Rhode Island Jewish Historical

Notes

Volume 18 Number 4 November 2022

The Association is grateful to the
Harold A. Winstead Charitable Foundation Trust
for its generous support of *The Notes*
and members of the Trust's distribution committee:

Norman Jay Bolotow
Philip M. Weinstein
Benjamin G. Paster

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The Library of Congress National Serials Data Program (NSDP), Washington, DC 20540, which operates the US Serials Data System, has assigned the following International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) to *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes,* a publication of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association: ISSN 0556-8609

OUTSIDE FRONT COVER:
Hebrew typewriter, manufactured by Underwood, probably 1946; Collection of RIJHA

INSIDE COVERS:
Portrait of Harold A. Winstead with detail of photo from the annual outing, Atlantic Tubing & Rubber Company, October 1, 1950; both photos from Collection of Norman Jay Bolotow

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Editor's Comments

Editing our journal is always a challenge and seldom a chore. Yes, I need a break after one issue goes to press, but much sooner than later I receive new submissions and begin seeking others. Eventually, it seems, just about everything falls into place.

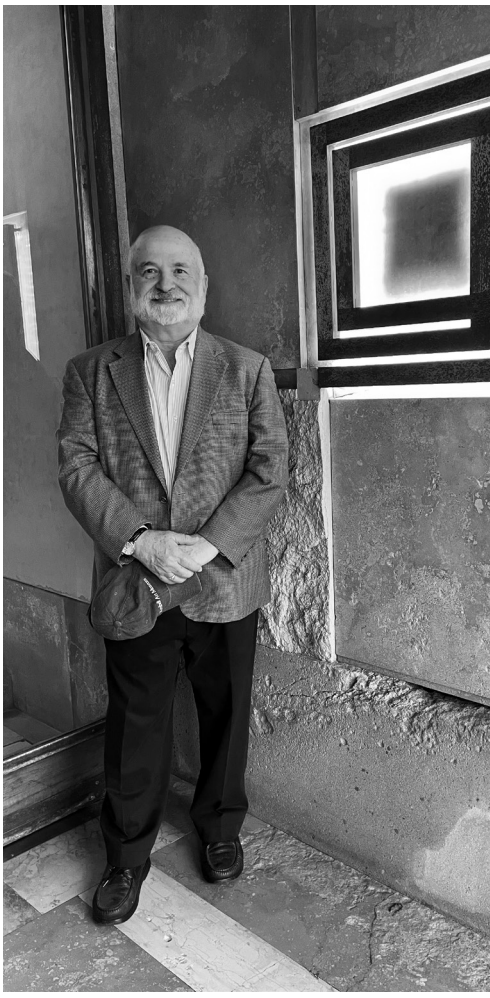
This new issue is exceptionally important because of the increased support provided by the Harold A. Winstead Charitable Foundation Trust. The Association is deeply grateful for the generosity and kindness provided by the members of the trust's distribution committee: Harold's nephews, Norman Jay Bolotow and Philip M. Weinstein, as well as Benjamin G. Paster – all three of whom are distinguished attorneys.

I would again like to thank the Association's officers and board members, who have always played a supportive role. I have also benefitted from working with a key group of advisors, the publications committee, which is chaired by Mel Topf and has gained another valuable member, Bob Kemp.

Of course the Association's staff has always been helpful. Both Kate-Lynne and Jaime look after numerous details, especially around the time when I begin to lose steam.

With this issue I am pleased to welcome another new colleague, Lynne Bell, who has compiled our index. I investigated the possibility of somehow undertaking this task almost automatically through a computer program, but this daunting process requires human oversight. Fortunately, Lynne, whom many of us have known as a longtime receptionist at the Dwares JCC, provided skill and warmth.

Stephen Logowitz, our highly talented and accomplished graphic designer, is another invaluable colleague. We've been buddies for more than a half-century, since meeting as college freshmen. Steve is a Providence native who, like his mother, Neda, grew up at Temple Beth-El. Whenever I happily point out that I have lived here and belonged to the same congregation for twice as many years as Steve, he too frequently reminds me that I will never become a Rhode Islander. Yet, even as a longtime resident of



Newton, Massachusetts, he will always remain one!

Thanks to Steve's wonderful predecessor, Bobbie Friedman, who designed eleven issues of *The Notes,* our Association has enjoyed a 19-year collaboration with the professionals of Signature Printing in East Providence. Sooner than later, Brian Mannix also became one of my key advisors and colleagues.

And, as usual, the contributors to this issue include many stalwarts as well as some newcomers. Their ages range from 88 to 31. While many contributors observe religious traditions in various ways, others choose to abstain from such observances. Go figure!

The new issue is also notable for having four women writers. Perhaps even more surprising is the fact that Kate-Lynne Laroche graduated from Rhode Island College, which Nancy Carriuolo led as president. But three of the women writers share another distinction, for each included at least one poem in her article.

So, in a sense, this is a poetry issue. But you may agree that some of our journal's best articles have often achieved a lyrical dimension.

George M. Goodwin

Liebe Feibelmänner!

Ihren l. Brief betreffs Ernst in Be
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Feibelmaenner: *A Chronicle, Part III*

H. Jack Feibelman

Like the second installment of Jack's memoirs, this one covers a brief period, from November 1938 through December 1942. It was, however, a momentous one for him and the world. This installment covers not only the young man's arrival in and adaptation to Providence, but also his early departure.

Jack and his parents, Siegfried and Clare, worked hard to build new lives in America. Unfortunately, however, they were also consumed with worries about dear ones left behind in Germany and others who fortunately found passage to distant lands. Yes, it seems both predictable and amazing that the Feibelman family found some degree of stability and acceptance on the shores of Narragansett Bay.

Jack gradually gained satisfaction through his increasing professional responsibilities, opportunities for higher education, a gradually expanding circle of friends, and an attraction to a young lady and her family. But even before becoming a naturalized citizen, he would be again uprooted and forced to defend his newfound way of life and country.

I am thankful to Jack and Hannah Feibelman's daughter, Barbara, for her continuing devotion to sharing her family's saga. She helped clarify and contextualize several points. Please keep in mind that Jack did not complete his memoirs until 2001, when he reached 80 years of age. And, yes, there will be a fourth installment.

1939

In the fall of 1938, a union affiliated with the American Federation of Labor organized the workers at Coro in New York City and called for a strike for higher wages. Management retaliated by closing up the warehouse, shipping and accounting operations, and offered jobs to a few, select employees at its large factory in Providence.[1] I had been pleading all along for a job in its accounting department; this was my opportunity to advance myself.

I jumped at the offer to move to Rhode Island to become head bookkeeper at the age of 18. The company had persuaded its independent CPA, Ed Perry, to accept the position of financial officer and move to Providence where I would report to him.[2]

During the last weekend of November 1938, my parents and I moved to Providence. We stayed for a few days at the Narragansett Hotel, which has since been torn down. Going to work that Monday morning, I walked into a vacuum, as the records had not arrived from New York and staff had not as yet been hired.

For a period of about nine months, we worked ten-hour days, sometimes more, from 7 AM to 7 PM, to build an organization of about 25 bookkeepers to cope with the company's manufacturing, marketing, and financial records. It was for me a crash program to learn the real rather than the theoretical ways of business.

Sometime toward the end of 1939, I was promoted to the position of credit manager, reporting to Charles Safran, the former credit manager who was still located in New York City and had been with the company since its founding in 1902. I was fortunate that Charlie took a liking to me and taught me all aspects of the work. He was in his sixties, and we developed something akin to a father-son relationship. Over the next couple of years, his support and advocacy helped me advance my career at the firm.

My relationship with the general manager, Adolph Katz, also proved invaluable.[3] Adolph traveled regularly to the fashion centers of Europe – Paris, Rome, and London – to keep abreast of new fashion trends. In the prewar era, there was an aura surrounding Paris which made easy the promotion and success of any new trends originated by such Parisian designers as Coco Chanel, Pauline Trigère, and later Christian Dior. Fashion houses such as Coro were on the lookout for these trends.

Discussion and consideration of new products, their conception, development, and marketing struck a resonant chord within me because this is what my father was involved with in the textile field and the merchandise he marketed. I also felt that to advance the company, creative work would be a great route, although at this point it seemed unattainable to me. One thing I learned early on,

Jack at Coro in Providence

which was confirmed and reconfirmed to me, was that the successful person, sometimes labeled the "self-made man," seems always to have had a strong helping hand from somebody who has already climbed that ladder to success. Time indeed proved to me that such friendships were in the long run very valuable.

As 1939 turned into 1940, my parents started to feel at home in America. Both Mother and Father had gone to adult classes given by the Providence school system to learn English, and they were now quite competent in speaking and writing English. We had rented a two-bedroom apartment on Elmwood Avenue and frugally furnished it.[4] My salary, increased to $22 per week upon my arrival in Rhode Island, had been advanced during the next two years to $30 so that we were self-supporting and did not have to touch my father's dwindling savings.

The mail from Europe brought desperate reports of Nazi atrocities from friends and relatives. The Hitler regime stepped up its efforts to remove Jews from Germany. Its two-pronged approach was to force Jews to emigrate or kill them by many means but primarily by sending them to death camps. We know that now; we did not know it then.

The first extensive report was a letter from our friend Hans Vogelhut, whom my parents left behind in Berlin. We were shocked – incredulous; we could not absorb what we learned from Hans's letter dated November 15, 1938, which reached us less than a week later. Here is an excerpt from the translation of that letter sent from Warsaw:

Dear Feibelmaenner:

From here I can write quite openly about what happened in the meantime. I only wished I had already gone with you in the spring. I was packed fairly well to depart and it had been my intention at the beginning of November to travel to Shanghai with a family of friends to manufacture dresses there.

On October 28th, early at 6 AM, I was arrested right out of bed and transported together with 2,000 other Jews of Polish nationality (I have a Polish passport) in a truck and then was held as prisoner in a police barrack. We were allowed to take with us DM 10 (about $2.50)- nothing else, no luggage, no underwear, no clothes, not even a toothbrush. In Berlin it was only the men who were arrested, but in the provinces and in all other German cities, also all Polish-Jewish women and children. In Berlin there were about 6,000 to 7,000 men, some very young, some very old, also blind, invalids, people from the home-for-the aged, the rich, and the poor. Then we were carried in trucks (a caravan of about 40 vehicles) right through the center of Berlin at high speed to the train assembly station of Stralau-Rumelsberg. All this happened under sneering and name- calling by Nazi hordes, particularly women (the latter could not scream enough). There we were put into railroad wagons with closed and sealed windows. The entire railroad station was surrounded; there were about 2,000 S. S. troopers and Gestapo officers, all with loaded guns and revolvers.

During the trip we did not at all know why we had been arrested and what our destination was. We did not receive anything to eat or drink, at best a beating with a gun butt.

The trip continued until late that night, when we arrived at the town of Bentschen at the Polish-German border. There we had to leave the train and walk under close guard about four kilometers to the border. Whoever could not keep up was either shot or stabbed to death. I have seen with my own eyes as one after another of four old men, who were not able to walk were shot with a revolver. Small children, who came from an orphanage in Frankfurt, were pushed into a river during all the shoving and pulling that was going on and drowned there. As we were standing on the border, it was shouted to us that anyone who would return to German territory would be shot for violation of the borderline.

On the Polish side, we stood in the darkness on a meadow, thousands of deported men, women, and children, without the sight of any Polish border guard. That is how I left Berlin and Germany, having

lived and worked honestly in Vienna, my birthplace, for 17 years and in Berlin for 18 years. I had never been to Poland, speak no Polish, and know no person here. You can imagine the condition that I was in, both physical as well as psychological, and the others fared also.

From these Jews who were settled in stalls, old barracks, barns, and abandoned buildings, 29 died and over 60 went out of their minds. These people are even now after 17 days at the same spot and in about the same circumstances in a horrible condition. This was a picture of misery and wretchedness. The women and small children are screaming and crying; add to that the indescribable filth and ragged clothes. Nobody can leave this place; it is surrounded by police day and night. There are ongoing negotiations concerning these people between the German and Polish governments.

In the meantime, I managed with another young man to get to Posen and from there reached Warsaw. This young man has relatives here in Warsaw, and I now live with them. They are very decent people, who make every effort to accommodate us. The dirt as terrifying as it is for me, however, here it is an accepted condition. We, who have also had clean and hygienic homes and lived that way, just cannot comprehend these conditions.

Last week, because of the murder in Paris, a totally new and worsened situation was created for us Jews in Germany. The parents of the Parisian murderer are also Polish Jews expelled from Germany, who, as I hear, are in the area near Bentschen – the area where I was dropped off by the Nazi trucks. The goings on in Berlin during the last three days, starting with Kristallnacht, *defy description. For days the Nazi troops were active, broke into homes and businesses, beat the people half to death and dragged them away; 10,000 men alone in Berlin were arrested; Jewish businesses without exception smashed and plundered; the temples and the adjacent Jewish schools burned. In Beuthen, Berlin, and many other places, the families of the temple caretakers were burned. There were many, many suicides; that is the German culture.*

I have telephoned my friends in Berlin daily. I can hear clearly the terror in their voices. All of them sleep away from their homes; my male friends stay in a laube *(a gazebo) outside of Berlin. The temple and the mortuary at the main Berlin cemetery were blown up with dynamite.*

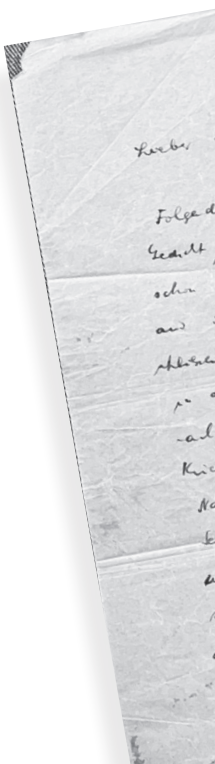
The children from the orphanages and the old people from the old age homes were driven to the streets and now are walking

around and are being chased from place to place. All bank and postal checking accounts for Jews have been blocked. Many leases on residences are being cancelled and those homes have to be vacated within a few days, although the residents cannot find new homes. Food stores do not sell to Jews.

My parents and I were busy in 1939 sending packages of affidavits to all cousins and friends who had written us these desperate letters. Of course, for our affidavits to be credible, we had to supplement them with affidavits from Uncle Adolf (in Camden, Arkansas) and cousin Harry Dannenberg.[5] The affidavits worked successfully for my cousins Arthur and Margaret Zander, who arrived in Providence via Lisbon and New York in November 1939.[6] For all the others that we wanted to help, it was just too late.

We received letters from Jewish friends still in Germany expressing their fears and desperation. They wrote like hunted, cornered quarry.

Rabbi Ernst Hoffman, a younger man of about 32 years, who was our rabbi in Arnswalde, my mother's hometown, who always had time for me when I visited during vacations, was a newly ordained graduate of the famous Breslau seminary. He wrote on February 1 to my parents and to my Uncle Willi in Australia. An excerpt of his letter to Uncle Willi tells of his hopelessness:



Breslau, February 1, 1939

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Arnholz:

For your kind letters I thank you deeply. In the meantime a great many things have happened in my world.

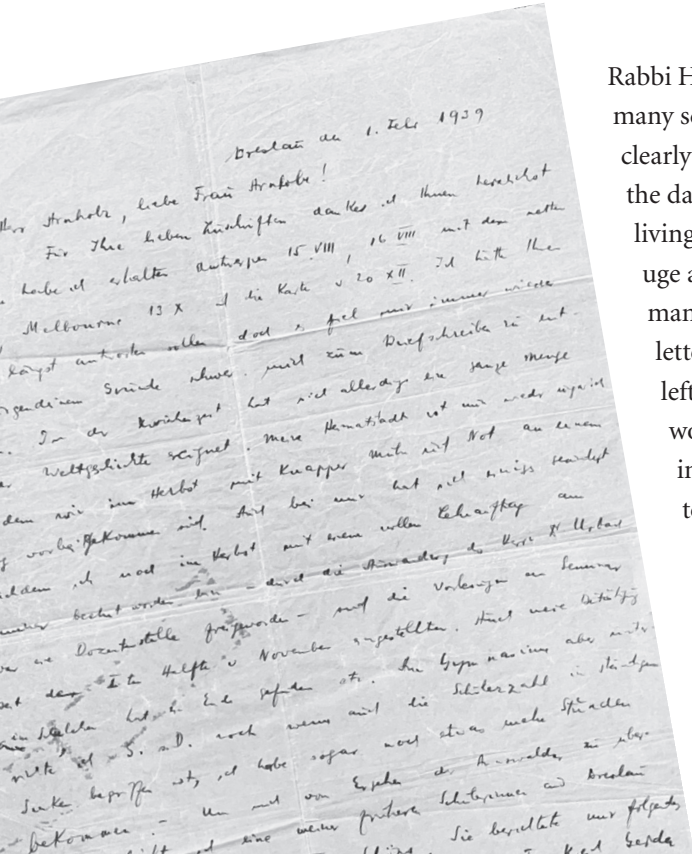
After having been honored in the fall with a teaching contract at the Seminary – when a Dozent *position became available through the emigration of Dr. Urband – the lectures in early November have been terminated. Also my activity in the religious school has found an end. At the* gymnasium *(high school), thank G-d, I still participate. Even though the number of students is in constant decline, I have been assigned more classes.*

To find out about the conditions in Arnswalde, I sent a

former student of mine from Breslau, who is presently in Berlin, to visit Frau Schoeps (a former resident of Arnswalde). She reported the following: Kurt Schoeps and family left last summer for France; Gerda Schoeps and her husband emigrated as a "service couplen*" (maid and butler) to Sydney, Australia. In Arnswalde there still are Mrs. Reich and Mrs. Daniel Friedman with whom Bruno Abraham's sister lives. Bruno Abraham, a former department store owner, lives in Berlin and would like to emigrate to Palestine. Moses Fuchs lives with a Christian family with the young Falk and Kidzenkowsky. I know nothing else of Arnswalde.*

So too here in Breslau it has become very lonely. Josef Falk, with whom I had a particularly good relationship, left these days for England. My colleague Stein, about whom I perhaps have reported to you in the past, has emigrated to Eretz Israel; Rabbi Joseph went to Manila in the Philippines.

My emigration has not moved ahead, but I am trying to obtain a Torah-student certificate to go to Palestine; I cannot tell yet if this will work out. Now, I am ready and willing to go to any country where it is possible for me to go without requiring advance money to obtain a visa. It appears that all who emigrated to Palestine are okay because I have not heard of anybody who has returned.



Rabbi Hoffmann was one of many scholars and clergy who clearly awakened too late to the dangerous world he was living in, unable to find refuge anywhere. Ernst Hoffmann's letter, much like the letter from Hans Vogelhut, left my parents and me wondering if we were doing all that was possible to save these lives. The

letter from Rabbi Ernest Hoffmann

news was not as surprising to us as it was to their writers. Both Hans and even more so Ernst did not see the coming of the intense Nazi persecution; they thought all along they would be able to leave, if Hitler actually rounded up the Jews as he had indicated. It was too late for them to save themselves or for their friends to help.

Unless they could hide somewhere, they inevitably would be caught, transported to a concentration camp, and killed. Hans Vogelhut lived underground and survived Hitler.

Dr. Ernst Hoffmann did not survive. When the Allied troops liberated Buchenwald, they found the books marked with Dr. Hoffmann's name, his prisoner's number, and a notation to send them to me. Thus in 1946, I received a small carton from the camp with scholarly books that I treasure. Among them was a small volume of cantorial compositions by Ernst. These were new melodies he had composed for traditional prayers.

I turned this work over to Temple Beth-El in Providence. At a Holocaust memorial service in 1999, Cantor Ida Rae Cahana sang some of the traditional prayers using Ernst's new melodies (*nigunim* in Hebrew) accompanied by the Temple Beth-El choir. I cannot describe how moving it was to hear Rabbi Hoffmann's work come to life. Despite the Nazis' efforts to destroy this good man, Dr. Ernst Hoffmann's music survived Hitler.

1940

War broke out in Europe in September 1939. When Hitler invaded Poland, France and England declared war on Germany to honor their treaty obligations.

Here in America, the immediate impact on our daily life was slow in coming. In our business life, the war created a shortage of raw materials, first of tin and sterling silver used for casting ornaments, then of other industrial materials that were used by the armament industry. Congress authorized rearmament of the military forces, which began to order weapons and supplies for men in their forces. The Lend-Lease Act for Britain called for the construction of thousands of Liberty ships and airplanes. Civilian consumption, too, had increased as people were earning more money in the heavy

industries and were spending more.

Then in 1940, the Selective Service Act established the first draft since World War I. A national draft lottery determined the sequence of induction of the registered men into the Armed Services. My draft number was 238, and I was on notice to expect my call soon. Anticipating their call to service, men suddenly volunteered with the understanding that they would be assigned to the service branch and activity of their choice. The draft by the Armed Forces, on top of the increased demands on industry, led to a tremendous shortage of manpower.

with Coro colleagues; Jack is standing at far right

As 1940 progressed, Coro set up a defense work division and bid for all types of defense contracts. The easiest work for us was orders for badges, insignia, and medals for the Quartermaster Corps, which involved work much like the production of jewelry pins. We also hired engineers to get us involved in manufacturing ammunition and armaments.

My first personal experience with the defense effort was in making ignition caps for rifle ammunition. We were awarded the contract, and I was told to take charge of expediting the delivery of this project, in addition to my regular duties. It was an opportunity to organize the flow of production and to develop an assembly line for this contract. Since there was ample engineering help and guidance available to me from our experienced staff, it all seemed simple enough.

It, however, taught me a lesson well learned, that nothing competently produced should ever be taken lightly. As with any substantial manufacturing project, there were numerous challenges that were not obvious in the planning stages. We overcame these problems, however, and produced our order on time and received many reorders.

In the fall of 1939, I had taken steps to remedy what I felt was my shortcoming, namely a formal higher education. I enrolled in the evening school of Northeastern University, which would lead to a B.S. degree in accounting and business management. At this time, Northeastern maintained a branch in Providence, allowing me to start off there.[7]

The instructors included a number of outstanding people from the worlds of politics, law, literature, and accounting. Among them was Christopher Del Sesto, who later became the administrator of the federal OPA (Office of Price Administration), regulating all prices during the war. In 1958 he was elected governor of Rhode Island. Harry Howell, who was called to Washington the following year as a "$1-a-year" corporate volunteer, wrote laws establishing the pay-as-you-go "withholding tax" system, which was replaced by quarterly tax payments in subsequent years. Howell's revolutionary change was needed to pay for the federal government's huge war expenditures.

1941

I remember 1940 and 1941 as years of awakening for the nation after a ten-year nightmare of living through what is now called the Great Depression. Money was in circulation again, the economy was slowly recovering, so that the extreme poverty and pervasive feeling of hopelessness were lifting. The consumer demand together with the armament effort by the government started to churn the economy and stirred most of country. We were working overtime, under pressure to handle the increased business and under an unidentified tension. In looking back, I see it was an anxious anticipation of the world crisis to come, the terrible war which surely would soon be upon us.

December 7, 1941 was a Sunday. I remember it well, as Ed Perry and I had gone to work at about 9 AM to prepare the financial statement for the month of November. We were there alone in the large factory building; the radio was playing music softly. Then the bombshell of the Pearl Harbor news hit us.

With an interruption of the music came the announcement: "At 7:55 AM Honolulu time airplanes of the Japanese Imperial forces bombed the American naval base at Pearl Harbor. The damage is widespread but not been assessed as yet. Further reports will follow."

The feeling that came over me then has happened only four times in my lifetime and, hopefully, will not be visited on every generation. The trademark of this feeling is that for the rest of one's life one remembers the place and time where one was when the news struck. The momentous other times I remember were: the news of the death of our wartime president, Franklin Roosevelt; the assassination of President Kennedy; and the murder of Martin Luther King.

Monday morning at work we knew that we had entered a new world, that life would be different from here on. I had grown up. America was at war.

1942

The impact of the United States' entry into the war hit us exponentially. There was rationing of all kinds. First it was for gasoline, and then for certain foods and for residential construction. The

production of new civilian automobiles stopped. We got accustomed to everything very quickly. There were no complaints. Men were being drafted for service in the Armed Forces. Before long, every family had one or several family members in one of the services. Then the Civil Defense guard was established, and each street had a warden who patrolled the streets nightly to make sure each home had blackout curtains up so no light from the home could be seen on the street.

The food rationing was tough. As we ran out of coupons

postcard undated

quickly, we learned to eat smaller portions or skipped some meat and other foods for a week or more. I love butter and missed it. I recall an incident when we were out of coupons and had trouble getting butter for the Thanksgiving Dinner in 1944. In desperation, I tried to make butter from cream, which we had been lucky to get. We had no electric beater and used the manual crank. I beat this cream for well over half an hour without results. Finally, after considerable more beating, I was happy that these two pints of cream yielded a ridiculous few ounces of butter.

At work the impact was greater. As the months went by, we were greatly restricted in the use of all metals – copper, brass, tin, and sterling – for the manufacture of fashion jewelry. For the merchandise that we produced from old metal scraps or from the limited metal quota, we had three times as many orders as merchandise, so we created costume jewelry from all kinds of exotic materials. For example, pearl necklaces are usually made by depositing pearl essence on glass beads. We substituted wooden beads made for us in lumber workshops in Keene, New Hampshire. We imported giri-giri shells from Australia, which we used for pins and pendants. We learned how to gold-plate plastic to use as a substitute for metal.

We lost a lot of our workers to the draft; others volunteered for the service. Help that had not been drafted left us to go into war work, such as the shipyards that had been established in Rhode Island. Shipyard workers and others in the armament industries were deferred from the draft. They were not really exempt and might be drafted later on. My own draft number indicated that I would have to report to the induction center late in 1942.

My social life had already been rather limited. I had four or five good friends in Providence, all young Jewish boys my age who had escaped Europe. Fritz Greenwood, among them, was the man about town who arranged for a few double dates with me. I was rather shy and not very successful nor aggressive enough to set up a date by myself. I also spent weekends with my parents, who were quite dependent on me to take them out to the parks and beaches, such as Goddard Park.

In June 1942, I decided that I had to meet new young people by myself. Since I had once been to Narragansett and liked it, I decided to spend the first weekend of June 1942 at the Pier. Neither beach facilities nor any of the dozen large hotels were open. Since the season did not start until the last week in June, the beach was deserted except for a couple dozen people.

On the beach I made the acquaintance of a young man, Sam Tourjee, who was very kind to offer me sleeping accommodations in his and his mother's home.[8] Sam was the manager of the Beachwood Hotel, one of many large, wooden, three-story hotels popular in Narragansett. These hotels were built during the Pier's glory days during the 1890s. Narragansett Pier, named for the pier that used to exist, offered docking facilities for private boats and ships to bring the wealthy summer residents from New York and as far away as Philadelphia to this spa. Narragansett was a great spot to which I returned many weekends that summer. It had a great clean beach – a beautiful sandy shore located in a cove opening into the Atlantic. At times there were very large waves, but generally no dangerous tides because of the angle at which the waves entered the mile-long cove.

Later that month, when the hotels opened for the season, Sam introduced me to the owners of the Beachwood Hotel. Because

of the war, it was not heavily booked, and a room for a night was available for $3, which was most attractive to me.

Two young couples from Providence owned the hotel. They were Ann and Irving Kotler[9] and his sister and her husband, Carlie and Coleman Zimmerman.[10] During my many stays there, in conversations with these two, good-looking young women, I found Carlie much more outgoing than Anne, and was quite taken by her. I cannot recollect what prompted my conversation with Carlie, but I assume that it came about naturally because she never saw me with a date. I complimented Carlie and asked if she had a sister who might be as vivacious and attractive as she.

With great laughter, she shot back that she indeed had a single, good-looking sister at home, who was not at all like her but (G-d help her) very much like me.[11] Having opened the subject, Carlie figured out quickly that her sister, Hannah (1919-2017), who had planned her summer vacation in Narragansett during the first week of August, would meet me then.

I was quite satisfied with myself for being so clever and sure that I had handled the situation OK, not realizing that without Carlie's prompting, this date would really not have come about.

On Saturday, August 8th, I was on the beach and met Carlie and a stunning girl about 5' 2", slightly built, but with a huge head of dark black hair. I was smitten.[12]

We went for a swim together and made a date for me to pick her up that evening to have a night on the town. That would be very limited, there being only two restaurants in town to have a drink in the evening. The "Casino," so named after what it used to be, was where a dance band played. The rest of the town was completely covered by the blackout – no street lights, no lights escaping the houses because, rumor had it, there was the danger of German U-boats in the Bay, and we did not want to give them aid in navigating.

Hannah was staying for her vacation week at the Massasoit Hotel with her mother, Sadie Davis, and I was to pick her up inconspicuously. She had been asked for a date by another boy, a young man I was friendly with and with whom I had dinner earlier that evening. I escaped my four friends after dinner with some excuse and

presented myself at the Massasoit Hotel.

That hotel had a gala that evening, so it was very brightly lit up inside and jammed with people. Twelve or thirteen of these were Hannah's brothers, cousins, and other relatives. The introductions and handshaking overwhelmed me. It was hard for me to understand how, at such short notice, a receiving line could be formed at the hotel. Both of us could not get out of there fast enough. We had a great evening and agreed that we would get together again soon.

It so happened that I got a bad cold that week, and it turned into laryngitis with a very nasty cough. As I could not speak on the phone for the next 10 days, it was two weeks before I called Hannah again, and I got somewhat of a cold shoulder. But a date was arranged after Labor Day, and we saw each other regularly thereafter. The summer of '42 thus turned out to be most memorable.

During the next few months, I met the remainder of the family besides Irving and Carlie. Hannah had two brothers, Albert (1923-2011) and Maurice Davis (1920-1993), the latter a rabbinical student.[13] That Thanksgiving, with some sadness, I left my parents alone to attend the Davis dinner, a tradition with family and close friends.[14]

At the end of November, I receive my "Greetings" from Uncle Sam.[15] This call to arms is named after the opening line of the notice. I was to report to the Army induction center in downtown Providence on December 15th for shipment to Fort Devens, the basic training center in Massachusetts for this area. Thus, I saw, in my imagination, my blossoming romance cut short, and the girl of my dreams carried away by a "4-F" (draft-deferred) suitor, while I was in the service.

I asked management at Coro to try to get a deferment for me, as I was absolutely needed to manage the company's war production. The answer from the draft board was swift and clear: "Report on December 28, 1942, and use the extra time given to train somebody for this vital job." Hannah and I said goodbye on December 27, and I promised to call on December 31 from the Army barracks.[16]

Hannah & Jack, 1942

Editor's Notes

1
When founded in New York City in 1902, the company specializing in the manufacture of costume jewelry was known as Cohn & Rosenberger. It did not become known as Coro until 1943. In 1911, the company had begun operations within rented quarters on Chestnut Street in downtown Providence.

In 1929, Coro built its own factory within Providence's jewelry district, at 167 Point Street, consisting of 160,000 square feet on three floors. The façade was designed in a generic, Art Deco style. In 1947, the factory added 110,000 square feet on four floors. See: the application for the designation of the Providence Jewelry Manufacturing District filed with the federal government's National Register of Historic Sites in July 1985. Having been renovated in 1990, the former Coro factory provides offices and research facilities for Lifespan.

Since the 1870s and through the end of World War I, Providence became the nation's leading producer of costume jewelry. Though it employed smaller numbers of workers within the central city, this industry remained one of Providence's largest for several decades. See: Richard A. Meckel, "The Jewelry Industry, Industrial Development, and Immigration in Providence, 1790-1993," in *The Jews of Rhode Island,* ed. by George M. Goodwin and Ellen Smith (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2004), 83-88.

2
On December 10, 1943, Edward B. Perry, a Rhode Island native and a resident of Greenville, was one of two witnesses in Jack's petition for naturalization in Providence's District Court. The other witness was Sidney Meyer (1919-2000) of Providence. According to his draft registration on October 16, 1940, Meyer, a native of New York City, was a jewelry worker at Coro. Later a supervisor, he spent much of his career there.

3
Katz (1905-1984), a German-born Jew, immigrated to New York City in 1924 and probably soon began working for Coro. By 1937, he became head designer and production manager. His revised draft registration shows that he was living in Providence by October 1940. Katz became a Coro vice president in 1948 and then executive vice president in 1960. Eventually a resident of Warwick, he continued working for Coro during the 1970s.

4
Siegfried Fred Feibelman's declaration of intention to become a naturalized citizen, filed in Providence's District Court on May 18, 1939, showed that he was living at 310 Elmwood Avenue. According to the 1941 city directory, the Feibelman family was living at 50 Glenham Street. Siegfried described himself as a "manufacturers agent." A year later, the family moved to 59 Glenham and, in 1943, to 72 Glenham. Temple Beth-El stood at 688 Broad Street, on the east side, at the intersection with Glenham. Thus, the Feibelman homes were located one or two blocks east of Broad.

5
Given the popularity of this name, it is quite difficult to identify who may be a Feibelman relative. One possibility is a Henry who was born in Germany in 1875, emigrated in 1884, and lived with his wife, Martha, in Chicago. Another Henry Darnenberg died in 1953 and is buried in New Montefiore Cemetery in West Babylon, New York. Barbara Feibelman has pointed out that, thanks to Peter M. Feibelman's research during the 1970s, more than 2,000 Feibelman relatives have been identified.

6
The earliest listing for Arthur and Marguerite Zander is 1942, when they were living at 590 Public Street. He was a jeweler, but Jack, through his Coro connections, may have been helpful getting "Greta" a job stringing pearls. The couple remained in Rhode Island until at least 1964. Having become Beth-El members, they are buried in its cemetery.

7

By 1939, Northeastern University, which had been founded in Boston in 1898 as an outgrowth of its YMCA, consisted of three colleges: Liberal Arts, Business Administration, and Engineering. These five-year programs were open only to male students; tuition was $250 per year. Northeastern also operated a coeducational evening division of its Law School in Boston, Springfield, and Worcester – all three in cooperation with local branches of the YMCA.

Additionally, Northeastern's evening division included a Business School at these three sites and in Providence. This too was operated in cooperation with the local YMCA, which, having been founded in 1853, was the country's second-oldest. The Providence program, located at 160 Broad Street (the present location of Providence Community Health Center), began in about 1920 and may have lasted about 30 years. During the 1938-39 academic year, 224 students were enrolled. I would like to thank Molly Brown, Northeastern's reference and outreach archivist, for providing most of this background information.

Barbara Feibelman has explained that Northeastern published two articles about her father in its magazine, *Encore*: in the fall 2007 and in the fall 2011 issues.

8

According to Samuel Aaron Tourjee's draft registration card, completed on October 16, 1940 in New York City, he lived in the Bronx but worked from May to October at Narragansett Pier. His employer was Jacob Kotler, who will be discussed further in the following endnotes. Tourjee had been born in East Greenwich, Rhode Island, in 1910.

9

Initially, information about this couple seemed sketchy. The first listing for Irving in a Providence directory was in 1930, when, as a salesman, he lived at 172 Gallatin. Eight years later, while living at the same address, he worked as a clerk at 511 Westminster Street and lived at 745 Cranston Street. This was also the business address for Jacob Kotler of Kotler Manufacturing Co. Presumably Irving's father, he first appeared in a Providence directory in 1904.

By 1941, Irving was married to Ann Kovak, and they resided at 86 Marion Avenue. Later in this decade, he was employed at Jack's Amoco Station and at Irving Motors, which, Barbara Feibelman believes, were owned by another relative, Jacob Davis. By 1961, Irving was the manager of Best Plastic in Providence and resided with Anne at 59 Baldwin Orchard Drive in Cranston. Subsequently, the couple disappeared from Rhode Island directories. They are buried in Lincoln Cemetery.

In 1930, Irving's sister, Carolyn, graduated from Providence's Technical High School. Two years later, she and her brother were living at 172 Gallatin.

10

Rhode Island's 1925 census is the key to understanding the mysterious relationship between these various relatives. Jacob Davis, 40 years of age and born in Russia, was living at 27 West Shore Road in Warwick with his wife, Sadie, also 40, but a native Rhode Islander. The Davis household included five children. Rubie (later known as Ruby) Kotler, 18, and her brother, Irving, 16, had been born in Rhode Island. These were Sadie's children from a previous marriage. Jacob and Sadie had three children of their own: Hannah, 7, Morris (later known as Maurice), 4, and Albert, 2, all born in the Ocean State.

