rhode Island.

2 For a masterful explanation of Roger Williams's evolving significance to historians, see: Anthony O. Carlino, "Roger Williams and His Place in History: The Background and the Last Quarter Century," Rhode Island History LVIII (2000), 34-71. One of William's most important, late-nineteenth-century biographers was Oscar S.
Straus (1850-1926), a Jewish multitasker. He was a prominent lawyer in New York City, the first Jewish cabinet member (President Theodore Roosevelt’s Secretary of Commerce and Labor), and served three times as ambassador to Turkey. Straus wrote Roger Williams: Pioneer of Religious Liberty (1894). Carlino characterized Straus’s portrayal of Williams in “heroic terms”: as “one who wrestled against the forces of darkness, who fought against evil and the powers of an oppressive government that would rob humanity of true liberty, and who maintained a sweet temperament all the while, repaying good for evil.” Straus also wrote The Development of Religious Liberty in the United States (1896) and received an honorary doctorate from Brown University the same year.

Straus, who was a president of the American Jewish Historical Society and owned a Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington, was the father of Roger Williams Straus, Sr. (1891-1957). He was a founder of the National Conference of Christian and Jews and was a president of the Reform movement’s National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods.

Roger Williams Straus, Jr. (1917-2004), who experienced anti-Semitism as a student at St. George’s School in Middletown, is best known as a cofounder of the publishing house, Farrar, Straus & Giroux. He was the father of Roger Williams Straus, III (1943-).

3 There is still another example of a banishment. In 1901, New York University dedicated its Hall of Fame of Great Americans in the Bronx rather than in Manhattan. The Hall was actually an enormous colonnade designed by the leading beaux-arts architect, Stanford White. The plan to commission and erect bronze busts of Great Americans was to continue in perpetuity. A bust of Roger Williams by Herman A. MacNeil was added in 1920. By the 1970s, however, NYU decided to abandon the Hall of Fame. It was purchased by New York state and given to Bronx Community College, which cannot afford to maintain it or continue adding busts.

4 Williams read Hebrew, had a biblical knowledge of Israelites, and gained some understanding of Jews’ suffering before their expulsion from England in 1290. In The Bloody Tenant of Persecution, he also championed Jews’ return. But did he ever meet a Jew? During the 1650s, while Oliver Cromwell unofficially allowed Sephardic and crypto-Jewish merchants to live in London, there were perhaps only a few dozen families. Williams lived in London from 1652-54, but the likelihood of an encounter seems remote at best.

Rhode Island’s founder was acquainted with leading English clergy who supported the readmission of Jews either as a matter of religious liberty or, through their conversion, as a catalyst to speed the Second Coming. By contrast, Cromwell, England’s Lord Protector, foresaw Jews’ usefulness in international trade.

Judging from a letter written on February 15, 1654/55, to John Winthrop Jr. (later a governor of Connecticut), Williams appears to have read Menasseh ben Israel’s book, The Hope of Israel, which had been published in 1650 in Latin and in English and six years later in Dutch. Amsterdam’s brilliant Sephardic rabbi, who corresponded with many Protestant theologians and scholars and received some in his home, was the most learned and influential exponent for Jews’ legal return to England. Indeed, from 1655-57, Menasseh lived in London to petition for their homecoming. Though he enjoyed Cromwell’s personal support, his efforts were unsuccessful at that time.

Williams and Menasseh were men of God. As dreamers, activists, and outcasts, they also would have enjoyed a sense of kinship.

THE FATE OF THE WASHINGTON LETTER

PAUL BERGER AND COLLEAGUES

When it comes to Rhode Island Jewish history, there is only one Washington letter. He wrote it to Newport's Hebrew congregation in the summer of 1750. Before the ratification of the Bill of Rights on December 15, 1791, this letter was the new nation's clearest and most eloquent expression of religious liberty and tolerance. It probably still is.

The Washington letter is owned by the secretive Morris Morgenstern Foundation. Two contemporaneous copies belong to the collection of Washington papers in the Library of Congress. The letter was first published on October 8, 1790 in New London’s Connecticut Gazette.

Of course the letter and the place where it was delivered and read should be inseparable. Congregation Jeshuat Israel’s Touro Synagogue, stately and luminous, embodies the letter’s significance.

It would be a serious error to overlook Moses Seixas’ stirring letter to Washington, which elicited such a principled and heartfelt response. Seixas’s letter, which was written on August 17, 1790 in his capacity as congregational “warden,” also belongs to the Washington papers in the Library of Congress. It is too often forgotten that Seixas and Washington also corresponded as fellow Freemasons.

During June and July of 2011, it was not only appropriate but necessary for the Forward, once a Yiddish newspaper founded in New York City, to inquire about the fate of the original Washington epistle. Not only did a reporter, Paul Berger, investigate its ownership, condition, and visibility, but its editorial staff, including executive editor Jane Eisner, explained what must be done. With deep respect and enormous gratitude, our Association acknowledges the Forward’s permission to republish its two articles and two editorials in our pages.

PART I: PUBLISHED ON JUNE 15, 2011
Solving the Mystery of Washington’s Famous Letter:
How Did It End Up in a Suburban Warehouse?
It started as a mystery.

During a lecture in England last December, Jonathan Sarna, America’s foremost scholar of American Jewish history, said he did not know the whereabouts of one of American Jewry’s most important documents: George Washing-
ton's letter to the Hebrew Congregation, in Newport, R.I.

Upon this yellowed piece of 18th-century rag paper is a short but powerful statement from the first president of the United States reassuring one of the original colonial congregations that his nascent government guaranteed religious liberty for all.

"For, happily," Washington wrote to the Jews of Newport in 1790, "the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support."

More than a vital piece of American Jewish history, the letter is one of the primary documents guaranteeing religious tolerance in America, its famous words still quoted by community leaders and politicians whenever they want to underline America's commitment to religious liberty.

But where is the letter?

After months of searching, the Forward has found the elusive letter in an art storage facility in a squat, nondescript building in an industrial park in Maryland, a stone's throw from the home of the Washington Redskins, at FedEx Field. The letter is owned by the Morris Morgenstern Foundation and has been on loan to the B'nai B'rith Klutznick National Jewish Museum for more than 50 years.

The letter has not always been hidden from sight— it was originally dis-
played in the exhibition hall of B’nai B’rith International’s headquarters, on Rhode Island Avenue, in Washington. But when B’nai B’rith sold that building and moved to smaller offices in 2002, there was no longer space for the entire collection, and so a significant portion of it was put into storage.

Over the years, the Library of Congress asked for permission to exhibit the letter, as did the new National Museum of American Jewish History. All requests were denied. During the Forward’s investigation, it became clear that many scholars did not even know where it was, who owned it and why it was not on public view.

B’nai B’rith would not give permission to publish a photograph of the original letter in the Forward.

Washington’s correspondence to Newport’s Hebrew Congregation is not the only letter he wrote to the Jewish community at that time. Washington wrote two more letters: one to the community in Savannah, Ga; the other, a combined letter to the communities in New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, S.C., and Richmond, Va.

Newport was singled out, Sarna explained, as part of a public relations campaign Washington waged on behalf of the new U.S. Constitution. Though the
While I receive, with much satisfaction,
your address respecting the reception of affection
and esteem; and rejoicing in the opportunity of assuring
you, that I shall always retain a grateful remem-
berence of the cordial welcome I experienced in
my visit to Newport, from all classes of citizens.

Constitution needed to be ratified by only nine of the original 13 states, Washington
wanted a unanimous vote. "Rhode Island was the great holdout," Sarna said,
because it thought that it would be bullied into signing."

So Washington made a deal: If Rhode Island approved the Constitution,
Washington and his entourage would personally make a state visit there.

After Rhode Island ratified the Constitution, Washington and Thomas Jeff-
erson toured the state in August 1790, stopping in Providence and Newport.

In Newport, Moses Seixas, president of the local congregation, presented a
communication on behalf of the Jewish community, praising Washington's victory
and giving thanks for the establishment of a government that guaranteed "civil and
religious liberty."

Indeed, were it not for Seixas's eloquence—his letter expressed gratitude for
the establishment of "a Government, which to bigotry gives no sanction, to
persecution no assistance"—then perhaps Washington's response, which copies
Seixas's phrasing almost word for word, would not be nearly as powerful as it is
today.

Steve Frank, chief interpretative officer of the National Constitution Cen-
ter, said that Washington replied to many religious groups and communities in
those days. But the Newport letter is special precisely because of the language.
"The ringing tones of the declaration really set it apart," Frank said.

But when Frank was asked where he thought the letter was, he, like Sarna,
was unsure.

Other scholars were puzzled, too. Susan Malbin, director of library and
archives at the American Jewish Historical Society, said she did not know where to
find the letter. Sharon Mintz, curator of Jewish art at the library of the Jewish Theo-
logical Seminary, did not know where to find it either. Neither did Tony Michels,
professor of history and Jewish studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison,
while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig-tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the Father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy.

G. Washington

nor Zachary Baker, curator of the Judaica and Hebraica collections at Stanford University.

Finally, Sharon Bender, B’nai B’rith’s spokeswoman, said that a private organization, the Morris Morgenstern Foundation, owned the letter and had loaned it to B’nai B’rith about 50 years ago. “Our current offices do not have space for a museum,” she wrote in an e-mail. “Therefore, the letter is now stored in a climate-controlled fine arts storage facility and is not readily accessible.”

If you want to see the Declaration of Independence, you can go to the National Archives. If you want to see Washington’s letter to the Jews of New York, Philadelphia, Charleston and Richmond, you can go to the new Jewish history museum in Philadelphia.

But if you want to see Washington’s letter to the Jews of Newport, you have to drive about 25 minutes from downtown Washington, to an art storage facility in suburban Maryland. And you’re not allowed to ask any questions.

Such were the conditions laid down by B’nai B’rith for the Forward’s June 10 visit to Artex Fine Art Services. There, in a warehouse, atop a pallet covered by a blue drop cloth and flanked by two Artex employees and Cheryl Kempler, the museum’s sole remaining employee, is Washington’s letter.

The letter is extremely sensitive to light, heat and humidity. Even during the Klutznick Museum’s heyday, when it attracted about 40,000 visitors a year, the document was on display only a couple of months of the year.

The Artex employees ensured that the temperature in the warehouse was carefully controlled. Dwarfed by towering shelves and enormous, canvas-shaped cardboard boxes, the 220-year-old letter looked fragile. There are no distinguishing features—no letterhead, stamp or seal—just row upon row of very straight, handwritten lines.

Ahead of this visit, James Hutson, chief of the manuscript division at the
Library of Congress, had advised that the most important factor to note was the condition of the paper. To the untrained eye, the letter looked fine. It was resting on what seemed to be a piece of cardboard and had been covered by what looked like acid-free paper.

"The lines are very straight," Bender said.

Anyone who has tried to chase down the whereabouts of Washington's letter has ended the search at the Morgenstern foundation.

Morgenstern's life— he died in 1969— has a Horatio Alger ring to it that is common to Jews of a certain era. He grew up on Manhattan's Lower East Side in the late 19th century, and made his first living selling newspapers and shining shoes.

Somehow, he parlayed such humble beginnings into a career as a wealthy financier and philanthropist who, according to The New York Times, often claimed to have "the most diversified philanthropic portfolio in the United States."

"He was an exuberant person," said Howard Rubenstein, a New York PR guru whose clients include the New York Yankees and Rupert Murdoch. "He was short— maybe 5' 2"— but he was very tall in spirit."

Fifty years ago, Morgenstern was Rubenstein's first big client. And Washington's letter was the fulcrum around which their relationship revolved.

"He cherished the letter," Rubenstein said. "There were many times when he slept with it under his bed."

Because Rubenstein knew how much Morgenstern loved the letter, he suggested that a special award be created in its name. Following that advice, Morgenstern had a copy of the letter framed and would present it to prominent people, along with a donation to a charity of their choice.

Over the years that followed, Rubenstein said he arranged audiences with former presidents Herbert Hoover and Harry Truman and with future presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. The photograph from at least one of those meetings has pride of place on the wall in Rubenstein's Midtown offices. "Everywhere we went," Rubenstein said, "if I said we have the letter, the doors opened; and Morris loved the glory of promoting that language."

After Morgenstern died, Rubenstein lost touch with his family. But he did say that he knew the sole director of the foundation, Morgenstern's son Frank.

"Frank was always very reluctant to take center stage in terms of publicity," Rubenstein said. "He was very modest."

Frank Morgenstern is, indeed, a private man. Paul Goodnough, an accountant who answered the phone registered to the Morris Morgenstern Foundation,
said Morgenstern did not want to speak to a reporter. "They're very private people," he said of the family.

It's unclear exactly when Morgenstern bought the letter or for how much. An article in the New York Amsterdam News in 1951 claimed that Morgenstern acquired the letter in 1949. The most recent public filings for the foundation list among its assets "historical documents" that it says, were purchased for $15,000 and currently have a "market value" of $300,000.

But the actual value of the letter is likely much higher.

Seth Kaller, a dealer in rare coins and documents, said the most recent sale of a George Washington letter, at Christie's in 2009, fetched $3.2 million. David Redden, a Sotheby's vice chairman, estimated that the Newport document would likely fetch between $5 million and $10 million today. "It's an astonishing letter," he said.

For now, anyone willing to see copies and reproductions of Washington's letter has very few options.

The foundation recently gave permission for the owners of the newly built Ambassador John L. Loeb Jr. Visitors Center, in Newport, to re-photograph the letter. The center, close to the historic Touro Synagogue, used the high-resolution photographs for its multimedia exhibit, which is run by the George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom.

But such acts of beneficence by the foundation are rare. It has maintained a tight grip on the rights to the letter.

That is why there is no photograph of Washington's letter accompanying this article.

In response to a request for an image, the museum said, "B'nai B'rith International does not grant permission for that photo to be published by the Forward."

Even the new NMAJH was refused permission to display a photograph of the letter. "We do display a reproduction of the letter," said Michael Rosenzweig, president and CEO. "It's a facsimile of a reproduction of the letter, written by Washington's secretary."

Indeed, this facsimile of the copy of Washington's letter, which was noted in Washington's secretary's letter book and is owned by the Library of Congress, is often used in place of the original letter.

Rosenzweig said he would prefer to have the original letter, or even a facsimile of the original letter. He said that B'nai B'rith had even asked the foundation on the museum's behalf, for permission to display Washington's letter.
Bender, B’nai B’rith’s spokeswoman, said that the museum “would be a wonderful venue for this important letter.” She could not say why the request had been denied. “You’d have to ask the Morgenstern Foundation,” she wrote in an e-mail.

“We are the only museum anywhere dedicated exclusively to telling the story of American Jewish history, and as the National Museum of American Jewish History, we would love to be able to display that letter here,” Rosenzweig said.

Steve Frank at the Constitution Center said that, in one sense, the foundation and the museum were doing everything right.

From the perspective of preservation, keeping the letter out of sight and in climate-controlled conditions would safeguard its future for centuries to come.

“But from the public’s perspective,” Frank added, “the opportunity to see that letter and to be connected to that history would just be enormously powerful.”

PART II: PUBLISHED ON JUNE 22, 2011
Papers Reveal Secret Struggle To Display Washington’s Letter
The mystery surrounding President Washington’s famous 1790 letter guaranteeing religious liberty in America continues.

As the Forward revealed last week, Washington’s letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, R.I., disappeared from public view almost a decade ago, after the B’nai B’rith Klutzniuck National Jewish Museum, where the letter had been displayed for half a century, moved to a smaller location and put the document into an art storage facility in suburban Maryland.

The Morris Morgenstern Foundation, which owns the letter and loaned it to the museum, has kept such tight control over it that even top American Jewish historians had no idea where it was. Now one of those scholars has uncovered historical records detailing a secret tug-of-war between the congregation of Touro Synagogue in Newport and Morris Morgenstern, the New York philanthropist who bought the letter in 1949 at a fraction of what the iconic document is worth today.

Touro’s congregants considered themselves to be the historical heirs of the recipients of the original letter, in which Washington pledged that the new United States would give “to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance.” Minutes from synagogue meetings, uncovered by a history professor at the University of Pennsylvania, show that Morgenstern originally considered loaning the letter to the congregation—and that the congregation simultaneously made preparations to sue Morgenstern to get the letter back.

Beth Wenger, director of Penn’s Jewish studies program, discovered the documents in the jumbled archives of Congregation Jeshuat Israel while she was

Congregation Jeshuat Israel made its home in Touro synagogue and at a special meeting held on January 15, 1950— one year after Morgenstern bought the letter— the minutes show, a committee was set up to travel to New York to negotiate with Morgenstern on behalf of the congregation.

The minutes reveal that congregants believed they had a legal right to the letter and that briefs had been prepared in New York “to obtain the letter for the congregation by legal means.”

One congregant, John Danin, even suggested that acquiring the letter on loan from Morgenstern “would be a good start towards ownership, and that once it was here it would probably never be taken away.”

It’s still unclear why that loan never took place, or why Morgenstern chose instead to loan the letter to the Klutznick museum. The foundation declined to comment.

Since the museum put the document in storage, the new National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia and the Library of Congress have sought to display the letter, to no avail.

“A document of that level rises to the status of a Declaration of Independence or a Bill of Rights,” said Keith Stokes, executive director of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation. “It really deserves to be in the Smithsonian or the Library of Congress, so all peoples can learn from it.”

The letter did make it back to Newport— once. Morgenstern took it there in 1958, to mark the tercentenary of Jewish life in the town. But Rita Slom, a congregant who was in Newport at the time, said she believes the letter was kept at the town’s Hotel Viking, and only for a very short time.

“It was probably just a couple of days,” said Slom, 78. “It could not have been any longer than that because they would not have kept it in the synagogue or hotel unless it was under guard.”

Despite the congregation’s muscular approach, the shul’s rights to the letter are not clear-cut.

The original Congregation Jeshuat Israel, the one Washington addressed, was a Sephardic community that disappeared after Newport fell into decline at the start of the 19th century. About 50 years later, waves of Eastern European immigrants revived Jewish life in Newport, but none were lineal descendants of the original congregation.

According to synagogue minutes, the long-lost letter only emerged in 1947
as part of a traveling exhibition of great American documents, such as the Declaration of Independence, called the Freedom Train.

The minutes recount that a plaque accompanying Washington's letter on the Freedom Train revealed that Howard Millman owned the letter. According to a Newport Daily News article of the period, Millman was a descendant of Moses Seixas, the warden of Touro Synagogue who received Washington's letter in 1790. The same article also stated that Morgenstern bought the letter "before a Newport movement to purchase could be organized." The Forward estimates that he purchased it for something between $10,000 and $15,000. Shortly afterward, Congregation Jeshuat Israel began its negotiations with Morgenstern.

But before they did so, Alexander Teitz, a board member of the Society of Friends of Touro Synagogue, advised the congregation that if they accepted the letter on loan they risked waiving their legal rights to it. So Teitz, a lawyer, suggested inserting a clause in the agreement.

When the synagogue delegation traveled to New York in February 1950, they did so armed with a stipulation that by accepting the letter they did not waive their rights to it. They also requested that the letter be loaned to the synagogue for a minimum of ten years.

Morgenstern, meanwhile, donated $550 to the synagogue toward a display case for the letter and a further $450, which he raised from other donors.

The meeting in New York had a "very friendly atmosphere," according to synagogue minutes, which recorded that Morgenstern and his representatives were "amenable to every suggestion made by the congregation representative."

By June, however, negotiations appear to have soured.

Samuel Adelson, a prominent member of the shul, reported back to the congregation that Morgenstern was willing to give up the letter but that he had some terms of his own, which were yet to be revealed. "If negotiations fail," Adelson said, "the matter will have to go through federal courts."

The congregational leaders were so sure of themselves that they began discussing plans to build a fireproof vault in the synagogue's northwest wall. But when the Touro delegation returned to New York later that June, Morgenstern did not attend a preplanned meeting. Instead, the delegation was told that Morgenstern had been advised by a lawyer to stay away so that "no process or injunction could be served."

Howard Rubenstein, the legendary New York public relations man and Mor-
genstern's spokesman from the mid-1950s, said he was not present at these discussions. But he did remember negotiations between the Morgenstern Foundation and Touro synagogue after 1954. 

"I have some recollection he was reluctant to lose control of the letter," said Rubenstein.

Rubenstein said Morgenstern was worried that too few people would see the letter if he loaned it to Touro and that he might lose control of the document altogether. Referring to the negotiations, Rubenstein said, "It started out in a very friendly way. It ended up with, I think, both sides being somewhat aloof."

Today, Touro Synagogue has nowhere near the funds necessary to care for the letter, which is sensitive to light, heat and humidity. The letter is also very valuable. Specialists in the rare document world believe it could be worth as much as $10 million.

Ambassador John L. Loeb Jr., who recently paid for an eponymous $10 million visitor center next door to the synagogue, once approached the Morgenstern Foundation about buying the letter. But Stokes, of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, who accompanied Loeb in those discussions, said that in addition to the cost, the level of security required and the liability were too great.

There remains another question regarding Morgenstern's purchase.

A New York Times article, in 1951, named Morgenstern as a director of the Society of Friends of Touro Synagogue—now The Touro Synagogue Foundation—as early as 1950.

Andy Teitz, chairman of the Foundation, said that if Morgenstern was on the board in 1949 there may be questions regarding the legality of the purchase.

Teitz, whose father, Alexander, warned the Touro congregation of its legal rights 60 years ago, said: "If Morgenstern was on the board when he came into contact with the letter, I would argue he had a fiduciary duty to acquire it for the congregation."

PART III: EDITORIAL PUBLISHED ON JULY 6, 2011
Liberate the Letter!
When Ron Chernow was travelling the country last year to talk about his new biography of George Washington, he was often asked about Washington’s 1790 letter to the Jews of Newport, R.I.—the one that famously promised that the United States government would give “to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance.”

“There were very few speeches that I made where people didn’t ask about
that letter,” Chernow recalled. “I can vouch for the fact that there’s tremendous curiosity out there.”

He’s curious, too. Even though Chernow spent six years reading through Washington’s papers to research his book, and was awarded the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for his effort, he’s never seen the original letter. In the last decade, hardly anyone has.

That cannot go on. As the Forward has documented in recent weeks, the letter that embedded religious freedom as a core American value has been hidden away in a nondescript arts storage facility in suburban Maryland ever since the museum in which it was housed closed its doors in 2002. The museum was run by B’nai B’rith International, which was lent the letter by its owner, the Morris Morgenstern Foundation, a private foundation based in Ventura, Calif. And neither B’nai B’rith nor the foundation has offered a convincing reason for why this iconic document has not been allowed to be publicly displayed.

So it’s time to persuade them otherwise. Joseph J. Ellis is another Pulitzer Prize-winning historian who has written an acclaimed book about the first president, and he, too, has never seen the letter. “It would be an honor to have it displayed,” Ellis said. “I’d like to see it myself.”

Historians know as well as anyone the deep significance of Washington’s words, the way they branded the new nation with the pledge of pluralism, addressed to “the children of the stock of Abraham” but in reality applicable to all. “It’s the most eloquent statement perhaps in our history of religious tolerance,” Chernow said. “There is a mystique about this letter that is almost unique among Washington’s papers. And there is a warmth to the letter that makes it especially compelling.”

The letter has, in the words of Jack Rakove, another Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, “a talismanic quality.” With the possible exception of President Truman’s declaration in support of the new State of Israel, Rakove said, “it is the most important document in American Jewish history.”

It’s not long—only 337 words—and like all such historical documents, its contents are in the public domain, easily read in print or online, and copies of it are hung in select museums and libraries. But that leaves history to speak in only a whisper. A facsimile fulfills a certain purpose, but it can feel cheap, manufactured. It doesn’t stir the soul, nor conquer doubt, nor make a civic connection. Authentic documents, Chernow reminded, “take us out of the realm of myth and put us into the world of historical events, real people and situations.”

Richard Beeman, a University of Pennsylvania historian, is also a trustee
of the National Constitution Center, and is intimately familiar with visitors' interactions with historical artifacts. "One thing we have learned is that many members of the public experience an important intellectual and emotional response when they see the original document. It brings this moment in the past alive," he said. That's why, Beeman continued, "it is astonishing that there should be any inhibition whatsoever in displaying such an important document. I can see no justification for it."

But this is not only about how best to display the past; it is also about how honestly and accurately to deal with the present. Understanding the motivations and beliefs of the founding generation is more than an academic exercise, for it gives us a broader perspective on the America we strive to perfect today.

Washington's warm and sturdy embrace of religious diversity was in keeping with his egalitarian vision for the new nation that he was asked to lead. It wasn't a perfect egalitarianism— it's not likely that he knew many Jews, and he certainly owned black slaves— but scholars say that he was the kind of leader who genuinely was openminded about others. Chernow reported that he did not find any racist comments in all of Washington's papers, and noted that he was the one founder who arranged, at his death, to free the 125 slaves under his legal control.

As the first president of a nation far more homogeneous Christian than it is today, Washington must have known the outsized impact of his statement to Newport's Jews. He was not speaking only for himself. "Among the founders, there was a pretty clear and deep commitment to the principle of religious freedom and toleration," Ellis said. "The public [today] needs to know, more than it does, that we are established on a set of principles that doesn't privilege any one particular faith." This is why the Morgenstern Foundation must loosen the reins on Washington's letter and allow it to be appropriately, carefully displayed in Newport, its historical home, or in the new National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia, or in the Library of Congress in Washington— all of which asked, and were denied— or anywhere it sees fit.

In fact, B'nai B'rith had approached the foundation on behalf of the Philadelphia museum to display the letter, but the request was turned down. When asked why B'nai B'rith made the request, spokeswoman Sharon Bender replied: "Because we think NMAJH would be a wonderful venue for this important letter." It would be.

The Forward believes so strongly in this cause that we will continue to press for answers and ask readers to send us their comments and support. As Rakove noted, this is probably the most important document in American Jewish
history, “and to have it squirreled away seems like an embarrassment.”

Liberate the letter.

PART IV: EDITORIAL BY JANE EISNER PUBLISHED ON JULY 21, 2011

Liberate the Letter, Part 2

On October 26, 1960, just days before Election Day, the two candidates for president issued statements commemorating the 170th anniversary of George Washington’s letter on religious pluralism to the Jews of Newport, R.I. The Republican, Vice President Richard Nixon, delivered his remarks in person, quoting from the letter’s definition of “toleration” and noting with pride that “after 170 years this letter still inspires us.” The Democrat, John F. Kennedy, could not attend and sent Eleanor Roosevelt to represent him. She referenced a different excerpt of the letter, its most famous, extolling the fact that America “gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance.”