Thanks to research provided by Talia Davis Haykin, who was Jack and Hannah Feibelman's niece, it becomes clear that Ruby and Irving Kotler were the children of Jacob Kotler (1878-1971) and Sadie Gertrude Marks (later Davis) (1888-1966).

Having grown up at Congregation Sons of Israel and David (later known as Temple Beth-El), she was confirmed in 1896 at its first permanent home on Friendship Street in downtown Providence. This was nearly a generation after the congregation had intro-

duced the ritual. In addition to becoming a leader of Beth-El's Sisterhood, Sadie became active in the National Council of Jewish Women in Rhode Island and beyond. She is buried in the Temple's cemetery.

Jacob Kotler is buried in Sinai Memorial Park, Warwick, as are Irving (1908-1993) and Ann Kotler (1909-1995), who had later lived in Broward County, Florida.

Ms. Haykin's research further clarifies that Carolyn Kotler (1911-2008) married Coleman Zimmerman (1908-1977), and they too are buried at Sinai Memorial Park.

It was impossible to find the Kotler family in the Providence section of the 1910 federal census because its name had been misidentified as "Cutter." The family resided at 11 Salisbury Street. Jacob was 32, Sadie 28, and their two children, Ruby and Irving, had been born in Rhode Island. Jacob's occupation was jeweler.

All of the above information was also instrumental in finding Irving Kotler's draft card from his registration on October 16, 1940. He was born in Providence on November 5, 1909, and he and his wife, Anna, lived at 86 Marion Avenue. He was self-employed at 1313 Broad Street.

Based on the above information, more was learned about Jacob Davis, especially from his petition for naturalization, filed in Providence's District Court on December 5, 1924. Having been born in Russia in 1887, he emigrated to Liverpool in 1904 and then during the same year to Boston. He declared his intention to become naturalized in Providence on November 18, 1922. At the time of filing his petition, Jacob was a garage manager. His three children had been born in Providence, Warwick, and Providence. Unlike his wife, Sadie, he is buried in Lincoln Park Cemetery,

11
Hannah Davis, born on August 18, 1919, was in fact Carlie's stepsister. Hannah had graduated from Providence's Central High School in 1937. According to her yearbook, her hobby was drawing and her "pasttime" knitting. She was "bound for" the business world and expected to become a stenographer.

In 1940, according to the federal census, Hannah was living with her widowed mother, Sadie, and her two brothers at 1959 Edgewood Avenue in Warwick. (This is an error, for Jacob did not die from tuberculosis until the following year. Hannah's brother, Albert, was also stricken with this disease but recovered. Hannah's stepsister, Ruby Kotler, died from tuberculosis in 1930 and is buried in Lincoln Park Cemetery.) In order to help support her family, however, Hannah worked as a "pricer" in "jobbing wholesale." The following year and in 1942, Hannah was employed as a stenographer at McKesson & Robbins, Inc., and lived at 55 Brown Street in Providence.

12
Barbara Feibelman has explained that, after her parents were married, Jack remained ever grateful to Carlie. On the anniversary of his introduction to Hannah, Jack customarily sent flowers or a card to their matchmaker.

13
Albert and his wife, Shirley (1925-2017), are buried in Sinai Memorial Park, as is their son, Joel (1954-2021). Rabbi Maurice Davis (1921-1993) and his wife, Marion Cronbach Davis (1923-2018), are also buried at Sinai.

Having grown up at Temple Beth-El and having studied with him as an undergraduate at Brown, Rabbi Davis became one of Rabbi William G. Braude's beloved protégés. As was mentioned in endnote 9 of the first installment of this article (published in the 2020 issue), Rabbi Davis briefly led the Reform congregation in Indianapolis, where a branch of the Feibelman family was active. He and his wife had met while he was a student at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati (where he was ordained in 1949). Her father, Rabbi Abraham Cronbach, was a distinguished member of its faculty from 1922 to 1950 as well as a pacifist and social activist. Rabbi Davis, who led the Jewish Community Center of Westchester, New York (later known as Congregation Kol Ami), from 1967 to 1987,

also blazed a trail as a social activist.

For more than 30 years, Rabbi Davis spoke at Beth-El at the Shabbat evening service following Thanksgiving. He would come to Providence to celebrate his mother, Sadie's, birthday. She had been born on Thanksgiving. In 1987, Rabbi Davis was joined by his sons: Jay, a rabbi, and Michael, a student rabbi. See: Seebert J. Goldowsky, *A Century and a Quarter of Spiritual Leadership: The Story of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David (Temple Beth-El), Providence, Rhode Island* (Temple Beth-El,

237, 242, 423-4.

14

Barbara Feibelman has explained that within the larger Davis family, attendance at Thanksgiving was considered "mandatory." Indeed, before any engagements were "sanctioned," a young couple had to agree to celebrate the holiday with the Davises. Further, Sadie would not allow any of her children to refer to each other as "step-siblings," only as sisters and brothers.

15

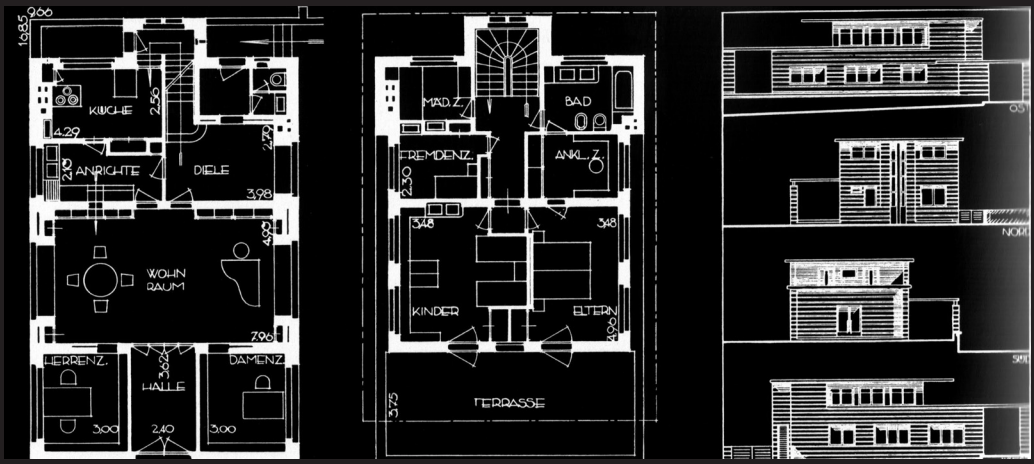
H. Jack Feibelman, not yet a citizen, registered for the draft in Providence on February 16, 1942. Having been born in Berlin on November 25, 1920, he was 21 years of age (and more than a year younger than Hannah Davis). He was employed by Cohn & Rosenberger (jewelers) at 167 Point Street. The person who "always knew his address" was his father, Siegfried F. Feibelman. Both Siegfried and his wife, Clare, described themselves as "manufacturers agents." Jack and his parents lived at 59 Glenham Street. He was 5' 11 1/4" and weighed 144 pounds.

Hans Jack in Providence was not the only Feibelman living in America who had registered for the draft, however. Jack Hans Feibelman, who had been born in Landau, Germany on May 15, 1920, arrived in New York City on November 4, 1938. When registering for the draft on July 1, 1941, he was living at 601 West 176th Street in New York and was employed as a "doll worker." Having enlisted in the Army on March 28, 1943, he was sent as a private to Camp Croft in South Carolina. In August of that year, he filed a petition for naturalization in the District Court in Spartanburg. Jack Hans died in 2000 and is buried at Beth David Gardens in Hollywood, Florida.

Still another Feibelman registered for the draft in Providence on April 27, 1942. This was H. Jack's father, Siegfried Fred, who had been born in Rheinphalz, Germany, in 1877, and was married to Clare. He had been naturalized but was unemployed. Siegfried was 5' 5 ½" and weighed 137 pounds.

16

Jack was drafted despite the fact that he had two dependents, his parents. It is not known how they subsisted without his support.



Mendelsohn's design of *Landhaus*

Landhaus Bejach: A House of Memories

Beverly Waldman Rich

Our journal has documented numerous accounts of Holocaust suffering and survival. Bev's account focuses on her mother's and her aunt's experiences as well as a transformative one of her own.

This account may be surprising because it is both anchored and animated by recollections of the Bejach family's new German home. Built in 1927 but lost to the family in 1936, this dwelling withstood catastrophe. In 1995, as Bev explains, it was still much enjoyed by another young family.

I probably became aware of the home's designer, the distinguished German-Jewish architect, Erich Mendelsohn, in 1984, when I researched a paper about notable American synagogues for a course at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles. Was it destiny, chance or luck that brought Betsey and me, only a year later, to a new home in St. Paul, Minnesota? We immediately joined Mt. Zion Temple, the state's oldest Jewish congregation, and soon began to enjoy Mendelsohn's remarkable design. The fourth and last of his American synagogues, it was completed in 1954 by a local firm a year after his death.

In 1986, I happened to recall that the centenary of Mendelsohn's birth would occur the following year, so I proposed creating an exhibition and a symposium at Mt. Zion to better understand and celebrate all that he had accomplished on three continents. It was a remarkable Shabbat and Sunday morning, which brought together many dignitaries, including two distinguished rabbis, Gunther Plaut and Armond Cohen, who had been his collaborators in St. Paul and Cleveland. Mendelsohn's only child, Esther, also came from San Francisco, and presented me with a copy of a wonderful photo: Mendelsohn, with his hero, Frank Lloyd Wright, taken in Wisconsin in 1924. Alas, Mt. Zion's tribute was the only one held in America that year.

Betsey and I have been fortunate to visit B'nai Amoona in St. Louis, the first of Mendelsohn's American synagogues, which has become a music school. We have also been privileged to

visit some of his landmarks in Israel. And on another pilgrimage, we sought out some of his few surviving creations in Berlin and Potsdam.

But perhaps my greatest surprise occurred in Providence in 1988, when researching Temple Beth-El's history for the new Bernhardt Gallery. I discovered that Mendelsohn had been interviewed here in March of 1946 for the design of the congregation's third home. Mendelsohn, perhaps the world's most accomplished Jewish modernist, came across to Temple leaders as egotistical and doctrinaire, however. Of course he should have received the commission, but I believe, without question, that Percival Goodman's stunning design, completed in 1954, is one of the best of his prolific career and of the early postwar era. I'm so proud of it.

Beth-El is also how and where I met Bev and her husband, Harlan. But it took decades before we discovered our mutual fascination with Mendelsohn and modernism.

In 1962, my parents left their urban life on West End Avenue in New York City and traveled up the Palisades Parkway to the suburbs. I was two months old, and my sister, Hilary, was three. We had a yard, a dachshund, a gray Persian cat, and two Fords in the garage.

We grew up in a new development in Pearl River, New York. Its residents were primarily gentile, second-generation, working-class, and of Irish and Italian descent. When my family moved into a cookie-cutter, colonial-style home, there was no synagogue in town. In 1963 our family and a small cadre of eight others founded Beth Am Temple, which initially resided in an old church. Within a year the congregation grew to 76 families, some residing in the nearby towns of Rockland County. When writing this article, I learned that my father was the congregation's first treasurer!

In most ways, we Waldmans were a typical family. In others, we were not. For example, my mother, Helga, was an immigrant from Germany by way of England.

My parents had met on a blind date, set up by each of their closest friends. My mother always told us that unlike her sisters, she had decided as a young adult that she only wanted to marry a Jew.

That he had curly dark hair, was very cultured, tall, and a good ice-skater seemed to enhance the success of their first date!

We spoke only English in our home. I always found it curious that my mother and her two older sisters would often converse in German, a language we were never taught. I never recognized that my mother had a German accent, although I had been told this numerous times. It was not until I reached high school that it resonated. My friends mimicked her, in a humorous rather than a malicious way, but never in front of her – always in front of me. My mother amused and intrigued them.

Her given name was Helga Maria, but after marrying my Jewish father, Herman, in 1954, she changed it to Helga. My mother was also a Holocaust survivor.

Her father, Curt Bejach, came from a family of medical professionals. They were Jewish but also fully assimilated. One day shortly before my mother's twelfth birthday, in August 1939, Curt put her and her sister, Irene Gisela, then 13, on one of the last *Kindertransports* (literally "children's transports") bound for England. She and my aunt did not know it was the last time that they would ever see their *Vati,* but he probably did.

Leicester

Both young refugees were settled in Leicester. My Aunt Irene went to live with Frederick and Mary Attenborough on the grounds of Leicester University, where he served as Principal. The Attenboroughs, who were raising three sons of their own, had taken in Basque children several years earlier during the Spanish Civil War.

Richard (now deceased) was the eldest of the Attenboroughs' sons. Well into his teenage years when my aunt and mother arrived, he was known as Dick and went on to become an acclaimed actor, director, and entrepreneur. Queen Elizabeth eventually gave him a title, Knight Bachelor and Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. His younger brother, David, about the age of Aunt Irene upon her arrival, is an internationally known naturalist. He also received a title from the crown for his longstanding affiliation with the BBC, his prolific environmental documen-

tary series, and his environmental stewardship. John, the youngest brother (also deceased), was of similar age to my mother. From her school-age stories, my sister and I suspect that she may have felt closest to him.[1]

My mother moved in with the Attenboroughs months after Irene, but the sisters remained with this family throughout the war and later, until they immigrated to the United States in 1947.

Our mother was welcomed into the household of Emily Hancock when she arrived on her 12th birthday on August 11, 1939. Mrs. Hancock had been widowed about three years earlier, at age 59. Her husband, Henry, had been a magistrate and a donor to the University College Leicester. Mrs. Hancock and her two children, both young adults, resided in the Western Park region of Leicester. Peggy, 19 years, had been adopted as an infant several years after the death of Mrs. Hancock's 8-year-old biological daughter, from bronchopneumonia ("Spanish Flu"). Her older child, Clifford, 27 years, was a biological son.[2]

This household, although nurturing, was much more sedate than the Attenboroughs'. My mother told us that when she visited her sister Irene there was often "constant commotion."

Irene also made frequent visits to Helga. We heard stories of Mrs. Hancock directing our mother to sit in the lovely garden to darn socks, something she loathed because of her more "hyper" nature. Peggy, however, was Helga's salvation. As rebels, they frequently escaped to the cinema and applied lipstick in the bathroom. They removed all traces of cosmetics before returning home.

Our mother always had a vibrant nature, with a love of theatrics and dance. As a true extrovert, she would be better matched to a livelier environment. By contrast, Irene could be sullen, fastidious, and rigid, with a nervous tic. These traits continued into adulthood. I adored my aunt. She was also warmhearted and highly intelligent. Never having had her own children, she loved Hilary and me unconditionally.

Both the Attenborough and Hancock homes were supposed to be way stations because Helga and Irene would push on to New York City to be with their paternal uncle, Hans-Egon Bejach. A

medical doctor, he had escaped from Berlin a few years earlier.

The initial plan had been for the sisters to remain in the U.K. for only several months. Shortly after the girls' arrival in Britain, war broke out. All travel out of the country ceased.

The Attenboroughs had also intended to take only one refugee during the turbulence in Germany. Without too much hesitation, realizing that Helga's disposition was better suited to an energetic household and knowing well that the girls were there for the "long haul," the Attenboroughs welcomed our mom into their home.

It is no secret that Irene, although she loved my mother, was initially jealous, knowing that Helga's infectious energy and nature would steal her limelight. Although our mother never lived with the Hancock family again, it remained clear to Hilary and me that she remained attached to them even after moving to the States. On top of our dark brown Formica kitchen table, I can remember many blue airmail envelopes, with the elegant stamp of the Queen, peeking out amidst the mundane white envelopes with the small stamp of the America flag.

Although my mom's attachment to the Hancocks remained strong, the Attenboroughs became her true family. The eight years under their guardianship and care, which coincided with Helga and Irene's critical transition from young adolescents to adults during wartime, sealed the bond.

As children, Hilary and I enjoyed hearing lively, humorous, and colorful accounts of Mom's and Aunt Irene's escapades in the dynamic and progressive Attenborough family. These included the Ginner Mawer School of Dance and Drama, which, due to frequent bombings and air raids in London, moved to Boscastle in Cornwall. Hilary and I learned even more when our mother's diaries were eventually published.[3]

Memories of Berlin

Growing up, we did not hear much about Mom's life in Germany. We knew that at the tender age of three, Helga experienced the death of her mother, Anna Emma Elizabeth Hedwig (Ottow) Bejach, at 33 due to tuberculosis (then called "galloping consump-

tion"). We knew that she had experienced *Kristallnacht* when she was 11, yet detailed accounts or stories of her outside life in Germany were seldom shared. When she spoke about her early childhood, she never mentioned adversity, anxiety, sadness or loss.

My mother and her two sisters, Irene and Jutta, were classified by the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 as *Mischlings* because of their Jewish (but assimilated) father and their Lutheran mother. The family called my mother *Morchen* ("Little Moor") from the time she was born, because she had dark hair and an olive complexion, unlike her older sisters, who had blue or green eyes and were very blond. In order to protect them, my mother and her sisters were baptized.

I did not know why my mother and her sisters never spoke to us about their time growing up in Germany, yet this was the pattern of many survivors. Whether they felt guilt that they may have fared better due to having Aryan blood or that accounts of anti-Semitism and violence should be hidden from our young ears, we will never truly know. As adults, Hilary and I began to suspect that our mother's traumatic memories, like those of many other Holocaust victims, were too painful and therefore stuffed down deeply. Perhaps they became a barricade, enabling a disconnection from triggering emotions of sadness and loss.

Landhaus

One subject Helga always shared enthusiastically was the story of her childhood home, which, having been built in a country setting, was known as *Landhaus* Bejach. She always described it as one of the most modern and therefore unusual homes of its time.

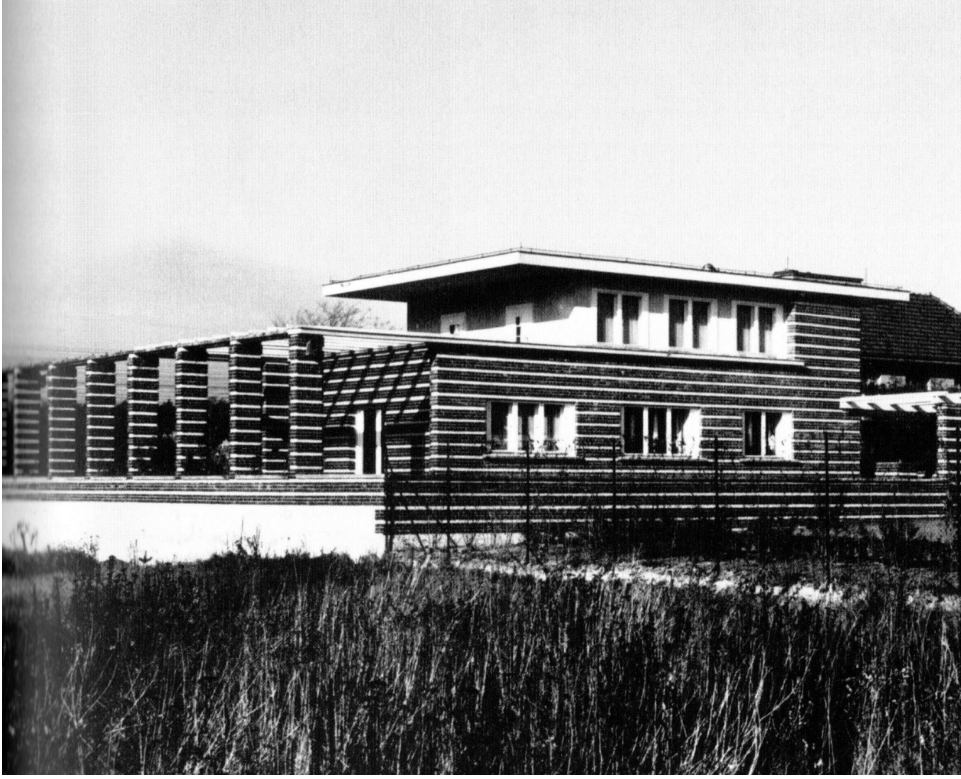
The architect of this home was Erich Mendelsohn (1887-1953), a Jew born in East Prussia who gained initial recognition for his expressionist style during the 1920s. He designed factories, shops, department stores, theatres, offices, apartment houses, and private homes (many for Jewish clients). Mendelsohn gained international acclaim (and notoriety) for his Einstein Tower, an observatory erected in Potsdam, which was completed in 1924 and still stands. During the 1920s, Mendelsohn traveled widely – not only within Europe – but also to Palestine and the United States. In 1933, fol-

lowing Hitler's rise to power, he suddenly fled Berlin and settled in London. Later during that decade, he began to build extensively in Palestine. He spent the last decade of his life in America, primarily in San Francisco.

According to our Aunt Jutta Grosser, now 100, and various archival sources, Mendelsohn and my grandfather, Curt Bejach, were close friends. Our family's house was built between August 1926 and December 1927 at Bernhard-Beyer-Strasse 12 on a large plot of land in the far southern outskirts of Berlin. This was the Steinstücken district of the borough of Steglitz-Zehlendorf. My mother was born in 1927, so this was the first home she knew.

Before providing a more detailed description of *Landhaus* Bejach, however, I would like to give a fuller portrait of my maternal

Bejach girls with grandfather Ottow at *Landhaus*



family. This will help suggest why Mendelsohn's modern design was so bold, appropriate, and appreciated.

Our maternal grandfather, Curt Dietrich Manfred Bejach, was appointed the *Stadtarzt* (City Doctor) in Berlin-Kreuzberg in 1922, and he served in that role until 1933. As a social reformer and a member of the *SPD* (Social Democratic Party), he helped establish a network of public health facilities, including hospitals, community nursing and outpatient clinics, and special treatment centers, for various diseases, including tuberculosis. Similarly, in his role as *Stadtarzt,* he crusaded for such public health innovations as less crowded housing and more decent living conditions in lower-income neighborhoods. In a pre-antibiotic world, these were hedges against deadly diseases.

In 1925, our grandfather founded the Am Urban Health Center, the first municipal center for preventive medicine and health education in Berlin. Between 1927 and 1928, he was also a part-time lecturer at the German Health Care School, in Berlin-Charlotten-

***Landhaus* when new**

burg, which provided advanced training courses for welfare workers. Additionally, between 1929 and 1933, Curt Bejach lectured at Berlin's *Soziale Frauenschule der Inneren Mission* (Social Women's School of the Inner Mission) on the subject of social hygiene.

Based on his strong public health convictions, our grandfather desired a home that provided airiness and light, but also complemented its exterior with simple yet practical amenities. All of these features were intended to support a salubrious lifestyle.

It is likely that Curt's wife, Hedwig, also favored this *neue* design. She had been a nurse whom he had met at the front lines during World War I. Tragically, Hedwig died in 1931, only a few years after the family settled into their new home.

With the Nazis' rise to power, my grandfather, a scientist, humanist, and optimist, a fully assimilated German, Jewish by blood but never by practice, would lose almost everything else: his medical license, his home, his family and, ultimately, his life.

A Description of the *Landhaus*

Built in the modern or New Objective style, the two-story *Landhaus* Bejach was set towards the rear of a large plot of land. It bordered Bernhard-Beyer-Strasse in the front and a railway line in the back. The home was positioned to allow for a large front garden and a smaller rear ("quiet") garden. The property was shielded by a wall, which was connected to pergolas on both sides. This positioning also allowed for much natural light.

The home's façades used alternating rows of brick and plaster, and this horizontal pattern was carried through to the wall

and pergolas. Mendelsohn's design unified the building, gardens, walls, and pergolas, resulting in an ideal retreat for a modern physician.

Landhaus Bejach was one of Mendelsohn's smallest, freestanding residences, with only 150 square meters (or 2,000 square feet) of living space. Such a design may have reflected Curt's modesty.

Symmetrically organized on both levels, the house incorporated wall units, built-in storage, and natural lighting. The ground floor contained an entry, two bathrooms, a living room (spanning the width of the house), a kitchen, a pantry, and stairs. The upper floor contained the master bedroom, "the girls'" bedroom, a guest room, dressing rooms, and bathrooms. The parents' and children's rooms were also connected to a terrace.

Our mother told us stories about the nursery on the second floor, which her father designed. In addition to the virtues of natural light, he was an early believer in plenty of physical activity to nurture healthy children.

Our mother also easily remembered the home's modular style, with each room having an abundance of storage units seamlessly incorporated into the walls. The white-tiled bathroom, with large casement windows opening to the verdant yard, was also considered quite inventive at the time. Our mother recalled the Murphy beds in the nursery, where she and her sisters giggled and bounced in protective goggles when exposed to the ultraviolet sun lamp (also termed "phototherapy") during dark winter months.

Somehow, several pairs of these tiny goggles traveled on our mother's westward journey, the only tangible remnants of her childhood in Berlin. Brittle and fatigued, they seemed ready to snap every time my sister and I opened our mother's dresser to try them on.

The Landhaus truly defined our mother's childhood and served as the backdrop for memories before disease – first physical, then political and mental – tore her world apart.

Nazis' Rise to Power

Curt was dismissed as *Stadtartz* in April 1933 for political and racist reasons (Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service), removed as a lecturer at the Berlin Social Women's Schools, and allowed to treat only individuals of Jewish heritage. The family was forced by the Nazi government to sell and flee their lovely custom-built residence in 1936, relocating to an apartment in Berlin's Charlottenburg district. Curt dismissed his older brother's pleas to apply for a visa to the United States. Miraculously, our Uncle Hans-Egon and his wife, Friedl, escaped and survived.

My mother and Irene left the country just weeks before World War II broke out. At 16, their oldest sister Jutta was too old for the *Kindertransport* and remained in Germany with *Vati.* Then she survived under very harsh and unsettling conditions.

On November 23, Allied forces bombed and destroyed their apartment building in the Charlottenburg district. Jutta stayed with friends in Berlin and witnessed her father's deportation. A few months later, she married Axel Grosser, also a *Mischling,* whom she had met while employed in a photography laboratory, which covertly employed people of "mixed heritage."

By May of 1944, the couple fled Berlin, traveling with falsified papers by train to stay with a family in Elmshorn (a small village near Hamburg). They remained there until after the end of the Battle for Berlin (May 1945). Upon their return to Berlin, they found the city in ruins but were able to secure housing through the Allied administration. They continued to live in Berlin through the blockade and airlift, which ended only half a year before their immigration to the United States in 1949.

On September 30, 1938, with the "Fourth Ordinance of the Reich Citizenship Law," Curt Dietrich Manfred Bejach, Berlin's former health commissioner, had his license revoked. From then on, he was only able to treat Jewish patients in his practice on Claudiusstraße as a "patient therapist."

Our grandfather, we have heard, was resistant to the idea

[opposite] ***Landhaus*in 1995 with Bev**

that humanity would be trumped by evil and madness. He was wrong. On January 10, 1944, Dr. Curt Bejach was deported to Theresienstadt, and he perished at Auschwitz on October 31 of that year.

Visits to Berlin

Since 1969, Holocaust survivors have been invited to return to Berlin as part of a German reconciliation program – a gesture of good will. My Aunt Jutta willingly accepted an invitation during the 1980s, when she was in her mid-sixties. My mother, who had been back to Europe many times, including trips to other German cities, wanted no part of a reconciliation visit to Berlin.

Unbeknownst to my mother, her wiser and older sister Jutta wrote to the German government soon after Helga was diagnosed with breast cancer. Appealing to the government's sense of compassion and goodwill, Jutta requested that Helga be considered sooner for her reconciliation trip to Berlin.

Thus, in the late winter of 1994, our mother, Helga, then 67, and our father, Herman, then 71, received an invitation for a one-week trip to Berlin, from June 19 through June 27, 1995. To our surprise, our mother accepted without hesitation.

The ordeal of her illness and the threat of her own mortality were crucial factors. But Helga was always very frugal, so a complementary trip made the offer irresistible.

Survivors' children were also invited to accompany parents on the full Berlin excursion. Aside from airfare, their expenses would also be covered.

My sister, Hilary, who lived in Andover, Connecticut, was expecting, and Harlan and I, who lived in Providence, had an infant, Samantha, and a toddler, Maxwell. Both Hilary and I, also employed full-time, had not planned to go overseas. Upon hearing hesitation in our voices, our mother said, "It's your decision, yet you will always regret not going." This was the closest that our mother ever came to imposing a sense of Jewish guilt on us, and it worked!

To record our feelings and observations, I purchased journals for my mother and sister. I wrote in mine religiously every night, even if I was more than exhausted.

My Journal Entry, June 23, 1995

The most fascinating part of the trip thus far is returning to the home of Mom's grandmother (Helena Bejach) in Kleine Wannsee and then *Landhaus* Bejach, Mom's family homestead in Babelsburg.

We were transported by Herr Peter Lehrecke, a German architect. His wife had recognized the name Bejach from a card Mom had filled out prior to our trip. She had expressed interest in meeting a German family. Frau Lehrecke chose us because she had gone to school with our aunt Irene and had remembered that Irene had a very nice watch, which she always admired. She had hoped that our Mom was a relation. The Lehreckes were very interested in our family history. They have pictures of our home in Babelsburg, which included Irene as a child. They are also inviting us for dinner this Saturday.

It turns out that *Grossmutter* (grandmother) had lived in an upscale suburb that can be compared to the mansions of Newport. The very quaint home was converted to a meditation /holistic center *(Haus Der Stille)* about 30 years ago. We were invited in for a tour. It was beautiful, very peaceful and quiet, orderly, and the view was spectacular. Some of the land abutting the house to the left was sold, and a mansion-like structure was erected. The lawns remain beautiful. We met the director of the center, who had researched and written a book documenting the history of the house. The Bejach family was included in the text! Mom says she is thrilled to be back,

[above] current owners, Helge & Johana Pitz, with Bev's parents, 1995

Bev & her parents at the Reichstag, wrapped by Christo, 1995

yet when I look at her expressions at times, she looks flat and wistful.

Our second stop was the homestead known as the *Landhau*s Bejach. The house in Berlin's Steinstuken suburb reminds me of some European-style homes in Scarsdale and Forest Hills, New York. The entry to the home is a long drive through a pergola covered by succulent grape vines. There is a large fence surrounding the property; a nice lawn and garden surround this 1920s style home. The owners of the home, who invited us in, are the Pitz family – Helge, Johana, Helene (age 5 ½), and Toerhs (age 15). They are very warm, and it is surprising how happy they are that we have come! We tour the home.

Helge, a Swiss architect, specializes in restoring historic residences. He told Dad that this house is the "highlight of his life." His aim is to authentically renovate and restore the home, his labor of love. He wants to make it a center to study and honor Mendelsohn.[4] The lush gardens in the back lead to a train that runs about by every 20 minutes. It makes a soothing sound like a gas heat system turning on.

The family served us a nice vegetarian dinner with dessert and champagne! The children are very pleased to have us in their house and are fascinated by its history. Ironically, Helene, who resides in the nursery now, has my mother's middle name.

All rooms were as Mom described. For example, the large nursery with a terrace and the bathroom with a bidet and a double sink. Everything in the house is so modern, so tasteful with clean lines. Mom seems relaxed and so happy to be back. She feels as if the house looks so similar to when it was hers. Mom seems to thoroughly enjoy her return!

Shortly before we left, Johana and Helge gave Mom a book about historic commissions in Berlin and a bottle of wine from their wine cellar. It was made from grapes on the *Landhaus* Bejach grounds. The family also showed us a clip from a German musical film, *Drei von Der Tankstelle* ("The Three from the Filling Station"), which was made on the grounds in 1928 but not released until 1930. Mom was thrilled to see the clip. She was aware of the film and very jovial and reminiscent throughout the visit.

Departure

On the last day of our trip, before leaving for Berlin's airport, I went to my parents' room, as they were packing up. They were extending their trip to Hildesheim, where my mother's gentile maternal cousins have lived for most of their lives. I was feeling sadness and some separation anxiety, but was embarrassed to admit this as a young adult. I asked my mother if, when we returned home, she would share her journal entries because she appeared to be having such a wonderful time.

By contrast, many of the survivors on our trip, who had immigrated to Israel, were frequently angry and upset. So was my Dad, Herman, who passed away in 2016. He was a clinical psychologist trained as a psychoanalyst, and his parents had escaped pogroms when they immigrated to America early during the last century. They questioned the atrocities that had occurred and how and why the greater society and its moral infrastructure failed to thwart the Nazis' rise to power. These foreigners expressed bewilderment, laced with

fury, at how Germany had betrayed its Jewish population.

Such discussions had actually begun at our group's first meeting with the Berlin *Burgermeister,* Eberhard Diepgen, who, in his welcoming address, invited open dialogue. Much debate and discussion continued in private conversations held in local pubs and coffeehouses well into the night.

Our mother was present, but did not join any of these highly charged discussions. She was silent and appeared carefree throughout our trip. My sister and I agreed that she seemed like an excited, school-age child of 11 on a holiday. She appeared to delight in the daily return to familiar places, especially savoring all gustatory experiences.

Therefore, her response the day before my departure back to the States shocked me. She explained, "I could not write one word in my journal. Every time I got into bed and finally fell asleep, I had terrible nightmares."

Mother's Death and Its Aftermath

We lost Helga in 2005 to breast cancer. When she died, I was at her bedside and initially felt as if every ounce of air had been siphoned out of me. She has been missed terribly, but I seldom thought back to the Berlin trip of 1995.

Nevertheless, in April 2012, while attending a one-day professional conference in Providence about treatments for anxiety, a strong and irresistible impulse came over me. I spent most of my time there authoring a poem about my mother. It is entitled *Mutti,* and I would like to share it with you:

Departed
From Berlin

"Moischen"– the dark one in a fair-haired nation
"Mischling"
Energetic, inquisitive, kindhearted, naïve
Summers near the North Sea
Round the corner, Glass shattered
Stifled anguish
11, and at sea to England

On deck a balmy night
Intrigued by children dancing the hora
Orphan, transported into strangers' arms
Across the deep Atlantic, when of age
Modern dancer, constant motion
Always searching, searching for connection, tradition, family
Dark atrocities repressed for decades
A docent at 70 – she finally spoke
She spoke and a good mother became better
An aloof mother became present
A grandmother emotionally connected
A clandestine childhood revealed, sparked life before she
Departed

As a result of writing my poem, I understood that, during her return trip to Berlin and her beloved *Landhaus,* Helga was not yet ready to process her experiences. Healing had to occur at her own pace and time. When ready, she would tell others in her genuine voice. Helga did this in the very latter part of her life.

Professionally trained in modern dance, our mother was always a very public figure, especially as a beloved teacher at the Rockland Foundation for the Arts in Nyack, New York. Her passion and energy for dance remained well into her seventies, as she continued to teach.

After our parents retired to Florida, Helga's focus gradually shifted, and she became equally involved in the new Florida Holocaust Museum in Saint Petersburg. Both our parents helped with fundraising, and our dad also volunteered in the gift shop. Our mother soon became one of the main docents, actively educating school children and the greater community about her life as a Holocaust survivor and the evils of prejudice and hate. Helga also allowed a large array of her historical photos to be displayed in the museum's permanent collection.

Time and distance did enhance our mother's ability for reflection. Perhaps I had never fully known the broken patchwork that was Helga Maria Helene Bejach Waldman. As a child of the Holocaust, she had difficulty showing affection. Yet, she was desperate to

have a cohesive family.

Experiencing her return to Berlin had not erased my mother's enigma. But the trip informed and clarified for me how she and her family had lived – and foreshadowed how much would be lost – when they were forced forever from *Landhaus* Bejach.

Endnotes

1
Richard Graves, "From Berlin to New York via Leicester: The Long Journey of the Attenboroughs' Adopted Sisters," *Parts 1 and 2, Leicestershire Historian,* Vols. L (2014) & LI (2015), published by the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.

2
Richard Graves, Re: *The Hancock Family of Letchworth Road, Leicester, 2022,* unpublished. This is a small addendum to the following reference.

3
Richard Graves, "The Diary of a Young German Jewish Refugee in Leicester, 1944-46: Helga-Maria Helene Bejach," *Leicestershire Historian,* Vol. LVII (2021), published by the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.

4
In 1987, the *Landhaus* Bejach, representing an important example of modernism, was entered in the list of Berlin architectural monuments. In the third edition of *The Handbook of German Art Monuments* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverglag, 2006), Georg Dehio wrote: "In the effective simplicity of its design, this is one of the most beautiful country houses of the 1920s in Berlin."

Editor's Note

For some references to Mendelsohn and German modernism in English, please see the following:

Barnstove, Deborah A., *The Break with the Past: Avant-Garde Architecture in Germany, 1910-1925* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

Gruber, Samuel, *American Synagogues: A Century of Architecture and Jewish Community* (New York: Riizzoli 2003).

James-Chakraborty, Kathleen, *Erich Mendelsohn and the Architecture of German Modernism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

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Zevi, Bruno. *Erich Mendelsohn* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985); also, *Erich Mendelsohn: The Complete Works* (Basel: Birkhaüser Publishers, 1999).

memorial plaque to Dr. Bejach at *Landhaus*

honorary degree recipients, New England Institute of Technology, 2017: Bob, David "Big Papi" Ortiz, and Warren

Robert T. Galkin: *Eternal Optimist*

Nancy Munzert Carriuolo

Many distinguished professors have contributed to our journal, but Nancy may be the first college president. Her contribution is also remarkable because she reached out to our Association. Only upon reaching adulthood, however, did Nancy meet and befriend many Jews. But several Jews also soon found her a dear friend.

Born on a farm in Hilton, New York, Nancy was educated as a Catholic. She confesses that traces of her upstate accent are still audible. In 1970, Nancy earned her bachelor's degree at the State University of New York at Brockport and then her doctorate at SUNY Buffalo. She began her career as an educator by teaching junior and senior high school.

Nancy not only became a full professor of English at the University of New Haven, but she met her husband, Ralf, there. He was a professor of music, but perhaps more important to their future was the fact that he was a Providence native. Indeed, he may have been a factor in her decision in 2000 to become the associate commissioner for academic and student affairs in the Ocean State's Office of Higher Education. After a four-year leave, Nancy returned to UNH to become its dean of arts and sciences.

Surely it was more than a summer home in Narragansett that brought her once again to Providence to serve as the deputy commissioner and chief academic officer at the Office of Higher Education. During the 2007-8 academic year, Nancy also served as the interim vice president for academic affairs at Rhode Island College. The following year, she became its ninth president and served for eight years. In addition to guiding the institution through the Great Recession, she is particularly proud of expanding the nursing program and helping erect several new buildings on campus.

Nancy later served as vice president for advancement at New England Institute of Technology and expanded her involvement in numerous professional, cultural, and civic organizations. Needless to say, such public service led to friendships with many Jewish leaders.

Nancy wrote this article in February, and Bob Galkin was able to help her and then enjoy it. Alas, he passed away on July 13, 2022, at 95 years of age, so it also sadly became a posthumous portrait.

Readers will enjoy Nancy's next article, which has already been written. It focuses on her deepening sense of Jewish identity. Did I mention that she is a new board member of our Association?

I first met Bob Galkin in 2008. By then he was a prosperous businessperson who was eighty-two years old. We became close friends, but we had an inauspicious beginning.

I was a new member of the Commodores, a group of Rhode Islanders invited by the governor to meet periodically for discussion of leadership issues and for networking. As the new president of Rhode Island College, I wanted to make a good impression, but I arrived at the Providence Convention Center just as Governor Donald Carcieri was about to speak. I scanned the group: about ten tables of six people each. I wordlessly slid into an empty seat next to Bob at the rear of the room.

After breakfast was served, I struck up a conversation with this stranger. He immediately spoke in rhyme. The rhymes formed perfectly reasonable responses to all my questions. Bob rhymed at length about his wife, Wini, and their love of dancing. "How sweet," I thought.

When I inquired about his business, he told me he was a rug salesperson. That also seemed a little unusual, but in Rhode Island connections mean everything, so I assumed he must be connected to someone very important to be appointed a Commodore.

I did not see Bob again for months until I attended a fundraiser at the Ocean House in Watch Hill. After he and Wini entered the ballroom, the floor soon cleared. They were jitterbugging like pros, and everyone stopped to watch. I approached Wini after they left the floor. She had never heard of me, and Bob could not remember me. I then explained to her that when I had met Bob, he spoke in rhyme about their dancing and about being a rug salesperson. She laughed and said my story sounded just like Bob. When I invited her

to lunch, she said, "Sure, why not?" I later learned that this optimistic attitude permeates the lives of the Galkin family.

Bob, who was born in 1926, began as a salesperson (yes, of rugs), but later became president and then chair of the board of Natco Home Group, the family business begun in Rhode Island in 1917 by Bob's father, Arthur. Natco, incorporated in 1923, evolved from two family businesses: National Waste Paper Company and City Coal Company. These businesses passed through three stages: selling scrap, producing products made from remnants, and manufacturing new products using materials purchased from U.S. Rubber. The new products eventually became quality home goods such as rugs, curtains, and pillows. Until recently, Warren, Bob's younger brother, who is far more than a colleague, served as vice president of Natco's board.

In 2000, Michael Litner, Bob's son-in-law, took over as the company's president and has, with the help of his own son, David, grown the business impressively. Bob has stepped back but still watches the family business, which remains based in West Warwick, but has manufacturing facilities in Georgia, Maine, Canada, and Mexico and has supply partners in Mexico, China, Viet Nam, Turkey, and Egypt. Natco recently sold a division with 250 employees, but last year had 2,000 employees, a number that rises and falls as does gross annual sales. In 2021, they totaled three hundred million dollars.

Samuel and Lena Galkin

The Galkins exemplify a Rhode Island Jewish immigrant family which started small in business, worked hard, and succeeded mightily. The family's American story began with Bob's grandparents: Samuel Galkin (1871-1964), who emigrated in 1888 from Sevastopol, Russia, and Lena Schendel Galkin (1869-1942), who was born in New York. Marriage records show that they were married in Providence in May 1893, but she would have been extraordinarily young. Sam would have been attracted to local metalworking businesses, but he also probably had relatives living in Fall River.[1]

Grandma Lena Galkin's father, George Schendel (1838-1931), was the only great-grandparent Bob had known. He remembers him sitting in a rocking chair at the Galkins' vacation house at

Oakland Beach in Warwick. At that time, he seemed over one hundred years old. Great-Grandpa George told a story about his German father, who was arrested in his late nineties for trading horses without a license. A judge said that he was amazed that anyone his age could trade anything, so he dismissed the charges. According to the 1900 census in Providence, Great-Grandpa George was also a horse trader, who had immigrated to New York in 1866.

The Schendels had lived for a few years in Massachusetts until 1880, when they settled in New London, Connecticut. At that time, George worked as a tailor while his wife, Sarah, looked after several kids. Bob's future grandmother, Lena, identified in the federal census as 13 years of age, was called Polena.

Samuel Galkin's dad, *Tevye,* was very stern and demanding. That behavior prompted Sam to leave Russia. As with many family schisms, it began with a small matter: Sam and three of his friends, who were also preparing for their bar mitzvahs, decided to use some spare wood and iron to make a sled. Sam was very proud of the sled and showed his father, who was furious that his son took time away from his religious studies for such frivolity. When *Tevye* smashed the sled, their relationship also broke. Sam came to associate punishment with his religious studies – a lesson in parenting that Sam carried when raising his own children.

Samuel invited his mother, Lizzie (1838-1909), and other relatives to join him and his new wife, Lena, also known as Pauline, in their home at 343 Quaid Street in Providence's North End. *Tevye* Galkin had died or remained in Russia, and the rest of his family never saw him again. Lizzie arrived in Providence by 1906, and she lived with her son and his family at the home they owned at 20 Wheaton Street, two blocks east of North Main and amidst many Jews.

Samuel had used his experience as a metal worker – in copper, tin, brass, and bronze – to secure a job with Brown & Sharpe, the company founded in Providence in 1833 that became the world's largest manufacturer of machine tools. After a couple of years working at its Smith Hill complex, he left to set up his own machine tool shop. His former employer became his main customer. Samuel also

worked for Nicholson File, another major tool manufacturer that had been established in Providence in 1864. A highly ambitious person, Samuel also made pots and pans in his spare time.

By 1917, the budding entrepreneur transformed his metal operation into Samuel Galkin Company, which specialized in sheet metal for automobiles. Its first location was at 120-122 South Water Street. The business evolved into an auto body and radiator shop located at 161 Chestnut Street in downtown Providence. Three of Sam and Lena's children were eventually involved, but Bob's father, Arthur, would have the greatest influence on him.

Arthur and Shirley Galkin

Arthur (1894-1992) was the eldest of Samuel and Pauline's seven children, all of whom were born in Rhode Island.[2] Arthur was only in the seventh grade when Samuel got him a job working at Brown & Sharpe, where he did piecework. Art earned about 50 percent more than his coworkers because he made a jig that allowed him to run two machines at once. After his coworkers complained, their supervisor decided that everyone would adopt Arthur's method, and their pay per piece would drop. No one was happy but the supervisor.

Galkin parents, Shirley & Arthur

After realizing that his coworkers resented him and that management did not reward him appropriately, Arthur left without telling his dad. He found a job in a nearby shoe store as a stock boy. After a

few months, his talents were recognized, and he became in charge of inventory. He saved old shoes and tied pairs together. When peddlers came to buy old cartons and boxes, Arthur was also able to sell them shoes, which they could repair and resell. He next became a commissioned salesperson and earned a higher income. Arthur also saw how well recent immigrants were doing selling waste, so he decided to enter that business, too.

In 1917, Bob's dad, along with Joshua Bell and Mayer Levitt, established the National Waste Paper Company, which recycled wastepaper and eventually rubber. When the company's building on South Water Street burned down in 1922, Arthur was undaunted and rebuilt it. He also started City Coal Company to keep his crew busy and to use its property and trucks while constructing a new building. The Galkin family always looked for a new opportunity when adversity struck.

And they quite literally stayed together. As a bachelor, Arthur continued living with his parents and a few siblings at 20 Wheaton Street and then at 91 Sackett Street in South Providence. As late as 1940, according to the federal census, the home's value was modest – only $5,300. In 1930 it had been worth $18,000.

Sylvia Mann arranged for her first cousin, Shirley, to meet Arthur. This led to other dates, and in 1925 Arthur and Shirley were married in Chelsea, her hometown.

Arthur loved Shirley's sense of fun, and she loved his. For example, after they became engaged, his friends held a bachelor party for him at a local hotel. The door attendant whispered to Arthur that some showgirls were outside on a bus that had broken down, so the girls needed to stay overnight. The door attendant suggested they might join the bachelor party as entertainment. So Arthur and one of his best friends rushed out to welcome the newfound entertainment.

What they didn't know was that Shirley and several of her buddies had bribed the door attendant to give Arthur a phony message about showgirls. Arthur and his fellow party participants suddenly realized that these young ladies, masquerading as showgirls, were now guests at their bachelor party.

After their honeymoon in New Hampshire, Arthur and Shirley moved to an apartment on Ardoene Street in South Providence. Soon the couple acquired a home at 112 Sumter Street, a few blocks east in the Elmwood neighborhood. It was large enough to accommodate a live-in servant, a young woman who was English.

The Galkins also began spending summers at Oakland Beach. One morning Shirley heard a neighbor loudly calling out for "Abie." She asked her husband who this was and why the neighbor was calling at their door. Arthur sheepishly said that his given name was Abraham. Then Shirley confessed that her name was originally Sadie.

Mann Family

Bob Galkin's favorite grandparent was Albert Kiber (Akiva) Mann, who was called "A.K." The Mann family had lived in Tilsit (today's Sovetsk) in East Prussian territory. Born in about 1868, A.K. was one of eleven children. In 1881, when he was almost 13 years, he left his home, possibly in Lithuania, without his parents' permission, and headed on a tramp steamer to Boston, where he had relatives. He arrived first in Key West, where A. K., who had not yet learned English, hammered tin cans flat and sold them as roofing material. As his English improved, he started peddling threads and needles house-to-house. After a few years, A.K. may have arrived in Galveston, Texas. But his arrival was more than 25 years before the "Galveston Plan," when Jewish philanthropists established a program to divert Jewish immigrants from settling in major East Coast cities.

Eventually, A.K. earned enough money to travel to Boston, where he may have had family. In his petition for naturalization, filed on October 15, 1891, he stated that he had arrived in New York City on June 28, 1883.

Having learned the plumbing trade, A.K. set up a shop in Chelsea. He lived in a rooming house owned by Abraham and Mary Schein and managed by their daughter, Bertha (1870-1937). If you are guessing that love bloomed in that rooming house, you are right. A.K. and Bertha were married in Boston in June 1889.

The Manns' first child, Harry, was born in 1892. George followed a year later. A third son was stillborn in 1894. Shirley was born

in 1898. Sidney was born five years later.

A.K. built a successful plumbing company in Boston's West End. Since A.K. was quite strong, he was able to carry boilers and heavy plumbing fixtures. He inspired his fellow workers with his strength and eagerness to work.

A.K.'s business was severely hurt by the Great Chelsea Fire of 1908, which killed 19 people and left 1,500 homeless. Despite his own losses, A.K. helped his Jewish friends financially. Bertha was upset with his generosity, but she had put a little money away, so the Mann family could support itself and assist others.

The Mann boys joined the family business, as did Shirley, who became a bookkeeper. At one time the business may have been one of the largest plumbing contractors in greater Boston.

Eventually, A.K. expanded his business, known as A. K. Mann Company, to include plumbing fixtures, gas fitters, hardware, paints, and oils. The business served local retail customers as well as industrial clients within a wide area. The building that housed the Mann Company, located at 340-50 Broadway in Chelsea, still exists.

His business was successful enough to allow A.K. to purchase one of the first automobiles in Chelsea and do a little stamp collecting. Bob remembers A.K. opening his safe and giving him Cuban stamps, which led to Bob's passion for philately. In 1976, Bob would give his collection of American first day covers to Brown University. In 1990 he would donate his much larger international stamp collection, whose earliest issues dated from the 1740s- long before the Manns could even dream of leaving Eastern Europe.

Youth in and near South Providence

Bob recalls much suffering caused by the Depression but believes that his family fared fairly well. Probably the best part of his boyhood was having a younger brother, Warren, who was born in 1929. Their lives became almost inseparable, and they remain so to this day.

Arthur, Shirley, and the boys lived at 202 Melrose Street in the Elmwood neighborhood, only a few blocks from their Galkin grandparents on Sackett Street. Indeed, the brothers attended the

nearby Sackett Street Elementary School, a four-story structure with separate boys' and girls' entrances built in 1920. Bob vividly recalls one teacher, Miss Hazelhurst, whom he may have had from kindergarten through sixth grade. She encouraged his love of reading, but he also enjoyed her nature walks through the forest behind Roger Williams Park.

During their elementary school years, Bob and Warren took piano lessons and practiced on their family's grand piano. Bob did not have much of an ear for music, but Warren excelled. After he and his wife, Joyce, bought their own home, they played twin organs in its basement. To this day, Warren still plays.

Bob and Warren attended Gilbert Stuart Junior High. Bob's experience there was less enthusiastic than at Sackett Street, but the nearby Carnegie Public Library on Elmwood Avenue was always a pleasure.

Unfortunately, as young teens, Bob and Warren experienced some anti-Semitism. For example, some neighborhood kids, chasing them home from the Liberty Theatre at Broad and Gallatin Streets, called them "dirty Jews."

Bob and Warren prepared for their bar mitzvahs at Temple Beth-Israel, Rhode Island's first Conservative congregation, which was founded in 1921 in the Elmwood neighborhood. Located at 155 Niagara Street, at the corner with Atlantic Avenue, the Temple was about 10 blocks from the Galkins' home. No doubt Rabbi Morris Schussheim and Cantor Joseph Schlossberg officiated at both boys' ceremonies. Bob still has a book in which Shirley meticulously noted every gift he received.

Probably inspired by their Uncle Herman Galkin, a fervent Scout leader, both Bob and Warren belonged to a Cub pack and a Scout troop (probably 10 sponsored by Beth-Israel). Rather than attending Rhode Island's legendary Scout reservation, Yawgoog in Rockville, they spent a summer at Avoda, a Jewish camp in Middleboro, Massachusetts, founded in 1927. It still exists.

Although Shirley meticulously observed the rules of a kosher kitchen, Arthur was less bound by Jewish rules or traditions. Such a liberal approach was partially due to his own father's rebel-

lion against his father's strictness. Accordingly, Bob occasionally tested boundaries by sneaking a favorite history book into religious or Hebrew school. Both Shirley and Arthur recognized that their sons would have to find their own adult interpretations of Judaism and possibly add some fun.

For most of their lives, Bob and Warren have enjoyed water sports. As kids, their parents rented a summer home at Oakland Beach, near their grandparents and other relatives. Oakland Beach was accessible by streetcar from Providence, and it was home to Rocky Point, a wonderful amusement park.

In later years, Arthur bought a home on a cliff on Mt. View Avenue in North Kingstown. This structure overlooking Narragansett Bay was designed to resemble a three-decker ship. A ten-foot-high mahogany steering wheel stood on one of the decks.

Bob and Warren enjoyed sailing, rowing, and swimming well into their eighties. Warren also windsurfed and skied expertly. Both brothers enjoyed hosting guests at their Newport condominiums.

High School, College, and the Navy

Bob graduated from Hope High in 1944. Classical High was closer to the Galkin home, but family friends and Bob's cousin and close friend, Jerry Olin, recommended Hope. So Bob commuted there on the Elmwood Avenue bus and the Hope Street trolley. An excellent student, Bob especially loved history. He joined the current events club and the swim team. Bob also performed as "Mr. De Pinna" in the senior play, Kaufman and Hart's "You Can't Take It with You," which provided a lasting lesson. He graduated in 1944, Warren three years later.

Bob applied to three colleges- Harvard, Brown, and Boston University. He was accepted at Brown, wait-listed at Harvard, but not accepted at B.U. Bob's parents could afford sending him to Brown, as they would with Warren.

Bob earned excellent grades during his freshman year, at least until his draft number came up. Unfortunately, he received Cs that semester because he was called to active duty before he could take his final exams.

Bob never took ROTC classes, but given his love of the sea, sought to enlist in the Navy. Given his love of history, however, Bob had never taken a science course. Thus, he seemed unqualified to take a Navy course that would enable him to become an electronic technician. Fortunately, Shirley Galkin knew an electrical engineer, the manager of radio station WJAR, so she arranged for him to tutor Bob in electronics. Consequently, when called up for service, Bob had a credential that made him more attractive to the Navy.

Bob's Navy service was less than exciting or heroic, however. He was sent to Great Lakes Naval Base north of Chicago for basic training, lived in a Quonset hut in Mississippi for additional training, and received electronics training in Chicago before being assigned to New Orleans and the Caribbean. For better or worse, the war concluded before Bob saw any action. Perhaps the most significant event of those war years was his meeting the Spiegel twins at a mixer at a base canteen, but more about the twins later.

When Bob returned to his studies at Brown, he once again commuted from his family home on Melrose Street. He worked hard and earned excellent grades. A slow but avid reader, he always kept a dictionary by his side. Because he was also very social, he joined the Tower Club, a Jewish men's group that had been founded in 1937. He drew up a 10-item checklist of qualities he wanted in a wife, but he used it without much success. He did date widely, however, and he recalls a girl whose father was an ambassador. She piqued his interest in the United Nations, which he later visited.

At Brown, Bob, an independent thinker, began exploring world religions- from Persian Zoroastrianism to Hinduism and Buddhism – and analyzing them within the context of his own religious upbringing. Accordingly, he has always bemoaned the evil caused by religious and ethnic hatred.

Having majored in international relations and also studied economics, Bob graduated from Brown in 1949. He then used the GI Bill to study international relations and history for a summer at Oxford. Always interested in the world, Bob was eventually able to visit more than a hundred countries.

Having been too young to serve in World War II, Warren was

able to earn a bachelor of science degree in physics and graduate from Brown in 1951. Confident that he, too, would join the family business, he earned a master's degree in business administration at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. Then Warren enlisted in the Navy and in 1954 graduated from Officer Candidate School in Newport. After having served three-and-a-half years of active duty, he served 18 years in the Reserves and retired as a lieutenant commander.

Business

Even as children, Bob and Warren were expected to help build the family business. The factory located at 92 Narragansett Avenue was only a 10-minute walk from the Galkins' home. One Saturday they had a particularly dirty job, a rush order for stair treads using recycled materials. The summer heat was oppressive, especially in their basement quarters, but they had to finish the order before breaking for lunch. Bob and Warren also competed to see who would earn more for his completed piecework.

Worried that the boys were late for lunch, Shirley walked to the factory and offered to help. Then Arthur arrived with two executives from U.S. Rubber, who wanted to see how the factory reused waste materials. After encountering his wife and kids with blackened faces and working furiously to finish, Arthur tried to back up the stairs. But Shirley saw him and rushed over to kiss him. Then one of the visitors remarked, "Any family that works that hard deserves to be successful."

As an adult, Bob was, in fact, eager to build a career at Natco, and his father became his mentor. He let Bob try his own ideas, even when they were likely to fail. Meanwhile, Bob took some practical business courses at Bryant, then a two-year business college. For example, he learned touch-typing, a skill that he still uses daily.

Bob points out, however, that he had big shoes to fill. While still a young salesperson, he recalls an indelible impression. Though Bob had prepared at great length to negotiate with a potential buyer, Arthur took over and charmed everyone with his humor and stories. Soon the buyer suggested a very reasonable price. Bob concluded that his father had a magical personality that he could not match.

Later in his career, Bob had to recover from a number of rever-

sals, including some caused by untrustworthy employees. His chief disappointment, which still may haunt him, occurred in 1972. Natco had a bag division that supplied 60 airlines with tote and flight bags. After the division's president suddenly died, Bob struggled to hold it together. While doing so, Bob feels he neglected some other responsibilities. Ultimately, he was unsuccessful, and the bag division was closed, resulting in the loss

with Coro colleagues:
Bob is tall man in middle

of several hundred workers.

Nevertheless, Bob continued to take the lead at Natco. As the family finance expert, he became the company's chief executive officer and chair of the board. Warren was vice president and the engineering expert, who streamlined operations in the company's factories. For example, Warren designed and built a machine that combined the cutting and screen-printing of the Pan Am logo into one automated process. Two machine operators, who replaced 12 skilled staff members, produced the goods at four times the previous speed. Except for the final assembly, he also automated every other non-hardware operation in the production of the Pan Am bag. These innovations allowed Natco to compete successfully with companies in other states and countries with much lower labor costs than in Rhode Island.

The brothers, who were and remain best friends, complement each other. Their desks at Natco faced each other until their recent retirements.

The brothers do differ in one important respect, however. This relates to their political involvement. Warren is a major supporter of a conservative organization, Rhode Island's Center for Freedom and Prosperity, which, according to its website, supports social change through "pro-family and pro-business reform policies." Bob describes himself as a "middle-of-the-roader," who believes in working with both sides for change. In 1956, for example, he sought political change by running unsuccessfully for Cranston's City Council. Wini was not disappointed because she thought that government responsibilities would distract him from business.

[above]
Bob & Wini

Marriage, Children, and Judaism

In 1952 Bob married Winifred Blacher, a Providence native, in a rooftop ceremony at the Biltmore Hotel. She had grown up on the East Side and graduated from Hope High in 1948. They met through a mutual friend soon after Bob graduated from Brown and was spending six months in Chicago as Natco's Midwest sales manager. Wini was a senior, majoring in art, at Brown's Pembroke College. Quite fortunately and quickly, he abandoned his checklist of characteristics he wanted in a wife. As Bob was fond of saying, "Wini might not have been what I wanted, but she was exactly what I needed." Wini, in turn, liked to say, "I pursued Bob until he caught me." She had even told her girlfriends not to date handsome Bob Galkin because she planned to marry him.

Bob often says that his lifelong regret was not dating and marrying Wini sooner. He feels that raising their three happily married daughters, Ellen, Jane, and Debby, is their greatest accomplishment.

Bob and Warren were not raised as privileged young men, and Bob sought to repeat this lesson with his own family. Wini, by contrast, had grown up within an affluent, jewelry-manufacturing family. She and Bob decided to live on his salary as a salesperson when the children were young and use their additional income for quiet philanthropy. Consequently, the Galkin girls grew up in a modest ranch home at 110 Elsie Street close to Cranston High School. Bob still enjoys living there. All the girls worked for their allowances, including on "Kill Dad Night," when Debby, the youngest daughter, cooked dinner.

As was true with their own childhoods, Bob and Wini gently but lovingly introduced their girls to Judaism. Bob and Wini decided their family needed to belong to a temple and wanted to choose one thoughtfully. While Wini had attended Temple Beth-El, a Reform congregation, Bob had attended Beth-Israel, a Conservative one. Although he liked its rabbi and many members very much, he felt attracted to something different. Fortunately, Bob and Wini encountered a group starting a new Reform congregation, Temple Sinai, in Cranston. They joined, and Bob,

expanding his role as a salesman, became its first membership chairperson. He's still a dues-paying member, but never sought a leadership position. The Galkin daughters went to Sinai's religious school, and the family attended services together. Bob and Wini agreed, however, that as adults their daughters were welcome to make their own choices, and they have.

Bob and Wini were always very proud to be members of a local, national, and worldwide Jewish community, as their philanthropy and travels attest. Given their awareness of anti-Semitism, even periodically within their own business, one of their favorite causes has been the Abraham Initiative, which brings Israeli and Arab youth groups together to work on various projects. But Bob and Wini have also expressed their appreciation to individuals they admire and trust. For example, they donated conference rooms at Rhode Island Hospital in honor of two esteemed physicians, Arun Singh and Stuart Schwartz. Needless to say, Bob and Wini's first and foremost loyalty has been to family.

Not surprisingly, the Galkins have been extremely modest about their gifts and achievements. But several organizations and educational institutions have honored them. For example, in 2017, Bob, Wini, and Warren were elected to the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame. Bob and Wini also received honorary degrees from Rhode Island College (2015) and Bob and Warren from New England Institute of Technology (2017).

Writing

The prosperity of Natco allowed Bob to eventually pursue creative writing, a talent that he had always been too busy to pursue. When filled with ideas for plots and characters, he often cannot rest until he has typed them up. Especially during the COVID pandemic, his computer has been a close friend.

Perhaps needless to say, many of the main characters in Bob's novels and plays bear Jewish names and are brilliant, driven, moral, and philanthropic- a lot like many of the Jews he has known. Accordingly, these characters embrace the values and qualities that Bob learned as a child and has passed on to his descendants.

Remarkably, with the assistance of a team of writers and editors, Bob has completed 24 novels, each about 70,000 words, and several plays.

Consequently, with the hope of publishing or making movies of his stories, he formed Galkin Entertainment, LLC. His advisors include: Warren; his artistic daughter, Debby Krim; his grandson, Ryan Kenner; and several friends.

Through his initial exposure to the entertainment industry, Bob has met many fascinating people, learned a great deal, and enjoyed a wonderful adventure. He has already shared some of his life's lessons through 105 "YouTube" videos, entitled "Bob Galkin Stories," which were recorded in 2018 and 2019.

After Wini

In the spring of 2015, both Bob and Wini, stricken with pneumonia, were sent to the Miriam Hospital. He suffered dark thoughts about one of them passing away and leaving the other alone. Sadly, after 63 years of a wonderful marriage, Wini left this world on June 2 at 84 years of age.

Life, especially during the pandemic, can be lonely and dull without family and friends. Fortunately, Bob's three daughters, six grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren, and many friends often visit him. But as anyone who is "long of tooth" knows, nothing is quite like having a friend who recalls the era before television and computers. Consequently, Bob has reconnected with somebody from decades ago. Her name is Phyllis, and they found each other via Facebook.

While in the Navy, stationed in Chicago, Bob met and dated Mildred Spiegel, but also liked her slightly younger, identical twin, Phyllis. Both ladies were attractive, smart, full of life, and Jewish. Inevitably, the twins moved on and found other men when they went to college, but Bob never forgot them.

While Bob was mourning Wini, their daughter Debby convinced him that it would be fun to reunite with Phyllis Spiegel. Having initiated some research through Facebook, his daughter-matchmaker found the active, 94-year-old widow living in Chicago. So Debby sent a photo of Bob and asked if Phyllis would be interested in reconnecting.

In a subsequent phone conversation, Phyllis reminisced about meeting Bob when she was eighteen and he was nineteen. When Bob and his friend walked towards them, Mildred told Phyllis that she had "dibs

on the cute one" (Bob) rather than his sailor buddy.

About a decade later, Phyllis Spiegel Shuman reconnected with Bob by chance when she was lounging by the pool at her husband's hotel in Chicago, where Bob and his family were staying. While wearing her wet swimsuit, she gave Bob, who was wearing a business suit, a big hug. Of course Bob, the devoted family man, was embarrassed because Wini and her father, seated nearby, had no idea what to think about this beautiful woman. Once Bob introduced everyone, Wini and Phyllis became great friends, though their lives would once again diverge.

Bob says he could never have married either of the twins, as much as he was smitten with them. They were as rooted in Chicago as the Galkins were in Rhode Island. Family was so important to Bob that he even told his daughters that he would fund their educations only if they chose colleges or universities within driving distance of home.

Phyllis still so much admires Bob's determination. If one plan does not work, he will immediately try a different angle. I believe that optimism is another reason why Bob and the Galkin family have always bounced back.

Spiegel twins, Chicago, ca. 1946

Endnotes

1
By about 1900, two men named Jacob Galkin were living in Fall River. The first, who had been born in Sevastopol in 1872, reached New York City by 1888, and was naturalized in 1895. He married Sarah and had four daughters. The second Jacob Galkin, who was born in Russia in 1873, immigrated in 1887, married Jennie, and had two sons and two daughters.

2
The other Galkin children were Ira (1895-1989), Hyman (later known as Herman; 1898-1979), Caroline (1900-1992), Leo (1903-1916), Theodore (1907-2002), and Joseph (1909-1992). Sam and Lena are buried in Lincoln Park, as are all of their children except Arthur and Shirley, who are buried at Sharon Memorial Park.

In 1924, Ira founded a successful business, American Insulated Wire, in Pawtucket, which he operated with his two brothers-in-law. This enterprise became a subsidiary of Leviton Manufacturing Company. Long after Ira and his wife Anna passed away, their fund, managed by the Rhode Island Foundation, is still active.

Several more of the Galkin sons became successful businessmen, but two achieved additional distinction. Herman, who spent his career as a manager with his family's automotive business, devoted his life to the Boy Scouts. At 10 years of age, he joined the Rhode Island Boy Scouts even before its affiliation with the national Scout movement and its development of the Yawgoog Scout Reservation. As an adult, he led or founded seven troops sponsored by Jewish organizations. In recognition of Herman's continuing service to the Scout movement, Gov. J. Joseph Garrahy declared March 18, 1977 "Herman S. Galkin Day." At that time, Herman also became the first Rhode Island recipient of the national Scout movement's Shofar Award. A Galkin Trail and a Galkin Cabin (to house a rabbi or Jewish leader) were also dedicated at the Yawgoog Reservation.

After graduating from Brown University in 1931, Joseph Galkin earned a master's degree in social work at Columbia University. While living in New York City, he began his career in Jewish communal service by serving as a field director of the National Refugee Service. In 1943, he became executive director of Jewish Family and Children's Service in Providence. Two years later he became the founding director of the city's General Jewish Committee, a forerunner of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island. Following his retirement in 1976, Joseph directed Federation's Endowment Fund for 13 years. He also chaired the Rhode Island Parole Board from 1958 to 1980.

Harold A. Winstead and His Family

George M. Goodwin

Thanks to annual, posthumous donations through his Charitable Foundation Trust, Harold A. Winstead has become our journal's major benefactor. These gifts, begun in 2007, now cover all of the publication's expenses.

Harold was not a member of our Association, but the three members of his trust's distribution committee have taken a deep interest in it. Thus, in addition to Harold, our deep thanks are extended to his nephews, Norman Jay Bolotow and Philip M. Weinstein, as well as to Benjamin G. Paster, who is also the estate's attorney.

Harold, the third of four Weinstein children, was born in Providence in 1909 and passed away in 2003. He spent almost his entire life in greater Providence. Unfortunately, he did not leave a wife or children – or a collection of business or personal records – so many facets of his life have survived only through his nephews' memories. Additional facts have also been gathered from genealogical and archival records available online.

Aside from having lived such a long life, Harold is notable in many ways. He was a gifted student who also served in the Army during World War II. He was probably more responsible than his father or his two brothers for the Weinstein family's considerable business success. During their lifetimes, Harold and his siblings supported many philanthropic organizations, especially the Miriam Hospital.

Through Harold and his brothers' generosity, the hospital's second floor was designated the "Weinstein Wing." William also donated funds to create the "William

detail, annual outing, Atlantic Tubing & Rubber, October 1, 1950: Harold second row, second from left

and Carlyn Weinstein Chapel." His wife, Carlyn, was nearly a full-time volunteer at the Miriam. Following William's death and that of her second husband, Harold Summer, she left the hospital a major bequest.

Harold Winstead, who closely resembled such movie stars as Clark Gable and Cary Grant, knew how to have a good time. He surrounded himself with multitudes of beautiful women in Rhode Island and at numerous vacation spots. Long before the success of Hugh Hefner's magazine, Harold could have been considered for a cover story (if men were used for such). But at the end of his life, except for his loyalty to his family and his family to him, he may have been a rather lonely person.

According to naturalization records filed in Rhode Island's District Court, Harold's father, Philip Weinstein, had been born in Uman, within the Ukrainian region of Russia, in 1874. In 1901, at 27 years of age, he immigrated to London, and a few days later departed for New York City. He arrived in Providence within a few weeks and remained here until his death in 1940. Quite likely Philip chose to settle in Providence because his sister, Sarah, had moved here with her husband, Jacob L. Zitserman, a clothier who was also a native of Uman. Philip and his wife, Rose (1881-1962), are buried in Lincoln Park, as are some of their progeny, including Harold.

Rose Weinstein, born in Russia, immigrated to Rhode Island in 1901, presumably with Philip. The 1942 draft registration of their eldest child, William Philip, shows, however, that he had been born in Uman in February 1901. Some records state that he was born in 1902. The second Weinstein child, Bertha (later known as Betty), was born in Providence in 1903, and her youngest brother, Sydney (later spelled Sidney), in 1913. Philip and Rose became naturalized citizens in 1915.

Whether or not he had any choices, Philip became an entrepreneur. That is, he peddled clothing. Indeed, in 1904, the first time he is listed in a Providence directory, he is identified as a "pedler" living at 224 Chalkstone Avenue on Smith Hill. How much could Philip carry, for he was only five feet four inches tall? By 1906, Philip, Rose, and their older children, William and Bertha, were living at 87

Goddard Street, also on Smith Hill. The younger children, Harold and Sidney, would also spend their early years there.

Philip, surely a native Yiddish speaker, learned to speak some Italian and befriended many Italo-Americans. Thus, around 1915 he established his own clothing store at 310 Atwells Avenue (the current site of Roma Restaurant). In 1918, when required to register for the draft, Philip described himself as a "clothier." But there were several other clothiers nearby on Atwells, including, for example: Abraham Maklar at 295, Abraham Bachman at 243, Philip Feinstein at 247, and John Lewis at 444. Perhaps one key to Philip's success was his generosity when providing credit. But he also enjoyed wearing handsome garments. Philip's eldest son, William, began his business career working in his father's store.

By 1923, Philip also operated Philip's Department Store at 40 East Avenue in Pawtucket. This business probably lasted only a few years, however. By 1924, Philip occupied an office at 923 Westminster Street in downtown Providence and described himself as the president and treasurer of an unidentified business. William was identified as its vice president and assistant treasurer.

Surely proud of their success, the Weinsteins, by 1925, owned a large, single-family home at 246 Lenox Avenue in the upscale Elmwood neighborhood of South Providence. William may have attended Brown, but did not graduate. An honors student, Harold graduated from Classical High School in 1928. He may have received some financial assistance to enroll at Harvard College; otherwise, he would probably have chosen Brown and, like most striving Jewish students, attended as a commuter. Having earned his bachelor's degree in only three years, Harold must have felt academically accomplished. Yet, he also found time to row on one of Gore House's four intramural teams. He majored in chemical engineering surely with the intention of working in his family's new business. He may have taken some graduate courses at MIT, but did not matriculate there.