The 221st anniversary will be celebrated this August in Newport with a public reading of the letter; the governor of Rhode Island is scheduled to attend. But the honored guest won’t read from the original letter, because no one can read from the original letter. As the Forward has reported, it is locked up in an arts storage facility in suburban Maryland, and the private foundation that owns the iconic document has refused to allow it to be publicly shown and refused to say why.

Perhaps the Morris Morgenstern Foundation might change its mind if it realizes how many public officials, Democrat and Republican, liberal and conservative, alive and no longer with us, have been inspired by the powerful expression of religious liberty contained in the brief missive penned as our nation was in its infancy. Several of Kennedy and Nixon’s successors in the White House drew on its language, to wit:


George H.W. Bush, March 14, 1989, in a speech to the Anti-Defamation League in which he quoted from the letter to support the ADL’s work defending religious freedom.

George W. Bush, September 10, 2002, at a press conference at the Afghan Embassy to denounce prejudice and hatred of Muslims on the day before the first anniversary of the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Vice presidents have also turned to the letter as evidence of a core American value. Walter Mondale employed the famous phrase September 6, 1984, in a
Bronze replica of Houdon's marble portrait of Washington
(commissioned in 1785 for the rotunda of Virginia's Capitol) at Redwood Library, Newport
speech to the international convention of B’nai B’rith. So did Dan Quayle, in an address to the Simon Wiesenthal Conference on March 5, 1990, in which, referencing his boss (the first President Bush), he told the group that “he is determined to build a better world, a world to paraphrase the first president, the first George, to build a nation which gives bigotry no sanction and persecution no assistance.” There’s more, and the context is important.

Ed Koch, former congressman and mayor of New York City, writing August 17, 2010, compared President Obama’s support of the proposed Islamic cultural center near Ground Zero to Washington’s letter, predicting that Obama’s eloquence “will be remembered by later generations of Americans with the same high regard.”

A few weeks later, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton quoted directly from the letter in her remarks at an official dinner celebrating the breaking of the Ramadan fast. “Our commitment to religious tolerance goes back to the very beginning of our nation,” she said on September 7, 2010.

And just a few months ago, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi used Washington’s language to anchor her statement in honor of American Jewish Heritage Month.

Now, we can imagine an argument that goes something like this: Why push the Morgenstern Foundation to publicly share the letter if its contents are already referenced so relentlessly— not only in a Jewish context, but also among Muslims, Christians, peoples of all faiths? Why bother to liberate the letter if its words and sentiments are already firmly in the public domain?

Here’s why. Authenticity matters. Viewing the original document in its entirety is a far more powerful act than reciting its words from a distance, especially when—as happened more than once in the history recounted here—the words were paraphrased or repeated without complete fealty to the text. There is something mystifying and, indeed, arrogant about one private entity holding on to an essential piece of American history that should be shared with all.

So, in the name of Kennedy, Nixon and Reagan, we call upon Bush (father and son), Mondale, Quayle, Koch, Clinton and Pelosi to join the cause to liberate the letter. You know how significant and special this document is. The rest of America should know, too.
THE AMBASSADOR
JOHN J. LOEB JR. VISITORS CENTER
IN NEWPORT

DAVID M. GITLITZ + LINDA KAY DAVIDSON

For three years David was a vice president of our Association, and he continues to serve enthusiastically on our board. Both he and Linda, a husband-and-wife team at home and everywhere else, have spoken to us about their books on several occasions. The most recent was the 2010 annual meeting, when he previewed his historical novel, The Lost Minyan.

After earning his bachelor’s degree at Oberlin College and his doctorate at Harvard, David gradually embraced numerous interests, including Spanish Golden Age literature, Sephardic history, culinary studies, and pilgrimage studies. He taught at Indiana University and the University of Nebraska before joining the faculty of the State University of New York at Binghamton, where he also served as Dean of Arts and Sciences. David recently retired from teaching at the University of Rhode Island, where he also served as Provost (the first Jew to do so). He has held visiting professorships at the Catholic University in Lima, UCLA, and the École des Hautes Études de Sciences Sociales in Paris.

David’s extensive publications include the definitive Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews (1996), which won the National Jewish Book Award in Sephardic Studies, among many honors. He and Linda, who earned her doctorate in Spanish at Indiana University and has taught and advised at several universities, including URI, wrote A Drizzle of Honey: The Lives and Recipes of Spain’s Secret Jews (1999), which won another National Jewish Book Award and recognition from the International Association of Culinary Professionals.

Linda and David are intellectual and physical adventurers. Not only did they meet on the pilgrimage road to the shrine of Santiago de Compostela, but between 1974 and 1996, they led groups of student pilgrims on the five-hundred-mile walk from southern France. Linda has coauthored four books about this journey, and together they wrote The Pilgrimage Road to Santiago: The Complete Cultural Handbook (2000). This led to a two-volume collaboration, Pilgrimage: From the Ganges to Graceland: An Encyclopedia (2002). In preparation for a new book, which required some practical understanding of mining, they recently conducted archival research in Mexico, Spain, and Portugal.

In addition to cooking, gardening, and caring for their colonial-era house in Kingston, Linda and David enjoy birding, hiking, photography, and
collecting textiles and ceramics. They have been leaders of URI Hillel and other South County Jewish organizations. Acknowledging that they don't need to pack a lunch to go to Providence or Newport, their sense of humor is delightful and infectious.

The Ambassador John L. Loeb Jr. Visitors Center is the portal to a compound encompassing the LVC, Patriot's [sic] Park, and Touro Synagogue. The center's staff issue tickets, hand visitors a copy of George Washington's famous 1790 letter about religious freedom, invite them to peruse the Center's two floors of exhibits, and direct them to the docent-led tours of the adjacent synagogue.

The synagogue itself is arguably the most important Jewish monument in the United States. The 1763 building is the oldest extant synagogue in the United States. The congregation that built it, Yeshuat Israel, dating from 1658, is one of the premier Jewish congregations of colonial America. The building is an architectural jewel, rare (if not unique) among the world's surviving 18th-century synagogues in its prominent location and massive windows that assert the self-confidence of
Newport's colonial Jewish community. Moreover, it played a key role in the establishment of religious liberty as a bedrock principle of the new American nation. As to Touro Synagogue's significance to the shaping of the unique nature of the American experiment, it ranks with Washington, DC, Boston's Faneuil Hall, and Philadelphia's Independence Hall.

When Newport's Jewish community declined after the War of 1812, the synagogue building, its contents and title to the property were given to the trustees of Shearith Israel Synagogue in New York City, who continued as its owners even after the reestablishment of the new Yeshuat Israel congregation in Newport in 1883. In 1946 the New York trustees, the Newport congregation, and the Secretary of the Interior reached an agreement by which the synagogue was designated a National Historic Site to be administered by the National Park Service. This affiliation increased tourist traffic, but did not provide the necessary resources to keep the building in good repair nor to create an entity to orient visitors as to the synagogue's importance. The synagogue's 1966 listing on the National Register of Historic Places added to its visibility, but not its fiscal health. Newport's small Jewish community, which continues to hold services in the landmark, was not able to meet the needs on its own.

Eventually, in 1997 the Touro Synagogue Foundation's quest for funding to underwrite much-needed repairs to the synagogue and to acquire two adjacent properties for a museum and visitors center led them to the philanthropist John L. Loeb Jr., American ambassador to Denmark in the early 1980s, founder of California's Sonoma-Loeb Vineyards, and chairman of John L. Loeb Jr. Associates Inc. Investment Counselors. Loeb's interest in early Jewish-American history, together with his genealogical connection with scions of colonial Judaism in Newport (he descends from Isaac, Abraham, and Judah Touro), fed his enthusiasm for the project. Loeb is also, not coincidentally, the founder and chairman of the George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom, whose mission is “promoting open, respectful discussion about religious liberty and the separation of church and state, and exploring the modern ramifications of these concepts.”

Although proponents of the Visitors Center project initially estimated that the center would be managed by the Touro Synagogue Foundation and would require only about $500,000, neither assumption proved to be realistic. Eventually Loeb contributed nearly $12 million and managed the project directly through his personal John L. Loeb Jr. Foundation. Ground was broken early in 2007. The Center, designed by Holly Grosvenor, of Newport Collaborative Architects, Inc., in a neo-Georgian style, opened amid a flurry of publicity on August 2, 2009. (This was
the same year that Congregation Beth Shalom, in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, opened its visitors center with its extraordinary sanctuary designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.)

Despite the LVC’s small size—scarcely 3,100 square feet—it has set itself an ambitious educational mission, to introduce visitors to three interrelated stories. The first, which squares neatly with the goals of the former ambassador’s George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom, is to explain how the newly-minted United States came to embrace the revolutionary principles of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. The second is to provide essential facts about the Touro Synagogue itself: why and how it came to be built, its principal architectural features, and its role both in the life of colonial Newport and America’s endorsement of freedom of religion. The third is to raise visitors’ awareness of the nature and importance of America’s colonial Jewish community, especially Newport’s Yeshuat Israel Congregation, which built what came to be known as Touro Synagogue. Judging from chatter on the Web over the last two years, the center seems to be accomplishing these goals.

In essence these three narratives are about the individuals who made them happen and were affected by them. Upstanding Newport community members like Jacob Rodriguez Rivera, whose technical innovations in manufacturing spermaceti candles in 1748 made him a fortune and spurred New England’s whaling industry. Moses Michael Hays, who in 1776 presented to Rhode Island’s General Assembly the Jewish community’s protest that because they were Jews they had been singled out to sign a loyalty oath to the new government. Synagogue members like Moses Seixas, whose letter of invitation to George Washington gave the president the words with which to frame the ethical basis for America’s guarantee of freedom of religion. And the merchants, artisans, housewives and children of colonial Newport whose lives were touched by these issues. It is in their capsule biographies and excerpts of conversations about the choices those heady times
obligated them to make that the abstract nature of these ethical issues becomes real.

From a well-marked alley off Spring Street visitors enter the LVC through a large arched doorway to be greeted immediately with a panoramic wall announcing the Center's principal themes—Freedom, Tolerance, Philanthropy, Faith, and History—each with a brief explanatory paragraph and a picture to focus visitors' attention. A centrally placed video screen plays a welcoming introductory message narrated by Ambassador Loeb. To the right are his portrait and a brief summary of his accomplishments. To the left is a ticket booth whose staff are amiable, knowledgeable, and eager to answer visitors' questions.

The downstairs, in addition to restrooms, air conditioning, and places for weary tourists to sit, is devoted to reproductions of all the known portraits (another John L. Loeb Jr. project) of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Jews in the thirteen British American colonies. Several of these decorate the staircase that leads to the second floor. Other portraits are arrayed on two large screens that invite visitors to touch up biographical information about each of the portrait's subjects. The more than two hundred portraits of men, women (at about a 3:2 ratio), and children introduce us to a fascinating array of colonial American Jews.

- There was Aaron Lopez, born to a crypto-Jewish family in Catholic Portugal as Duarte López, who reverted to Judaism in America and became one of Newport's wealthiest merchants. When in 1762 Rhode Island refused to naturalize him because of his religion, he relocated to Leicester, MA, from where, during the war, he supplied the Continental Army with much needed provisions.

- There was Rachael Levy, of Ashkenazi extraction, whose family emigrated to New York from London in the mid-eighteenth century. When Isaac Mendes Seixas, whose family fled the Portuguese Inquisition to Bordeaux, and from there to London and Newport, chose her for his wife, Seixas' uncle Rodrigo Pacheco described his nephew's "mixed marriage" to a non-Semitic Jew.

- There was Isaac Touro, first hadassan of the Newport synagogue, whose family in Spain fled first to Portugal and then to Amsterdam, and to Newport by way of Jamaica.

- There was Lieutenant-Colonel Solomon Bush, a Mason and member of the Pennsylvania Militia, who rose to become the highest-ranking Jewish soldier in the Continental Army. After the war he married a Quaker and is buried with her in Philadelphia's Friends Burying Ground.
These men and women are not a true representative sample of America’s colonial Jews, for the gallery includes only those who were wealthy or prominent enough to have their portraits painted. Even so, we meet men and women of widely varied backgrounds and extraordinary achievements.

The presence of Jews in colonial America stoked the curiosity and the enthusiasm of many intellectual Christian philosemites. Prominent among them was the Congregationalist minister Ezra Stiles, whose portrait greets visitors at the top of the stairs to the LVC’s second floor. Stiles was a trusted ally of Newport’s Jewish community, an accomplished Hebraist, a patriot during the Revolutionary War, and a devoted educator who played a role in founding Rhode Island College (Brown University since 1804) before going on to become president of Yale, his alma mater.

Dividing the upstairs in half is a low wall that hosts eight audio-visual living history stations, each with a video screen and four earpieces. By pushing a button visitors can watch and listen to a simulated historic conversation played by actors in period costume. Each conversation poses, in the guise of an ordinary, everyday encounter, some of the practical, moral, and political dilemmas faced by colonial American Jews.

- Aaron Lopez, on a Newport wharf in 1758 in conversation with the Christian captain of one of his ships, insists that no Lopez ship will be permitted to weigh anchor on either the Jewish or Christian Sabbaths.

- Aaron Lopez and his wife Abigail argue about whether Rhode Island’s 1762 decision to deny him citizenship sprang from envy of his wealth or disapproval of his religion.

- Three prominent Jewish businessmen in 1762, jolly after an evening at cards, compete with each other in pledging contributions to the nearly-finished synagogue.
A Newport slave girl in 1772 tells her friend, the slave of another prominent family, how she is going into the pastry business— with her masters’ permission, of course— with the eventual aim of purchasing her freedom.