By the early 1930s, Philip and Rose were real estate investors. While still residing at 246 Lenox Avenue, they owned two East Side apartment buildings: one at 116 Evergreen Street, the other at

50 Blackstone Boulevard. By 1940, William and his wife, Carlyn, moved to the Blackstone building, which had at least six units on three floors, and probably managed it. They remained there until about 1958.

But the family's major business enterprise and presumably its primary reason for moving to Lenox Avenue became the Atlantic Tubing & Rubber Company, which was originally located on Cranston Street in Cranston. This manufacturing company, established in 1903, consisted of numerous, interconnected buildings. While Philip served as president, William worked as a manager. Then Harold became a sales manager, and Sidney also worked in sales.

In 1940, Sidney married Isabelle Weinstein (who was not a relative). That same year, following his father's death, Harold continued living with his mother at 246 Lenox.

Harold's parents, Rose & Philip

In 1926, Betty Weinstein had married Charles Bolotow, a Providence native. Having launched her mercantile career at 16 years of age in her father's clothing store, she learned to speak Italian. As a bookkeeper trained at Bryant and Stratton Business College, she later worked in the Bolotow family business, Star Restaurant Equipment Company at 222 North Main Street, and continued to do so for decades. Betty's son, Norman (born in 1936), believes that her business savvy was at least comparable to his father's. For example, she would have boldly invested in real estate on North Main (in the area that in 1965 became the Roger Williams National Memorial). By contrast, Charles, whom Norman considered "one of the most honorable people I ever knew," was extremely cautious. Norman conjectures that Betty was "bold enough to run a country."

When Harold registered for the draft in 1942, his surname was still Weinstein. At an unknown date, however, the name on his registration card was crossed out and incorrectly replaced with "Weinstead." Harold was 31 years of age and still resided at 246 Lenox Avenue with his mother. His height was five feet nine-and-one-half inches, and he weighed 160 pounds. His eyes and hair were brown.

Military records show that Harold enlisted in the Army in Providence on August 12, 1942. His rank was private, and he was assigned to the "warrant office." Harold's kin feared that he would be injured or killed during the war.

His nephews believe that he changed his surname at this time both as a precaution against anti-Semitism and to advance his military career. Never posted overseas, Harold was sent to New York City and stayed there for the war's duration. He worked in a Manhattan office building and resided in a nearby apartment. Harold was probably given a research task related to chemical engineering.

Betty and Charles Bolotow often visited Harold on wholesale buying trips to New York City. But they always called ahead to see if he was available. If he faced any danger, it was from an overactive social life. Accordingly, Harold, who achieved the rank of first lieutenant, never boasted about his wartime service.

In order to expand, Atlantic Tubing & Rubber relocated

to Mill Street, off Park Avenue, in Cranston. It acquired an existing industrial facility located on the Pawtuxet River. The complex of interconnected, one-floor buildings occupied approximately 300,000 square feet. At its peak during the 1960s, Atlantic Tubing & Rubber employed at least 600 people – primarily male immigrants or children of immigrants. A large number were Italo-Americans; there were also some Blacks and a small number of Jews, among various minorities. Before World War II, these workers produced all kinds of rubber products, including hoses.

Following Harold's return to the family business, the company transitioned from rubber to plastics. This was accomplished through the manufacture of "PVC," polyvinyl chloride, which begins with a gas that is converted to a resin. Atlantic Tubing & Rubber became a pioneer in the manufacture of PVC piping, used in numerous plumbing products, which replaced cast iron piping. The Weinstein family's business also manufactured such standard plastic products as floor coverings and toilet seats – even hula hoops.

Sidney and Isabelle's son, Philip, who was born in 1942 and named after his deceased grandfather, worked at Atlantic for several summers while a student. He believes that the company's employees were treated respectfully. Sidney, who served as president, knew employees' names and routinely interacted with them on the factory floor. Even so, the laborers who belonged to the United Rubber Workers' union, which had been organized in Ohio in 1935, predictably went on strike every three years.

Unlike Sidney, Harold, who became Atlantic's chairman of the board and driving force, was not known to *schmooze* with employees. Indeed, he tended to keep to himself in the company's second-story office, even avoiding lunchtime games of gin rummy with other managers. Without question, he considered himself the second generation's leader. In order to get along, his brothers usually agreed with or deferred to him.

Yet, the family business was largely successful because all the Weinsteins worked so darn hard. With profit margins being relatively small, the brothers made every effort to satisfy their demanding corporate customers in many states. After returning home for din-

ner, Sidney was required to make additional business calls to collect money from customers, many of whom became his friends. He also traveled a fair amount to see customers, and Isabelle also deserves credit for some of Atlantic's success. Though never an employee, she too often charmed customers and their wives on sales trips.

Philip and Rose belonged to Sons of Israel, Rhode Island's first Conservative congregation, while living in South Providence. This is where they sent their children to religious school. But Isabelle had grown up at Temple Emanu-El, so Sidney and his family affiliated there. The Bolotows also belonged to Emanu-El. All the Weinsteins switched to Temple Beth-El in 1954, however, when the congregation built its new home on Orchard Avenue. Indeed, William and Carlyn donated the window of the Ten Commandments on the sanctuary's north side. Sidney had been close to Rabbi William and Pearl Braude; he took credit for introducing them to each other. And Pearl may have introduced Sidney to Isabelle.

Although the larger Weinstein family did not regularly attend Beth-El services, it almost always gathered for Shabbat dinners and other holiday celebrations in Sidney and Isabelle's home. Such dinners also included his mother Rose, his in-laws William and Sophie Weinstein, as well as siblings and their spouses. Isabelle was an excellent cook, and the men typically did what they knew best – yammered about business.

Among the Weinstein siblings, Betty and her husband, Charles, were the first to live on the East Side. In 1940, they built a handsome, Georgian-revival abode at 365 Cole Avenue. In about 1963, it was sold to Temple Emanu-El to use as the assistant rabbi's home. Shortly after World War II, Sidney and his family lived at 106 Preston Drive in Cranston, not far from Atlantic Tubing & Rubber. In 1954 they built a beautiful home at 285 Blackstone Boulevard. A radical example of modernism – at least by Providence standards – it was among the first designed by a local Jewish architect, Ira Rakatansky, who would intrigue many Jewish clients. Given the home's flat roof, workers had to shovel off snow following a large storm. Perhaps Sidney and Isabelle were partially attracted to Beth-El by its embrace of modernism. William and Carlyn Weinstein, also Temple members,

Harold's sister, Betty, in front of father's store on Atwells Avenue

would be buried in the congregation's cemetery.

During World War II, Rose Weinstein, then a widow, kept her home on Lenox Avenue in South Providence but also rented an apartment at the Biltmore Hotel. After the war, Harold again lived briefly with his mother on Lenox Avenue. By the late 1940s, however, the mother and son rented Apartment 218A at the East Side's Wayland Manor.

Although Rose never learned to drive, she insisted on obtaining Harold's used Cadillac convertibles. When summering

at Narragansett's Massasoit Hotel, a remnant of the Victorian era, a driver would take her where she fancied, but always with the top up.

Most likely Harold purchased a lot at 275 Blackstone Boulevard around the same time that Sidney and Isabelle purchased theirs at 285. Within a year or two, Harold erected his own home, which was then divided essentially in half. Rose occupied the northern end, and her son took the southern end. In the middle, they shared a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, and a maid's room. As for providing daily rides, Harold's older brother, William, who moved around this time with his wife, Carlyn, to 10 Intervale Road, was eager to assist. Sadly, William survived only two years longer than his mother, passing away in 1964.

The Weinsteins' growing affluence could also be measured by the fact that many relatives joined the new Ledgemont Country Club, which had relocated from West Warwick to Seekonk in 1949. The Bolotows were already members, but did not play golf. While Harold, Sidney, and his son, Philip, enjoyed this sport, the women probably preferred playing cards.

Surely another measure of the Weinsteins' business success was family vacations. Of course Harold was free to go wherever he wanted, especially to meet or rendezvous with beautiful women, but he and Sidney's family would routinely venture beyond Grossinger's in the Catskills or the Griswold Inn in Essex, Connecticut, by spending Christmas vacations at Miami Beach's Fontainebleau Hotel, which had opened in 1954. Harold usually reserved a penthouse suite as well as a poolside cabana.

After about 1965, when the Bolotows moved to Collins Avenue in Miami Beach, Harold also enjoyed staying in their apartment. Additionally during the 1960s, he enjoyed staying with his nephew, Norman, when he and his friends rented summer homes on Nantucket. Instead of a T-shirt, Harold preferred wearing a blue blazer and a tie. Having few inhibitions, he also preferred socializing with the younger generation of ladies.

Harold had two longtime male buddies – businessmen who did not marry and become fathers until their forties or later. In

Providence, there was Oscar Archibald Leach, known as "Arnie," who succeeded his father as president of Harry Leach Machinery Company. Ironically, Cary Grant's given name was Archibald Leach! David Leach, a past president of our Association, is Oscar's nephew.

Perhaps Harold's more surprising friend was Henry Riseman, a native of Revere, Massachusetts, who had majored in "poultry husbandry" at Massachusetts State College in Amherst and graduated in 1935. He subsequently developed a successful business, Brooklyn Live Poultry, in the Connecticut town where he lived. His specialty was raising Rock Cornish game hens. Henry and his wife, Marion, also became serious art collectors, especially of Tiffany and Steuben glass, and helped establish a local center for contemporary art.

Philip Weinstein believes that his Uncle Harold, while a young man, fell deeply in love with a lady from Swampscott, Massachusetts. After having become stricken with polio, however, she decided not to accept his marriage proposal. Unconcerned about the burden she might have become, Harold always seemed to regret her refusal. Thus, his favorite woman remained the one he could never have.

In 1968, an explosion and fire not only destroyed portions of Atlantic Tubing & Rubber's chemical plant but caused three deaths. Unwilling to accept his insurance company's offer, Harold decided to sue. Three years of litigation led to a civil jury trial, led by Bruce Selya and Raymond LaFazia, which lasted six months, a Rhode Island record for that era. The trial resulted in a settlement of four million dollars.

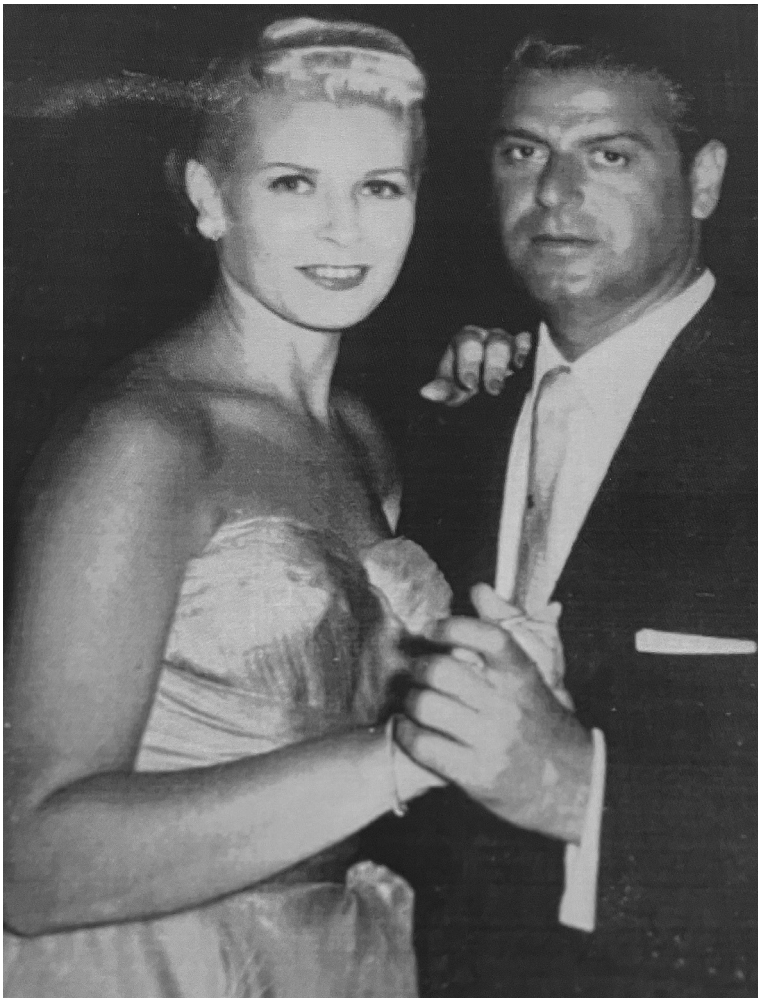
Fortunately, most of the plant's 20 buildings were not damaged, and these were eventually leased to other businesses. Even though Atlantic Tubing & Rubber's property had grown from three to approximately 20 acres, the possibility of polluting nearby residential properties and waterways remained. Thus, Cranston would not allow the company to rebuild and further expand at this site.

Rather than selling what remained of the family business, especially its massive equipment worth perhaps $20 million, Harold could not accept retirement. What else would he do? Thus,

he decided to rebuild part of Atlantic's plant within an industrial park in New Bedford, which had looser environmental restrictions. Harold invested several million dollars of the insurance funds and his reserves, but was unable to obtain the full level of financing required. Even before its completion, the new plant was also quite small compared to those of its major competitors. For example, the capacity of Tenneco's plant could have been 20 times larger. But the 1973 oil embargo, caused by the Arab-Israeli war, brought further obstacles to the manufacture of plastics. Consequently, Atlantic's new plant was sold even before it began production. Then the new owner went into bankruptcy.

The Weinstein brothers also thought that they would live forever. Accordingly, they never encouraged a third generation to

Harold and girlfriend



enter and perpetuate the family business. But only one of Grandfather Philip's three sons, Sidney, had a son of his own. Needless to say, neither Philip's daughter nor his granddaughters were ever part of a management equation.

Betty and Charles Bolotow were never involved in the Weinstein family business. Indeed, they sold their own business when they decided to retire to Miami Beach. Their children, Barbara and Norman, had never been encouraged to perpetuate it, either. Norman became a lawyer and continues to practice part-time.

Similarly, Sidney and Isabelle's children went in other directions. After earning degrees in art history, Jackie gained some renown as an environmental designer and sculptor in this country and abroad. Philip also became a lawyer and continues to practice part-time.

After selling his Blackstone Boulevard home, Harold lived more modestly in an apartment at the Regency Plaza in downtown Providence, where his sister, Betty, resided since 1978. He also enjoyed dining regularly with both his nephews, especially when they picked up the tab.

Inevitably, Harold was left with fewer and fewer close friends. A much younger woman, Tina Z., helped look after him, but they were probably not romantically involved – at least at this juncture. Indeed, by this time, Tina was already widowed. Harold, who spent his last three years at Epoch Assisted Living Center, left her a small bequest.

Most of Harold's considerable wealth went directly to his Charitable Foundation Trust, which continues to support many of his favorite organizations, including the Miriam, Jewish Collaborative Services, Harvard, Brandeis, and Classical High. At JCS, the "Winstead Gardens" surround the new building on North Main Street. The Winstead Trust's name is also visible through its continuing support of *The Shofar,* Temple Beth-El's bulletin. And after Harold's nephews retire as trustees of the trust's distribution committee, they will appoint successors. Fortunately, the trust will render *mitzvot* for many decades to come.

Because of his generosity, Harold will be best remembered

as a philanthropist. Knowledge of his academic brilliance, his business success, and his numerous romances will inevitably fade away. Ironically, his *mitzvot* have become stronger, more flexible, and more enduring than rubber or plastic.


ARROW-DORSET
F. POLLARD, Maker,
33 to 37 Bethune St., New York.
4 Superior St., Cleveland, Ohio
949 Liberty St., Pittsburgh, Pa.
ARROW-BOYD
ARROW-CONTOUR
ARROW
ARROW ASHBOURNE 2
ARROW-TIMES
ARROW-SPUR
Golden Arrow
ARDSLEY
ARROW-MEYRICK

A Family Affair in Newport

James W. Tobak

Jimmy told me that my introduction to his article in our 2017 issue, about his father, Leo, would once again suffice. But I want to say a little more about one of my dearest friends. It has little to do with the fact that he served as an Association vice president in 2004, when I was president, or that he has supported some of my other endeavors by giving me the benefit of his doubt.

Yes, our paths have crossed in so many ways. Perhaps the least consequential is on a *Shabbat* evening or morning, when Rabbi Yehoshua Laufer of Chabad House comes searching for his tenth man. We respect his deep faith and countless *mitzvot* and attend his services more than occasionally, but, as Beth-El members, we are inclined to lower our shades and turn off our lights. Too bad that Jill and Betsey can't help reach that magical number.

Fortunately, Jimmy's path and mine had crossed in at least two important ways before we actually met. He and I overlapped as graduate students in 1971-72 at Stanford: he in law and American history, I in art and education. In fact, for a while we lived in nearby fraternity houses. And both of us later taught at the college level: Jimmy at Lehigh University, where he had graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1968, and I at numerous colleges and an art school in Southern California. Yes, a classroom finally brought us together in Providence in 1990, when I taught a course on Frank Lloyd Wright for the Brown Learning Community. He and Jill were my most enthusiastic (or forgiving) students.

Destiny brought the Tobaks and Goodwins much closer together in 1996, when Betsey and I were interested in purchasing an Arts & Crafts bungalow on Brenton Avenue, which was located coincidentally across the street from our friends' home. Indeed, Jimmy told the seller that we would be ideal owners, so a deal was struck and, fortunately, our families have been rewarded ever since.

No, I never became an outstanding tennis player, as Jimmy did at

[left] **Arrow collars**

Rogers High School, nor do I swim laps at the JCC or the Y. And although I too enjoy wearing handsome garments and driving a stylish car, I will never quite measure up to Jimmy's debonair standards.

But I do think that we share a similar view of the world and our relatively modest roles within it. While laughing frequently and heartily at ourselves, we also appreciate our great fortune.

"What's past is prologue."[1]

The Prologue

It was a relationship that spanned three generations and over one hundred years. To quote my brother-in-law Joe Fox, who, when at his laminating business in Hartford, Connecticut, was wont to end a telephone conversation with me by stating (abruptly, but never rudely), "Got to treat you like family," and then hung up to take a customer's call. And so it was with the Werners, my mother's side of the family: Potter & Company, which began as a means to an end – supporting the family – became over time an end in itself. Not overriding family exactly, but literally a family member whose needs frequently held sway and who often was the source of dinner table conversation ranging the gamut from consternation to pride.

The Beginning: Herman Werner's Run,1908-1941

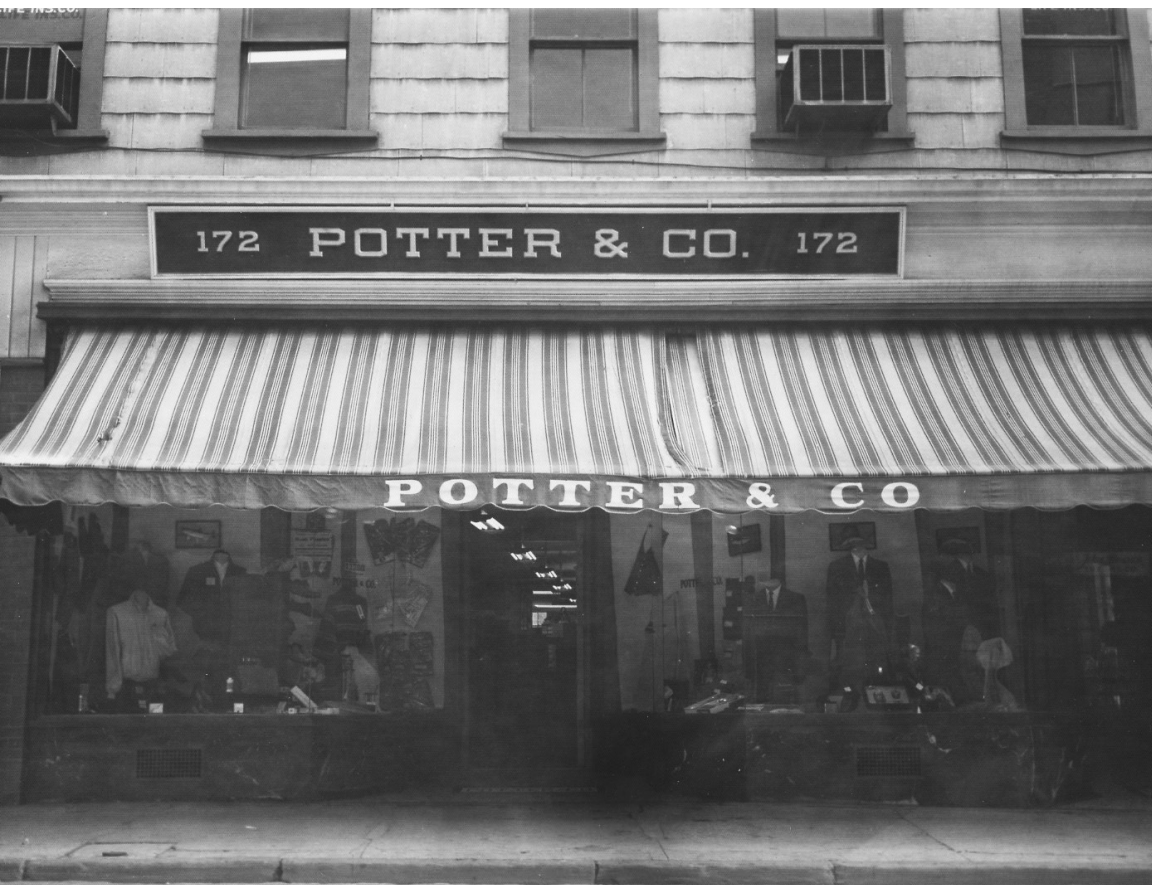
February 29, 1908 is a day that lives in our family's history and lore.[2] On that day, my maternal grandfather, Herman Werner, signed a partnership agreement with Louis Potter (always referred to in our family as "Louie" and, according to my Uncle Harold Werner, Potter was anglicized from Padashevsky). Although a bit murky, it seems likely that over the course of the partnership the eponymous "Potter," Louie[3] was not contributing to the business as much as his partner, "& Co," my grandfather, Herman Werner. A 1915 ledger with the inscription Werner,[4] would seem to confirm that the business, certainly the invoicing/ bookkeeping end, was being maintained by Herman.

The business, begun in 1908 at 237 Thames Street, relocated

to 172 Thames in 1911, where it remained throughout the rest of its life. Newport real estate records show that the property was at one time owned by the Weenat Shassit Association of Red Men (how times have changed; certainly, it is unlikely that any Native Americans were members), before becoming the property of the city. In May 1932, Land Evidence records indicate that the real estate was conveyed by the city to Louis Potter and Herman Werner; a few months later the property was conveyed to the partnership, Potter & Co. Following the death of Louie Potter in 1933, ownership of the real estate was held solely by the Werner family, where it remains to this day.

And it was this business, Potter & Co., that became an integral and formidable factor in our family's financial, social and, dare I say, even emotional history. The business sadly ended within five years after being sold to a nonfamily member in 2010. This was

store on Thames St. (undated)



inevitable, but nonetheless disheartening. The business survived and ultimately flourished for over a century including: two World Wars; the Great Influenza Pandemic of 1918; the Great Depression; the 1938 Hurricane; the unprecedented drawdown of Newport's naval base in 1973; and social and political upheaval. Of course the unceasing river of change that marks the American fashion industry had by 2015 become a proverbial footnote.

The Past, the Foundation

Born in 1826 in Posen, Germany (Posen suffered a rare form of national schizophrenia, one day German, the next Polish), my great-grandfather, Jacob Werner, emigrated at age thirteen to Manchester, England, to learn coat making. Approximately ten years later, in 1849, he sailed from England to America, quickly settling in Bridgeport, Connecticut. According to his obituary, he began making clothes in Bridgeport on a very small scale, but subsequently moved to the bustling commercial thoroughfare of Water Street, where he established a haberdashery. The obituary goes on to note that the business became "one of the best-known stores in the State, and hundreds of men would never trade in any other clothing store. Though the style of the store was merely Jacob Werner, the old gentleman, some years ago took as partner, his son Herman."

For reasons that can only be left to speculation,[5] within a few years after his father's death, Herman Werner left Bridgeport and decamped to Newport. Louie Potter, Herman's soon-to-be partner, was operating Crown Clothing Co. at 237 Thames Street when my grandfather opened an ill-fated tailor shop a few doors away at 221 Thames, where the business remained until its demise in 2015.

Back to the Beginning: "But For"

But for a quirk of family history this article would never have been written, and indeed this author would never have been. A part of me would almost like to say this "quirk" is family legend and not based on an actual event; on the other hand, I have reason to believe (evidence as we lawyers are glad to argue) that the legend has real legs. Family lore has it that, discouraged in his tailoring business,

my grandfather, single and 40 years of age, was on his way out of town to return to Bridgeport when he bumped into Louie Potter, who mentioned that he was looking for help in his business, Crown Clothing.

Persuaded that opportunity remained in Newport, Herman never used the 10¢ one-way ticket he had purchased on the Long Island & Hartford Railroad, instead deciding to team up with Louie. As it so happens, secreted away in Werner family archives in a carefully marked envelope was evidence in the form of a 10¢ ticket to Bridgeport on that very same railroad. Embarrassingly, although I once found the envelope, opened it, and saw the unused ten-cent ticket that likely changed the course of our family history, that evidence has gone missing. Let us just say, Herman has an idiot grandson, but at least he has a grandson.

The Second Partnership

Herman Werner formed another partnership in 1915 when he married Virginia Engel, whom he endearingly referred to as "Virgy." Having been born in Bridgeport in 1870, Herman was 45, while Virginia Engel, born in 1887 in York, Pennsylvania, was 28. Although I know little, actually nothing, about how they met and what the attraction might have been, I can speculate that having quite similar family backgrounds there was the initial attraction of familiarity. Both descended from Jewish ancestry in Germany and Austria; both had parents who came to this country in the latter half of the 1800s; and both had fathers who established successful businesses soon after their arrival. By the turn of the twentieth century, both families could have been considered middle-class and were well assimilated into American social mores and culture.

Virginia's father, Julius Engel, was instrumental in the founding of Newport's nascent Congregation Jeshuat Israel, becoming its second president. Indeed, in 1903 and again in 1908, Julius was one of three signatories on behalf of the lessee, CJI, to sign dollar-a-year leases of Touro Synagogue together with "the appurtenances" (including a handwritten interlineation) "paraphernalia belonging thereto" with the putative owner/ lessor,

Herman Werner

the New York Sephardic congregation, Shearith Israel.

By way of an unrelated aside, it was those leases that formed the basis of a longstanding relationship, that until recently allowed for what I think could reasonably be described as a peaceful coexistence of sorts between the respective congregations. The demise of even the appearance of "peaceful coexistence" is certainly fodder for another article, but more likely would require an entire book, and quite a large one at that.

By 1915, my grandmother Virginia's oldest sibling, Stuart, was married and an attorney with a practice in White Plains, New York; her next oldest sibling, Joseph, was married and a physician living in Brooklyn; and Virginia's older sister, Irene, was married to Max Levy, an attorney in Newport, who would soon become one of the first Jewish judges in Rhode Island (Newport's probate court). At 28, Virginia was living at 231 South Third Street in Brooklyn, which was either Joseph Engel's residence or an apartment in a building that he owned and in which he maintained an office. My understanding is that Virgina attended Hunter College, although I am not sure if she graduated. In any event, and this is pure conjecture on my part, at 28 and with all her siblings married, I can only imagine that she was experiencing a certain anxiety about her future.

Herman, on the other hand, at 45, was one of only three of Jacob and Roslyn Werner's six children who ever married, and he was the only one, after his marriage to Virginia, to have children. Again, I can only imagine and also speculate that, by his mid-forties, he too was feeling a certain anxiety about his future.

Unfortunately, the lens of history's retrospective telescope, however powerful, invariably fails to detect human motivation, intentions, and certainly feelings; facts can only reveal so much. What I can deduce is that their 26-year union, ending only with Herman's death in 1941, produced three children; a comfortable middle-class life in Newport; a gracious home on Everett Street; stability; and a union that became the mainstay of an enterprise that survived first, the death of Herman, and then the incapacity of his "Virgy" in the mid-1950s.

Herman Werner's Run: 1908-1941

Over its century-plus run, Potter & Co. was blessed with incredible folks who became part of the fabric of the business and hence family. Starting in my grandfather's era there was the esteemed Florence McPherson, whose career lasted over 50 years and spanned two generations. I believe that Ray Bell, a gentleman whom I never knew, was involved in the business for 35 or more years. I also believe that Jim Lambis started in the late 1940s and remained until his retirement in the mid-1960s.

With the death of Herman Werner in 1941, my grandmother, Virginia, became the putative owner; however, I believe that for all practical purposes, her sons, Jack and Harold, both graduates of Rhode Island State College (later known as URI), ran the day-to-day operations. Nonetheless, my grandmother, a formidable presence, would sit on her "throne" on a landing overlooking the front of the store and knit for the better part of the business day. She became "The Madame Defarge of Newport Haberdashery." I loved her dearly, but would not characterize her as "warm and fuzzy." Nonetheless, I have a distinct impression that she liked me most of the time, and was proud whenever I received recognition of any sort, ranging from academic to athletic

accomplishments. (The latter were few and far between, but certainly a highlight for my grandmother and me was one that garnered the following note in the *Newport Daily News:* "Jimmy Tobak, Cranston-Calvert's 6th grade catcher, emulated Yogi Berra yesterday in hitting for the cycle against Oliphant Elementary School.")

Eventually age and a broken hip prevented my grandmother from occupying her perch and, although I do not know the exact date, my uncles formed a partnership and became co-owners.

Their partnership was dissolved with my Uncle Jack Werner's retirement in February 1972. Tragically, within months, Jack died unexpectedly, without having the opportunity to see the transformation of the business that had been such a large part of his adult life. Upon the dissolution of their partnership, Uncle Harold Werner became the sole owner of Potter & Co. Under his reins, the business enjoyed not only increased financial success, but this formerly staid men's haberdashery was reinvented in ways once seemingly unimaginable.

Another Transition: "The Times They Are a-Changin'"[6]

Over the next several decades Uncle Harold was

Herman in store, ca. 1930

extraordinarily fortunate to work alongside many wonderful people who also revered him. These included my sisters, Helen Tobak Weisman and Anne Goldberg Navarro, but I will say more about their involvement in the business in a moment.

Many young Newport natives cycled through the store as employees for short periods or during summer vacations from school. Without pulling an unseemly and extended Oscar Award-like thank you, I would like to recognize seven people who were instrumental in the business's success. In alphabetical order they were: Barbara Cohen Helmbrecht, Pam Holubesko, Wayne McLead, Joan Meunier, Joanne Potts, Lloyd Quint, and Wayne

Stepalovich. Each of these people enjoyed a special place in my Uncle Harold's heart, and in various and unique ways, each contributed immeasurably to the success of the "new" Potter & Co. No longer a staid haberdashery, this iteration of the business had changed with the times, providing an intriguing variety of sportswear and casual clothing lines that were for all ages and both genders.

"Mr. Potter"

Over the final four decades of his life, Harold Werner became known, by generations of students being outfitted for the start of the school year, as "Mr. Potter." Parents brought in their children at the start of middle school, high school, and college. Even graduate students came in on their own to continue their family traditions. And so, much like his grandfather before him, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Harold Werner became an institution, quite literally, a part of the fabric of the local community, in this case Aquidneck Island.

After a remarkable run, my Uncle Harold's tenure came to a sad end in 2002, when he tripped and fell in the store he loved[7] and broke his hip. (Although apocryphal, I would like to think that,

Harold & Virginia Werner with Rinty

like gunslingers of yore who went down with their boots on, my uncle had the haberdasher's trademark, a measuring tape, draped around his neck on that fateful occasion). Having devoted almost his entire adult life to Potter & Co, and overseeing it for more than 30 years, during what was undoubtedly the golden era in the life of the business, this was an inglorious end. After his injury and a lengthy stay in Newport Hospital, my uncle spent the final five years of his life in a local nursing home. He passed away in April 2008.

The Last Hurrah

Although our family's involvement in the business continued into 2010, without the guiding presence of Harold Werner, it became increasingly challenging. Ostensibly I was now running the business under my uncle's power of attorney, but in addition to having a law practice, I lacked retail experience and was never going to be a daily presence.[8] The store's long-serving stalwarts had been attached to my uncle, and without him most had little inclination to stay.

In 2004, my older sister, Helen Tobak Weisman, who had recently retired and was then living in Newport, agreed to manage the store. Like our Uncle Harold and our sister Anne, Helen was extremely conscientious and had a genuinely wonderful way with customers. Although it was a challenge, Helen kept the business on an even and profitable keel until an exceedingly difficult diagnosis in 2008 forced her to step down. Thereafter, a nonfamily member took over Potter & Co., and the business limped along to the finish line. It was sold in 2010, and sadly within five years the business failed.

In his 1896 Bridgeport obituary, it was said of my great-grandfather, Harold's grandfather: "Mr. Werner was no ordinary man, and his taking off[9] becomes more than a family bereavement-it is a serious loss to the community." Further, the encomium reads in part, "Not a man or woman in all that throng but felt a personal loss at the death of Mr. Werner. High and low, rich and poor alike, gathered about his bier to do him reverence. No man ever appealed to Jacob Werner in vain; he never was known to do a fellow-being an injury; he spoke unkindly of no man; and in business his methods

were faultless." And further, "Mr. Werner accumulated considerable wealth but much of his fortune was given to charity."

Jacob Werner's legacy lived on in his grandson, Harold. "Mr. Potter" not only was exemplary in business, but through his philanthropy he left an indelible mark on Aquidneck Island and on Rhode Island's Jewish charitable and religious organizations, including: the Rhode Island Foundation, Newport Hospital, the Potter Animal League, Touro Synagogue, Temple Shalom, the Jewish Alliance's Edward & Florence Goldberg Scholarship Fund, Rogers High School, and many more. I would like to think that my uncle's legacy goes beyond his success in business and philanthropy to the manner in which he led his life and for which it can be said once again, "No man ever appealed to him in vain; he never was known to do a fellow-being an injury; he spoke unkindly of no man" (okay, on occasion he could be a tad acerbic); "and in business his methods were faultless."

Although I managed, rather mismanaged, to lose the 10¢ ticket that my grandfather Herman never used, thereby changing the course of one family's history, I have managed to keep a note my grandmother Virginia wrote to her younger son, Harold. The note simply reads, "To the sweetest boy in all the world."

And so, this very sweet boy grew into a very kind,[10] funny, often unintentionally funny, and generous man who became the face, the heart and the soul of our family business, a business that became something of an institution on Aquidneck Island. For more than a century the store survived, and for the most part flourished, through very good times and, not infrequently, difficult, trying times, not only for our family and the business but for Rhode Island, our nation, and even the world order.

Harold Benjamin Werner, aka "Mr. Potter," died at 87 and, like that of his grandfather, Jacob Werner of Bridgeport, his death cemented the business's demise. I can only hope that the saga of Potter & Co. serves as an enduring legacy for our family and for former staff members who were devoted to it. The saga was also shared by such great friends and business neighbors as the Boluskys (who owned and operated Ben's Furniture, another wonderful,

multigenerational family business) and Margo Kemp (the proprietor of a sandwich shop). Then of course there were countless members of the Aquidneck Island community, who helped the business succeed for over a century.

While notable for its longevity, I know that the story of Potter & Company is one of millions, many millions, of similar sagas of immigrants to America, sacrificing to establish businesses and careers or struggling day-to-day to find the financial wherewithal to allow their children the opportunity to realize the American Dream.

Isn't this story, told time-and-time again, through differing immigrant nationalities, religions, and cultures, one that revitalizes and reimagines our country and helps make this American Experiment, Great? I can only hope that this constant process of infusion, even reinvention, continues to help strengthen our experiment as a Democratic Constitutional Republic.[11] But lest we ever forget, it remains only an experiment.

Harold, ca. 1995

DEATH OF JACOB WERNER.

THE trade received a keen shock early in February when it learned of the death at Bridgeport, Conn., of Jacob Werner, who, for nearly half a century, was engaged in the clothing business in that city. Mr. Werner was no ordinary man, and his taking off becomes more than a family bereavement-it is a serious loss to the community. For nearly fifty years Mr' Werner was closely and actively identified with the life and growth of his adopted city. He entered it at a time when there was only here and there a house, the entire habitation being scarcely more than a handful. He left it a bustling city of thousands, and much of the progress was due to Mr. Werner's personal enterprise, activity and liberality.

How well this was known and appreciated by the people of his city was shown on the day of his burial when thounds flocked to the house where the funeral services were being held. Not a man or woman in all that throng but a personal loss at the death of Mr. Werner. High and low, rich and poor alike, gathered about his bier to do him reverence. No man ever appealed to Jacob Werner in vain; he never was known to do a fellow-being an iniury; he spoke unkindly of no man, and in business his methods were faultless.

Jacob Werner was born in Posen, Germany, in 1826. When thirteen he went to Manchester, England, to learn coat making. About tenyears later he came to the United tes and at once went to Bridgeport, where he began making clothing on a very small scale. Subsequently he moved into Water Street, which at that time was the pri pal thoroughfare, and here he remained until his death. It became one of the best-known stores in the State, and hundreds of men would never trade in any other clothing ore. Though the style of the firm was merely Jacob Werner, the old gentleman, some years ago, took as partner his son Herman.

Mr. Werner accumulated considerable wealth, but much of his fortune was given to charity. He leaves a wife and six children, five being boys. Although of age, none the children are married. Morris Werner, who was in business in Boston, has formed a partnership with his brother Herman and will continue the business in Bridgeport. Julius Werner, the clothing manufacturer at

brother of Jacob Werner.

Jacob Werner obituary, 1898

Endnotes

1
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest,* Act 2, Scene 1.

2
At the end of the classic movie, "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance," the young journalist Maxwell Scott, covering the shooting's aftermath, declaims, "When the legend becomes fact, print the legend." And so, with this note, although by and large historically accurate, there are moments, infrequent moments, when time, memory, and oral history may serve to embellish certain events.

3
An article about the business in the *Newport Daily News,* "Then and Now," indicated that Louis Potter was divorced in 1903 and for many years before his death in 1933 became something of an iterant moving from boarding house to boarding house and, at the end of his life, resided in the Viking Hotel.

4
Interestingly, the massive ledger contains the names of what undoubtedly were primarily Jewish manufacturers located in New York and New Jersey during a bygone era. Such vendors included: "A. Hochman: High Grade Men's Clothing, 684 Broadway, NY"; "Shatz, Joseph and Marks"; "Joseph Yeska, Broadway"; and "Gittelmacher and Sons."

5
As the obituary notes, the store's cachet was in fact Jacob; moreover, with six children one can only imagine that Jacob Werner's estate, however substantial, would not be bereft of family and financial complications.

6
The third studio album (January,1964) of *Shabtai Zisel ben Avraham,* aka Bob Dylan, who became a Nobel laureate, a renowned troubadour, and a Newport Folk Festival legend.

7
As in many, hopefully most, family relationships, while I believe that love was the dominant emotion, I strongly suspect that over the years, the relationship between my uncle and the business was far more complex and nuanced.

8
Unlike Harold, Helen, and my kid sister, Anne Goldberg Navarro, who worked in the store during summers throughout college, my approach to customers was much more like the notorious purveyor of soup in the "Seinfeld" comedy series. A customer should come in, pick something out, pay for it, and leave without small talk. This very un-Zen-like approach was surely not one designed to capitalize on the schmooze factor, so essential to a small, local business.

9
"Taking off"– what a singularly charming euphemism to describe departing this earthly realm.

10
Over the years my uncle had adopted a cantankerous affect, more shtick than anything else, which belied every fibre of his true nature.

11
Although there is considerable debate over the historical accuracy of describing the United States as a Democratic Constitutional Republic, within the framework of this essay, I have chosen to do so.

Judge Silverstein's 80th birthday, 2013

The Honorable Michael Silverstein: *A Half-Century of Legal Leadership*

Harris K. Weiner

This is Harris's fourth article for our journal. I hope that it leads to many more.

Harris's first article, written in 2011, profiled Jules Cohen, a star tennis player at Providence Country Day School and at Yale. His second article, appearing in our 2014 issue, profiled another outstanding athlete, Jane Forman, whose career took her from Wheeler School to Wimbledon and far beyond. Harris's most recent article, appearing in last year's issue of *The Notes,* profiled his PCD classmate, teammate, colleague, office mate, and dear friend, David Bazar, who like Harris, has helped lead our Association.

I am tempted to say that the following article has little to do with sports. But it too encompasses competition, determination, rules, daring, victory, and defeat.

Fortunately, while focusing on Judge Silverstein, Harris profiles more than two generations of Rhode Island's highly accomplished Jewish attorneys, judges, and elected officials. Consequently, his article also sheds some light on Jewish Rhode Islanders' legal education as well as the state's recurring cycles of prosperity and decline.

Far more than a compendium of facts, Harris's article becomes a portrait of someone he deeply admires. As a result, Judge Silverstein comes across as a highly accomplished and spirited competitor, one who has honed his abundant skills and talents to achieve far more than personal recognition, renown or power.

Not enough Rhode Islanders know that the Honorable Michael A. Silverstein has made historic and lasting contributions to law and justice in our state. Extraordinary devotion to legal scholarship and problem-solving with humanity have marked his lengthy career. This is his professional and personal story with some of my own observations from my long association with the Judge.

Beginnings

Michael Silverstein, who was born in Providence in 1933, was also reared there. His father, Barney (1894-1974), was also a Providence native. His mother, Pearl (Israel) (1906-2000), was from New York, but both his parents traced their roots to Bialystock, which has belonged at different times to Russia and Poland. The family's ancestors were peddlers, which may account for the newspaper and magazine distribution business that Barney and several of his 13 siblings established. Since the 1920s, while living in Providence, Barney and Harry ran Woonsocket News Company. Their cousin, Martin, the benefactor of Silverstein Hall at Temple Beth-El, operated Max Silverstein & Son, a similar company in Providence. Barney later expanded the wholesale business to include toys and games.

Growing up at 288 Slater Avenue in Providence, Michael suffered some identity confusion with his older brother, Myron. Myron was known as "Mike" and Michael as "Mickey." Compounding the issue, Mike was a die-hard Boston Red Sox fan and, in reaction, Mickey became a lifelong New York Yankees loyalist. Mike, who began running the newspaper distributorship with his father and uncle in Woonsocket, passed away in 2001 at the age of 72. He was married to Selma "Honey" Silverstein, a well-known Providence realtor, who passed in 2013 at 83. Mike and Mickey's younger sister is Alice. She married Richard Fierstein and lives in Wilton, Connecticut. Alice continues teaching as an adjunct professor of social work whose focus on adoption and death issues borrows heavily from a book by Rhode Island's Harris "Hershey" Rosen.

Mickey, who is still called that by such old friends as Nat Baker, Natalie Weiner and Lenny Meyers, enjoyed playing tackle football on Sessions Street, where Brown University's coach, Charles "Rip" Engle, sometimes instructed the boys. Mickey enjoyed spending summers at the beach and playing mini-golf in Narragansett with such buddies as Howie Lipsey and Dick Oster. In Providence, he also enjoyed horsing around with my father, Sheldon Weiner, who liked to race his Oldsmobile past police foot patrols, and gorge with Mickey at the Spaghetti House on Mathewson Street, which was fol-

lowed by a dessert of sandwiches at Hall's Drug. Generally speaking, Mickey, Mike, and Shelly looked for harmless trouble, and all three became b'nai mitzvah at the Conservative congregation, Temple Emanu-El.

Mickey attended John Howland Elementary School with his lifelong friend, Alan Dworkin, a lawyer of some note who prevailed in the Palladin trademark case against CBS television. For kicks, Alan often snuck into the girls' side of Howland's Works Progress Administration edifice. Nathan Bishop Junior High School was next and then Hope High School.

For his senior year of high school, Mickey transferred to Moses Brown to get into a better college. During the McCarthy era, he studied political science at Brown with the Class of 1956. In June 1954, Joseph Welch, a Boston attorney representing the Army, pointedly asked McCarthy twice, "Have you no sense of decency?" That became a watchword for Michael Silverstein, reflecting his values and personal conduct.

Mickey's year at Moses Brown had introduced him to football coach Joe Schein, who, following his career at Brown, had played two-way tackle in the National Football League for the 1931 Providence Steamrollers. Schein, who was Jewish and built like a block of granite, was also a consummate educator who taught history at Classical High. An outspoken liberal, Schein encouraged one of his sons to flee the Vietnam draft by settling in Canada, which he did. His other son played football for Harvard and became a prominent high school principal in New York and Massachusetts. Joe invited Mickey to be a counselor at Mendota, his boys' camp in Casco, Maine. Four summers there began Silverstein's lifelong affinity for Maine, and he eventually bought a vacation home in Kennebunk. Mickey's son, Marc, and his daughter-in-law, Helen, attended Bowdoin College, and they now reside in Maine.

Early Career

Following Brown, Mickey became better known as Michael, and he decided to attend law school. Having been accepted at the University of Pennsylvania and Boston University, Silverstein judi-

ciously chose B.U., where his girlfriend and future wife, Phyllis Feer, was studying music with a focus on piano performance. Her 1956 Hope High School yearbook lauded Phyllis's exceptional musical talent.

Michael was an outstanding but modest law student. His second cousin, the late Charlie Hirsch, earned unexceptional grades at B.U. Law, but became a successful lawyer. Several years ago he told me that his parents would scold him, asking, "Why can't you be more like your cousin Michael? He's second in his class!" Charlie, Michael, and Myron did share an important characteristic: all were tall and lanky, standing over 6'2". By the way, a prominent Jewish lawyer from Pawtucket was William Schwartz, who taught Michael's courses on tort law and future interests and became a long-serving dean of Boston University School of Law.

1959 was a watershed year for Michael. In addition to graduating from law school, he married Phyllis at Emanu-El. The ceremony did not go well. Her family's Orthodox rabbi from South Providence did not get along with Rabbi Eli Bohnen, and the attendees never heard the solemnization, "You are now man and wife." To this day, Michael jokes that he does not know whether he was really married.

That same year the couple moved to an apartment on Harris Avenue in the then-bustling manufacturing and mill town of Woonsocket, where Michael had accepted a job with his cousin Sidney's firm, Higgins & Silverstein. John R. Higgins had been a litigator and a part-time judge. Sidney, a Harvard Law graduate – and thus a family icon – was a talented but difficult corporate lawyer. He acquired an impressive client list of local and out-of-state banks, manufacturers, and media.

From three lawyers the Woonsocket office grew to include a roster of great, predominantly Jewish practitioners. These included, for example: Leonard Decof (Harvard Law and Rhode Island's "King of Torts"), future Superior Court judge Robert Krause, L. Neal LeRoy (from a Wall Street firm), Michael Nulman, future bank president Merrill Sherman, Charles Sokolov (tax and real estate), Bentley Tobin (Harvard Law), future Superior Court judge Melanie Wilk, and

Max Wistow (a singular legal force). By the way, it should be noted that by the mid-1940s, Woonsocket had several other Jewish lawyers practicing within a block or two of each other on Main Street. These included: Fred Israel (whose son, Richard, would become Rhode Island's first Jewish attorney general in 1971 and a Superior Court judge in 1984), Louis Macktaz, Israel Rubinowitz, and Irving Zimmerman.

Mid-Career

As Michael Silverstein developed his regional insolvency practice and opened a Providence office, he proudly mentored a generation of associates who became leaders in receivership and bankruptcy law. These included, for example: Joe Ferucci, Joe D'Iorio, Peter Furness, and Sheryl Serreze. In mentoring these young lawyers, Michael undoubtedly drew on his early interactions and lessons learned from several preeminent Jewish lawyers, including: Joe Adelson, Walter Adler, E. Harold Dick (my cousin by marriage), Arthur Finer, Alan Flink, Supreme Court Justice Alfred Joslin, Ralph Semenoff (for whom the Bar's professionalism award is named), Max Winograd, and Morty Zeitz. Among Michael's friendly opponents for many years were Allan Shine and Richard Mittelman.

In 1983, Hinckley Allen, which had been founded in Providence in 1906 as Green, Hinckley & Allen, merged with Tobin & Silverstein and changed its name (for a few years) to Hinckley Allen Tobin & Silverstein. Ironically, this hoary, 50-lawyer firm had declined to interview Michael in 1959. Even more unexpectedly, however, in 1989 he was named managing partner of this multistate partnership. Eventually known simply as Hinckley Allen, it grew to 200 attorneys.

Notwithstanding such partners as Steve Carlotti, Mick DeFanti, Doris Licht, and Paul Silver, Hinckley Allen was still perceived as a Yankee firm. The first indication of a cultural difference occurred when two conservative partners, Ted Torrance and Jacques Hopkins, put an end to Tobin & Silverstein's Friday happy hours for clients and employees – even though Torrance and Hopkins appeared to enjoy themselves as guests. Otherwise, the firm continued

to evolve, as evidenced by the election and lengthy service of David Rubin, a real estate lawyer who became the second Jewish managing partner. Despite the long hours, David was also an excellent boys' basketball coach at the Jewish Community Center and served as a Beth-El board member.

Collapse of State Credit Unions and the DEPCO Solution

On January 1, 1991, one hour after his first inauguration, Governor Bruce Sundlun closed Rhode Island's credit unions. (Sundlun was the state's second Jewish governor. The first, Frank Licht, who served two terms, from 1969 to 1973, had previously served as a Superior Court judge from 1956 to 1968.) Sundlun froze $1.7 billion in assets. The credit unions' insurer, Rhode Island Share and Deposit Indemnity Company (RISDIC), had become insolvent, triggered by a massive defalcation at one of its member institutions, Joseph Mollicone Jr.'s Heritage Loan and Investment. Sundlun dropped this economic bombshell after some preliminary strategic planning with his Executive Counsel and future United States Senator, Sheldon Whitehouse (a non-Jewish "Sheldon"), a few lawyers at the venerable Hinckley Allen, financial advisor Ira Magaziner and presumably others. But the plan did not coalesce until Hinckley Allen's managing partner, Michael Silverstein, a leader of the bankruptcy bar, was summoned with virtually no advance notice to a meeting with Governor Sundlun, a lawyer and former business executive, to fix the problem.

Drawing on his 31 years of legal experience with insolvencies, particularly in debtor-creditor relations for banks, Attorney Silverstein outlined a state receivership proceeding (receiverships are the state analogue to federal bankruptcies) to handle failed, state-chartered credit unions. Then he drafted the statute for the Depositors' Economic Protective Corporation, commonly known as DEPCO, which remarkably resulted in full recovery by all depositors, with interest, in approximately two-and-a-half years. Taxpayers were protected as DEPCO successfully collected assets and cash from multiple responsible sources, including RISDIC's professional advisors.

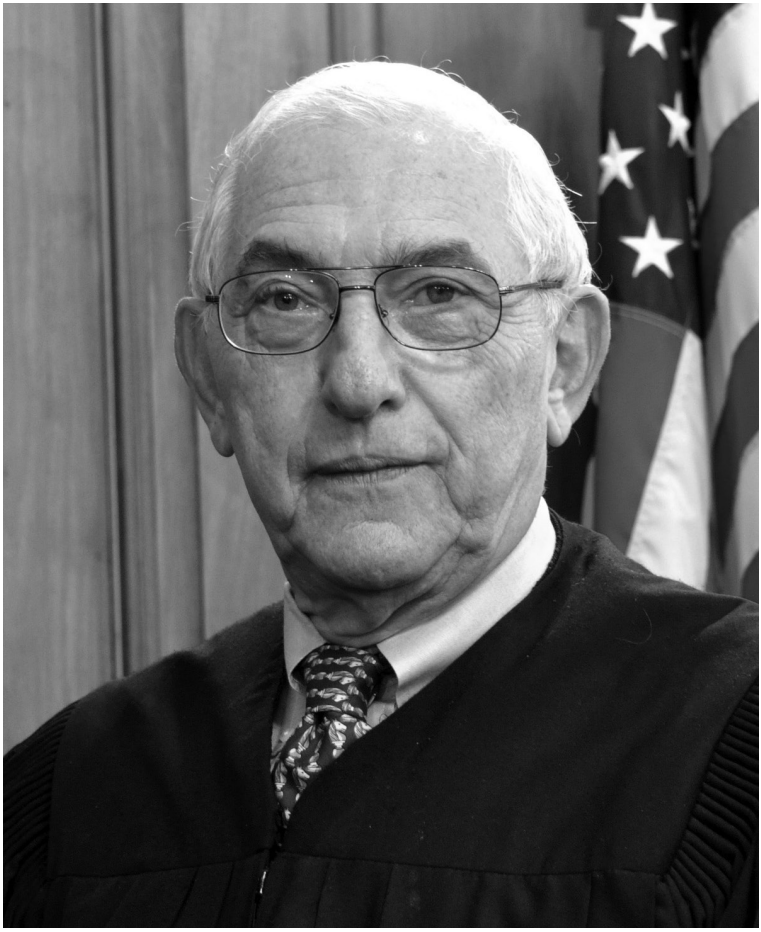
Related emergency litigation and volatile public relations followed, which prompted Sundlun's Executive Counsel, Judith

Savage, to ask Silverstein to handle those matters as well. When a group of commercial bankers led by Terry Murray of Fleet tried to hire him to represent their interests – and even before Silverstein could decline- Sundlun barked, "You can't have him. He's my lawyer."

Public Service

The success of DEPCO would have been the capstone of a great legal career, but for Michael Silverstein an even greater chapter lay ahead – more than 24 years of public service on the bench as a

recent photo (undated)



justice of the Superior Court. Under pressure from Governor Sundlun, who was notoriously insistent, Attorney Silverstein submitted his application to the new constitutionally – created Judicial Nominating Commission for a vacancy on the Superior Court, which is Rhode Island's trial court of general jurisdiction over most civil, criminal, and administrative agency matters.

The Commission screened the applications and sent several lists to the Governor, who officially chose Mr. Silverstein for one of the vacancies. Amusingly, Sundlun's office forgot to inform Silverstein of his selection. It was Providence Mayor Vincent "Buddy" Cianci who told him while "working the room" at Café Nuovo restaurant. Cianci and Sundlun had been cavorting and sharing political gossip the prior evening.

Named to the Superior Court with Silverstein in 1994 were Providence Solicitor Edward Clifton, former legislator Stephen Fortunato, and a fellow Jewish jurist, Netti Vogel, who was the last to retire on August 31, 2022 after 28 years. When Judge Silverstein spoke to the Pawtucket Bar Association and to Temple Beth-El's Brotherhood in 2018, Judge Vogel was there to lend her support and humorous observations about the Silverstein era.

That era officially lasted 24 years until Judge Silverstein's retirement on September 30, 2018, but in actuality it continues as he is still working diligently on a voluntary basis. He hears cases from the bench, issues written rulings, and tackles some of the most challenging issues– separation of powers, eminent domain, and municipal receivership. He turned 89 on September 28, 2022, but is active, sharp and still exceedingly hard-working.

During his career, he regularly arrived at the courthouse at 7:30 AM, met with lawyers beginning an hour later, and presided in his courtroom until the lights went out at 4:30 PM. Then he took home some undecided matters to outline appropriate oral bench decisions or craft written published opinions. This was an unending stream of work that he has truly enjoyed. Judge Silverstein loves novel issues, making new law, and providing guidance to the bench and bar on these unprecedented matters.

Nowhere is this more evident than the large body of cor-

porate case law he authored during his tenure as the longest-serving judge for the Business Calendar, which was established by Presiding Superior Court Judge Joseph Rodgers in 2001 at the suggestion of Speaker of the House John Harwood. This specialized, full-time calendar streamlines and accelerates resolution of business disputes. Previously, cases bounced from judge to judge, calendar to calendar, and were mixed with non-business controversies, all of which delayed justice, cost more, yielded inconsistencies, unpredictability, and impaired business and the economy. Many reorganized entities, such as hospitals, are of course critical to the state.

Judge Silverstein has been succeeded on the Superior Court Business Calendar by two talented and hard-working Jewish judges, Brian Stern and Richard Licht. Another Jewish judge, the analytically gifted Allen Rubine, was Silverstein's heir apparent, but illness sadly cut short his career.

It was not merely what Michael Silverstein accomplished as a judge, but how he did it. Practitioners have publicly praised him as evenhanded, respectful, scholarly, practical, and humorous. On one hand, he has held lawyers to exacting standards of preparation and skill; on the other hand, his courtroom has always been inviting, lively, and an enjoyable place to practice (unless one proved himself incompetent, which the Judge will not countenance). His courtroom is invariably educational, as he puts attorneys through their paces on a range of questions. Bemoaning the use of electronic appearances by appointment, he declares, "I encourage young lawyers to attend motion calendars. You can learn a lot of law."

Judge Silverstein's bench decisions are dramatically constructed to keep opposing counsel squirming while he stacks the facts against them. Then he gives a reprieve with some favorable law- only to continue the lengthy roller-coaster ride until finally revealing a well-reasoned and amply supported ruling. His explanation for his suspenseful style? "I try to keep it interesting."

One commentator has noted that another source of amusement- when competing advocates cite the same Silverstein opinion as authority for their respective positions. The Judge usually smiles and remarks, "I know what the case stands for. I wrote it." He also gets a

kick out of having children of his cohorts litigate before him. These have included Carl Levin, Jeff Brenner, and yours truly.

Although Judge Silverstein presided over the longest civil case in Rhode Island history, in which plaintiffs convinced him and a jury that lead paint companies had created an actionable nuisance of great economic scope, he was reversed by the state's Supreme Court. Nevertheless, his view of cases is more fundamental. He declares, "No case is more important than others." All cases are significant to the litigants, not only the complex or sweeping.

Judge Silverstein adds, "I like being able not to have to take sides. You look at a matter, apply what the law is, and help or force people to solve their problems. That is the natural goal of the courts."

As for reversals, he comments, "Getting flipped goes with the territory." Those reversals, however, are rare. His thoughtful rulings are generally affirmed. For the most part, Judge Silverstein's rulings are not even appealed because litigants are satisfied that they have received a just adjudication.

His bold take on matters of first impression or unsettled law, which other judges might avoid for the inevitable appellate scrutiny, is "territory" he relishes. For example, his prescience in evicting legislators from the executive branch Lottery Commission was adopted by the voters in a 2004 constitutional amendment, which formally separated such powers.

More Personal Observations

I first met Michael Silverstein in 1980 at a monthly meeting of the Bowdoin Club of Rhode Island, which was held at the University Club. His son Marc, the Silversteins' only child, was still an undergraduate (and a much better student than I). Marc sat in the front row and pressed books up to his nose because of a visual impairment. Fortunately, it did not prevent him from joining a fraternity, Alpha Rho Upsilon – "All Races United" – before true inclusion was a common goal. Neither did his impairment prevent him from obtaining a Ph.D. in literature from Brown and a tenured professorship at Auburn University.

As an aside, Marc had become a bar mitzvah at Congrega-

tion B'nai Israel in Woonsocket, where the Silversteins have been members since 1959 even after moving to Lincoln. Unfortunately, like their ancestors' once-thriving temple in Bialystok, the once-flourishing Woonsocket congregation has suffered significantly diminished membership.

Between 1981 and 1984, I worked for the brilliant and open-minded George Graboys, a Jewish lawyer who became the president of Citizens Bank. He agreed to sponsor me for business school, but drew the line at law school. At my interview for the Citizens' management training program with William Heisler, the chairman of the board, I mentioned that law school was my ultimate goal. But he apparently ignored me, which is probably how I talked my way into a finance job for which I was unqualified.

During those years as a mediocre banker, I sought and received excellent advice on law school from Michael Silverstein and Judge Ronald Lagueux, a 1953 Bowdoin alumnus, whom I met while playing Providence Country Day football with his son, Greg. Based on my mother's complaints about my undergraduate antics, including my fraternity presidency, our family's attorney, E. Harold Dick, told me that I was not law school material. He changed his mind, however, when I graduated from Washington University with honors and clerked for the witty and oft-quoted Rhode Island Supreme Court Justice Thomas Kelleher and subsequently for United States District Judge Lagueux, a great trial jurist. I honestly don't know whether I learned more law from my clerkships or from dozens of cases I argued before Judge Silverstein, who was always a generous mentor.

In my thirties I spent a few years practicing in Boston with the 140-lawyer office of Burns & Levinson. When Judge Silverstein found out, he excitedly told me that his neighbor and friend in Kennebunk was its founding partner, Larry Levinson. I met him only once, when he descended from the fine-art-festooned corporate department to referee a dispute on the cold, barren litigation floor of 125 Summer Street in Boston. It was like a visit from the Wizard of Oz, although he still had a heavy Atlanta accent- despite having graduated from Harvard Law forty years earlier and stay-

ing in Boston. I confirmed with Judge Silverstein that Larry would chain-smoke and drawl while Mr. Silverstein puffed on his pipe and chuckled over legal war stories. The familiar image of Judge Silverstein striding through downtown Providence while enjoying one of his many pipes during a lunch break also became history when he gave up his habit and fine collection in 2001.

In my forties, my official duties as Deputy Executive Counsel to the Governor and then Senate Minority Counsel brought me into contact with dozens of judicial candidates and judges. Some overcame inexperience. Others were able to turn off their political engines. A few were propelled by insecurities, and many more had to moderate their egos.

Judge Silverstein had none of these issues. He still wants to hear what advocates and witnesses have to say. He loves well-crafted and challenging pleadings. He does not "home town" visiting counsel or tilt the playing field for powerful institutions or public officials. This judge is unfailingly fair and comfortable in his own skin.

Once, during a pre-trial chambers conference, to intimidate me, my opponent from Hinckley Allen raised his former partnership with "Mike" under the guise of a potential conflict. Judge Silverstein lightheartedly responded, "Gerry, as long as I've known you, I've known Harris's family longer."

In my fifties, I applied for an appointment to the Superior Court. Despite having had a disappointing experience with the Judicial Nominating Commission in 2000, when he was boxed out of the finalist list for Chief Justice of Rhode Island's Supreme Court, Judge Silverstein graciously agreed to testify on my behalf.

I had the sad experience of attending Mrs. Silverstein's funeral on December 26, 2018, shortly after his retirement that year, when the couple had hoped to travel and share more time together. Phyllis, 84, entered the hospital one week after he retired and never came out. She is buried in Lincoln Park Cemetery.

Judge Silverstein shared an anecdote about a meeting among the three most famous summer residents of Kennebunkport. At a local restaurant, Phyllis spotted the 41st President and Mrs. Bush at a nearby table. So she boldly strode over, put her hand on

Mr. Bush's shoulder, and then engaged George H.W. and Barbara in a lively conversation. The Secret Service knew better than to interrupt Phyllis Silverstein.

Recognition

Judge Silverstein was instrumental in the establishment of the Roger Williams University School of Law. According to an article in its Law Review, he "regarded the absence of an in-state law school as an embarrassment." Judge Silverstein has advised law students and those considering the profession not to make it about money; instead, hard work will be rewarded. He also told the Law Review writer that he gains youthful energy from the Business Calendar, "which he regards as his occupation, his favorite hobby and indeed, his life."

Roger Williams University granted Judge Silverstein an honorary degree in 2016. He had received the Rhode Island Bar Association's Chief Justice Joseph R. Weisberger Award for judicial excellence in 2010. Moreover, his peers in both the state and federal judiciary hold Michael Silverstein in the highest regard with public praise and deference to his body of legal decisions. Irrespective of these accolades, Judge Silverstein repeatedly states, "I love my work... I have had a wonderful life."

Conclusion: A Judicial Legend

When the legal history of Rhode Island is properly written, Michael Silverstein, as a practitioner and a jurist, will figure prominently. His professional dedication is without equal. Michael Silverstein, a judicial legend, remains approachable and eager to engage lawyers, court staff, and colleagues within his chambers, his courtroom or on Benefit Street. A self-described "people person," he misses the personal interaction that preceded COVID protocols and new technology introduced in 2020. Judge Silverstein left me with these words: "It is OK to be traditional." A grateful legal community wholeheartedly concurs.

Joe [right] **with his husband, James Cottrell, M.D.**

RI to NY Jew: *Assimilation, Acculturation, and Conformity, Part II*

Joseph F. Lovett

The second part of Joe's article may be even bolder than the first. Indeed, the second part may be one of the most courageous and heartfelt articles ever published in our journal. Joe and I are proud to share it with you.

During the 1950s and '60s, Reform Judaism seemed to be all about social good and our role in making social justice happen. My religious teachings, my Quaker education at Moses Brown School, the ongoing civil rights struggles, and my family's values were all in concert and to a large degree fashioned who I was and who I would become.

Years later, as organized Judaism seemed to be concerned almost exclusively with the defense of Israel and its policies no matter what, I found Israel-centric Judaism and the growing Orthodoxy alienating. I certainly have always supported Israel's right to exist, but that is a small part of my Jewish identity, and my Jewishness is but one part of my sense of self – an important part nevertheless.

In 1960, when I was 15, I attended a North American Federation of Temple Youth leadership conference, sponsored by the Reform movement. We explored our role in the ongoing civil rights movement. There I met a Harvard student, who later invited me up to visit the university and sit in on classes. I was hooked on Harvard, and it became the only school I wanted to attend.

For backup I applied to Haverford College, a Quaker school, and Columbia. I knew nothing about Columbia except that it started with "CO," like Colby, Colgate, and Cornell – three other good schools. I knew that Columbia was in New York City, but I was terrified at the thought of living in such a big city.

My sister, Tricia, and my college advisor did not want me to consider Brown. They thought that I should get out of Provi-

dence and see what else there was in the world. My advisor suggested Brandeis, but I told him that after six years at Moses Brown, I wouldn't feel comfortable being in a majority. I liked being in a minority.

I didn't get into Harvard and found Haverford too much like Moses Brown. In 1962, on the first day of freshmen week at Columbia, we were greeted with, "Welcome, Harvard rejects!" I was just one of hundreds groaning loudly at the thought. But that was a perfect entry to Columbia, where there was no sugarcoating.

The year before, when Columbia had accepted students solely on grades and college boards, the student body wound up being almost entirely from the metro-New York area and disproportionately Jewish. So for my acceptance year, the university set out to rebalance.

When the assistant admissions director came to Moses Brown to interview applicants, he saw a young man dressed in a tweed jacket, a pinstripe shirt and a rep tie, and whose family had a summer home on Cape Cod. His last name was Lovett (my grandfather having changed it from Mendelovitz). Maybe the admissions officer thought I was related to Robert Lovett, Harry Truman's Secretary of the Navy. I think I was accepted to Columbia as a WASP.

When Tricia, and my brother-in-law, Alvin Stallman, took me to Columbia, all the freshmen were wearing baby blue yarmulkes. "God, It must be the high holidays and these are all Orthodox Jews!" was my first thought. My second thought was, "I could have gone to Brandeis." It took a few hours for me to realize that the yarmulkes were freshmen beanies.

Though fraternities were not supposed to rush freshmen during their first semester, I was "dirty" rushed by St. Anthony's Hall, a high WASP fraternity, and by ZBT, a national Jewish fraternity, which seemed to be for rich kids as well. I later realized why St. Anthony's rushed me. The admissions director, who was a fraternity member, had provided a list of appropriate freshmen, and WASP-appearing Joe seemed to be worthy.

I was rushed by ZBT because its president, Donald Mintz, a Jew from New Orleans, had met me in 1960 at the NFTY leader-

ship conference, where we thrashed out our role as Jews in the civil rights movement. By meeting Southern Jews, I came to learn that some Jews were capable of prejudice against Blacks, and it shocked me. I had thought that it was genetically impossible. I also found it astounding to meet Jews who had never experienced anti-Semitisim. "What kind of people are they?" I wondered. "How could they understand what it means to be Jewish?"

I couldn't afford to join a fraternity, nor did I like the idea of exclusive clubs, but the free food and parties at St. Anthony's were a help to my budget. One day, after a few weeks of being wined and dined by them, I walked in for a meal and a hush came over the dining room. I turned to the upperclassman who had been sponsoring me and said, "Oh, you guys found out, huh?" Sheepishly he replied, "I'm sure you understand." I later realized that Don Mintz at ZBT had stopped talking to me because I had turned them down.

Being Jewish meant something very different to me in New York than it had in Providence. I realized that it was not only OK to be Jewish in New York, but to some degree it was also expected. In Providence, I felt that Jews were sort of on the fringe of society – not integral to it – but allowed. In New York, Jews were a major part of the social structure.

Also in Providence, most of the Jews I knew were of Russian descent with families who had come over in the late 19th century. In New York, so many of the Jews I met came from families who had escaped from Europe during World War II. So, imbued with the Holocaust narrative and having always identified with refugees' experiences, I felt very related to these new friends.

One Saturday night, a roommate from the Bronx invited me to his parents' home for dinner. A New England Jew was such a novelty to his father that he asked me when my family had come to America. When I told him the end of the 19th century, he cocked his head, looked over his glasses and said, "*Oy,* so you're a Yankee?" "Not where I come from," I told him.

During freshmen week, I took a walk down Fifth Avenue next to Central Park. It was a beautiful September day, and I realized that I could take off all my clothing and do cartwheels down

the street. Nobody would care, and nobody in my family would ever know. I had never been in that situation before. In Providence, if anything occurred in the evening, everyone would know of it by 7 AM. I had never craved any sort of privacy, but I had never known that it even existed. New York City was a place where if you set your own boundary, you weren't considered out of line.

I was an indifferent student at best. In required freshmen humanities classes, I felt like a bumpkin. I had never heard of Kant and Hegel. The Columbia students, the New York ones in particular, were so familiar with these philosophers

So academically I felt cowed, but I was also fascinated by the different backgrounds people brought to college. There was the Nebraska boy who encountered the Virgin Mary in the middle of a cornfield the summer before freshman year. I had a friend whose father had died running over a mine in Korea, and whose stepfather beat him with a dog chain. Then there was the Philadelphia society boy who never laundered his shirts. Rather, he threw them out and ordered new ones. I wound up concentrating on people's stories and neglecting my formal studies. Decades later I've come to understand that I was probably just trying to keep my equilibrium after my parents' deaths, wanting everything to be normal. Just standing upright was about all I could manage.

I majored in English because I was too intimidated to try anything else. I was luckily exposed to some great teachers in various disciplines, including: Howard McParlin Davis, F. W. Dupee, Kenneth Koch, Edward Said, and the playwright LeRoi Jones, later known as Amiri Baraka.

[above] **as Columbia student**

During junior year, when one of my best friends from high school, Rick Femino, died in a car accident, I realized that this could happen to me here. Although I was at one of the greatest universities in the world, I was not making the most of it. So I decided to drop out and go to Paris for a year so that I would at least know something when I finally graduated – a new language, a different culture, new ideas – anything that might shake me from my disinterest in my studies.

That junior year, when I was really in a funk, a friend noticed and asked me what was wrong. I was doing terribly in school and had no interest in my studies. I said, "All my friends, like you, are straight "A" students, and I'm barely passing. I'm a moron." He very kindly said, "Yes, it's true your friends are top students, but why would we want to hang out with you? You aren't stupid, but think differently from other people." His words gave me pause.

After an illuminating year at the Sorbonne, where I met students from all over the world and had classmates from China and friends from Vietnam and Ethiopia, the world became bigger to me with many more options than I had grown up with.

At this time, Joan Baez was conducting teach-ins about the Vietnam War with Ira Sandperl. I'd go with friends to hear new views about the war. We were aware that CIA agents were taking photographs of all who attended, but we didn't care.

Fortunately, when I returned to Columbia, it was with an awakened desire to learn. I moved to Greenwich Village, but I took more classes as a commuter than I ever had while living on campus.

Putting these early experiences together and talking to family and friends about them, I could see that my experiences, feeling like an outsider, especially dealing with my parents' early death, were more unusual than I had realized. They very much colored my outlook and my future. And they were the perfect training for my coming out as a gay man when the contemporary gay rights movement exploded in 1969.

After graduating from college, I had to stay in school to avoid the draft. I had no particular interest in anything, and my only ability, I thought, was being able to write a bit. Being afraid that a

Master of Fine Arts degree in writing would leave me with no new skills to support myself, I enrolled in Columbia's School of the Arts.