Reverend Ezra Stiles, meeting Reyna Hays Touro on the street in the summer of 1776, discuss the problematic nature of patriotism and treason, and whether her family should remain loyal to the king and to the British troops who are occupying Newport, or leave the city to join the colonial rebels.

In their brief skits the characters take stands and make choices, generally in tactful and often in humorous ways. The stilted language and formal poses make clear that these are staged instructional conversations, not snippets of observed real life. This exhibit, like every other in the center, demands only passive appreciation from visitors. This is unfortunate, for it would not take much work to engage visitors interactively. Perhaps in a renovation, the LVC can add a device by which visitors can register what they would choose to do when faced with a dilemma similar to the one faced by Reyna Hays Touro. Or to compare the immigration stories of visitors’ families to those sketched in the touch-screen portraits. These, and other interactive approaches, are used to great effect by Holocaust museums like Richmond, Virginia’s Museum of the Holocaust, Los Angeles’ Simon Wiesenthal Center’s Beit Hashoash-Museum of Tolerance, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, among others.

Occupying one whole wall at the LVC is an exhibit describing and providing historical background for George Washington’s famous letter to the Newport congregation. This is the thematic heart of the LVC. The display cogently contextualizes the exchange of letters between the Yeshuat Israel Congregation and Washington and the president’s visit to Newport in 1790, and makes clear to visitors how the letter and visit played into the president’s national campaign urging approval of the Bill of Rights. It underscores how Moses Seixas’ letter of invitation gave language to the fundamental core of American religious freedom— “a Government which to bigotry gives no sanction, to persecution no assistance, but generously afford[s] to all Liberty of conscience, and immunities of Citizenship.” It notes how Washington in his response not only accepted the principle and repeated Seixas’ wording nearly verbatim, but added a second key concept, that religious freedom is a natural, inalienable right that no group, be it in the majority or not, has the power either to grant or to take away. “It is no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights.” Bravo, Moses and George, on your fruitful collaboration!

Like museums, visitors centers at specific attractions display material in
a way that tells a story. The material drives the story line, while the story helps viewers understand the context, nuances, and meaning(s) of the displayed material. Most museums display original artifacts: paintings, sculpture, tools, items of clothing, and photographs. In contrast, visitors centers’ artifacts and expository material are valued not so much for themselves but as vehicles to focus visitors’ attention on a nearby site.

There is no original material on display inside the LVC. Instead visitors find reproductions of colonial era paintings and documents. While relevant original material has not survived in abundance, it is not altogether lacking. Numerous letters and commercial documents by Aaron Lopez are located just up Touro Street in the Newport Historical Society and in Providence at the John Carter Brown Library. Touro Synagogue owns elegant rimonim (finials capping the wooden handles of Torah scrolls) fashioned by the eminent colonial silversmith Myer Myers that are currently on loan to Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts. The Washington letter, privately owned and previously lent to B’nai B’rith’s Klutznick National Jewish Museum in Washington, is currently in storage. It would have been appropriate had at least some of these artifacts been lent to the LVC.

Despite the LVC’s limited space and tightly focused mission, there are some important gaps in its exhibits, its Web site, and its handouts. These gaps do not gainsay in any fashion the accomplishments of the LVC, but they do indicate some missed opportunities to educate and to engage. For example, as already mentioned, there are no truly interactive exhibits. There is a biography of Ambassador Loeb, but not of Peter Harrison, the architect of the synagogue. There is only minimal mention of slavery, and the thorny issue of colonial Jews’ involvement in the trade. There is no exploration of the colonists’ reluctance to perceive the uncomfortable parallels between lack of freedom of religion and slavery. There is no map indicating the location in Newport of the homes and businesses of the city’s prominent colonial Jewish citizens, either in the displays or—more usefully to tour-
ists— as handouts. Likewise there is no handout describing historic graves in Newport’s Jewish cemetery or in the Common Burying Ground and Island Cemetery on Farewell Street, which piques the curiosity of visitors who enter Newport from the Pell Bridge. There is little in the center to specifically engage the interests of young children. Wheelchair-bound visitors can access the LVC, but they must give prior notice in order to visit the synagogue. Lastly, and perhaps trivially, although John L. Loeb Jr. was the major benefactor and guiding force behind the creation of the center, visitors who go through its arched entry come not to visit a monument to the former ambassador’s achievements and generosity, but to experience a cradle of American religious liberty. The prominent inscription over the entry arch might more appropriately say so.

In some ways the LVC resembles event museums that say, “This is the important event that happened here and these are its causes, its stages, and its outcomes.” To the world’s sorrow, the best known Jewish event museums are those that chronicle disasters: think Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and other great Holocaust memorial museums in cities like Washington, Los Angeles, and Berlin. The Newport complex— the LVC and Touro Synagogue— celebrate instead something extraordinarily positive: the role of Newport’s colonial Jewish community in making the United States a secular nation that, at least in the ideal, eschews bigotry and persecution and guarantees equal protection under the law to all citizens, irrespective of religion. The message is worth communicating to those who know little of the history of how these ideas took root, and worth reemphasizing to those who already know the story well.

We live in a world where xenophobia, tribalism and religious extremism are on the rise. We can see the signs in the anti-Muslim prejudice that poisons social discourse in much of the developed West. We can see them, too, in the way that extremists try to impose the agendas of their particular religious sects onto the laws that govern multicultural populations, be they advocates of Sharia in parts of the Middle East, Jewish extremists in Israel, or Christian extremists in sectors of the American body politic. In these troubled times, the message cannot be emphasized enough: freedom of religion, freedom from religion, a secular government that treats all citizens equally no matter where, or to whom, or if they choose to bow their heads or bodies in prayer.
THE NEW JEWISH MUSEUM
AND INDEPENDENCE MALL

GEORGE M. GOODWIN

Given my love of American and Jewish history as well as my endless fascination with museums and their buildings, I keenly anticipated a visit to Philadelphia's National Museum of American Jewish History. Dedicated in November 2010 and costing more than $150 million, the new museum is located at South Fifth and Market Streets, opposite Independence Mall. It replaces a much smaller facility built in 1976 within the fifth home of Congregation Mikveh Israel, only two blocks northeast of this site.

So why was I not thrilled by my visit in June? Am I a perfectionist, an untiring devil's advocate or simply museum-crazy? I had assumed that the new, six-story edifice would welcome, inform, and inspire just about everybody. Though not a connoisseur of American decorative arts or horticulture, I had felt enchanted the day before by my visit to Winterthur, Henry du Pont's exquisite museum and country estate near Wilmington, Delaware.

Philadelphia's Jewish leaders may not have fully considered an important theoretical danger when contemplating a new Jewish museum. A site only steps from Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, and the National Constitution Center could be overloaded with meaning. Although philanthropists and curators could erect a monument to America and American Jewish life, it would not necessarily become a shrine. Shrines are holy places, and Jews' are principally synagogues and cemeteries.

Swedish-Americans, Polish-Americans, and African-Americans have museums in Philadelphia, but they do not face the Mall. Of course the Mall itself is a fabrication, a site for national pilgrimages that resulted from an urban renewal project begun in 1962. The newest site on the Mall, dedicated in December 2010, happens to be an anti-monument. The President's House (home to Washington and Adams), is an excavation rather than a building, and it is used to tell the shameful story of slavery.

Although a good neighbor to nearby commercial buildings, the National
Museum of American Jewish History, designed by the prominent James Polshek Partnership of New York City, is bland. And American Jewish history is anything but bland. Though free of artifice, the structure lacks expressive power. (By contrast, Daniel Libeskind’s contorted Jewish Museum in Berlin seems complete even when empty.)

Fortunately, a heroic marble sculpture representing religious liberty, which had been commissioned by B’nai B’rith in 1876 for display in Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park, has been relocated to the new museum’s plaza. Sir Moses Jacob Ezekiel’s august figures, placed atop a high pedestal, provide a rousing patriotic fanfare. Indeed, this remarkable carving, a veritable Jewish Statue of Liberty, was a 19th-century counterpart to a national Jewish museum. (Ezekiel, a native of Richmond who established his career in Rome, was also highly regarded for his Jefferson Memorials in Charlottesville and Louisville and his Confederate Soldiers’ Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery.)

Regrettably, the entrance to the new National Museum, on Market Street
(perpendicular to the Mall), lacks a symbolic threshold. Instead of experiencing a surge of drama or a sweet embrace, visitors must submit to an elaborate security screening.

Unfortunately, there is no immediate contact with treasures of the American Jewish past. How about displaying (if light permitted) a magnificent document (Washington’s letter to Newport’s Hebrew congregation) or a compelling work of art (silver by Myer Myers or a painting by Mark Rothko)? How about a tower of a hundred Jewish cookbooks, an aerial view of a Levittown or a panoramic shot of rabbis with other clergy marching from Selma to Montgomery? If there were only one song by Irving Berlin, what would it be? “God Bless America,” “White Christmas” or “There’s No Business Like Show Business”?

Yes, there is an introductory film on a subterranean level, and floor plans of galleries are abundant. Except for a web of crisscrossing staircases, however, the museum’s vast atrium is empty.

Yearning to tell a comprehensive and balanced story, the new museum presents much of the obvious over a span of 350 years. This American Jewish cov-
enant states: Despite outbursts or cycles of anti-Semitism, America has offered unparalleled freedom and opportunity to Jews, who, in return, have enriched America in myriad ways. But the genius of American government, perhaps best expressed in Washington's letter, never required a quid pro quo. Jews' extraordinary record of achievement was an amazing by-product of a Promised Land.

Through legal, political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions, the National Museum emphasizes American Jewish peoplehood and ethnicity. By paying less attention to patterns of religious observance, it avoids the rudimentary task of explaining Shabbat, holidays, customs, and texts. As a result, however, the competing and conflicting forces of acculturation and assimilation are muted. Indeed, it becomes apparent that a great many American Jews have thrived without or beyond religion— as a result of their extraordinary ambition, passion, and ethos.

Thus, it is far easier and more enjoyable for the National Museum to spotlight individuals' heroic and stunning achievements than piece them all together. Indeed, an area on the ground floor, honoring 18 distinguished Jews, is designated the "Only in America Gallery/Hall of Fame." In my opinion this is the institution's
hokiest feature. Fortunately, there are no computerized mannequins. As other galleries demonstrate, however, American Jews have also been gangsters, scoundrels, and crackpots. Except for being president, first lady or chief justice, haven't American Jews done just about everything?

A fundamental problem is not differentiating between "high," "low," "popular" or "folk" culture; all of these categories are welcome and necessary. There's room for Arthur Miller and Wendy Wasserstein, Gertrude Berg and Pee-wee Herman. A more vexing problem is finding a proper balance between groups and individuals, rules and exceptions. American Jews want the best of both worlds: the opportunity to conform but not the requirement to do so. In so many ways, they have wonderfully succeeded by creating their own equation.

Rather than portraying heroes, stars, and superachievers, the National Museum's most suitable Jewish images could be purely anonymous: a Passover Seder, shops on Main Street, a downtown department store, a lecture hall at a public university or Jewish graves within a military cemetery. These are the ordinary miracles of American Jewish life.

The National Museum's three floors of galleries are found on the building's east side (away from the Mall). These floors are arranged in descending chronological order but also topically within each floor. The building's top (or fifth) floor houses offices, conference rooms, and probably classrooms.

Granted, it is extremely difficult to present and analyze complex ideas within three dimensions, but the new National Museum is not a traditional museum. It lacks a core group of original objects that are empowered to speak for themselves. Instead, artifacts, models, and reproductions bear somewhat similar conceptual weight (or weightlessness). They are often used as props within a tableau of video and audio recordings. The natural wonderment of things, pervasive in great art and natural history museums, is often missing here.

Designed for visitors of all ages, but primarily those with little or no knowledge of American Jewish history, the galleries cater to short attention spans. As a result, flashing images and loud noises in one gallery disrupt the contemplative aura of another. Amidst the hoopla, there is an irresistible pressure to keep moving.

The National Museum also differs from traditional museums because its broad appeal offers little to specialists or experts, who delight in fresh details, juxtapositions, and contexts, which enable new perspectives. In its yearning to be user-friendly and entertaining, the new museum lacks a critical voice (especially one that may spark controversy). If the new museum houses a scholarly library, its
location is hidden. Even the ground-level gift shop has only a few shelves devoted to American Jewish history. And there is not yet a museum guidebook or souvenir booklet.

To me, much in the National Museum seems trivial. For example, in a gallery representing post-World War II suburbia, why have a photo and dress from Margo Bloom’s 1966 Bat Mitzvah? A toy wine bottle from Rachel Rosen’s 1985 Bat Mitzvah or a group of B’ni Mitzvah cake “toppers”? A plastic electric menorah? Mah Jongg tiles? A visitor can also feast his eyes on Benjamin Kaplow’s 1950 diploma from Hartwick College. Most of these ishatskhkes would have been fodder for the satirist Allan Sherman.

Yes, it was fun perusing a computer screen with the names of Jewish summer camps, but does the fact that a camp was owned by Jews or had many Jewish campers make it a Jewish camp? Why the emphasis here, as in some other galleries, on the Conservative movement? (And why devote so much attention elsewhere to the “Trefa Banquet,” which followed the first ordinations at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati in 1883? Isn’t the city’s Plum Street Temple more remarkable?) Somehow, the friendship, fun, and ruah of Jewish summer camp is not conveyed through the display of a cot. Likewise, a bed or a chest cannot convey the squalor and desperation of tenement life.