But it was 1968, the age of social documentaries and student rebellion, and I was hooked on both. When I became a Columbia strike leader, I felt the end of a cop's billy club and had no desire to go back to finish my M.F.A.

I became a filmmaker and journalist to introduce people who didn't know each other to one another. I hate exclusivity and am impassioned about inclusiveness. It took me years to figure out how to limit a guest list for dinner. Everyone should be invited. My films and stories for television have often been about understanding stigma and demystifying taboos.

My experience growing up Jewish in Rhode Island had prepared me very well for the gay rights movement. I had no problem being "other." I was used to it. It was easier for me to be open about being gay than it would have been to lie and conceal. And, like being Jewish at a WASPy school, it seemed to bother very few people. It's hard to imagine it today, but in 1974, when I started at CBS News, I was the only "out" gay person there. Certainly there were other gay people and they were often known to be gay, but no one talked about it and their private lives were off limits. I, on the other hand, was very clear. When people talked about boyfriends or girlfriends, I talked about my then lover. They invited us to dinner, and we invited them. Yes, there were a few people who were uncomfortable but that was their problem.

When I was 31 and had just been hired at CBS news, I met Jim Cottrell, a young neuro-anesthesiologist. Jim seemed exotic to me. He had grown up in rural West Virginia in a born-again, Christian family. He had put himself through college and medical school and seemed to have been studying so much that he missed the '60s and early '70s. He was very different from my friends, who were mostly arty and political. He was also handsome, smart, and kind, and he liked me. My previous, five-year relationship had been one of constant criticism and disregard. So it was amazing to me to meet someone who liked and respected me for who I was and in ways similar to my colleagues at work.

During our first meal together, we learned that we both had lost our fathers at the age of nine. I think that this created a certain, basic understanding of one another. Both Jim and I loved our careers, and we understood and enjoyed each other's dedication to our professions. We never became jealous of each other's time at work or business travel, and Jim and I have been together for 46 years. We married in Hyannis in 2004, the first day that it became legal.

I had been a film editor at CBS News before I produced my first documentary. To make the leap from editor to producer was rare in those days, and I needed to suggest a story that I was uniquely qualified to produce. In 1976 I suggested, "What do you say when your kid says he's gay?" My idea was to profile one family dealing with a son's coming out. Executives accepted the idea with great trepidation, going so far as to allow sponsors to withdraw if they so chose. When my film aired nationally, it was the first time that gays (now called "queer" people) had been presented as normal people on network television. Previously, the psychiatric experts, Charles Socarides and Irving Bieber, promised homosexual "cures." But our story was produced three years after homosexuality was struck from the American Psychiatric Association's *Textbook of Personality Disorders.* Later, homophobia itself would be identified as a disorder by APA's president, Judd Marmor.

My documentary became a huge success, the first of several I produced for CBS before I went to ABC's news show, *20/20.* My second story was on Carolyn Shelton, one of the first black flight attendants who talked about her dealing with prejudice and helping young ghetto girls to prepare for the "white world." Another story, "Prisoners' Wives," was about what happens to a family when a man goes to jail. How do they survive? How do the children deal with the stigma? Another story was about Margo St. James, the founder of COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics), and the decriminalization of prostitution. So I continued introducing people to people they would never have met.

When I arrived at – in 1979, I was once again the only openly gay person. In 1981, when the AIDS crisis began, Jim and I began losing friends in a variety of horrendous ways. As the epi-

demic grew closer, I, like so many others, felt like a Jew in hiding in Germany, waiting for the knock on the door. In fact, many gay men would express a feeling of relief when they were diagnosed, for they were relieved of the anxiety of not knowing.

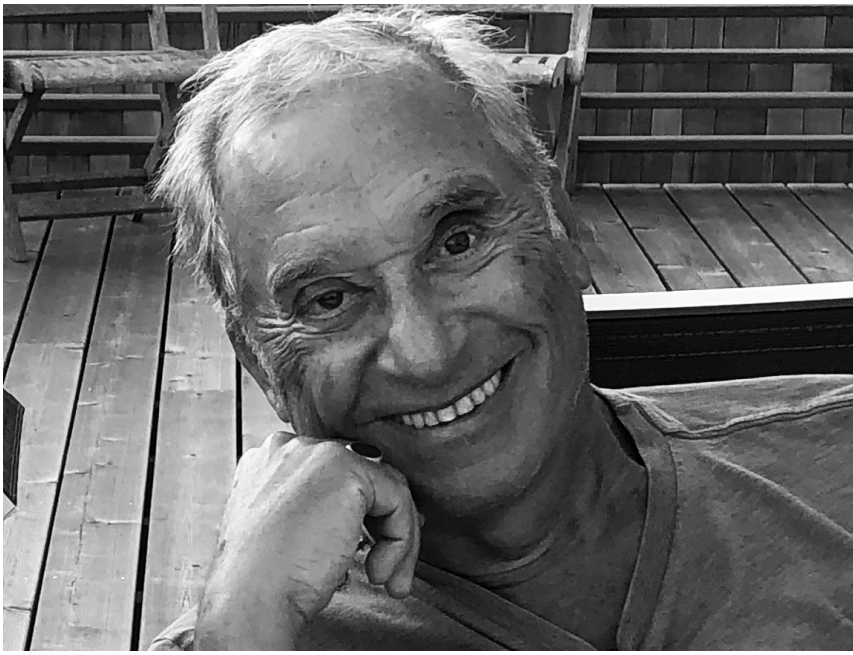
Being a producer at *20/20,* I was in a unique position to get the word out about AIDS. Like so many other print and broadcast journalists, however, my ideas for stories were rebuffed at story meetings. I was often told: "It's not really for our audience; I don't think people want to hear about this; it doesn't really affect a general audience."

Jim and I were fortunate to live on lower Fifth Avenue, across the street from the writer Larry Kramer, a founder of Gay Men's Health Crisis and later of ACT UP. Larry was like a Hebrew prophet, a Jeremiah raging in the wilderness. He single-handedly took on the establishment, excoriating everyone to pay attention. Twice a week he would rap on my door, yelling, "Why the hell aren't you doing anything?" At first, I'd say that it was a local story and that broadcasters just didn't want to carry it, but then AIDS spread. Larry continued to rap on my door and say, "Well?" After I'd have to report the story was rejected again, he'd scream, "Then get back in there and present it again. They have to let people know what is going on!" And I would.

I honestly believe that had it not been for Larry, I wouldn't have been able to stand the humiliation of presenting the same idea week after week only to have it shot down. It started to become a joke at meetings, but it was no joke as people were dying agonizing deaths, often abandoned by their families and unattended in hospitals by staff terrified of contracting this frightening disease.

Again the parallel to the Jewish experience was inescapable. How many years had it taken for America to acknowledge what was happening to the Jewish people in Europe? How much time, effort, and mind changing did it take to convince Americans that these "other" lives were worth saving?

After a year and a half of pleading, a small international AIDS conference was being held at NYU, and I begged to take a local crew to cover it. I explained, "It won't cost anything, and you can see



Joe at 75 years

for yourselves what I've been talking about." My idea was finally approved. I shot researchers from all over the world who were astounded at our government's inaction, the slow response to the epidemic, warning that if all medical forces weren't brought to bear to address the epidemic, it would spread all over the world.

The senior producer to whom I reported was not particularly interested in the story, and I was afraid she'd reject it, so I did something I had never done in my entire career. I went behind her back and took it to Geraldo Rivera, who at the time saw himself as a swashbuckling defender of the oppressed. After seeing the reel of excerpts I had put together, he said, "We've got to do this." Geraldo became the first correspondent for many stories I did on AIDS. Over the next six years, I also worked with Barbara Walters, Hugh Downs, and Tom Jarriel.

In 1989, after 10 years, I left *20/20* to launch my own

company. Over several years I created an AIDS education outreach special for ABC called *In A New Light.* I also produced over 35 hours of prime-time network programming and produced and/or directed seven documentary features. Many of my feature documentaries are personal films dealing with major issues that can be seen in microcosm from my perspective. They include: *The Accident, Gay Sex in the '70s, and Going Blind.* Our latest film, *Something Terrible Happened to Joey,* is an animated children's short on childhood trauma.

My latest feature documentary, *Children of the Inquisition: Their Story Can Now be Told,* had its roots at Temple Beth-El when I was 13. The film is about what happened to the Jews who were forced to convert or flee during the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions. The tale is told by their descendants, many of whom are just now discovering their once problematic Jewish roots.

The year I was supposed to become a bar mitzvah, Rabbi William Braude was taking a sabbatical and asked me to wait until his return. I loved him and was honored, and it made me particularly interested in what he was doing. When he returned he gave an extraordinary sermon, "*Todos Catolicos*" ("Everyone is Catholic"). He had been in Spain trying to learn about the experiences of converted families, then called Marranos (commonly understood as "swine"). But he reported that not a person would talk to him. "No, no, no," they would say. "Todos Catolicos! Everyone is Catholic. We have always been Catholics." And he went on to explain how the shadow of the Inquisition still loomed large over contemporary Spain.

As a 13-year-old, I was struck that something that had happened 500 years ago could possibly still have an effect on contemporary life. But that was 1958, in Franco's very Catholic Spain, and only a few years after the Holocaust. It was still not always a good thing to be Jewish.

My wonder stayed with me my entire life, and twelve years ago, at 65 years of age, I decided it was time to actually make a film. My research brought me nose-to-nose with the people of the 1300s. I saw the difficulties of being Jewish in a Christian world: how some people converted, how some refused but thrived for a while, how some knew when to take refuge, and how others who waited were

forced to take refuge. As in Rhode Island, some Jews changed their names to appear Catholic. Others converted but continued to practice Judaism secretly. Still others continued to identify more openly as Jews.

Researching, producing, and writing *Children of the Inquisition* was a rare privilege that allowed me to explore my own experiences with much more perspective. I realized one day as I was interviewing Spaniards that I was able to finish a project Rabbi Braude had begun over 60 years before. I felt honored.

As for George's questions: how does it feel returning to Providence for a visit and would I ever consider living there again? When I was growing up, Providence was not the beautiful city it is today. I always say that Providence was Albany then. The universities have changed the city dramatically: Johnson and Wales, the food scene; RISD, the art scene; and Brown's influence is felt worldwide.It is now a much more welcoming place than it used to be. And for any younger person reading this essay, I hope that my story sounds like ancient history.

My four older siblings, Merrill, Tricia, Billy, and Raul, have died, but some of their spouses and children still live in Providence. I enjoy visiting my relatives and the city where I grew up, but I'm always happy to return to New York, which is very much my home.

For additional information, please see the following websites:

www.lovettproductions.com
www.acloserlook.org
www.childrenoftheinquisition.com
www.goingblindmovie.com
www.gaysexinthe70s.com

Also see the following video:

Cancer: Evolution to Revolution at:
https://vimeo.com/379290414

Voss-Altman Family at Disney World, a favorite destination

The Night the Rabbi Went to the Movies: *A Reflection on 50 Years of Sitting in the Dark*

Howard Voss-Altman

Howard and I live only a block from each other, but we are far more than cheerful neighbors. Indeed, we have become dear friends. Betsey and I have also become fond of Howard's wife, Annie, and their three kids. We Goodwins were also fortunate to know Howard in still another capacity, during his five years of inspired and devoted leadership of Temple Beth-El (2015-20). His naming ceremony for our first grandchild, Chloe, was splendid. With similar verve and vigor, he leads a sister congregation, Temple Habonim.

Howard and I share several other bonds, including: New York City, Hebrew Union College, Washington University in St. Louis, and periods of professional service elsewhere in the Midwest. While believing in the importance of social activism, we also harbor a mischievous sense of humor.

Despite my upbringing in Los Angeles, I don't think that my enjoyment of cinema can measure up to his. Yes, I have some favorite genres, directors, writers, and performers, but Howard's love and devotion encompass almost everything Hollywood. Indeed, he has viewed some of his favorite films dozens and dozens of times. Perhaps the equivalent for me has been visiting and photographing favorite art museums.

Fortunately, our broad outlooks allow and encourage us to see and experience Jewish life and history from ever-evolving perspectives. I wonder if, in some sense, these can be considered cinematic. Yes, Judaism beckons, but largely through its illumination of darkness, and it magnificently marries sound and silence. Has any people enjoyed and suffered a more dramatic existence?

Love at First Sight

From the very first time I went to a movie theater, it was love at first sight. In 1966, I was just five, and my father took me – without my older sister Joy – for a special outing to the Englewood Theater (in Englewood, New Jersey) to see Walt Disney's 1937 "Snow

White and the Seven Dwarfs," the first full-length animated feature in film history. I settled into my red velvet seat, the lights went off, the curtain opened, and the magic happened.

Because my family did not own a color television set, this was my first experience with colors on a screen. The "blue" of Snow White's dress, the menacing black cape of the Evil Queen, Dopey's green tunic and floppy lavender hat, and especially the red poison apple that Snow White bit into so foolishly all combined to create a visual feast. The explosion of color and movement and theatrical sound overwhelmed my virgin eyes and ears, but I knew I wanted more.

I also knew that my parents – and their friends – were seeing all sorts of films that I was not yet old enough to see. I was determined, however, to overcome this injustice. I may not have been old enough to see these films, but I would experience them in another way: I would read about them.

I had two significant advantages. First, our family subscribed to magazines like *New York* and *Cue,* which were dedicated to highlighting – and publicizing – the cultural life of New York City. Every week, both magazines published a listing of films playing in the area, along with capsule reviews of each film with all of the pertinent details I needed to know. Even if I had read the capsule review from the week before, I read it again, so that I would have a nearly encyclopedic knowledge of any film playing nearby. I also read each magazine's film critic (John Simon and Judith Crist were my earliest influences) every week, along with *The New York Times* film critic, Vincent Canby, whose film reviews were published every Friday.

And then on Sunday morning, before I had to go to religious school at the Fort Lee Jewish Center (a nearby Conservative synagogue whose major funder, ironically enough, was the comedian and film actor, Buddy Hackett), I woke up even earlier so that I had time to read the "Arts and Leisure" section. This is where Canby published his weekly film column, reflecting on the current trends in cinema.

The second advantage I enjoyed was timing: it was the late 1960s and early '70s, perhaps the most ambitious period of artistic

American cinema. Often referred to as the "American New Wave," it was a time when cinema was first being taken seriously as an art form, and when critics – in both Europe and America – were writing about American film as our most important cultural export. Indeed, the *New Yorker* film critic, Pauline Kael, was practically a celebrity herself, and her public feuds with her fellow critics, Andrew Sarris, Renata Adler, and John Simon, were the stuff of legend.

My next project, of course, was to actually go to the movies I was reading about. My best experiences were theatrical re-releases of older films that my parents wanted me to see. We saw musicals like "Mary Poppins," "The Sound of Music," and "My Fair Lady," (Julie Andrews walked on water in our house), and epic, biblical films like "Ben-Hur" and Cecil B. DeMille's "The 10 Commandments" (which I dutifully told my parents we had to see because it was a Hebrew school assignment). Indeed, if there was a "gateway" film in my life, it was probably "Ben-Hur." It starred Charlton Heston (whom I had just seen in the mind-bending "Planet of the Apes") and was about a Jew who was redeemed from slavery and became a hero. This movie had the most exciting film sequence of all time – the Roman chariot race – that is still honored today for its cinematography and editing. Nothing could ever match the wonder and adrenaline of seeing Heston – whom I would come to loathe for his stance on guns – commanding his chariot's horses, racing to the finish line.

But I also insisted that we see current releases, with a special emphasis on early 1970s "disaster" movies: films with a big cast, epic drama, and an abundance of special effects. The first was "Airport," (1970) starring Burt Lancaster and Dean Martin, which presciently featured the threat of a bomb on a plane. Next was "The Poseidon Adventure," (1971) the "Citizen Kane" of disaster films. I was mesmerized by clips of a 90-foot tidal wave, a capsized luxury liner, its passengers desperately clinging to upside-down banquet tables, their feet dangling hundreds of feet in the air. The movie was both terrifying and exhilarating in its realism, and for the first time in my young moviegoing life, the characters whom I cared about – genuine stars – died in the story. I was also impressed because Shelley Winters, playing an elderly Jewish woman going to Israel with her husband,

was portrayed with such courage and nobility. I could never have imagined either of my *bubbes* swimming like that.

After "The Poseidon Adventure," my obsession with film continued to flourish. I read reviews and commentary voraciously, and expanded my list of film reviewers to Pauline Kael and Andrew Sarris (I would go to the public library for a school assignment – accomplish it in just a few minutes – and then spend the rest of my allotted time reading back issues of *The New Yorker* and *The Village Voice*). I began to pay attention to the names of directors: classic ones like Hitchcock, Welles, Buñuel, and Kurosawa, but also new American directors like Lucas, Friedkin, Coppola, Scorsese, and Spielberg. I desperately wanted to see Coppola's "The Godfather," (but had to settle for reading the parody in *Mad Magazine*) and Scorsese's "Mean Streets," who was acclaimed as a cinematic prodigy. But I was thrilled to see Lucas's coming-of-age film, "American Graffiti," and Spielberg's first television film, "Duel," featuring a demonic, 18-wheeler.

A Budding Fascination

I also began to notice how my interest in film seemed to coincide with my budding fascination with Jewish identity. Mel Brooks's "The Twelve Chairs" and his "Blazing Saddles" (my first R-rated film) offered a glimpse of humor that was just for us (when the Native American chief spoke fluent Yiddish, the entire theater, including my family, erupted in laughter). The same was true for Woody Allen's early films ("Take the Money and Run," "Bananas," and "Love and Death"), but also in films that he didn't direct, such as "Play it Again, Sam" and "The Front," where his nebbishy antiheroes were proudly bookish, socially awkward, obviously Jewish and, best of all, in love with the movies.

Allen's signature role reached its artistic zenith in his breakthrough film, "Annie Hall." When it was released in 1977, near the end of my junior year of high school, Allen seemed to capture the paradox of my feelings of intense Jewish pride along with the neurosis and anxiety that accompanied it. Like his character, Alvy Singer, I identified with a desire to see "The Sorrow and the Pity" again and again, his determination to find anti-Semitism in the smallest of

gestures, his desire for moral responsibility, his love affair with New York (and derision of Los Angeles as empty and superficial) and, most of all, his unapologetic expression of a particular Jewish ethos that I lived, but had never heard out loud.

In one marvelous scene, Alvy is flirting with Allison (Carol Kane) when they meet backstage at a campaign benefit for Adlai Stevenson. He asks her if she works for Stevenson and she replies, "No, I'm working on my thesis…'Political Commitment in 20th Century Literature'." And he says, both endearingly and satirically, "What, you're like New York, Jewish, left-wing, liberal, intellectual, Central Park West, Brandeis University, socialist summer camps, with the father with the Ben Shahn drawings, you know, really strike-oriented…stop me before I make a complete imbecile of myself." "No," she says, "That was wonderful. I love being reduced to a cultural stereotype." And Alvy, recognizing that he might have gone too far, says, "Right. I'm a bigot, but for the left."

In less than a minute, Allen had given me a voice, a window to my soul, an Upper West Side universe so central to my worldview, and yet so mysterious to non-Jewish, non-New Yorkers. Shortly after, though, Allen returns to the key joke in the film, one he attributes to Groucho Marx, by way of inspiration from Freud. He says, in explaining the dissolution of his marriage to Allison, "I would never wanna belong to a club that would have someone like me for a member." Indeed, "Annie Hall" teeters precariously – and hilariously – between narcissism and neurosis, and thus, a film – which I appreciated as a genuine work of art – gave me a sense of what it meant to be me.

Cinema Studies

The following year my cinematic cup overflowed. Two faculty members at my high school, Dwight-Englewood, in Englewood, New Jersey, were passionate cinephiles, and offered a course – for seniors only – in "Cinema Studies." I happily gave up calculus and fully embraced my passion for film. The course met every day, and twice a week we had double "lab" periods to extend the viewing experience. The class analyzed films the way my English class analyzed classic

literature: as texts to be pored over. We studied films by director, by genre, and most of all, by how they fit into the larger context of American social history. I adored every moment.

We studied the silent comedies of Keaton, Chaplin, and Harold Lloyd, D.W. Griffith's virulently racist "Birth of A Nation," and Sergei Eisenstein's "Battleship Potemkin" to learn about principles of editing. We studied the films of great directors like Orson Welles, John Ford, and Alfred Hitchcock. But what I loved most was learning about film genres- screwball comedy, film noir, musicals, Westerns, and war. We even viewed documentaries- and in particular- the intersection between Washington, D.C. and Hollywood.

As we discussed and analyzed a film's text, I began to recognize the underlying social and political significance of a specific genre. Screwball comedies weren't just about making people laugh during the hard years of the Depression. They were intended to turn the social order upside down, with wealthy industrialists portrayed as fools or prigs, while the ordinary, down-on-his-luck man (or woman) displayed common sense and folk wisdom.

In my absolute favorite, "Ball of Fire" (1940), the great Billy Wilder (a German Jewish refugee), reimagines the Snow White story as an American fairy tale starring Barbara Stanwyck, a nightclub singer hiding from the police (she doesn't want to testify against her rich mobster fiancé), and Gary Cooper, an uptight scholar of English grammar living in a mansion with six other professors writing an encyclopedia (like the Seven Dwarves). Cooper invites Stanwyck to live with them (he needs her for his entry on "slang"), and before you know it, everyone's dancing in conga lines while Cooper falls head over heels. As the plot thickens, Stanwyck realizes that there's more to life than diamonds and furs, the professors use their brain power to outwit the mobster's gun power, and in the film's final shot, Stanwyck and Cooper share a most satisfying – and passionate – kiss. At the film's end, the professors' cloistered world has been pierced (but is still intact), Stanwyck's "career girl" has been happily domesticated, wealth and corruption have been renounced, and moral order has been restored. The wicked have fallen, and the innocent have prevailed.

Just two years later, though, Gary Cooper's innocence would take a backseat to Humphrey Bogart's world-weary anti-hero, Rick Blaine, in "Casablanca" (1942), the most dramatic (and effective) piece of wartime propaganda ever made. The film was released in November, just weeks after the United States invaded North Africa (where the film is set). As most of you know, the film's plot centers around Bogart's character, the expatriate Blaine, who is living unhappily in Casablanca. He must sacrifice the love of his life, Ilsa (Ingrid Bergman), to ensure that Ilsa's husband, the resistance hero Victor Laszlo (Paul Henreid), can continue his struggle against the Nazis.

The film's screenplay, written by two Jewish brothers, Julius and Philip Epstein, and Howard Koch, is considered the best of all time, and contains so many quotes that have entered the popular culture lexicon that it is difficult to narrow them down. A few include: "Round up the usual suspects"; "Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine"; "I'm shocked! Shocked to find that gambling is going on here"; "We'll always have Paris"; "Ilsa, I'm no good at being noble, but it doesn't take much to see that the problems of three little people don't amount to a hill o' beans in this crazy world; someday you'll understand that"; "Louie, I think this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship." And my personal favorite, "Here's looking at you, kid."

The film is comic, romantic, melodramatic and, most of all, patriotic. Rick's Café Americain, where most of the action takes place, is a melting pot of immigrants, Jewish refugees, and European nationals, all of whom wish to escape to the U.S. Rick's staff is a virtual UN convention – French, Russian, Hungarian, and Moroccan – who coexist as allies in wartime. Indeed, in an emotional signification of the war itself, the Nazis surround the club's piano to sing a German "fatherland" song, their voices rising to dominate the room. But Laszlo boldly walks up to the nightclub's orchestra and demands they play the French national anthem, *La Marseillaise.* The bandleader hesitates and then looks out into the distance. The film cuts to Bogart, who, with a simple nod, gives his approval. The orchestra plays the anthem, the patrons rise to their feet and sing in glorious triumph, the Nazis are drowned out, and by the end of the scene – in

the midst of a war in its earliest stages – "Casablanca" taught us that liberty and freedom were worth fighting for.

In the film's final scene at the airport, as Laszlo says goodbye to Rick, he seems to be speaking to all of us, to all the young Americans suddenly thrust into combat: "Welcome back to the fight; this time I know our side will win."

"Casablanca" didn't just capture the 1943 Oscar for best picture. It captured the nation at its idealistic peak, reminding us, even exhorting us, not to be indifferent, and not to stand on the sidelines. I believe that, to this day, no film has ever represented our best American selves with such style, grace, and wit.

Perhaps the most forthright (some would say obvious) promoter of Hollywood's vision of America was Frank Capra, the director of such populist masterpieces as "It Happened One Night," "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," "Meet John Doe," and "It's a Wonderful Life." Using Jimmy Stewart- the embodiment of the noble common man- as his mouthpiece, Capra's films raised up the hardworking, community-minded "little guy" to legendary status.

Take, for example, Stewart's portrayal of George Bailey in "It's a Wonderful Life" in 1946. He is the archetypal, small-town hero, the man who dreams big, but who must give up his dreams for a life of service to his family and community. George symbolizes personal self-sacrifice for the larger good: he stays at home and takes over the family business; he cares for his mother and his feckless Uncle Billy; he marries the girl who has loved him all her life; and, most important of all, he stands up to the Waspy plutocrat, Mr. Potter, "the richest, meanest man in Bedford Falls." In speech after speech, Stewart defends the ordinary working man (Bert the cop, Ernie the cab driver, Mr. Gower, the druggist,) and the immigrant, Mr. Martini, whose family – complete with chickens and goats from the old country – is able to move into its very own home.

Though the film may be famous for its Christian story of symbolic death and rebirth, and for its Jewish narrative of how a lifetime of *mitzvot* can change the world, I think the most powerful sequence of the film is Capra's montage of how the residents of Bedford Falls join together to fight World War II. The film's narrator,

a ministering angel named Joseph, is teaching us about the arc of George's life and describes the action:

> "Then came a war. Ma Bailey and Mrs. Hatch joined the Red Cross and sewed. Mary (George's wife) had two more babies but still found time to run the U.S.O. Sam Wainwright (George's childhood friend) made a fortune in plastic hoods for planes. Mr. Potter became head of the draft board. Mr. Gower and Uncle Billy sold war bonds."

Then the montage moves to the battlefield itself:

> "Bert the cop was wounded in North Africa. Got the Silver Star. Ernie, the taxi driver, parachuted into France. Marty (George›s brother-in-law) helped capture the Remagen Bridge. Harry…Harry Bailey (George's younger brother) topped them all. A Navy flier, he shot down fifteen planes…two of them as they were about to crash into a transport full of soldiers."

George, on account of a childhood ailment, isn't able to go overseas, and our narrator describes his war effort at home:

> "George fought the battle of Bedford Falls…Air raid warden, paper drives, scrap drives, rubber drives. Like everybody else, on V-E day, he wept and prayed. On V-J day, he wept and prayed again."

This brilliant sequence encompasses the entire community and shows us the American "can-do" mythology in action: from the women on the home front, to the older men selling war bonds, to the young men who went overseas to fight, to George, who organized the town's collection drives so that everyone could participate in the effort. Watching this scene today, I can't help but feel wistful for a time – even if it was a myth – when our nation's citizens made sacrifices for a larger goal; when civic cooperation and participation were points of pride, not an opportunity to accuse someone of "virtue signaling."

To date, the film is still the most evocative example of our country's mythology: the pluralist, egalitarian melting pot that coalesced into a nation. I've seen the film upwards of 70 times, and can quote every line of dialogue by heart, but it never ceases to bring me to tears.

American Jewish Life and American Film

Looking back, as I consider the cultural and intellectual legacies that have shaped me, I believe the history of 20th century American Jewish life is inseparable from the history of American film. As brilliantly chronicled in Neal Gabler's 1988 history, *An Empire of Their Own,* the seven major Hollywood studios were founded by Jewish men, and each studio carved out an essential component of "American-ness" for its youthful "greenhorn" patrons.

Although these stories of assimilation rarely dealt with specifically Jewish themes, it is worth noting that the groundbreaking film of its era, Al Jolson's "The Jazz Singer" – the first "talkie" – stars Jolson as a cantor's son who wants to break free from his father's "old world" Judaism and become a famous American jazz singer. The drama culminates on *Erev* Yom Kippur, when the cantor falls ill and no one knows who will chant *Kol Nidre.* Jolson, the prodigal son, is performing at a nightclub, but when he is told that his father

is ill, he rushes back home to stand in for his father. «The Jazz Singer» is almost entirely silent, but the first synchronous sound ever heard in a commercial film was the traditional chanting of *Kol Nidre.*

Despite this auspicious beginning, Jewish practice hasn't exactly been a Hollywood staple. Consider *The Forward*'s recent survey, "125 Greatest Jewish Movie Scenes." Not counting several 1930s Yiddish films made specifically for Jews, only two films – "The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz" (1974) and "A Serious Man" (2009) – include comic mishaps at bar mitzvah services. And only two films – "Fiddler on the Roof" (1971) and the recent "Licorice Pizza" (2021) – include scenes of Jews having Shabbat dinner. It's hardly an embarrassment of riches.

On the one hand, it may be Hollywood not wishing to call undue attention to its Jewish character (yet another sermon). But on the other hand, perhaps we're a people more comfortable with words than images. After all, our Second Commandment – and God's first actual prohibition for our people – forbids the use of any graven image or likeness. Our liturgy and music are substantially the same from service to service, and aside from the Torah service, there's not much "action" to film. Moreover, with the exception of ornate Sephardic synagogues (mostly found in Israel, the Middle East, and Italy), a typical mid-20th century American synagogue emphasizes function over form. We are the people "of the book," not the people of the icon.

But despite the paucity of actual Jewish images, our fingerprints on film are everywhere. Film may be a visual medium, but first and foremost, it's about telling stories. And we've been telling stories for four thousand years: around the fire, around the dinner table, in the yeshiva, and at the bimah. As great a narrative as the Torah is, the Rabbis wanted more and created the first DIY "fan fiction" in the form of Midrash. And not content with the Midrash of a prior age, every generation of rabbis handed down commentary, Midrash, and rabbinic legends that reinvented and reimagined our ancient texts for a new generation of Jews.

After so many thousands of years of crafting narratives for a new audience, our tradition lent itself beautifully to the rhythms of

this new medium. Like most films- that often follow characters on a journey of self-awareness- our Jewish stories, from the patriarchs to the prophets to the Tales of the Hasidim- are also about wandering, self-discovery, and moral responsibility. Stories- especially ones involving movement and transformation- have been our specialty for centuries. And there's been no more compelling medium for our stories than the American landscape of cinema.

"Film Guy"

And now, back to the story. In 1978, I entered my freshman year at Duke University, where I discovered that only a handful of people cared about film the way I did. I immediately joined Duke's "Freewater Film Society," which showed films three nights a week, and I quickly rose to be a leader in the organization. The students selected the films (Tuesdays were for foreign films, Thursdays for American classics, and Friday nights for offbeat, current American cinema). Not only did I get to choose the films, but I had the pleasure of standing up in front of the audience to make announcements before each showing (which turned out to be excellent training for the rabbinate). I soon became known as Duke's "film guy," and on a typical Friday night, I would meet and address several hundred people. (The midnight shows had a tendency toward rowdiness that would be unthinkable today on a college campus.)

I also enrolled in every film class available (only a few in those days). When I wasn't too busy – between film classes, Freewater, and whatever was playing at the local theater – I would average about eight films a week. (It's useful to recall that there were no VCRs, DVDs or streaming services back then; everything I saw was on a big screen).

Upon graduation, despite my passion for film, I fulfilled my parents' dream and went to law school at Washington University in St. Louis. And while I never enjoyed law school all that much, I was very fortunate to discover Washington University's "Filmboard," the undergraduate film society that held its weekly meetings on Sunday afternoons. Filmboard was not accustomed to the presence of a graduate student, especially one who told the students about all

the things they were doing wrong (humility not being my strongest suit). But much to their consternation, I kept coming back week-after-week.

Annie & Children

In my second semester, January of 1983, I went to a Film-board meeting and there, to my great surprise, I met a beautiful undergraduate named Anne Voss. During our first conversation, she told me that she wanted to put on a series of Preston Sturges films, and I suggested that we show a series of Billy Wilder films. I was smitten. Over the next two years, our friendship deepened (we were very enthusiastic film companions) and, eventually, after many twists and turns (worthy of a 1940s romantic comedy), we finally became a couple and married in 1991.

Film has always been a cultural bond for us, and for nearly two decades, we passed that love for film onto our children. We own hundreds of classic films, and Annie and I weren't shy about showing them our favorites. Emilie, our oldest, and Adi, our youngest, have always been major fans of movie musicals and screwball comedies, especially Sturges' "The Lady Eve." Our son, Judah, tends toward the more academic side of cinephilia, with a particular love for Hitch-cock, the French New Wave, and Fred Astaire. Our kids also grew up on Disney and Pixar films and, over the years, at least one (and usually more) has seen every single animated feature film produced by the Disney studio, from 1937 to today.

When our family moved to Rhode Island in 2015, we were particularly enamored by the presence of the Avon and Cable Car art house cinemas, and we happily purchased a home on Providence›s East Side that enabled us to walk easily to both. However, in the last few years, since the closing of the Cable Car and the onset of the pandemic (along with the titanic shift from seeing films in theaters to seeing films at home – indeed, the loss of communal cultural space is worth an article all to itself), the Hollywood cinematic renaissance has receded in both influence and artistic ambition. These days, the lion›s share of films produced for theaters are dedi-cated to "superheroes," and live action franchises – "The Fast and the

Furious," for example – which are made primarily to satisfy an ever-expanding international audience. These films are the equivalent of cinematic junk food- tasteless, consumable, and utterly unmemorable.

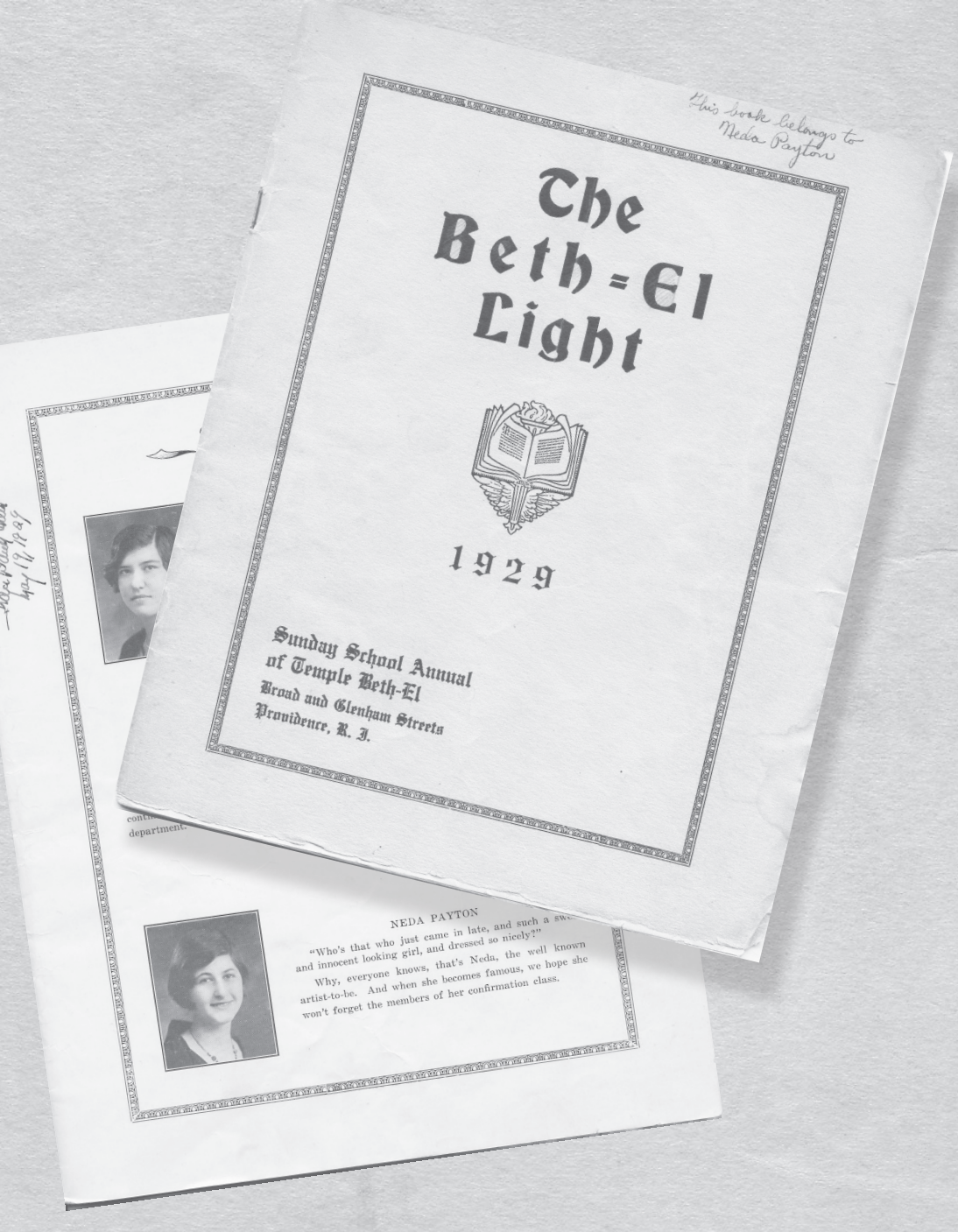
An Extraordinary Jewish Story

As the film experience – at least in the communal sense- has declined, Annie and I have become devoted to the power and intimacy of live theater. We feel fortunate – after years of living in the cultural desert of Calgary, Alberta – to be near so much innovative and ambitious theater – not just in New York and Boston – but right here in Little Rhody. Recently, our daughter, Adi, directed a production of Stephen Sondheim's "Company" at Brown, and we are regular patrons of Trinity, the Gamm and, more recently, the Wilbury Theater, whose production of "Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet of 1812," was outstanding. Indeed, our cultural shift has been so complete that in 2019 (pre-COVID), we actually attended more theatrical performances than we saw films in movie theaters.