For those of us who love Newport and the study of its colonial history, the coverage in a fourth-floor gallery looks anemic. But how much information and emotion can be conveyed through a half-dozen objects? There is a model of Touro Synagogue, approximately five feet high by six feet wide, but no mention of the nearby colonial burial ground (or Jewish involvement in Redwood Library). A copy of John Mumford’s map of Newport from 1711, showing Jews Street, would have been helpful. A copy of America’s first published Jewish sermon, in the Newport Mercury in 1773, would also have been appropriate.

There is an example of Reverend Ezra Stiles’ detailed observations about the Newport Jewish community from 1762, but it is a reproduction from a Yale library. An example of Aaron Lopez’s business records, from 1761, was lent by the American Jewish Historical Society. Would it have been possible to borrow Gilbert Stuart’s portrait of Sarah Rivera Lopez and her son from the Detroit Institute of Arts or a gorgeous piece of Newport furniture commissioned and exported by Lopez?

The niche devoted to colonial Newport does contain one fascinating object: iron shackles worn by Henrietta Marie from about 1700. It was lent by a private collector. Such a complex topic as Jews’ minimal involvement in the slave trade cannot be adequately addressed by a label, however. As Rhode Islanders know so
well, colonial Newport is a huge topic.

One reason I was particularly eager to visit the new National Museum was to examine my own participation in a video about post-World War II synagogue architecture. A film crew had traveled to about 15 shuls around the country to collect glowing images and insights from clergy and congregants. I was of course proud that Providence’s Beth-El was selected, and I was thrilled to offer my comments (with those of Rabbi Leslie Gutterman and a lifelong member).

Our Beth-El was properly included in the 20-minute video, shown continuously on a screen about six feet high by ten feet wide. Not only a fine example of Percival Goodman’s artistry, the synagogue has been lovingly maintained. But there was no need to show four more examples of his work when there is only one by his chief modernist rival, Erich Mendelsohn (who was also considered for Beth-El’s commission). The Temple’s inclusion is in fact somewhat idiosyncratic because the video and some handsome photos besides it are intended to illustrate the growth of suburban Jewish communities. In my opinion, Beth-El’s location is urban, and some of the video’s synagogues are exurban.

In their expressions of architectural pride and gratitude, clergy and congregants dwell on familiar themes: light is an animating force; windows offer glimpses of nature; a large sanctuary allows for the experience of both grandeur and intimacy; a synagogue can mysteriously provide a sense of community and introspection; silence complements sound and vice versa.

All of these observations may be accurate, but they may also reveal that clergy and congregants impose their own meanings and feelings on synagogues, in some sense negating significant differences of architectural quality. It therefore becomes apparent that a historian or a critic with a deeper understanding of synagogue architecture could have provided more nuanced arguments and counterarguments that resulted in a thesis or, at the very least, a summation.

Frank Lloyd Wright’s astonishing Beth Sholom, located in suburban Philadelphia, was included in the video, but there was no reference to any synagogue (or Jewish community center) designed by Louis Kahn, one of America’s great modernist architects who lived nearly his entire life in Philadelphia. Kahn was a deeply spiritual person, but in no sense a religiously observant Jew or a paragon of ethical behavior. After preparing several sets of designs, he was in fact fired from the commission for Mikveh Israel’s North Fourth Street building, the one which eventually housed the first National Museum of American Jewish History. In my recent review of a book about Kahn’s aborted work for Mikveh Israel, I foolishly remarked that he would be “lionized” within the new museum.
Yes, it is easy for me to quibble about the synagogue video’s shortcomings, but does anybody care? Would any other visitor object to the nearby placement of High Holy Day tickets or a sign proclaiming tickets for sale? Curators, consultants, and exhibition designers should care about the accuracy and impact of every detail. Excellence, like beauty, is its own reward.

Alas, the National Museum, though worthy of a lengthy visit, raises many troubling questions. Fundamentally, is a history museum, with its traditional emphasis on viewing a permanent collection of unique or exceptional objects, the best vehicle for studying, sharing, and rejoicing in American Jewish history? Even in 1976, was it too late to build a collection of sufficient magnitude and subtlety? Perhaps more troubling (or liberating) is the thought that so much of American Jewish history is intangible and falls beyond the purview of what social scientists call “material culture.”

If history museums are now considered stuffy or obsolete, in what ways

Given Jews’ and Judaism’s marriage to words, perhaps the idea of an American Jewish Library is more plausible. But such an institution could be built in dozens of places. Or it already exists within the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library or on many university campuses.

I believe that the National Museum’s location— not the shape of its building nor the presentation of its content— is its most important function. The new Philadelphia museum seeks to ring a Jewish Liberty Bell— to affirm a Jewish presence within the pantheon of America’s patriotic symbols.

Curiously, though, Touro Synagogue, which was built under British rule, happily serves that purpose. It is a true religious shrine of local, national, and international importance, as is its cemetery. Though welcome, Touro’s designation as a National Historic Site by the Department of the Interior in 1946 was superfluous. In my opinion, the new Loeb Visitors Center complicates and somewhat obscures the synagogue’s essence. More than an astonishing Jewish artifact or museum, Touro must survive as a house of worship, study, and assembly. It is the strong and glowing embodiment of a living Jewish community.

Could the huge sums lavished on the new National Museum have been better spent on scholarships, research fellowships, travel grants, publications, and endowments? On New York City’s struggling Jewish History Center? America hardly needs a National Museum of the Jewish People (proposed for Washington, DC) or another Holocaust museum or memorial. But how about a museum and a book devoted to Pennsylvania Jewish history? A museum and a book focusing on Congregation Mikveh Israel and its 18th-century cemetery, located at Spruce and South Eighth Street, only a few blocks from Independence Mall? Regrettably, the Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center, established in 1972 with a grant from Philadelphia’s Jewish Federation, could not sustain itself. In 2005 its encyclopedic collection was donated to Temple University’s Urban Archives.

I believe that American Jewry’s magnificent history can be expressed in spectacular and intimate ways. Seeing Touro’s two silver *reymonim* (Torah finials) within the glorious new American Wing of Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts was for me a magical experience.

My equally arbitrary list of eighteen inductees would include: Saul Bellow, Abraham Cahan, Aaron Copland, Bob Dylan, Betty Friedan, George Gershwin, Hank Greenberg, Louis Kahn, the Marx Brothers, Arthur Miller, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Julius Rosenwald, Philip Roth, Mark Rothko, Solomon Schechter, Stephen Sondheim, Alfred Stieglitz, and the Warner Brothers. Even a list of one hundred inductees would feel arbitrary.
REMEMBERING BRUCE SUNDLUN

Since Frank Licht completed his governorship in 1973, Rhode Island's Jewish community has probably not produced a public figure as notable— or as charismatic— as Bruce Sundlun. Although his governorship from 1991 to 1995 represented the apogee of his political career, he served the Ocean State in numerous other ways. As explained in "A Soldier's Plea," which appeared in the 2009 issue of our journal, Bruce was, for example, the only second-generation president of Temple Beth-El.

As a fearless attorney and business executive, he was recruited to play roles on countless boards and committees. While enjoying the limelight, he also got things done. At times Bruce’s enthusiasm, energy, and egotism could be exasperating.

It was no anomaly to him that arts organizations had to function as businesses, but businesses could also be led in a highly creative manner. Indeed, the private and public sectors were not rivals but partners. Communities benefitted.

Bruce’s sense of covenant was most dramatically expressed as a bomber pilot during World War II. He was responsible for a crew on which he was also fully dependent. For him, patriotism was a similarly beneficial agreement.

It may have seemed that an entire era ended with Bruce’s passing, at 91 years, in July of this year. He was remembered in many publications and places— throughout Rhode Island and beyond. Accordingly, five tributes are included within these pages.
EULOGY

U.S. SENATOR SHELDON WHITEHOUSE

Rhode Island's junior senator received an extraordinary honor at Bruce's 'funer- al' on July 24, 2011 at Beth-El. Although Rabbi Leslie Y. Guterman lovingly officiated, Senator Whitehouse was the only non-family member invited to speak. His words surely conveyed the thoughts and sentiments of Jews and gentiles assembled in the sanctuary and many others who watched on television.

Sheldon Whitehouse, a son and grandson of diplomats, served from 1984 to 1990 as a special assistant to Rhode Island's attorney general. Later an assistant a.g., he joined the Sundlun administration in 1991 as the governor's executive legal counsel. He was soon promoted to the governor's policy director and then directed the state's department of business regulation.

Following his service in the Sundlun administration, Whitehouse served for four years as Rhode Island's U.S. Attorney. Beginning in 1999 he served four years as attorney general but was an unsuccessful candidate for governor. Even after being elected to the U.S. Senate in 2006, Whitehouse remained close to the House of Sundlun.

What a man. What a life.

Bruce Sundlun's accomplishments— as a record-breaking athlete, as a resourc eful war hero, as a superb lawyer, as a successful business entrepreneur, and as political leader of our state— would each on their own be significant. You could probably write a book about each. Together, packed all into one energetic life, it makes Bruce Sundlun one of the most accomplished and remarkable men in our state's history.

And that's not even counting five marriages, four children, three unsuccessful runs for governor, two dead raccoons, and one long escape on the loose, behind enemy lines.

There's really just no way to fit it all in.

Let me step into my role as a Sundlun staffer, and ask you to think just of his brief four years as governor. Hit (on Day One of his administration) by an unprecedented bank failure affecting 300,000 Rhode Islanders, AND by the worst budget deficit in state history, AND by an implosion of the state's entire workers' compensation system, AND with the urgent need to restore ethics in government, Bruce was the man for that moment, and swung into his customary decisive action.

The budget was promptly and fairly balanced and the whole budget process improved.

Inventive solutions to repay the depositors and clean up the RISDIC mess.
were found and implemented, and those at fault were made to pay—over a hundred million dollars.

His workers' compensation reform moved the state from an embarrassment to a model, moving what was then the business community's worst problem completely off the problem list for now going on 20 years.

As a problem solver, he had no peer.

And that alone would be pretty extraordinary. But there was that ethics gap. So Bruce wrote Executive Order 91-One, the ethics executive order that succeeding governors renewed virtually unchanged. He reformed our Ethics Commission. He changed the way we appoint judges, to reduce the politics. He changed the way we fund elections, with a public finance plan and donor limits. Through an intense storm of legal and political opposition, he opened up the pension records; putting an end forever to backroom special pension bills. He got our State Police nationally accredited.

He even cleaned up the Capitol literally!

All that was extraordinary—but still not enough.

In the worst economic times the state had seen since the Depression, with a shrinking budget, he decided to extend universal health care to children—and started the program that became Rite Care. Against immense opposition, he built our new airport terminal. He embarked on the Westin Hotel, the Convention Center, and the Providence Place Mall. He finished the Jamestown Bridge and built the Expressway. And even that's not the end of it.

It was an amazing burst of activity. I will bet that almost every Rhode Islander, almost every day, is somehow touched by something Governor Sundlun did.

And through it all, he drove his staff crazy. He was irrepresible, impatient, imperial, unscriptable, combative, frustrating, willful, constantly threw caution to the winds, impossible to keep up with—he drove us nuts.

And we loved him.

We loved him because he was bold and brave, and was warm-hearted and trusting and generous, and because he was willing to throw caution to the winds to do what was right. We loved him because he never once had us make excuses or try to shift the blame.

That was not his style. "Never complain; never explain."

We all remember his Bruce-isms:

"Always touch base with those concerned before taking action."

"How fast would you get it done if the Russians were in South Attleboro?"

"When you've won, stop talking, close your briefcase and leave."
“Message to Garcia.”
“Who, what, where, when; don’t bother me with why.”
The phone calls, at all hours, that began with no “hello” and ended with a dial tone.
The road shows known to his staff as “Dome on the Roan,” or more precisely, “Bruce on the Loose.”
And sometimes just that big foxy grin.
We saw that his qualities of friendship and loyalty had an almost physical force; that he had your back even if you made mistakes (no one ever was thrown under the bus); and that he was a better friend the more the chips were down.
Politics is full of fair weather friends; Bruce Sundlun was your stormy weather friend. Politics is full of people who take tiny cautious steps with their finger up constantly testing the winds; Bruce stepped boldly down the path he thought was right, even if that meant stepping right in it.
People wonder what lives on after they die. Well, Bruce, we do. And every one of us has been changed: made better, and stronger, harder-working and more resourceful, by your vibrant elemental force in our lives.
We’ve gone on to be judges and lawyers, to run state and federal agencies, to become Senators and councilmen and Lieutenant Governors, banking leaders and senior partners in national accounting firms, but none of us ever will be more proud of anything than the simple title: “I was a Sundlun staffer.”
Soozie and Marjorie, Tracey and Stuart and Peter and Kara: Thank you. Thank you for sharing your husband and father with our state. For those who loved and were changed by him, I thank you. For those who knew and were touched by him, I thank you. And for those who never knew him directly, but whose lives are better today because of what he did, I thank you.
As I close, I want to take you back to a scene from that wonderful movie I saw as a kid, “To Kill A Mockingbird.” As you’ll recall, Atticus Finch takes on the courageous but unpopular defense of a black man wrongfully accused of rape. At the end of the trial, Atticus’s daughter Scout—proper name Jean Louise— is up in the gallery of the courtroom, with the black townspeople, who aren’t allowed down on the regular courtroom floor. The courtroom floor empties, but they remain, and slowly stand. As Atticus packs his papers together, closes his bag, and walks out, an elderly man leans down to the little girl and says, “Stand up, Miss Jean Louise. Your father’s passing.”
At the end of this service, as Bruce is taken to his gravesite after 91 years of a life well and fully lived, we will all stand up. And rightly so. A governor will be passing.
A TRIBUTE TO GOVERNOR SUNDLUN
U.S. SENATOR JACK REED

The governor and the senior senator from Rhode Island shared more than a devotion to public service. Both men were born in the Ocean State, both were Boy Scouts, both graduated from Harvard Law School, and both served in the military. Indeed, both men fell to earth: Bruce as a downed bomber pilot, the senator as a paratrooper. And both men served many years as reservists. Yet both were optimists who, through politics, sought to overcome gravitational forces.