Although the future of theatrical film is very much in jeopardy, the history of Hollywood remains an extraordinary Jewish story of ambition, vision, assimilation, and the cultural birth of our nation. Indeed, we have been blessed with a film archive over the past century that not only chronicles the history of Hollywood, but also the history of the American experience. Now more than ever, streaming enables every family to explore our rich cultural history, and I hope that many of you will take advantage of this unique opportunity.

These days, you can purchase film reference compendiums, such as *1001 Movies You Must See Before You Die* or *The New York Times Book of Movies: The 1,000 Essential Films to See,* to guide you in the process. But instead of passively waiting for them to be shown to us (on television or in the theaters the way it used to be), we can now actively select the films we want to see at our leisure. And here's a tip: if your children or grandchildren tell you they don't want to watch old movies, or movies in black and white, show them a Marx Brothers film, a film starring Fred Astaire or Gene Kelly, or even

"Bringing Up Baby," (1938) so they can experience the youthful brilliance of Cary Grant and Katherine Hepburn. Who knows? To quote Humphrey Bogart in "Casablanca," this could be "the beginning of a beautiful friendship."


This book belongs to
Neda Payton
The
Beth-El
Light
1929
Sunday School Annual
of Temple Beth-El
Broad and Glenham Streets
Providence, R. I.
NEDA PAYTON
"Who's that who just came in late, and such a sw
and innocent looking girl, and dressed so nicely?"
Why, everyone knows, that's Neda, the well known
artist-to-be. And when she becomes famous, we hope she
won't forget the members of her confirmation class.

Temple Beth-El's Confirmation Class of 1929: *A Group Portrait*

George M. Goodwin

I am aware of only two copies of a remarkable document now nearly a century old. One copy can be found in Beth-El's archives; the other belongs to our graphic designer, Stephen Logowitz. It runs 23 unnumbered pages. Consisting of short texts, photos, and advertisements, it resembles a high school yearbook. Indeed, it is subtitled "Sunday School Annual." The brief but evocative title is "The Beth-El Light." I believe that its promise still shines.

Steve's copy, though a bit tattered, contains many autographs. His mother's is found on the outside front cover. She also wrote: "This book belongs to Neda Payton." In addition to Rabbi Samuel M. Gup's handwritten inscription on the third page, there are autographs by nearly every member of the Confirmation class, which was 23 strong. Isn't such a number prophetic? Most autographs are placed beside the teenagers' handsomely posed portraits and above a few descriptive sentences. (In most cases, middle names or initials are omitted.) Only one of Neda's classmates wrote a congratulatory message, which is simply, "Best Wishes." Most kids signed their full names; only one used her nickname, "Goldie."

None of the Confirmands felt audacious or nerdy enough to write, "We have hopes and dreams." Or, the more obvious, "We have been blessed." Or, "So glad religious school is over!"

I wonder how many times since their Confirmation service at the "old Temple," built at Broad and Glenham Streets in South Providence in 1911, these men and women gathered again. What would they have shared with each other? What would they want us to know, so many decades after their graduation from religious school? That most of these once young men and women, despite disappointments, difficulties, and hardships, led safe, satisfying, and fulfilling lives? That Confirmation was indeed a gateway to Jewish adulthood? Conversely, for others, it was possibly a terminus? Did

the Confirmands remain thankful and hopeful? Today, how can Jewish Rhode Islanders see themselves reflected in these Confirmands' lives? Are we links in a similar chain of communal continuity, devotion, and fulfillment or do some of us also fall short?

Keep in mind that, by 1929, Confirmation was a highly established ritual at Beth-El, which had largely replaced bar mitzvah as a rite of passage. (The world's first bat mitzvah, for Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan's daughter, Judith, did not occur in New York City until 1922.) The congregation's first Confirmation may have occurred soon after 1878, when Congregation Sons of Israel and David established its religious school. This would have been more than 30 years after Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise established the ritual in Albany. The year 1878 would also have been only a year or so after the merger of the two Providence congregations and its decision to join the Reform movement by becoming a member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which had been established by Rabbi Wise in Cincinnati in 1873.

Congregation Israel and David's first Confirmation ceremony long preceded the construction of its first synagogue, which occurred in 1890 on downtown's Friendship Street. A printed "Certificate of Confirmation," presented to Rachel Cohen (1870-1955) in 1885, survives.[1] A decade later, when Beth-El began taking photographic portraits of Confirmation classes, Rabbi David Blaustein and 14 young men and women were portrayed. Unfortunately, most Confirmands' names were not written on the backs of such photos, so the names of many young people from the early decades of the last century have been lost.

In December 1895, however, Rabbi Blaustein launched Beth-El's first bulletin, *The Organ,* which was published on a monthly basis but was discontinued after his departure. In addition to the times of Shabbat services (Friday evening at 7:30 and Saturday morning at 9:45), there is a schedule for six levels of Sabbath School classes. The first and second classes met on Sundays at 10; the third and fourth met on Saturdays at 11; the fifth met on Thursdays at 5; and the sixth met on Mondays at 5. Perhaps the sixth level was for Confirmation students because a "senior post-confirmation" class

met on the second and fourth Sunday evenings at 7:30. But once a month, on a Sunday morning at 11, all Sabbath School students gathered for a "reunion."

I may have met only one or two of the 1929 Confirmands, but I never knew any well. For that matter, I think Steve is the only child of a Confirmand whom I've known quite well. I have known one other child, Michael Stillman, through playing Ping-Pong at the East Side YMCA. It's quite plausible that I've met some Confirmands' grandchildren, but probably did not know their familial connections at that time.

Almost all of the following information has been gathered from documentary sources. These include some handwritten records in Beth-El's archives, but primarily such sources as federal and Rhode Island censuses and Providence city directories. Additional information was gleaned from naturalization, marriage, divorce, and Social Security records as well as high school and college yearbooks. Even handwritten draft registration records from both World Wars. Yes, an abundance of information can be found online through such a priceless website as Ancestry.com, but a researcher needs not only to know where and how to search but also to possess considerable determination. He or she must also benefit from at least a dollop of good luck. Unfortunately, to the best of my knowledge, a website measuring *mitzvot,* gratitude, kindness, and humility probably does not yet exist.

An Overview

Before providing some rudimentary sketches of individual Confirmands and their families, I would like to present some general information about these young Rhode Islanders on the cusp of adult lives. For example, virtually all these young men and women were born in 1913 or 1914, so they were approximately 15 or 16 when they reached Confirmation. Remarkably, all 23 Confirmands were American-born. Indeed, fourteen were native Rhode Islanders. Eight were born in New York and one in Arkansas.

As for parents' birthplaces, only fifteen had been born in this country. Four of these parents were fathers, and eleven were

mothers. Again, according to census records, most fathers had been born in Russia or elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Three more fathers had been born in Germany, one in Austria. Which was the fathers' most exotic birthplace – Jerusalem or Mississippi?

The majority of foreign-born mothers had also been born in Russia, Romania or Poland. A scattering came from elsewhere in Europe, including Austria, Belgium, and Sweden. The preponderance of native-born mothers came from New York, a few others from Massachusetts, and one from Louisiana.

But had all parents been born Jews? If there were some Gentiles, did they become Jews? And how many Confirmands chose Gentile spouses? Did spouses of intermarriages rear Jewish children and also determine where their Jewish partners would be buried?

The 23 Confirmands had approximately 42 siblings. While two families had no other children, two families had six more kids. If the average number of additional siblings was only two, then there were ten families with only one other sibling.

So where did these 23 families live within Rhode Island? By 1927, there may have been as many as 21,000 Jews living in the capital city.[2] To try to answer this question, I relied primarily on the federal census of 1930 and to a lesser degree on the Rhode Island census of 1925. (Each was conducted at 10-year intervals.) Where a family's name was missing from either census or a handwritten address was illegible, I sought information in Providence directories, which were published annually.

Following poor Irish-Americans, most of Providence's poor and struggling Jews lived in the former North End and on Smith Hill, and numerous families remained there. But other Jewish families, having gained a foothold in their adopted country and city, again followed Irish-Americans to South Providence in order to obtain better housing, a closer commute to work, and easier access to kosher food as well as a panoply of Jewish organizations.

By 1925, the vast majority of Confirmands' families lived within walking distance or a very short drive to the Temple, at Broad and Glenham Streets, assuming that some families owned a car. But there were plenty of streetcars, which had replaced trolleys.

Confirmands' families lived on such streets as Earley, Gallatin, Sackett, and Staniford – now totally devoid of Jews. Generally speaking, they inhabited two or three-family structures built quite close to one another.[3] A small number of families lived a somewhat greater distance from Beth-El in such neighborhoods as Elmwood (to the south) and Washington Park (to the east) – and probably too far to walk.

By 1925, however, six families already lived on Providence's East Side (east of North Main) on such streets as Elton, Laurel, Lippitt, and Waterman. Some of these homes were upscale, others more modest, and some comparable to those on the South Side. Keep in mind that the first synagogue built on the East Side was Temple Emanu-El, but not until 1927. And this was actually the state's second Conservative congregation. So parents of Beth-El congregants definitely had a choice among liberal congregations as to which to send their kids to religious school.

The first Conservative congregation, known initially as "The Providence Conservative Synagogue" and later as Temple Beth-Israel, was founded in 1921 on Niagara Street in South Providence's Elmwood neighborhood.[4] It occupied the former German social hall, which had opened in 1890. Within a year, 175 children were enrolled in the religious school, which met three days per week. At the congregation's first Confirmation ceremony, held in 1925, seven boys and five girls completed their studies. The first bar mitzvah also occurred that year. Beth-Israel's last Confirmation, which included only three girls, was held in 1981. That year, due to shrinking membership and continuing vandalism, the congregation merged with Temple Beth Torah in Cranston and moved to its site. The new congregation became known as Temple Torat Yisrael.

By 1930, seven of Beth-El's Confirmation class families were living on the East Side. Three of these families were the same as in 1925, so four others moved elsewhere.

Some sense of families' financial standing can be measured more precisely by the 1930 federal census. If a tenant, how much did a family head pay? If an owner, what was the value of a home? Here are some examples of what Confirmation class families were able to

afford or achieve. Ruth Berry's family, living in South Providence, paid rent of $40 per month. Helene Koppe's family, also living in South Providence, paid $65 per month. By contrast, Samuel Fox's family, living on the East Side, paid $100 per month. As for ownership, Ralph Rosenberg family's home, in the same part of town, was worth $3,000. Also in South Providence, Madeline Newburger's family home was valued at $7,500, Pauline Meller's at $14,000. These homes can be contrasted with two other Confirmation families living on Waterman Avenue on the East Side. While Benjamin Segool's family home was valued at $14,000, Dorothy Markoff's was $26,000.

The wide range of Confirmation families' finances is of

Dedication page for Rabbi Gup

course reflected in the Temple's membership dues. Fortunately, detailed records from 1927 are found in Beth-El's archives, though not for other years. By post-World War II standards, the congregation was still relatively small, for there were only 276 membership units. Except for widows and unmarried women, all memberships were held in men's names.[5]

Generally speaking, Confirmands' mothers did not work outside their homes. Those who were employed, however, often assisted in family businesses. Of course there's no record of how many children held part-time jobs, but most likely a high number.

Presumably, families paid what they were able or willing, for there were 31 categories of membership. That is, the lowest level was $18 per year, the highest $350. Some categories consisted of only one or two families; other categories, as many as thirty or forty. Thus, most Beth-El members paid $30 to $100 in dues during 1927 (presumably comparable to a month's rent in 1930). There were 32 families who paid more than $100 (nine who paid $300 or more).

In 1929, Temple membership was not required for students to enroll in the religious school, though the vast majority of students belonged to dues-paying families. But the range of dues paid by families with children in religious school ran from $27.50 to $207. Once again, the preponderance of these families paid $40 to $100 in 1927. Needless to say, some of the families paying the highest dues lived on the city's East Side.

Perhaps some measure of family income in Providence can also be gained by examining Rabbi Samuel Gup's salary.[6] Born and reared in Mobile, Alabama, he was ordained at Cincinnati's Hebrew Union College, the first and only Reform seminary at the time, in 1919, and he held his first pulpit at Temple B'nai Israel in Natchez, Mississippi. It had joined the Reform movement in 1873 and built its second synagogue in 1905, at the Jewish community's peak. When Rabbi Gup and his wife, Ruth, an Ohioan, came to Beth-El in the fall of 1919, his salary was $3,500. The Gups soon had a daughter and son. Having been encouraged to remain here, he received numerous raises, ultimately earning $8,500. In 1930, the rent on his home at 265 President Avenue, on the East Side, was $110. Due to the

Temple's financial hardships during the Depression, however, his salary was reduced by $500. In the fall of 1932, Rabbi Gup resigned to accept a pulpit at Temple Israel, the oldest Jewish congregation in Columbus, Ohio, where he remained until his death in 1955. When Rabbi William G. Braude was hired by Beth-El in the fall of 1932, his initial salary was $4,000. Ordained at HUC's Cincinnati campus during the previous year, he initially served Temple Beth-El in Rockford, Illinois, where his salary had been $2,500.

It should be noted that Rabbi Gup was responsible for or his tenure coincided with a huge increase in religious school's enrollment – probably both. In 1921, for example, enrollment soared to 300 children in 11 classes, an increase in only two years from 100 children in seven classes. Sunday School classes included kindergarten and post-Confirmation. Keep in mind that, despite Rabbi Gup's recommendation, Hebrew was not taught at this time (to boys or girls). Surely a significant reason for the religious school's increased enrollment was the board of trustees' decision to abolish tuition fees. Previously, children of Temple members and non-members attended separate sessions. Without a religious school wing, however, Beth-El lacked sufficient space to accommodate so many students and teachers. Consequently, partitions were used to divide the lower-level vestry and possibly the sanctuary. A plan discussed in 1925 to expand the vestry or purchase adjacent property was abandoned, however. In 1933 a neighboring building on Glenham Street was purchased, but it was never used for instruction.

In retrospect at least, Temple members' income during the 1920s was relatively high, for the Great Depression would bring countless hardships. In 1920, the average annual income of Rhode Islanders, among the small percentage of those who filed tax returns, was $3,394. A decade later, the average annual income, again among the small percentage of those who filed returns, was $1,368. From 1920 to 1930, however, the state's population increased from 604,000 to 687,000.[7] In 1925, however, Providence's population had peaked at 268,000.[8]

Members of the Confirmation class of 1929 attended many local high schools, including Classical, Commercial, Hope, and

Technical. (Commercial and Technical later merged to former Central High School, but all of these school buildings were eventually replaced.) There is no documentation showing that all 23 members of the Confirmation Class graduated from high school, but 20 surely did.[9] Nationally, this was a notable number, for in 1930 only about 30% of American children graduated from public or private high schools.[10] There is no documentation showing the percentage of New Englanders who graduated from high school at this time, but Jewish kids quite likely graduated in higher numbers.

There is no record of a 1929 Confirmand enrolled in a private school. The first Jew to attend Moses Brown School, for instance, was E. Gardner Jacobs in the Class of 1920.[11] He became a Confirmand in 1916, but did not remain a self-identifying Jew. The second Jew at Moses Brown was Charles Fox, Jr. in the Class of 1936. He was probably a Confirmand, but his year is not known. His younger brother, Robert, was a Confirmand in 1934 and graduated from Moses Brown in 1938. The first Jew to attend Providence Country Day was probably Charles Shartenberg, Jr., a Confirmand in 1932, who graduated with the Class of 1934.[12] His father, Charles, Sr., was a quite young Confirmand in 1900; he graduated from Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, in 1907.[13] Charles's uncle, Henry Shartenberg, who graduated from Harvard College in 1900, had been a Confirmand in 1893.[14]

Unfortunately, there isn't an easy or reliable way to determine precisely how many members of the Confirmation class enrolled in college or earned undergraduate degrees. The problem is searching for information in scores of yearbooks and alumni directories. In the 1929 "Sunday School Annual," however, there is an "Alumni Notes" section, which shows that 15 young men and women from 1920 through 1924 attended such schools as Brown, Columbia, Emerson, Harvard, Rhode Island College of Education (later known as Rhode Island College), and Rhode Island State (later known as the University of Rhode Island). Providence College, which came into existence in 1917, did welcome some Jews, the first having enrolled in 1922.[15] And Jews also attended the Rhode Island College of Pharmacy and Allied Sciences, which was established in Providence in 1902

and merged with Rhode Island State College in 1956.

It would appear, however, that perhaps ten of the 1929 Confirmands were able to earn bachelor degrees, and four of these were women. Four students graduated from Rhode Island State, two of whom were women. Another Confirmand earned his bachelor's degree at Massachusetts State College (which became the University of Massachusetts, Amherst). One Confirmand, a woman, studied at Rhode Island School of Design, but it did not yet offer a bachelor's degree.

Five of the Confirmands graduated from Brown. Three of these were women who attended Pembroke, its women's college.

Four Confirmands – three of them men- earned graduate degrees. One man earned a dental degree at Tufts, another a veterinary degree, and the third a Ph.D. in chemistry at Yale. The fourth Confirmand, immediately following her Pembroke degree, earned a master's at Brown. Surprisingly, there is no evidence that any of the 1929 Confirmands became a doctor or a lawyer. Of course Rhode Island lacked such graduate degree programs, but the cost of attending an out-of-state program during the Depression would have been prohibitive.

It would appear that a large number of men entered family businesses or started businesses of their own. These tended to be small enterprises. Presumably, many men, despite their somewhat advanced ages, served in the military during World War II. Thus, they can be considered part of "the greatest generation," Tom Brokaw's moniker that I reject. Fortunately, no Beth-El Confirmand of 1929 was forced to sacrifice his or her life.

Federal census records are not released until after 72 years. Thus, information gathered in the 1950 census will become available later this year. Consequently, it is quite difficult to determine how many times a Confirmand was married or how many children she or he produced or how long children lived. It appears that at least three men were married more than once, but fewer women remarried. One Confirmand's first marriage was with a widower. Alas, several men and women lost their spouses and lived alone for years, if not decades. At least one Confirmand was widowed twice.

Given that all members of the Confirmation class are deceased, it can be determined, based on Social Security and burial records, how long most lived. For example, the oldest Confirmand, a woman, lived to be 100! But she also experienced the longest widowhood, nearly 60 years. There were four nonagenarians, but they included only one man. By contrast, three men died in their fifties and another at 60 years.

Compared to their parents, the Confirmands gave birth to few children. The average number appears to have been only two, though precise information about births is difficult to obtain. It would appear that only one Confirmand had three children. This was Neda Payton, who, like Irving Lisker, had grown up with six siblings.

Surely some sense of synagogue affiliation and loyalty can be determined by tracing burial records. Of course the vast majority of Confirmands' parents were buried in Jewish cemeteries. Indeed, seven sets of parents were buried in Beth-El's. A slightly smaller number were buried in Lincoln Park Cemetery. Two sets of parents were buried in Providence's Swan Point Cemetery, and at least one parent was buried in the large Jewish cemetery in Sharon, Massachusetts. Some Jewish burials beyond New England have also been noted. These include cemeteries in Florida, Louisiana, and New York.

As for the 1929 Confirmands' final resting places, a large number – seven – were buried at Beth-El, often beside their parents and other relatives, including grandparents, siblings, and their spouses. One Confirmand was buried besides his parents in Lincoln Park.

Thus, quite generally speaking, it would appear that a large number of Confirmands maintained lifelong bonds with Beth-El, other synagogues in Rhode Island or with Jewish institutions beyond our borders. In this sense, their Jewish affiliation is never-ending.

At this juncture, if largely for the purpose of future research- to add or correct details – it seems appropriate to say a bit more about each member of the Confirmation class. Unfortunately, only the barest, factual details can be provided. Very few qualitative meanings – so central to Judaism – can be ascertained. But silence is also an essential component of Jewish prayer.

The young men and women are listed alphabetically by their full, unmarried names. Except for some inscriptions found on gravestones, their Hebrew names, assuming that they once existed, are unknown.

Dorothy Vera Bergmann: 1914-1984

Her parents, Charles and Sarah, born in Russia, led peripatetic lives. Dorothy was born in New York, but by 1920 her family was living in Hartford, where Charles, a clothier, owned his own store. By 1928, when the Bergmanns had moved to Providence, Charles was employed as an insurance agent and worked downtown on Weybosset Street. The family lived initially in South Providence but by 1930 relocated to the East Side. Dorothy's nickname while attending Hope High was "Midget." She majored in home economics at Rhode Island State and served as secretary of the Campus Club, a Jewish women's organization founded in 1932. Meanwhile, her parents relocated to Boston, where Charles again worked in the insurance business. They would later return to Hartford. Dorothy worked as a stenographer in Boston and then married a physician, Bernard Fritz. The couple lived in Chelsea, then in Winthrop, and had two children. Dorothy and Bernard are buried in Shalom Memorial Park.

Ruth Lenore Berry: 1914-2001

Her father, Morris, initially a shoe dealer, was born in Russia, her mother, Bessie Lisker, in Massachusetts. Ruth and her younger brother, Joslin, were born in Rhode Island. A 1935 Confirmand, he graduated from Brown in 1942, served in the Navy during World War II, and then attended Tufts Dental School. He practiced in Providence for nearly 40 years.

The Berry family lived in South Providence, even while Lenore attended Hope High, where she and Dorothy Bergmann were classmates. In their 1932 yearbook, Ruth was characterized as "full of fun and good nature" and "bubbling over with happiness." She planned to enroll at Rhode Island College of Education (the forerunner of Rhode Island College) to become a teacher, but entered Rhode Island State, where she too became active in the Campus Club and, like Dorothy Bergmann, joined Nu Alpha, a Jewish sorority. After graduation, Ruth became a Providence social worker and was on the staff of Jewish Family

& Children's Services. She lived with her parents on the East Side. Previously the proprietor of a furniture store at 318 Weybosset Street, her father became the owner of Berry's Luggage Shop at 45 Washington Street.

In 1943, Ruth married Oscar Stillman, a widower, in Franklin, Massachusetts. At one year of age, in 1914, he had emigrated from Russia as Ainschel Schtitelman but was not naturalized until 1943, when he was living in Providence. Soon after the wedding, Oscar went to work for his father-in-law. Oscar and Ruth had one son, Michael, in 1948, but Oscar passed away in 1963 at 50 years of age. Ruth later married a man named Kaufman, but it is not known whether she was widowed a second time. Ruth is buried with Oscar and her parents in Beth-El's cemetery.

Madeline Cohen: 1917-?

Even with a relatively uncommon first name, any Cohen is difficult to trace. Her father, Albert, born in Germany, was initially a wholesale dry goods salesman in Providence. Her mother, Ida, had been born in Romania, but passed away in 1927 at approximately 40 years of age. Madeline and her younger brother had been born in New York. It is not known where she attended high school, but in the 1940 Providence directory she was still listed as a student. The following year she was working as a cashier on Olney Street. By 1948, she was a clerk at Kay Jewelry in Providence but resided in Central Falls. Unfortunately, at this juncture, Madeline disappears from Rhode Island records. Her father and his second wife, Sadie, are buried in Lincoln Park.

Berton Allen Finberg: 1914-1999

His father, Edward, was born in Russia, his mother, Bessie, in Austria. All four Finberg children were born in Rhode Island: an older brother and two younger sisters. By 1915, Edward was practicing dentistry in Providence, but later he may also have operated Standard Dental Laboratory, where Bessie worked as a stenographer. It is not known where Berton (also known as Burton) went to high school, but he attended Rhode Island State with the Class of 1935. Both he and his brother, Milton, were college classmates, though it is not known whether Milton was a Confirmand. Berton and Milton were brothers in a second sense, for both belonged to a national Jewish fraternity, Alpha Epsilon

Pi, which had been founded at New York University in 1913 and established its Rho chapter in Kingston in 1922. (Norman Fain, a Beth-El Confirmand in 1930, was another AEP member. There were 110 Rho members between 1925 and 1937.) Berton was also a member of Rhode Island State's boxing team. Milton followed in his father's footsteps and became a dentist.

Berton later lived in Worcester and worked as an assistant manager in a furniture store. By 1940, according to his draft registration records, he was living with his wife, Irma, in Clarksburg, West Virginia. He was employed as a credit manager with the Interstate Home Equipment Company and remained in Clarksburg until at least 1944. Eventually, Berton and Irma returned to Providence, where he was president of BAF Associates, an insurance company on Westminster Street. The couple wintered in or retired to Ft. Lauderdale.

Edward and Bessie Finberg are buried in Beth-El's cemetery. Berton, Irma, and two of their three children are buried in Lincoln Park, as are Milton and his wife, Anne. The older Finberg daughter, Phyllis, and her husband, Alfred Steiner, are also buried there. Lucille Finberg and her husband, Erwin Robinson, were Beth-El members and are buried in its cemetery.

Samuel Hersch Fox: 1914-2001

His mother, Bernice, was born in Pennsylvania. His father, Maurice, born in Rhode Island, was an 1897 Confirmand at Beth-El. Samuel's uncle, George, was an 1895 Confirmand. Maurice worked in a family printing business, The C. J. Fox Company, which had been founded in 1895 and later specialized in packaging. Having remained within the Fox family for three generations, it was sold in 2008. During the 1920s, both Maurice and his brother, C. Joseph, built homes on the East Side. One of Samuel's two younger sisters, Helen, was Confirmed at Beth-El in 1931.

In January 1932, Samuel graduated from Hope High School. His first cousins, Charles J. Fox, Jr. and Robert S. Fox, were among the earliest Jewish graduates of Moses Brown School.[16] Samuel studied accounting at Bryant & Stratton Business College. In 1940, when registering for the draft, he was living in Elmira, New York, where he worked for his maternal uncle, Sidney Hersch, in retail sales. Samuel's wife, Maxine, was from upstate New York, and the couple made their home in

Amsterdam. He became the highly successful head of Holzheimer & Shaul, a downtown clothing store. Samuel outlived his wife by seven years, and the couple is buried in Temple Israel's cemetery in Cranesville, a few miles east of Amsterdam. They had two children.

Bennett David Goldberg: 1914-1999

His father, Louis, was born in Boston; his mother, Svea Mathilda Viktoria Carlson, in Skäne, Sweden. With her parents, Axel and Alma, and her three older siblings, she sailed on the *S.S. Stockholm* from Gothenberg to New York City in 1916. Louis and Svea met in Plainville, Massachusetts, where he worked as an engraver and she as a housemaid. In 1913, they were married in Plainville by Edwin F. Thayer, a justice of the peace. Bennett had been born in Plainville – one of 22 births there that year – but by 1920 his family was living in South Providence. Louis continued working as an engraver in the textiles industry.

In 1930, Bennett was working as a stock clerk in a department store. At Technical High School, he was known as "Benny" and "Dusty" and was active in the student dance orchestra, the chorus, and the French and German clubs. Following his graduation in 1932, he was expecting to enroll in the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London. By 1940, when registering for the draft, he was working as a truck driver for provisions dealer, possibly John D. Rourke & Son, in Providence.

In July 1942, while stationed with the Navy in Norfolk, Virginia, Bennett married Evelyn Agnes Randall, a bookkeeper who had been born in East Providence. A Mr. Sturowand, a Methodist minister, officiated.

After World War II, it appears that the couple remained in or returned to Florida. In 1955 they were living in Miami Beach. In 1961, however, they were living on Friendly Road in Cranston. A few years later, presumably in retirement, Bennett and Evelyn moved to Gloucester, Massachusetts. Twenty years later, he was buried in Sharon Memorial Park. Svea died after another decade in Gloucester, but she was not buried beside her husband. There is no record of their having had children.

Anna Goldstein: 1913-1997

The third of four children, Anna was born in Providence. Her parents, Max and Bella, were born in Austria. By

1918, according to draft registration records, he worked as a window cleaner; eventually, he owned his business. The family lived at many addresses in South Providence. In 1931, Anna graduated from Technical High School. Beginning at 17 years of age, she worked in various retail sales positions. By 1947, however, she can no longer be found within Rhode Island records.

It's easy to find Anna's older brother, Harry, who graduated from Classical High in 1929, earned a Phi Beta Kappa key at Brown in 1933, then a law degree at Duke University. He worked in the Social Security Administration before serving in the military during World War II. From 1949 to 1964, Harry worked as Providence's assistant city solicitor and later as Mayor Joseph Doorley's first Jewish commissioner of public safety, then as a special assistant to attorney general Julius Michelson (a Jew).

Anna's parents and their eldest child, George, who died at 15 years of age in 1924, are buried in Lincoln Park. After a considerable search, I discovered that Anna was buried with her husband, Morris Stone, a Fall River native, in that city's Hebrew Cemetery. The couple had lived in Fall River by 1942. He was a service manager in a tire shop; and she worked as an assistant manager at Nemrow Brothers, a wholesale merchandise company. Their only child, Alan George Stone, is deceased.

Donald David Jaffa: 1913-2001

His father, Meyer, was the only parent of a Confirmand not born in the United States or Europe. But the name of that location varies considerably among documents. For example, the 1915 Rhode Island census records "Palestine." The 1920 federal census states "Jerusalem," and the 1930 federal census states "Turkey." All of these options sound right, especially if Jaffa ancestors once lived in that very place. Meyer was born within the Ottoman Empire in 1888 and immigrated to the United States in 1900. He and his wife, Mamie, a Russian native, were living in Providence by the time their eldest son, Farrell, was born. Originally a clerk in a restaurant, Meyer later was the proprietor of his own lunchroom. Still later he worked in jewelry manufacturing.

By 1920, the Jaffas lived on Lippitt Street on the East Side. A decade later, Meyer's parents, Abraham and Bertha, were living with the Jaffas. It is not known where Donald went to high school. In 1935, he was a driver for Whiting Milk Company. When registering for the draft in 1940, he was self-employed at

New Deal Home Outfitters. He and his wife, Jean, who had been born in New York, had one son, Farrell. A daughter, Lesley, would follow. Donald established his own furniture company, called Donald, which he ran until about 1960 by which time he and his wife were living in Warwick. Donald, Jean, and Farrell are buried in Lincoln Park, as are his parents.

Gertrude Kahn: 1914-?

Both her parents, Nathan and Bessie, were Russian-born. Gertrude, their eldest daughter, was born in Providence. Nathan worked as a stone-setter in a jewelry shop, and his family resided in South Providence. In January 1932, Gertrude graduated from Commercial High School, where her sisters would also study. Dorothy belonged to Beth-El's 1931 Confirmation class. By 1935, Gertrude worked as a saleslady at the Outlet Company, but soon disappeared from Rhode Island records. Presumably she married and moved out of state, but anybody named Kahn – even a Gertrude – is quite difficult to trace. The Kahn parents are buried in Lincoln Park, as is their youngest daughter, Beatrice, who married James Gerstenblatt and died at 41 years of age.

Helene Koppe: 1913-1993

Her father, Gustave, was born in Germany, her mother, Rose, in New York. Like her older brother, Jesse, Helene was born in New York. The Koppes were living in South Providence by 1925. Gustave was a manufacturer of novelties; his business was eventually known as The Elkloid Company. After his death in 1933, Rose continued working there.

Helene graduated from Technical High School in 1931. According to *The Tech Review* yearbook, she was known as "Brown Eyes." She was described as "a friend that's true, faithful and trustworthy" and "a good sport, ready for anything that comes up, ready to support, and to render her services." Helene was also portrayed as an "accomplished pianist, who feels that her future lies in the musical world." She later worked as a secretary at the Rhode Island Title Insurance Company.

Helene married Morris Baruch, a Chicago native, and it appears that, after working as a retail jeweler in North Attleboro, he assumed ownership of Elkloid. Before serving in the military during World War II, Morris lived with Helene and Rose in Providence. Helene's younger brother, J. Melvin, was not only

a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity at Rhode Island State but was elected "Master" before his graduation in 1933.

In 1964, Helene and Morris lived on 10th Street in Providence but probably soon left Rhode Island. He died in West Palm Beach in 1980. Helene died in Clemmons, a suburb of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Possibly, she lived at the Blumenthal Jewish Home for the Aged, which opened in 1962, but in the late 1990s relocated to Greensboro. It is not known whether Helene and Morris had children or where the couple is buried, but they are not beside her parents in Beth-El's cemetery.

Joseph Harold Krasnoff: 1914-2013

The Krasnoff family's connections to Rhode Island were relatively brief. His father, Samuel, and his mother, Eva, were born in Russia. In his petition for naturalization, filed in U.S. District Court in Providence in September 1912, Samuel stated that he was a cigar maker living at 9 Staniford Street. His older son, James, had been born in Somerville, Massachusetts, in 1903, his younger son, Harold, in Providence, in 1914. Samuel's draft registration, in 1918, states that he was still a cigar maker living with Eva in Revere. By 1920, however, the Krasnoffs were living in Queens, New York, where Samuel was employed as a foreman in a shirt manufacturing business. The next federal census shows that the family back in Boston and that Joseph H., 15 years of age, had been born in Rhode Island. But the 1930 Providence directory also shows that Samuel owned a variety store on Public Street and resided at 97 Staniford Strreet in South Providence. Most likely Samuel had two homes or he was separated from Eva, for Joseph graduated from Roxbury Memorial High School. He then enrolled at Massachusetts State College in Amherst, where he majored in bacteriology and physiology. Before graduating in 1936, he found time to belong to the Menorah Society and Alpha Epsilon Pi's Phi chapter (established in 1933) and played varsity football.

Joseph Harold then lived in Roslindale with his parents and worked as a clerk in a medical laboratory. When he enlisted in the Army in August 1941, he was working as a retail manager. During the war Joseph Harold served on the 49th Station Hospital, a ship that returned to New York in September 1945. A few months later he married Shirley Rosenfeld in Roslindale, and they lived initially in Chelsea. Soon this veteran, who was better

known as J. Harold, returned to Providence, where he established T-K Medical Laboratory with Daniel Tramonti. The couple lived on the East Side. Both J. Harold and Shirley died in 2013, and they are buried near his parents in Lincoln Park.

Elsie Maxine Landauer: 1913-2004

Even compared to the Jaffa family, with its connection to Jerusalem, the Landauer family was one of the most exotic in Providence's Jewish community. Elsie's father, Joseph (1887-1970), who was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi, grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas. According to the 1910 census, his father, Max, had been born in Germany and immigrated in 1872 with his parents to Little Rock, where he became a wholesale liquor "broker." His wife, Lillie, 16 years younger than he, had been born in Mississippi, but her parents were also Germans. It is quite possible that she was a Landauer cousin, for her parents, buried in a New Orleans cemetery, were identified as Elias and Bertha Bodenheimer Landauer. Thus, she could have been Lillie Landauer Landauer.