In many other respects, however, the governor and senator were opposites. Bruce enjoyed a privileged upbringing. Reed was educated in parochial schools. One man was flamboyant, the other a model of humility. Bruce had many wives; the senator found his later in life. Bruce lost many elections, the senator not one.

Three has been a recurring number in Jack Reed’s career as an elected official. He served three terms in the State Senate (from 1984 to 1990), three terms as a representative in Congress (from 1990 to 1996), and is now serving a third term in the U.S. Senate. He succeeded Claiborne Pell, whom Bruce served as a key supporter and knew as a friend and as a Newport neighbor.

The following speech was delivered in the Senate on July 28, 2011. It is now part of the Congressional Record.

Mr. President, Senator Whitehouse and I have come to the floor today to pay tribute to Governor Bruce Sundlun. He passed away last Thursday. He was an extraordinary gentleman.

I think it is particularly appropriate that my colleague is here along with me because he was the director of policy for Governor Sundlun, and many of the achievements in the Sundlun administration were directly attributed to Senator Whitehouse’s extraordinary efforts.

Today, I am here, first, as a Rhode Islander to say on behalf of the people of my State how much we appreciate the leadership, vision, and determination of Governor Bruce Sundlun. He was elected in the middle of the worst financial crisis in the history of our State since the Great Depression—a collapse of the private credit union system. He got through that crisis as only he could. Then he went on to reconstruct our airport, to reform our workers’ compensation system, and to make lasting contributions to the people of Rhode Island.

So I come to salute an extraordinary Governor. I also come as a colleague in government. When Governor Sundlun was elected to the statehouse in 1990, I was elected to my first term in the Congress. I was there to observe his extraor-
dinary intellect, determination, skill, and his relentless commitment to doing his best to help the people of Rhode Island. I saw it firsthand.

Truly, without Bruce’s leadership, we would not have weathered the financial crisis of 1991 in Rhode Island. His extraordinary grasp of the financial details, his unwavering determination to do the right thing, not the popular thing, and his ability to withstand withering criticism from all quarters resulted not only in the restitution of the savings of thousands of Rhode Islanders, but essentially the repayment of the moneys that had to be borrowed to take care of the crisis. It was extraordinary work. Frankly, I think everybody in Rhode Island rapidly conceded that only Bruce Sundlun could have done it.

I also come here, like Bruce, as a veteran of our Armed Forces, but unlike Bruce, who was a combat veteran. Bruce joined the U.S. Army and qualified as a pilot in the Air Corps in World War II. He was brave. He was tough. He led his crew with great distinction on numerous bombing raids over occupied Europe. In one of those raids, he was shot down. Of course, he had the presence of mind to keep the aircraft as steady as he could to let crewmen escape.

Finally, at the last moment, he himself parachuted to Earth. He was behind enemy lines without any weapons except his determination, his courage, and his determination, again, not only to survive but to return to the fight.

Through an amazing series of breathtaking episodes that read like a novel, Bruce would go from village to village and seek out the priests in the French village, or Belgian village. He would say in fluent French that he was an American flier and needed their help. He always received their help. He would be given assistance and would be hid for a while. He told me with his great sardonic smile—that he would find unusual ways to get around. He would go into the village at market time when the ladies of the village parked their bicycles, and he would take one of them and pedal as fast as he could to the next village where he could find another bike. So he covered the route through occupied Europe, finally
making his way into Switzerland. That was a remarkable bit of courage.

After the war Bruce continued to distinguish himself in business, and in so many ways. But one thing is that he left a legacy not just to the people of Rhode Island, not just a public record, but he was part of the “greatest generation” that left an indelible image on the soldiers, sailors, aviators, and marines who serve today, a fidelity to duty, of courage, and of determination to serve and sacrifice on behalf of your comrades and your country. That image continues to sustain our forces in the field and this great Nation.

To Governor Sundlun, to his family, as a Rhode Islander, I thank you. As a colleague in government, I thank you. As someone who was inspired by your service to this country, I thank you. May you rest in peace.
ONE OF THE MOST COMPLEX, ACCOMPLISHED, DIFFICULT, CHARMING, DRIVEN, IMPATIENT, ARROGANT, CARING, INSENSITIVE, SMARTEST, CLUELESS POLITICIANS I EVER KNEW

M. CHARLES BAKST

Many readers enjoyed the author's affectionate article, "Fall River: A Jewish Reminiscence," in our 2009 issue. Over 40 years, a much larger readership seldom missed his byline as a reporter or a columnist in The Providence Journal. They surely miss it now amidst the decline of serious journalism and the possible demise of newspapers.

Having fearlessly sought objectivity and guarded his independence, Charlie understands politics better than most candidates or elected officials. As the following portrait and self-portrait reveal, he could be Bruce's admirer and critic. Although agreement or friendship were never goals, each man ultimately thought highly of the other.

Bruce retired to Jamestown and Charlie winters in Florida, but neither could give up politics. For both, politics was a positive force that could decrease suffering and strengthen society.

It was a Sunday morning, the phone rang at home, and, no surprise: it was Gov. Bruce Sundlun, complaining about my Providence Journal column.

I was used to this drill, but this particular time I didn't mind so much because I had a topic I wanted to raise with him.

So when he began barking about the column, I said, "Forget about that, I want to ask you about something."

But Sundlun wasn't about to let go so easily. "Sure," he snapped, "you put stuff in the paper and you tell me to forget about it."

Maybe he had a point. I'd never really thought about it that way.

Covering Democrat Sundlun during his two, two-year terms, 1991 to 1995, could be exasperating. His relations with the press were tense. Sometimes he'd place a newspaper or TV reporter in the "penalty box" and not talk with him or her for—well, in hockey, the penalty would be two minutes; with Sundlun, it was several weeks.

Did I mention that he'd also give out a hatchet award? Yes, a hatchet that you'd buy in, I don't know, a hardware store? Myself, I never bought one, but I did receive the award one year. It was a handsome plaque with a hatchet mounted on it and adorned with quotes from columns that had offended him.

I don't cite these things out of bitterness. They just were part of the land-
scape, one aspect of one of the most complex, accomplished, difficult, charming, driven, impatient, arrogant, caring, insensitive, smartest, clueless politicians I ever knew, dedicated to public service, intent on helping people, loving the limelight, wealthy, handsome, and yet, I often thought, certainly in his later years, lonely.

I first met him circa 1978. The former war hero and prosecutor was now a prominent businessman and TV executive. He raised money for politicians, notably Sen. Claiborne Pell, and was often at the State House on Chamber of Commerce issues. He was quotable and accessible, and, over the years, if he wasn’t in Rhode Island I’d have no problem tracking him down at his farm in Virginia or retreat in Jamaica or a fancy-sounding hotel in, say, Paris.

His 1986 run for governor against Republican incumbent Ed DiPrete fell far short. In 1987, looking to the 1988 elections, Sundlun talked of running for lieutenant governor, a post that seemed more attainable. One day he told me a delegation from Temple Beth-El was coming to see him that afternoon about becoming president, a post his late father, Walter, had held years earlier. Sundlun said that if the delegation insisted that he couldn’t be president if he also was going to run for LG, he’d forgo the race, that the temple honor meant more to him.

He did become president. Meanwhile party leaders persuaded him to run again for governor, and this time he nearly won.

And in 1990, he prevailed in a tough Democratic primary and then finally knocked off DiPrete in the general election.

During his campaigns, Sundlun spent millions of his own dollars and never seemed to regret it. His governorship was filled with drama and color, with the credit union crisis and fiscal crisis, the near-death of wife Marjorie, the emergence of Kara (the daughter the public never knew he had), and his shooting raccoons on his property in Newport. Through his tireless energy and with the help of many gifted staffers, including Sheldon Whitehouse, now a U.S. senator, he got things done— a new airport terminal, the Rite Care health program, a revised workers' compensation system— and, in a state so often stained by corruption, it was a pleasure to have a governor who was honest.

He loved the job, but over time his popularity waned, due, at least in public to his bull-in-a-china shop style and what struck me, at least, as a jarring series of course changes. For example, he campaigned as an outsider above politics but made some clunker old-school patronage appointments. He opposed casinos, then embraced them. He promised in 1990 to serve no more than two terms a pledge he renewed in 1992 when he announced for a second, but went ahead in 1994 and tried for a third anyway.
He could seem out of touch. On the afternoon of the 1994 primary, he called me and insisted he was going to win, which no one else I knew believed. No more than two hours later, apparently after seeing early exit polls, he phoned again to say he now realized he was going to lose. Placing the second call might have been humiliating, but at least it showed he saw the truth and was being straight with me.

Sundlun always said he was a who-what-where guy; introspection was alien to him. In December 1994, as he was about to leave office, I asked him why he thought voters threw him out. He said he didn't know and didn't care but that he was not bitter, sad, or angry. "I consider it an honor to have been governor of Rhode Island for four years. I think my administration achieved a lot of positive things for Rhode Island, and I think history will judge it well."

During his tenure, I was the newspaper's government affairs editor, writing the Sunday column and overseeing the State House reporters. He'd regularly call or fire off letters complaining about something I wrote, or the reporters wrote, or the way something was played, or ask why we didn't use a press release...

In one of the letters, he apologized for calling one day and yelling, but in the same letter he went on to defend people who yell. Manners are important, he said, "but honest emotions and free expression are just as important."

Yet this same man could also phone with a compliment or thank you, or an invitation to lunch, or just to talk. He was a great raconteur. In later years, he'd sometimes patronize the doughnut shop across from The Journal, then drop in the newsroom to schmooze.

And in my retirement I'd still hear from him; he delighted a couple of years ago in having me lunch with him at Bailey's Beach in Newport, a corner of the world I'd never been in. He may have been slowing down, but he could still tell stories. And as I was about to leave, he looked at me earnestly and said that if I ever needed anything I should call him.

This past May 23, we lunched again, at the Hope Club on Providence's East Side.

He still had spark and he said he was writing an autobiography, but now he was 91 and there was no escaping he was very old.

We discussed several of the current politicians and touched on some of his State House days. And then, as he spoke of his governorship, he said, "I love you."

This certainly caught my attention. I chided: "Is that why you yelled at me all the time or wouldn't talk to me for weeks on end? That must have been what they call tough love."

And he chuckled and said, "Yeah."
A MAN WHO BELIEVED IN ACTION
MARK PATINKIN

The author's columns have appeared in The Providence Journal for nearly a quarter-century. Many of these have been read nationally through the Scripps-Howard News Wire.

Perhaps best known for his self-deprecating and earthy reflections on the Ocean State, Mark has also won three New England Emmy Awards for television commentaries. His outsider status as a Chicago native and a Middlebury College graduate has given him a delightful appreciation of Rhode Island's curiosities and kookiness. With the cartoonist Don Bosquet, he wrote The Rhode Island Dictionary (1993) and The Rhode Island Handbook (1994).

But Mark has also tackled troubling international issues. For example, he was recognized as a Pulitzer Prize finalist for his series on religious violence in Northern Ireland, India, and Lebanon. With Ira Magaziner he wrote The Silent War: Inside the Global Business Battles Shaping America's Future (1989). His most recent book is: Up and Running: The Inspiring True Story of a Boy's Struggle to Survive and Triumph (2005). Surely Mark's longtime membership in Temple Beth-El has helped broaden and deepen his perspective.

The following portrait of Bruce, which was published on July 27, 2011, is reprinted with the kind permission of The Providence Journal.

Through all his life's public tumult and drama, only once did I ever see Bruce Sundlun, who died last Thursday at age 91, look defeated.

It was 1988, just after his second loss for governor. The polls predicted he would win by 5 percent, but in an upset, Sundlun lost. I was leaving an East Side restaurant when I saw him sitting unnoticed with his wife, Marjorie. I went to chat with him, and he mostly stared into space, as if stunned. He had really wanted that one.

I had long thought that what made Sundlun exceptional was his ability to absorb hardship without the devastation most people feel. It was a reminder that even great warriors have movements of being bereft.

I suppose the difference is that it never stopped him from moving on to the next battle.

He did. He ran again—winning with 75 percent of the vote.

But those who choose the arena are never immune.

In September 1994, when he was 74, I saw him after another defeat. This was a rough one. He'd served two terms as governor and had just lost the Democratic primary. The next day, I went to see him in his office at the State House.

"I've left a lot of jobs," he said, "though this is the first involuntarily."
Was it painful?

"Sure, it hurts, but you have to know how to handle hurt. You have your
day, and when it's over, you move on."

When I asked what challenge he'd like next, he said he'd love to get a call
from the Clinton administration. Then he said something that tells you what he
was about in life.

"I'd ask them to give me a mess," said Sundlin. He said that was what he
did best, fixing big things that were broken.

I often thought that part of his larger-than-life success was that he was
unseeing enough to make the kind of hard decisions that most folks couldn't stom-
ach. He knew he was seen that way, and on some level, was wounded by it.

"They describe me as cold and arrogant and uncaring," he told me that
day. "But talk to the people who've been with me a long time."

I did, and was surprised by two telling reactions. On my way in, I ran into
Libby Arron, his director of protocol. When I asked if she'd miss her boss, she
started to cry. Later in the interview, Dante Boffi, his director of transportation,
walked in to shake Sundlin's hand.

"The biggest honor of my life was serving you," said Boffi. Then he began
to choke up, and quickly left.

Two years later, I spent another few hours with Sundlin, this time at the
new airport terminal he'd shepherded into creation. I followed as he gave advice
where he saw weak points. Then I decided to try a test. I told him he'd been a lot
of things—governor, CEO, lawyer, pilot, father, athlete. Which identity did he see as
his true self? He didn't have to think about it.

"Pilot." He explained: "You always have to be anticipating problems, al-
ways checking your instruments to make sure you're not in trouble, always be
ready to take decisive action quickly. It's better to take action than not to take ac-
tion."

After pilot, he said he was a lawyer.

"I was only a public servant for four years," he said. "I liked it more than
any other job I've done." And he missed it. But he felt his focus on solving prob-
lems revealed a weak point. Unlike most public servants, he didn't make it a priori-
ity to be popular.

"With the public, I wasn't a very good politician. Even at my best, they
didn't like me."

But I think he knew they respected him.

I spent many other times with him, most recently in 2009, when he was
89 and living in a home in Jamestown that overlooked the bridge he’d built. It had been a public works challenge for years, getting a new Jamestown bridge, but he said it wasn’t his best legacy.

"I’m more proud that I built the airport terminal," he said.

What else— as two-term governor and longtime power player— was he proud of?

He said playing a big role in the Convention Center, the Westin Hotel and the Providence Place mall. Surprisingly, he also mentioned the Jamestown highway connector between the two bridges.

I asked why he’d mention something so... logistical.

Because that’s what problem solvers should be about, he said— not just great edifices, but the details that make it all work.

The home was filled with memorabilia, much of it from his wartime exploits. He retired from the Air Force Reserves at age 60. He told me that soldier was another core identity in his extraordinary life.

He looked out the window at “his” bridge. I asked if by age 90 he might retire.

"Never," said Sundlun.

He was still writing his memoirs.

He said he had a lot left to do.

BRUCE

GEORGE M. GOODWIN

His vitality, ego, and accomplishments were as big as— Rhode Island. During good times and bad, he did everything within his powers for the Ocean State. He surely knew 10,000 residents, and many can tell colorful stories about him. Of course he enjoyed telling stories about himself— because there were so many and because they were so good.

Bruce was impressive in countless ways, beginning with his appearance. Consider his height, athletic build, good looks, white hair, grin, strong handshake, and of course his signature garment: a double-breasted blazer with gleaming brass buttons. He had to be a governor or a senator because he so much looked like and felt the part.

I am deeply grateful that Bruce recruited me for two positions. In 1988, while president of Beth-El, and having little in the way of a personal agenda, he
supported my idea of celebrating the congregation’s 135th anniversary and the 20th anniversary of Rabbi Leslie Y. Gutterman’s pulpit. So I became the Temple archivist and created numerous documentary projects. Bruce later arranged for me to serve as archivist of Trinity Repertory Company to document the theatre’s 25 years under Adrian Hall—both his hero and his nemesis—but also to document his own significant accomplishments as board president (following a similarly successful tenure at PPAC). Bruce didn’t particularly care for plays, but he surely savored drama.

When I worked for Beth-El, he kept making the point that his father’s presidency should be commemorated, but on a far grander scale than I imagined. Thus, I was also astonished to hear Bruce’s story about Walter’s funeral. After the service, while standing on the Temple steps, Bruce was greeted by a stranger, who remarked that the deceased lawyer had been such a kind, sweet, and wonderful mentor. Bruce replied, “Are you talking about my father?”

On one unfortunate occasion I experienced a Sundlun legacy: raging anger. Having written to Bruce to request a donation for the publication of RIJHA’s anthology, The Jews of Rhode Island, I asked for a personal appointment. It was eventually arranged in his expansive office within URI’s Pell Library. (Bruce with an office in a library?) When I suggested a particular amount for a gift, he seemed amenable. But Bruce then inquired about the article devoted to Walter. I reluctantly explained that there would be none because, regrettably, nobody had ever written an article about him; thus, there was nothing to anthologize.

So Bruce then asked about his own article. Even more reluctantly, I gave the same answer. Losing his patience in a flash, he said that he would find somebody to write it. I explained again that a new article could not be included in a book of previously published articles. That’s when the screaming started, and I thought that he might take a swing at me. Needless to say, I left the governor-in-residence’s office empty-handed and shaken.

I do not know if Bruce read the article about his father and himself that appeared in the 2009 issue of The Notes. The article focused on Walter’s poem—a wartime lament about his sole surviving son missing in action.

In recent years, Bruce was cordial toward me. Whenever our paths crossed at Temple, he greeted me by name, often cracked a joke or brushed a hand across my face or shoulder. He once told me, a southpaw, never to wear a name tag on my left lapel because an acquaintance would naturally look toward a right lapel.

At our last encounter, a few months before his passing, Bruce asked if I would write a sequel to Seebert Goldowsky’s Temple history, which would of course include his presidency. I said that it was a splendid idea. Would he make it
happen?

I also asked if he wanted to run for office again. He replied, "Yes, if you pay for my campaign."

Other than his wanting to be president of Beth-El, like his father, who served from 1938 to 1942 and again from 1952 to 1955, I could never figure out Bruce's take on Judaism. Had he? Based on many childhood incidents, he obviously hated anti-Semitism. As a former aviator and aviation executive, moreover, he had proudly assisted the Israeli Air Force. Honesty, honor, and loyalty mattered to him, and he knew the meaning of good deeds.

Strangely, however, Bruce took some glee in telling me the story of how Rabbi Braude tried to prevent his Confirmation. The teenager's comprehension of Hebrew was miserable, as was probably everything else he was taught in religious school. Nevertheless, on holy days Bruce seemed proud to grasp a Torah and stand tall, shoulder-to-shoulder, with other past presidents. He also probably reasoned: who has never sinned?

As Temple archivist, I conducted some oral history interviews with Bruce, and he loved to describe the ways he had outfoxed the Germans as a downed bomber pilot in Belgium and France. It became obvious to me that Bruce had always been an adventurer. No, a daredevil. Danger and adrenaline gave him a rush. When I asked whether his struggle to survive in enemy territory made him a more spiritual person, Bruce gasped. He could have remarked, "Are you talking about me?"

Bruce was both a Democrat and a democrat (partially because Walter was neither). He surely cared about and enjoyed people, especially the young, bright, and beautiful. And probably those with moxie.

But I also wondered why, after his harrowing governorship and his embarrassing defeat for renomination, Bruce hung around Little Rhody. He had other homes and a far-flung circle of glamorous friends. Didn't he require an encore: a bigger stage and a brighter spotlight for an ever grander performance? His hearing had suffered, and fewer words sufficed. Surely Soozie was central to his equation, but he clearly loved this cantankerous and captivating place. Yes, Bruce's ferocious heart was as big as Rhode Island.

Bruce is on right
RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

57th ANNUAL MEETING

Robert Berkelhammer, a past president of the Association, chaired the meeting held on April 10, 2011 in the Great Room at Laurelmead. More than 125 members and guests were present. The audience stood for a moment of silence in memory of Lynn Stepak, the Association's former administrative assistant and longtime volunteer.

President David Leach commented on the Association's finances, explaining that it costs $25 to publish each copy of The Notes, which is $10 less than an annual membership. Bruce Leach, chair of the finance committee, added to David's remarks. He pointed out that donations and membership dues account for only half of income. Regrettably, the number of memberships is declining. Thus, the organization is too dependent on income from endowments. Explaining that operating expenses are managed prudently, Bruce made a plea for increased donations.

David announced the formation of a 60th anniversary committee, which will be chaired by Jane Civins. He invited members to serve as volunteers and offer ideas for celebrations. David also recognized David Bazaar as the Association's new treasurer.

George Goodwin, speaking on behalf of the publications committee, recognized Stanley Abrams, the current chair, and other committee members. Reflecting on the new issue of The Notes, George praised Bobbie Friedman's excellent design. George, a past president of the Association, recognized other past presidents in attendance: Stanley, Bob Berkelhammer, Stephen Brown, Robert Kotlen, Jerome Spunt, and Eugene Weinberg.

Gene, who chairs the nominating committee, introduced and installed the slate of officers and board members. Bailey Siletnik, formerly a presidential appointee, accepted a full term on the board. Marilyn Myrow is a new presidential appointee.

In place of a traditional lecture, the 41st David Charak Adelman Tribute consisted of a performance by Daryl Sherman, a jazz pianist and singer. Her presentation, "From Woonsocket to the Waldorf: My Musical Journey," interwove sounds and stories of her family's musical accomplishments and her involvement in Congregation B'nai Israel. Several of Daryl's relatives attended the meeting.

As always, Anne Sherman helped coordinate a festive collation.

Respectfully submitted,

Maxine Goldin
SECRETARY
IN MEMORIA

NOVEMBER 12, 2010 – OCTOBER 5, 2011

ABRAMS, HAROLD “HANK” H., born in Providence, was a son of the late Samuel and Ella (Elman) Abrams. A graduate of Classical High School, he was a member of the Class of 1939 at Rhode Island State College.

In 1940 Mr. Abrams volunteered as a seaman in the Navy and graduated as an ensign from an accelerated program at Annapolis. He served in the Pacific during World War II and achieved the rank of lieutenant commander.

For 37 years Mr. Abrams was the owner of Greenwich Hardware and Paint. For 57 years he made his home in Cranston.

Mr. Abrams was a former member of the Cranston Jewish Center and belonged to Temple Sinai for three decades. His numerous interests included travel, golf, tennis, music, and theatre.

Mr. Abrams is survived by his wife Helen (Abrams) Abrams and his three daughters, Anne Schwartz, Dr. Jane Abrams, and Eleanor Wasser.

Died on February 6, 2011 in Warwick at the age of 94.

BELLIN, DR. LEONARD B., born in Providence, was a son of the late Archie and Goldy (Brodsky) Bellin. He was the husband of the late Shirley (Borodach) Bellin.

A member of the Class of 1942 at Brown University, he graduated from Tufts University Medical School. As a captain in the Army medical corps during World War II, he served in the Philippines and Japan. He also served in the Korean War.

A pediatrician for half a century, Dr. Bellin belonged to numerous medical societies and was on the staff of Rhode Island and Women and Infants Hospitals. Since 1973 he was an assistant clinical professor at Brown University Medical School.

Dr. Bellin was a member of Temple Emanu-El and a life member of the Association.

He is survived by his sons Steven and David and his daughter Susan Peskoe.

Died on July 4, 2011 at the age of 89.
EPSTEIN, BARBARA E., born and reared in Halifax, Nova Scotia, was the daughter of the late Gordon and Lillian (Becker) Elman. She was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Wellesley College in 1951.

Mrs. Epstein and her husband, also a native of Nova Scotia, made homes in four cities. After living briefly in New York, the Epsteins moved to Montréal, where she became active in the local Wellesley Club and served on the board of the Baron de Hirsch Society. Mrs. Epstein earned a master’s degree in political science at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. An accomplished fundraiser, she became vice chair of the United Israel Appeal of Canada.

In 1977 Mrs. Epstein and her husband settled in Providence, their fourth and final home. Once again she was an activist, helping international graduate students at Brown University and serving on committees at Hillel. Given a lifelong love of books, she volunteered extensively at The Athenaeum. Mrs. Epstein enjoyed numerous other passions, including: art collecting, bridge, crossword puzzles, and politics.

She is survived by her husband Dr. Nathan Epstein and her three daughters, Tobe Barad, Nancy Goldbloom, and Jane.

Died on December 6, 2010 in Providence at the age of 80.

FERN, BEVERLY A. was the daughter of the late Joseph and Evalyn (Lembo) Armas.

After graduating from Hope High School in 1952, she began her lengthy career with a position in the Providence School Department. She served for six years as secretary to the executive director of the Providence Chamber of Commerce before joining the Fern/Hanaway Advertising Agency. She specialized in print production and finance until her retirement in 1997.

Mrs. Fern is survived by her husband Sanford Fern, her stepdaughter Deborah, and her sisterly companion Mary Caine.

Died on January 1, 2011 in Woonsocket.

FISHEBEIN, DOROTHY L., born in Warwick, was a daughter of the late Charles and Anna (Smira) Kay. She was the wife of the late Samuel “Sidney” Fishbein.

A 1945 graduate of Pembroke College, she was a co-owner of the Dorothy Kay clothing store in Providence for 40 years. She was a member of Temple Beth-El and was active in its Sisterhood.

Died on February 5, 2011 at the age of 89.
FRIEDMAN, DR. LESTER M., born in New York City, was a son of the late A. Max and Bertha (Goldschneider) Friedman. He was reared in Newport and spent most of his adult life in Warwick.

A graduate of Rhode Island State College, he earned his medical degree at the University of Rochester. During World War II, Dr. Friedman served as a captain in Europe with the 1st Infantry Division, 26th Regiment. Having fought in the Battle of the Bulge and in the immediate aftermath of D-Day, he received many decorations, including three Bronze Stars. Dr. Friedman was also present at the Nuremberg Trials.

He practiced internal medicine in Warwick and was known throughout his career for making house calls. He was a member of national and Rhode Island medical associations.

Dr. Friedman was a member of Temple Beth-El and a former member of Temple Emanu-El.

He is survived by his wife Janet (Lipson) Friedman and sons William J. and Robert L.

Died in Warwick on January 3, 2011 at 90 years of age.

GROSSMAN, STANLEY was one of five sons of the late Leo and Bessie Grossman.

He was a graduate of Lehigh University. During World War II, he served as an Army captain in the Pacific. He received the Silver Star for “gallantry in action,” which described much of his adult life.

With his late brother Clinton, Mr. Grossman owned and operated Lebanon Knitting Mills in Pawtucket. He served on the boards of The Outlet Company and Old Colony Bank.

Mr. Grossman was one of his generation’s most dynamic and effective leaders. Within the Jewish community, he was chair of the Miriam Hospital and served on the boards of Federation, the Jewish Home, Temple Beth-El, B’nai B’rith, Israel Bonds, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews. He was a life member of our Association.

Within the larger community, Mr. Grossman was chair of the Providence Center and helped lead the United Way, Hospice Care Rhode Island, Planned Parenthood, Big Brothers, and the Providence Human Relations Commission.

Mr. Grossman is survived by his wife Hazel (Singerman) Grossman, his daughter Nancy, and his sons Rick and Scott.

Died on January 1, 2011 in Providence at 91 years of age.
KOLODNEY, SAMUEL J., born in Providence, was a son of the late William and Gussie Kolodney.

On May 2, 1945, as a staff sergeant in the Army's 8th Infantry Division, he participated in the liberation of Woebbelin concentration camp near Hagenow, Germany. He served as commander of the Jewish War Veterans' Sackin Shocket Post 533.

Mr. Kolodney was a graduate of Rhode Island College and Boston University Law School. A member of national and Rhode Island bar associations, he practiced for more than six decades with the firm of Arcaro, Belilove & Kolodney.

Mr. Kolodney was president of Roger Williams Lodge of B'nai B'rith and was an associate member of Hadassah. He was a longtime member of Temple Emanu-El.

He is survived by his wife Zelda (Holland) Kolodney.

Died on November 5, 2010 at the age of 91.

KOLODOFF, MAX, born in Providence, was a son of the late Jacob and Sarah (Uditsky) Kolodoff.

During World War II he served as a petty officer in the Merchant Marine and later attended Northeastern University. He was president and treasurer of Maxwell Realty.

Over many decades, Mr. Kolodoff belonged to four synagogues: Temples Shalom, Am David, and Torat Yisrael, and Congregation B'nai Israel. He supported numerous Jewish organizations, including the Providence and South Providence Hebrew Free Loan Associations, Federation, and Touro Fraternal Association. He was also a Knight of Pythias.

Mr. Kolodoff is survived by his wife Gloria (Kosofsky) Kolodoff and his stepchildren Debra and Barry Ackerman.

Died on May 6, 2011 in Warwick.

NEMTZOW, HELENE R., born in Providence, was a daughter of the late Isaac and Sadie Rottenberg. She was the wife of the late Dr. Aaron R. Nemtzow.

A 1949 graduate of Rhode Island College of Education, Mrs. Nemtzow taught at the elementary level in Providence public schools. She later held positions with Rhode Island’s Departments of Employment Security and Elderly Affairs.

Mrs. Nemtzow grew up within a family steeped in secular Yiddish culture and the labor activism of the Workmen’s Circle. For more than half a century, she
was a member of Temple Emanu-El.

Mrs. Nemtzow lived in Pawtucket and Boynton Beach, Florida. Bridge was one of her passions.

She is survived by her daughters Tema Steffen and Marci and her son Ted. Died on June 13, 2011 in Providence at the age of 83.

ROBINSON, ERWIN G., born in Providence, was a son of the late Matthew and Bess (Leichter) Robinson. He was the husband of the late Lucille (Finberg) Robinson and lived for 63 years in Warwick.

Mr. Robinson graduated from Hope High School. During World War II, he served as an lieutenant in the Army and fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

He succeeded his mother as the proprietor of Mrs. Robinson, the fine linen and lingerie store that was a landmark on Providence's Wayland Square. During the 1950s he established a satellite store in Garden City. Until his retirement in 1985, Mr. Robinson derived particular delight assisting male customers who were befuddled when selecting gifts.

He was a member of the Providence Chamber of Commerce and served as chairman of the board of the Southern New England AAA from 1987 to 1990. Mr. Robinson was an advisor at Bryant University's Small Business Development Center. He enjoyed golf, swimming, and gardening.

A longtime member of Temple Beth-El, he was also a volunteer at the Rhode Island Community Food Bank.

Mr. Robinson is survived by his son Peter and his daughters Susan Fleisig and Paula Greenwood.

Died in Warwick on September 20, 2011, his 93rd birthday.

ROBINSON, LOUISE R., a lifelong resident of Providence, was a daughter of the late Samuel and Martha (Finkelstein) Robinson. She graduated from Hope High School in 1938 and was a saleslady for Robinson Dress Shop in Woonsocket for two decades.

Ms. Robinson was a former member of Temple Emanu-El.
Died on March 4, 2011 at the age of 92.
ROBINSON, LUCILLE F., was born in Providence, exactly one year before her future husband. She was a daughter of the late Edward and Bessie (Reifkin) Finberg and graduated from Hope High School.

For more than three decades, she assisted during busy times in Mrs. Robinson, the store owned and operated by her mother-in-law and husband. This business employed many Robinsons, including the founder’s sisters.

Lucille Robinson was a member of Temple Beth-El and a life member of Hadassah. A fabulous cook, she also enjoyed golf and Mah Jongg.

She was survived by her husband Erwin Robinson and is survived by her son Peter and her daughters Susan Fleisig and Paula Greenwood.

Died on December 22, 2010 in West Warwick at the age of 91.

SALTZMAN, DR. ABRAHAM “ABE,” born in New York City, was a son of the late Samuel and Anna (Lieberson) Saltzman.

As a young man he was strongly influenced by his uncle, Dr. Frank Lieberson, who nurtured his interest in science and medicine. Dr. Saltzman was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of New York University in 1940 and four years later earned his medical degree at Long Island College of Medicine (later known as SUNY Downstate Medical Center).

He settled in Providence in 1950 and retired from private practice at 80 years of age. In addition to caring for patients, he was a researcher and teacher.

Dr. Saltzman, who played numerous musical instruments, specialized in the violin and bass violin. He often played with his wife, Ruth, a professional harpist. His other interests included reading, photography, and vacationing on Cape Cod.

Dr. Saltzman is survived by his wife, his daughter Beth Aaronson, and his sons Dr. Charles, David, and Dr. John.

Died on May 14, 2011 in Providence at the age of 91.

SATLOFF, MORRIS was born in Shenderivka, Ukraine, and immigrated to America in 1923 with his parents, the late Charles (Chaskel) and Cilia (Zipe) Zatloff.

Mr. Satloff graduated from Hope High School and with the Class of 1943 from Rhode Island State College. During World War II, he served in the Army as a clerk and rabbi’s assistant in Italy and North Africa. With the assistance of the GI Bill, he earned a master’s in business administration at New York University.

For more than a half-century, he was a public accountant and real estate investor in Providence.
A nearly lifetime member of Temple Emanu-El, Mr. Satloff was also a life member of Touro Fraternal Association. He was active in numerous Jewish and Israeli causes, including Providence Hebrew Day School and B’nai B’rith. He also belonged to the Masons’ Overseas Lodge for more than five decades.

As a young man, Mr. Satloff had been a member of the legendary Olympic Club at the Jewish Community Center and won many of its table tennis championships. He was also a charter member of Crestwood Country Club.

Mr. Satloff is survived by his wife Beverly (Granoff) Satloff and his sons, Drs. David, Lewis, and Robert.

Died on January 9, 2011 in Providence at the age of 89.

SCHALER, ALBERT, born in Munich, was the son of the late Joseph and Elizabeth (Bruner) Schaler.

A consultant in precious metal castings, he was the founder of A. M. Schaler, Inc. and was an associate member of Goldsmith Hall in London.

Mr. Schaler is survived by his wife Ilse Schaler.

Died on May 8, 2011 in Bristol at the age of 87.

SCRIBNER, MILTON G., born in Providence, was a son of the late Jacob and Dora (Bachman) Scribner. He was the husband of the late Dorothy (Nutman) Scribner.

Mr. Scribner was a graduate of Classical High School and a member of the Class of 1934 at Brown University. Active in the Zionist movement, he volunteered on kibbutzim in Palestine during 1935. While serving in the Army for three years, he helped establish price control clinics for servicemen throughout the United States.

Mr. Scribner was a merchandising manager for New York Lace and Zayre Corporation for four decades.

A member of Temple Emanu-El and a leader of its social action committee, Mr. Scribner was also a member of Roosevelt Masonic Lodge and B’nai B’rith. An active resident of Laurelmead, he served on many committees and presented programs on jazz, opera, and classical music.

Mr. Scribner is survived by his sons Neal and Eric. He was predeceased by his son Arnold.

Died on November 10, 2010 in Providence at the age of 98.
STEPAK, EVELYN "LYNN" R., born in Providence, was the daughter of the late Saul and Dorothy (Goldman) Faber. She was the wife of the late Samuel Stepak.

A graduate of Hope High School and Rhode Island College of Education, Mrs. Stepak devoted much of her life to children. She taught in public schools and at the Jewish Community Center's preschool and tutored youngsters.

Mrs. Stepak served as our Association's warm and thoughtful secretary from 1989 to 1991, but she was a devoted volunteer long before and long after her official employment. Continuing to assist with fall and annual meetings until a few years ago, she was both a life member and an honorary board member.

Mrs. Stepak was a member of Temple Beth-El and its Sisterhood. She was also a life member of N'amat and the Miriam Hospital Women's Association. Always eager to lend a helping and encouraging hand, she helped produce the "Senior Journal" program on cable television.

Mrs. Stepak is survived by her son Steve and her daughter Jane. Died in Providence on April 7, 2011 at the age of 88.

TEMKIN, MARTIN M., born in Providence, was a son of the late Charles and Rose (Pullman) Temkin.

He was a graduate of Hope High School and a member of the Class of 1950 at Brown University. An alumnus of Boston University Law School, he was a member of national and Rhode Island bar associations and specialized in estate planning.

There were few Rhode Island organizations in which Mr. Temkin did not play a leadership role. Within the Jewish community, he was vice chair of the Miriam Hospital; president of the Jewish Home for the Aged, the Jewish Seniors Agency, and Hebrew Free Loan Association of Providence; and a board member of Federation. He was a member of Temple Beth-El and founded an ecumenical dialogue group.

Beyond the Jewish community, Mr. Temkin was chair of Hospice Care of Rhode Island Foundation and a cochair of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank; president of the Urban League and of First Night Providence; and a board member of the YMCA and the Friends of the Rhode Island School of the Deaf.

As if he operated by a different clock, Mr. Temkin also found time to enjoy tennis, wind surfing, and skiing as well as reading and classical music.

He is survived by his wife Beatrice (DePasquale) Temkin, his daughters Lisa Nisky and Donna Paolino, and his son Mayor Joseph R. Paolino, Jr.

Died on December 4, 2010 in Providence at the age of 81.
WOLF, W. IRVING, JR., born in Queens and reared in Woodmere, New York, he was the son of the late W. Irving, Sr. and Fay (Miller) Wolf. He was the husband of the late Ruth H. Wolf.

Mr. Wolf attended Lehigh University and took courses at Columbia, New York, and Brown Universities. Despite a childhood case of polio, he volunteered to serve in World War II and was sent to Atlanta.

For more than four decades, Mr. Wolf led Trifari. He rose from vice president to president to chairman. During the mid-1960s, he oversaw the construction of a state-of-the-art manufacturing plant in East Providence. He was also president of the Manufacturing Jewelers and Silversmiths of America.

Mr. Wolf was a member of Temple Beth-El, a president of Jewish Family Service, and a board member of the Miriam Hospital. In 1982, in recognition of his efforts to help build its medical school, he received an award from Brown.

Mr. Wolf enjoyed snow and water skiing, golf, tennis, reading, classical music, and travel. He was a founder of the Highridge Swim and Tennis Club in Lincoln.

He is survived by his son Scott and was predeceased by his son David.

Died on August 6, 2011 in Providence at the age of 96.

ZEXTER, ELEANOR M. was a daughter of the late Dr. Morris and Anna (Cantor) Marks. She was the wife of the late D. Ronald Zexter and is survived by her daughters F. Deborah and Judith.

A longtime resident of Providence, Mrs. Zexter died in Santa Monica, California, on June 29, 2011 at the age of 74.
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The time and place of birth of Roger Williams are not recorded in history, which knows him as a young minister of the Massachusetts Colony, who believed and taught that all men should be free to act in religious matters according to their own consciences. For this he was banished. With a few followers he fled to the forest in the dead of winter, and found a refuge with the Indians. In June, 1636, he founded a settlement in Rhode Island and gratefully named it Providence. Massachusetts claimed jurisprudence over the new colony, but he went to England and got an independent charter. On his return the people agreed on a set of laws that guaranteed faith and worship for all,—the first legislation of liberty of conscience ever adopted or America.

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