Joseph's younger brother, Irving, started out in his father's business, but Elsie's father went in a different mercantile direction as a cotton buyer and shipper. Eventually, however, he was president of Landauer Brothers Cotton. Elsie's mother, who had been born in Louisiana in 1890, had the extraordinary first name of Salome. She had been born in Arkansas in 1914, and her younger sister, Lois (also recorded as Lawless), was born there, but in 1920 the Landauers were living in Greenville, Texas, which is northeast of Dallas. Joseph was a cotton buyer.

Textile manufacturing is the obvious answer, but it's difficult to know what brought these Southerners to Providence. In 1922 Joseph, a cotton dealer, had an office at 21 South Main Street. By 1925 the Landauer family was living at 25 Laurel Avenue on the East Side, a few doors from Alvin Sapinsley's family at 31 Laurel. By 1930, the Landauers had moved to 25 Everett Street but Joseph continued to work as a cotton broker. The census of that year contains some astonishing information, for both Joseph's father and Salome's had lived in the German town of Rulsheim. As explained in the 2020 issue of our journal, this was the ancestral home of the Feibelman family. But Hans-Joachim, later known as Jack, did not arrive in Providence with his parents until 1938.

Elsie and Lois attended nearby Hope High School. In the *Blue and White* yearbook of 1932, Elsie is profiled for her involvement in literary pursuits. But the Landauers did not remain in Providence much longer. The 1934 city directory shows that Joseph "removed" to Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Elsie had her own reason to relocate, for in March 1934 she married Wilfred Mohr Kullman in New Orleans. (As explained in the 2021 issue of our journal, there were also Feibelman cousins living there as well as in Arkansas.) Wilfred (1903-1999) had been born in Natchez, Mississippi, and his father, Bernard (1863-1935), in Germany, but the family was soon drawn to New Orleans. Wilfred studied at Tulane's College of Commerce & Business Administration and joined a Jewish fraternity. The Kullmans spent most of their lives in New Orleans. He built his own insurance company, and the couple lived with their three children in suburban Metairie. The family belonged to a Reform congregation, Temple Sinai. Elsie and Wilfred are buried in Lake Lawn Cemetery Mausoleum, as is their oldest son, Bernard.[17]

Irving Abraham Lisker: 1913-1967

Both his parents, Harris and Sophie, were Russian-born. Their two eldest children were born in Fall River, Massachusetts, the remaining six in Providence. Irving, known as "Mootsie," was the second youngest. Saul, the youngest, was the father of Lowell, the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association's longtime board member. In 1920, if the Lisker home on Chester Avenue in South Providence was not crowded enough, two of Harris's brothers were also living there (as they had at the Liskers' residence a decade earlier). Harris worked as a salesman in a soft drinks business, one of his brothers as a chauffeur. Some of Irving's older siblings were employed as a jeweler, a stenographer, a salesman, and as an errand boy.

According to the 1929 yearbook at Classical High School, there was an Abraham Lisker, "the big boy of the class," also known as "Honest Abe." He played tennis for three years, planned to attend Brown, and did graduate there in 1933. But this was our Irving's cousin, Abraham Louis Lisker (1911-2002), who became a lawyer and is buried with his parents, John and Etta, and his five siblings in Beth-El's cemetery.

Irving probably attended Central High School. In 1940, when he married Louise Mae Sprague, the daughter of Gladys

and George Augustus Sprague, Jr., he was working as a truck driver for a wholesale paper company. When Irving often came home to enjoy his mother's barley soup, Louise was always welcome. His enlistment papers show that he had acquired skills working with precious metals through the manufacture of clocks, watches, and jewelry. He served in the military only briefly, for in 1942 he was honorably discharged following a period of hospitalization in Savannah.

After returning to Providence, he worked as a control manager at Owens Corning Fiberglass and later as a traffic manager at the Warwick Mill Outlet. Both Irving and Louise also worked part-time at the Merrill Lounge in East Providence: he as a bartender, she as a waitress. His health probably continued to decline, for he suffered a fatal heart attack at 53 years of age. Thus, all of his Confirmation classmates outlived him.

Irving's parents, who never belonged to Beth-El, are buried in Lincoln Park; his own remains and his wife's rest in Highland Memorial Park in Johnston. Irving's side of the grave is engraved with a Star of David and a Masonic compass. Louise, a widow for 22 years, is buried without a Star of David. The Liskers' daughter, Patricia, who became the postmaster of Locust Grove, Georgia, is buried in its Methodist cemetery.

Stanley Theodore Loebenberg: 1914-1992

His father, Theodore, was born in Maryland. His mother, Nannie, who was born in Massachusetts, was 17 years younger. The couple married in Providence, and this is where Stanley, their elder son, was born. The Loebenbergs lived initially in the Elmwood neighborhood, but soon relocated to 104 Elton Street on the East Side (one block north of Orchard Avenue, where the third Beth-El synagogue would be built in 1954). Theodore was a buyer at the Outlet Company on Weybosset Street, so it could hardly have been a coincidence that another Outlet buyer, Daniel Donig, his contemporary, lived with his family at 112 Elton. The Donigs were Beth-El members, and their daughter and son-in-law, Bertram and Helene Bernhardt would become important congregational leaders. Indeed, Bertram served as president from 1955 to 1960.

In January 1932, Stanley graduated from Hope High School. A brother of Alpha Epsilon Pi, he graduated from Rhode Island State in 1936. He earned his dental degree at Tufts two

years later and began his private practice in downtown Providence. In 1942 he married Frances H. in Brookline, and they soon had a daughter. Following their divorce, her parents fought over the child's custody. Both parents remarried – Stanley to Roberta Barron in 1952. Stanley's stepson, Stuart Aronson, became a Beth-El leader and a national figure in Brotherhood. Stanley's parents are buried in Beth-El's cemetery, as are he, Roberta, and Stuart.

Dorothy P. Markoff: 1913-2014

She was the 1929 Confirmand who lived the longest – nearly 101 years. Her life was rich in many other ways.

Dorothy's paternal grandfather, Aaron (1855-1921), was born in Kiev and immigrated to New York in 1889. He was naturalized in Providence's U.S. Circuit Court three years later. Listed as "Dr." in Providence directories by 1901, he had studied at the Tomsk Medical Institute and was licensed in Rhode Island as an allopath. Aaron's Russian-born wife was Pauline (1863-1918), and they had six children: four sons and two daughters. During the first decade of the last century, the two eldest children, Charles Aaron (1880-1946) and Samuel Aaron (born 1881), were still living with their parents at 618 North Main in Providence. Samuel took some art courses at Rhode Island School of Design and later at the Art Students League in New York City, and by 1906 he launched a business, Japanese Wood Novelty Company, which manufactured art goods. His brothers, Charles, Allen, and Theodore, soon joined him. In 1913, Samuel married Ruth Urdang, a Boston native and a department store manager, in Boston. The 1915 Rhode Island census shows that the young couple was living at Camp Street in Providence, and Samuel described himself as a manufacturer of novelties. Five years later, as recorded in the federal census, the Markoffs while still living on Camp Street, had two daughters, Dorothy and Bernice, and employed an Irish-born maid. Samuel was listed as a "wholesale dry goods merchant" specializing in "art goods." Indeed, as early as 1906, he had obtained several international patents for "photographic mailing cards." When he registered for the draft in 1918, Samuel stated that he was self-employed and that his business was located at 109-19 Summer Street in Providence.

By 1924, the Markoff brothers' business, which a became highly successful manufacturer of greeting cards, enabled

Samuel and his family to move to a grand Victorian home at 229 Waterman Street, which no longer stands, near Wayland Square. Unfortunately, Samuel died in 1932, so Charles became president-treasurer and Allen became secretary and general manager. In 1936 the family business became known as The Paramount Line, and marketed its products nationally and later in many countries. During the 1950s, the company relocated to Pine Street in Pawtucket, where it continued to expand. Ruth, who worked initially as assistant treasurer, served as the company's chair before her death in 1978.

Dorothy, known as "Shrimp," attended Hope High School. Here is how she was described in the 1931 yearbook: "All is perfectly quiet, and then suddenly a hilarious sound coms bursting on our ear drums. When Dot isn't laughing, she smiling- in fact, she was the best-natured little thing ever let loose in Hope." She participated in the drama club, debating, and four sports. Dorothy graduated from Pembroke in 1935, her sister Bernice Gourse (1918-2017) six years later. The youngest sister, Gloria Winston (born in 1926), graduated from Pembroke in 1948. Needless to say, Dorothy began working at Paramount as an editor and eventually became executive vice president. Her sisters also assumed leadership positions, as did two of their husbands.

In about 1939, Dorothy married Walter Nelson, a New York native, who was beginning his dental practice in the Turk's Head Building in Providence. They had three children. After Walter died accidentally in 1956 at 43 years of age, Dorothy expanded her volunteer work in numerous Jewish communal organizations, including Beth-El. She and Walter are buried in its cemetery, as are their son, Bruce; a grandson, Jacob; her parents; her sister Bernice; and her uncles, Charles and Theodore. Her Markoff parents are buried in Lincoln Park.

Pauline Gladys Meller: 1913-1993

Her father, Adolf, was born in Germany. His application for an American passport, filed in Providence in September 1922, states that he was born in Berlin; his father, Marcus, was deceased; Adolf arrived in the United States in 1909; and he resided in Providence since 1911. As an importer of precious and imitation stones, he planned to travel in Europe for seven weeks. Pauline's mother, Rosa, was born in Belgium. (According to the 1930 census, her first language was French rather than Flem-

ish.) By 1915, the Mellers were living in South Providence. When required to register for the draft in June 1917, Adolf worked as a salesman for H. Nordlinger & Sons at 63 Washington Street and had two children, but was still considered an alien. The 1920 census shows the Mellers at the same residential address, 65 Courtland Street. The family of five sailed to and from Europe in the summer of 1921. By 1930, when living at 154 Warrington Street18 in South Providence, the family was joined by a second daughter and an Irish maid. Both of Pauline's brothers were Beth-El Confirmands: Max in 1931, Robert the following year.

Pauline was portrayed in her Classical High School's 1931 yearbook, *The Caduceus,* as "vivacious and ever-cheerful" and as "the wittiest" female. When she graduated from Pembroke in 1936, she planned to become a foreign correspondent or work for a business concern. One of her classmates was Frieda, Irving Lisker's sister; another was Rebecca, Ruth Berry's sister. Pauline graduated magna cum laude, which led to her earning a master's degree in religious studies at Brown the following year. Meanwhile, Adolf served as Beth-El's president from 1935 to 1938.

Pauline married Perry Bernstein, a Providence native and an accountant, and they moved to Stanwood Street in South Providence, later to the East Side. By 1960, after rearing two sons, Pauline began teaching French at Lincoln School and remained four years. There were probably only a few Jewish faculty members. One was Naomi Brodsky, also a Pembroke alumna, who taught English. She wrote an article in the 1993 issue of *The Notes* about the centenary of Rhode Island's section of the National Council of Jewish Women. Pauline taught for three years.

Perry died in 1962, and two years later she married Milton Berger, who also predeceased her. She lived for many years in Florida. Pauline is buried beside her first husband in Beth-El's cemetery, where her parents and paternal grandmother, Rosa, are also buried. Her brothers, Max and Robert, are also buried there, as is Max's wife, Dorothy. The Temple cemetery is also the resting place of Pauline's sister, Fannie, and her husband, Maurice Shore.

Meller Optics, which Adolf established in 1921, moved to its Corliss Street location in 1937 and is still located there. For four decades the business has been owned and managed by a third generation of the Meller family. The younger of Max's twin daughters, Lindsey, married David Lydon, and he developed ex-

pertise in optics used in medical and military products. The Lydons have two sons, but neither is involved in the family business.

Madeline Newburger: 1913-1985

Her father, Samuel, was born in Russia, her mother Clara in Romania. The eldest of their four children (and only son), Nathan, was born in Rhode Island. Madeline was his youngest sister. Samuel worked in a men's clothing shop, and the family lived for more than four decades at 174 Porter Street in South Providence. It is not known where Madeline attended high school, but she graduated from Pembroke College in 1936. A social worker for 42 years, she worked for Providence's welfare department and later as a home visitor for Providence schools. Madeline was a board member of the Rhode Island Philharmonic. She lived with her parents and her unmarried brother for much of her adult life.

Madeline died in 1985 and is buried beside her parents and brother in Beth-El's cemetery. Also buried in the Temple cemetery are Madeline and Nathan's sister, Helen (1905-2002), and her husband, Martin Chase (1906-1971), a cofounder of Ann & Hope Stores. The Chases' son, Irwin (1926-2020), also a cofounder of the retail empire, is buried there.

Rose Osterman: 1914-2011

Her father, Jacob, was born in Russia, her mother, Mamie, in New York. Rose, their eldest child, was also born in New York, and her sister and brother in Rhode Island. Since 1920, the family lived in South Providence. In January 1932, Rose graduated from Commercial High School and was inducted into the Rhode Island Honor Society. Jacob owned a clothing store, and by 1940 Rose was a bookkeeper in an optical shop.

In about 1943, she married Arthur Lipson, a Providence native and the second of Samuel and Nettie's eight children. The newly weds lived with Arthur's parents. He was a salesman in clothing stores for most of his career. Even after the birth of their two daughters, Rose continued working as a bookkeeper. Beginning in the late 1940s, the Lipsons operated Jack & Jill, a children's shop in Pawtucket. Arthur died in 1994, so Rose was widowed for 17 years. Her final home was at Tamarisk in Warwick. Arthur and Rose are buried on Osterman Lane in Lincoln Park near her parents and maternal grandparents, Herman and Rosa Rosner.

Justin Jerome Parvey: 1914-1974

Justin's father, Harry, a dentist, had been born in Russia, his mother, Celia, in New York. They married in New York in 1913 and were living in South Providence within a year. Justin, who had a younger brother, Edgar, graduated from Classical High School in 1931 before entering Brown, where, according to the 1935 yearbook, he was known as "Jay." By 1940, according to draft registration records, he worked at Bond Stores on Weybosset Street. It is not known where he studied veterinary science, but a good possibility is Middlesex University in Waltham (the site that became Brandeis University in 1948), for it was New England's only veterinary college. It is not known when he and his wife, Bernice, moved to or near the nation's capital, but in 1967 he was elected president of the District of Columbia's Academy of Veterinary Medicine. The Parveys had two children, and Jeanne was a widow for 15 years. The couple is buried at Fairfax Memory Gardens in Fairfax, Virginia.

Neda Payton: 1913-1982

Both of Neda's parents, Harry and Sarah, were Russian immigrants. Born in 1872, he was probably the eldest parent of a Confirmand. The couple lived in Brooklyn, where four of their seven children were born. Neda, whose given name was Elizabeth Neda, was the fourth child. Her older sister, Daisy, was confirmed at Beth-El in 1921. Neda's three younger siblings were born after the family relocated to Providence, William in 1935. Harry, initially a jewelry salesman, became the proprietor of his own manufacturing enterprise before his death at 55 years in 1927, two years before Neda's Confirmation. So Sarah took over the business and struggled to run it with her oldest children while caring for her younger ones.

After graduating from Central High School, Neda studied at Rhode Island School of Design. This made perfect sense, for RISD's archival records show that, beginning as a 10-year-old, she took several years of Saturday classes there. Although she began her college career at RISD as a day student, studying painting, drawing, and interior decoration, she was unable to continue, presumably for financial reasons, so switched to the evening program. She studied costume design for two years on this basis, but was unable to graduate. Later in her life, however, she much enjoyed serving as a RISD Museum docent.

Neda married Kenneth Logowitz, an office manager at the Outlet Company, and they had three children. He spent his 52-year career there, retiring in 1976 as president and chief executive officer. Neda died at 69 and, like her parents, is buried in Beth-El's cemetery. Her family established an educational fund at the RISD Museum in her memory. Neda and Kenneth's second child, Nancy, died in 1994, and she too is buried in the congregational cemetery. Kenneth, who remarried and spent his final years in Palm Beach, lived to 90 and is buried beside Neda and Nancy.

Ralph R. Rosenberg: 1914-1971

His father, Abner, was born in Romania, his mother, Sarah, in Russia. Ralph was born in Brooklyn and his brother, Siegfried (later known as Shepard), less than a year later when the family moved to Rhode Island. In 1920, Sarah's parents, Adolph and Eva Wiener, were living with the Rosenbergs in South Providence. A decade later, Abner had his own business, Century Printing, on Friendship Street in downtown Providence, near the site of Beth-El's first synagogue. Ralph graduated from Central High School. His draft registration, in 1940, shows that he already served in the Navy and was living in Los Angeles. Later that year, the census shows that Ralph and his wife, Barbara, were living in Long Beach, California. The daughter of Horatio and Flora Bell Chase, she had been born in Sutton, Worcester County, Massachusetts. Marriage records show that Rev. William R. Snow officiated at their wedding in Uxbridge in 1938. Their son, Alan Chase Rosenberg, was born in 1942. The couple remained in Los Angeles until the mid-1950s, when they moved to greater Miami. He was employed as a musician.

By 1958, Ralph and Barbara divorced. He died in Tallahassee and is buried in its nondenominational Memory Gardens cemetery. His grave records that he was "Rhode Island, MUC US Navy, WWII & Korea." There is a Star of David above his name. Barbara lived 20 years longer, and she is buried besides her parents and her twin sister (who lived less than a year) in Lackey Cemetery in Northbridge, Worcester County. Alan, who served in the Marines Corps from 1963 to 1967 and lived to be 55, is buried in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Exeter, Rhode Island. Ralph's brother, Shepard, who served in the Army during World War II and died in 2001, is buried at the Barrancos National Cemetery in Pensacola, Florida. His grave records that he was "a man of honor, duty and family" and is engraved with a Star of David.

Howard David Segool: 1914-2003

Howard's father, Benjamin, was born in Russia, his mother, Mary, in New York. Benjamin was a bookkeeper in Brooklyn before moving with his family to Rhode Island by 1920. The Segools lived in Cranston before moving to the East Side. In 1930, Benjamin became a salesman for a yeast company, and Mary worked as a secretary in a bank.

According to *The Crimson* yearbook, Howard graduated from East Providence High School in 1931. He belonged to the French and debating clubs and was inducted into the Rhode Island Honor Society. Recognized as "a very brilliant student" of chemistry, he was expected to "make chemistry his life's work." In 1935, having majored in organic chemistry, Howard earned a bachelor of science degree at Brown. Three years later he completed a Ph.D., also in organic chemistry, at Yale. By 1950, Howard and his wife, Dorothy Abeshaus, a 1935 Pembroke alumna, were living in Chicago, where he worked on pipeline corrosion protection in the private sector. From 1965 through 1979, Howard was a professor of engineering at the University of Massachusetts. One of the four founding members of Amherst's Jewish Community Association, he also served as its second president. The couple had two children and is buried in the Association's cemetery in Shutesbury. Howard's older sister was buried beside their parents in Swan Point Cemetery.

Evelyn Irma Snyder: 1913-2007

Her parents, Daniel and Sadye, were unusual among Confirmation class parents for both were born on American soil. He was from Maryland and she from New York, and their only child was born in New Jersey. By 1915, the Snyders were living in Providence. He ran a dry goods store on Atwells Avenue. In 1925 the family lived near Smith Hill; five years later they made their home on the East Side.

Following her graduation from Classical High School in 1933, Evelyn, who trained at Catherine Gibbs School, worked as a secretary in a furrier's shop. In 1937, she married Irving Sussman, a New Yorker. Three years later the census shows that the couple and their daughter, Fredlynn, were living in Boston, where Irving worked as a window dresser. The Sussmans also had a son and later lived in Natick and Framingham. Daniel outlived Sadye to reach nearly 100 years, and the couple is buried in Temple

Sinai Memorial Park in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, near his brother. Evelyn and Irving's graves are in Beth-El's cemetery.

Thank You

Thank you, 1929 Confirmands, for sharing your lives and your families' lives with readers of this journal and yours truly. I learned a great deal, but not nearly as much as if I were able to meet and interview you – to sit down and listen to your sweet, colorful, difficult, harrowing, and insightful stories. Though generations apart, I do believe that we share a deep bond with one another: as Jews, Rhode Islanders, Americans, and human beings.

Those of you who remained in or returned to Providence knew that our congregation, Sons of Israel and David, built a third synagogue, also known informally as Temple Beth-El, on the East Side in 1954. It was and remains a glorious building, one of the most impressive synagogues of the postwar era. Together many distinguished clergy and dedicated congregants have been able to achieve wonderful goals, and we endeavor to sustain and perhaps surpass them.

Fortunately, following Beth-El's move to Orchard Avenue, the synagogue on Broad Street, which you knew, enjoyed, and perhaps loved, found a new life as Congregation Shaare Zedek, which arose through the merger of four neighboring Orthodox congregations in South Providence. It thrived for perhaps two decades, before most Jews began to uproot themselves from South Providence in search of more comfortable and inviting neigborhoods- especially those on Providence's East Side and in expanding suburbs and nearby towns. Ultimately, Shaare Zedek's few remaining members, having struggled to survive and enter a new era, decided that it was necessary to close their synagogue's doors and turn over its dreams, memories, and physical contents to another Orthodox congregation, Beth Sholom, to try to sustain them. Now that East Side congregation has also closed its synagogue doors and is renting quarters within Rhode Island's Dwares Jewish Community Center until it finds another home of its own.

You would easily recognize its crumbling exterior, but for 15

years the old Temple Beth-El has stood empty and forlorn, awaiting a new use by a new owner. Of course this should also be dignified and show respect for what both congregations endeavored to achieve and successfully accomplished. Fortunately, Touro Synagogue remains the best exception to the rule, for most North American synagogues survive only a few generations before their congregations move elsewhere and begin anew.

Yes, Jews remain a highly mobile people, continually seeking and often finding new opportunities and roles. As you well know, Judaism can grow and flourish almost anywhere- especially within democratic and peaceful societies. Far more than a religion or a faith, Judaism represents a way of life that remains ever inviting, challenging, and rewarding.

As your generation paved a way for others, I hope that my generation, my children's, and my grandchildren's will do the same. We still consider Judaism a sacred way of life. As a people, we perpetually seek kindness, goodness, peace, justice, and holiness.

Endnotes

1
The Notes, December 1955, 298.

2
Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration,* 1880-1920, Vol. III of *The Jewish People in America,* ed. by Henry L. Feingold (5 vols.: Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 137.

3
See my article, "Sheltering Poor and Struggling Jews in New York City, Boston, and Providence, 1863-1930," *The Notes* (November 2012), 346-75.

4
Benton Rosen, "The Providence Conservative Synagogue: Temple Beth Israel," *The Notes* (November 1967), 87-96; Eleanor F. Horvitz, "Temple Beth-Israel: 1921-1981," *The Notes* (November1983), 30-67.

5
In 1921, the congregation's board of trustees had been expanded from nine men to include up to three women. Seating within sanctuary pews was assigned.

6
Much of the following information about Rabbis Gup and Braude was derived from Seebert J. Goldowsky, Temple history published by Beth-El in 1989.

7
See: Treasury Department, U.S. Internal Revenue, *Statistics of Income from Returns of Net Income for 1920,* published 1922; The comparable volume for 1930 was published

in 1932. For vivid evidence of the Depression's economic impact on a small number of Providence families, see: Bob Jacobson, "The Olympic Club at the JCC: A Second Look at a 1932 Photo," *The Notes* (November 2021), 480-89.

8
Marilyn Halter with Robert L. Hall, "Introduction: Ethnic and Racial Identity," in Burt Feintuch and David H. Waters, eds., *The Encyclopedia of New England: The Culture and History of an American Region* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 333.

9
I am most grateful to Rebecca Valentine, reference librarian at the Rhode Island Historical Society's Robinson Research Center, for helping me identify the schools that many Confirmands attended.

10
Thomas D. Snyder, ed., *120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Report* (Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics, 1993), 31.

11
See my article, Moses Brown's Jewish Alumni: 1920 through 1976," *The Notes* (November 2020), 342-351.

12
Harris K. Weiner, "David Bazar: PCD Stalwart and Community Leader," *The Notes* (November 2021), 639.

13
See my article, "Class of 1896: Three Pawtucket Lads at Harvard," *The Notes* (November 2014), 620.

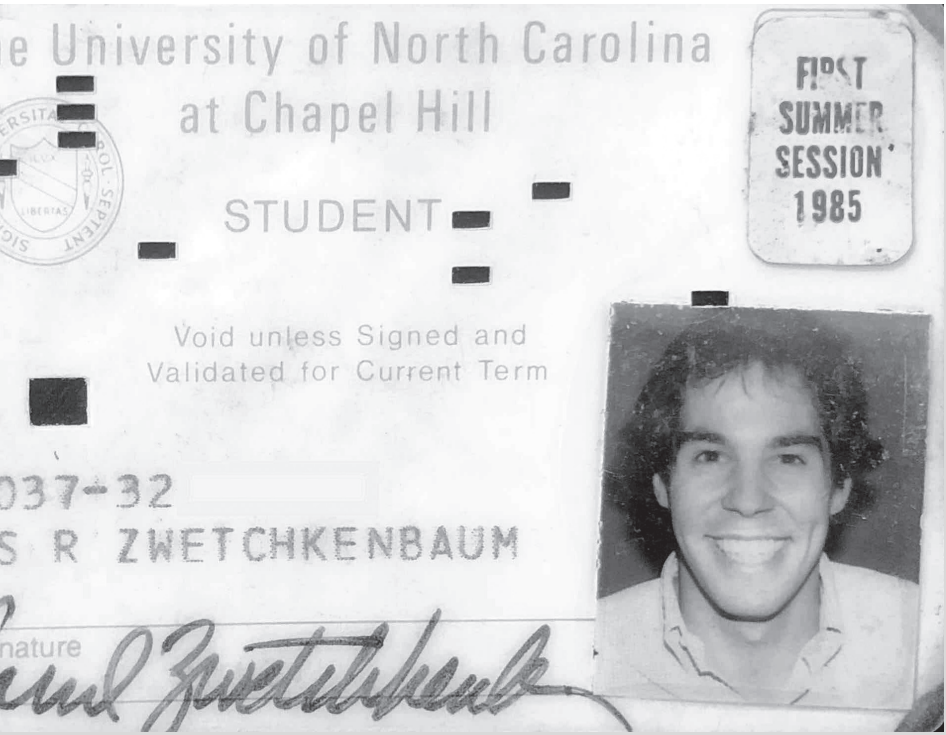
14
Ibid., 619.

15
Jennifer Illuzi and Arthur P. Urbano, "Sons of Providence: The Education and Integration of Jews at Providence College, 1917-1965," *The Notes* (November 2017), 534-5. Joel Novogroski of Westerly enrolled in the College's two-year premedical program but stayed only a year before transferring to the University of Pennsylvania. The first Jew to complete this program was Benjamin Burr from Pawtucket in 1924. The first Jews to earn a bachelor's degree at PC was Siegfried Arnold from Providence in 1930.

16
Charles J. Fox, Jr.'s daughter, E. Jill Fox Tobak, was the last Fox who served as president of C. J. Fox. The company was sold in 2008. A 1966 Confirmand, she also served as Temple president from 2014 to 2016.

17
In January 1943, Elsie's younger sister, Lois (1915-2006) was living in New York City when she enlisted in the Women's Army Corps. She listed her occupation as "statistical clerk and compiler." It is not known how long she served or where she was stationed. It appears that she never married. Her last home was in East Hampton, New York, but her burial site is unknown.

18
During the mid-1930s, Lester Jacobs, born in 1914, lived at 55 Warrington Street. His surname suggests that he was a Jew, but this is impossible to verify. He became a volunteer in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and in 1937 sailed to Spain to fight for democracy in its civil war. He sacrificed his life, and his burial place is unknown. Jacobs was one of ten American volunteers from Rhode Island, and three others gave their lives. See my article, "Lester Jacobs: Jewish Volunteer in the Spanish Civil War," *The Notes* (November 2001), 356-74.



dental school, University of North Carolina, 1985

My Jewish Experiences in Dentistry

Samuel R. Zwetchkenbaum

Sam and I met in about 1988, when, at least initially, we were enjoying some quiet time in Temple Beth-El's Braude Library. Then I probably interrupted him to ask a question or remarked about something fascinating that I had discovered. Unfortunately, I was not yet aware of his deepening commitment to dentistry and could not have imagined all that he would achieve. But we resumed our friendship a few years ago, happily once again, at Beth-El.

Given his skill, kindness, and dedication, I wish that I had been Sam's patient. But Betsey and I can hardly complain, for we were patients of a talented Jewish dentist – also our neighbor- for nearly 30 years, until his recent retirement. We also still feel grateful to his similarly kind and caring staff.

Are dentists relatively quiet or reticent, at least compared to historians, lawyers, and rabbis? No doubt, they communicate primarily through their eyes and hands. Accordingly, when writing this essay, Sam thought he had finished several times, but I kept asking for more.

Alas, few dentists have contributed to our journal. The most important article by far was Dr. Abraham Schwartz's "Jewish Dentists of Rhode Island," published in our 1994 issue. As with several professions and occupations, it's time for a younger generation to step up, take pride, and update and expand the historical record.

Deciding on Dentistry

My interest in dentistry came on very suddenly in 1981. One morning during my junior year at Brown, I was at the Sciences Library on Thayer Street, trying to write a paper for my finance class. I had chosen to concentrate in economics because I thought it would prepare me for a career in business with my father, Joseph, but I was completely bored by things such as profit and loss statements.

So I took a break from my writing and walked through the stacks. I spotted a couple of books on dentistry, flipped through the pages, and was fascinated. I decided then and there to become a dentist.

It didn't hurt that my mother's father, Charles Basseches, enjoyed a long career as a dentist in Washington, DC, before he retired from dental practice in his mid-eighties. My grandmother, Rose, had passed away shortly after, and we moved my grandfather to Providence to be closer to us. Eager to tell him of my career decision, I dashed to Hattie Ide Chaffee Nursing Home in East Providence, where he was a resident, and delivered the news. I like to think that he understood and gave his support, even though Parkinson's had limited his ability to communicate.

Energized to pursue my chosen career, I contacted Rhode Island Hospital and offered to volunteer at the Samuels Dental Clinic, which had been established in 1930 through a $300,000 gift by Col. Joseph Samuels, a founder of the Outlet Company. The clinic opened in 1931, and eight years later received a bequest of $250,000 from Col. Samuels.[1] I had passed the clinic hundreds of times driving on Interstate 95 and thought it would be a great opportunity to see what kind of dentistry was practiced there. Forty years ago, Dr. Phillip Finkle, a Jewish orthodontist from Woonsocket[2], took me under his wing that summer, and I was hooked.

But surely there were other factors that helped prepare me for a

career in dentistry. Like many of my Jewish friends growing up on the East Side during the 1970s, I attended Temple Beth-El. My mother had grown up in the Reform movement in Washington, DC. Having become a bar mitzvah in May 1974, I appreciated the support I received from Cantor Norman Gewirtz and Rabbi Leslie Gutterman. I enjoyed religious and Hebrew school classes, especially because my teachers were caring and committed. I continued through post-Confirmation and was active in the Temple's youth group, PROVTY.

Judaism has been an important part of my identity both then and now. My experience attending Moses Brown, a Quaker school, also instilled within me the importance of community service and putting the needs of others first.

with father, Joseph, and Providence's Mayor Joe Doorley at ribbon-cutting for Warwick Shoppers World, ca. 1967

Dental School and Advanced Training

The director of the Samuels Clinic, Dr. Frank Mastrola, recommended that I apply to the University of North Carolina School of Dentistry, one of the top dental schools in the country, so I sent away for a catalogue (this was years before the internet!). When the catalog arrived in the mail,

my mother, Rissy, thought it was a mistake, and almost threw it out. She couldn't imagine me going to school outside of Rhode Island, never mind in the South. But after receiving all of my education in Rhode Island (at the three Browns: John Brown Francis Elementary in Warwick, Moses Brown, and Brown University), I was ready to spread my wings.

I was accepted to UNC and moved down to Chapel Hill in the summer of 1983. In many ways, it was a different world for me. Official school activities included prayers before meals that mentioned Jesus Christ. This came as a surprise to me and the seven other Jewish students in my class, all of us from out-of-state, including two from New York. We quietly tolerated the school's rituals because we knew we were going to get a great education with a much lower tuition than at private schools in the Northeast.

I hadn't set foot in Hillel more than once during in my four years at Brown. Yet, at UNC, I sought it out in the first week and attended activities regularly. Hillel offered an all-you-can-eat Shabbat chicken dinner after services for only $2. Years later, when I in turn was asked for a donation, I realized that these meals were subsidized by alumni. With a small Jewish population and a small space, there was room for just one type of service, and it leaned more Conservative, but within a short time I was comfortable with it.

There were several Jewish faculty at the dental school. They included: Beryl Slome, who grew up in South Africa and taught oral diagnosis; Mel Kantor, a young faculty member from New York who taught oral radiology; and Nathan Schupper, a beloved older prosthodontist from New Jersey who was teaching dentures as a retirement job.

The Jewish dental students also were grateful to Dr. Steve Mackler, a Jewish dentist in the area and Dr. Slome's friend, who sought us out and became our mentor. He introduced us to the dental clinic in the Blumenthal Home, a Jewish institution in Winston-Salem, about 80 miles west of Chapel Hill. It was great to see the care Blumenthal provided; this sparked my desire to help older adults as part of my career.

After graduation, I did a one-year dental residency at Hen-

nepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis. Mel Kantor, who had trained there about five years earlier, recommended this program. The year spent in a hospital increased my capacity to manage patients with complex medical histories, treat emergencies, and remove even the most difficult teeth.

Gaining Experience in Providence

In 1988 I returned to Providence, where I worked Monday through Thursday at Capitol Hill Health Center on Candace Street in the Smith Hill neighborhood. I had visited this clinic several times when I came back from school vacation and loved the idea of working in an underserved community alongside professionals in other health fields. The previous dentist had moved to Franklin, Massachusetts, to start a private practice. We accepted Medicaid and had sliding fees based on income. The patient population included recent arrivals from around the globe. They had significant dental needs, which made me feel useful every day.

I learned to say "open your mouth" in Spanish, Portuguese, Lao, Khmer, and many other languages. We had instruction sheets for what to do after an extraction in 10 different languages. With the newer Soviet refugees, most of whom were Jewish, it was necessary to have instructions in Russian as well. I worked with Dr. Boris Skurkovich, one of the pediatricians at the health center, to create instructions in Russian. In 1989, we published this translation in the journal of Alpha Omega, the Jewish dental fraternity, and it was shared across the country for other dentists to use.

My schedule at Capitol Hill meant my Fridays were free. My family's longtime friend, Barbara Rosen, a retired dental hygienist and a volunteer at the Jewish Home for the Aged, told me there might be an opportunity to work in its dental clinic. I wanted to replicate the good work I had seen at the Blumenthal Home. I learned that the older adults residing at the Jewish Home had a lot of dental needs, and it was often difficult for them to travel for appointments.

Max and Ruth Alperin had donated funds to outfit a room with a dental chair in the Home's medical suite. On Tuesdays, Dr. Fred Musen, a Jewish veteran of the Korean War with a practice on

Hope Street, treated patients, and I started doing the same on Friday mornings. I did cleanings, fillings, extractions, and dentures. Mrs. Rosen was both my assistant and interpreter because some of our older patients were more comfortable speaking Yiddish. I learned yet another way to say "open your mouth" (*effen deyn moyl*), and when someone received new dentures and showed off a new smile, she'd remark, *Shayna punim* ("pretty face").

Making dentures required a few steps and the assistance of a laboratory. I found a dental laboratory at the north end of East Avenue that made the models, set teeth in wax, and processed the dentures into acrylic. I loved learning about how dentures were made, especially by a certain lab technician. I peered over her shoulder as she mixed and poured the stone, but she got nervous when I watched her work. She decided to let me do the work myself, so she gave me my own workspace. The dental lab is no longer there, and the building now houses a check-cashing business, but whenever I drive by, I remember fondly making dentures.

Friday mornings were very lively at the Jewish Home, with plenty of activity in the lobby. I'd see a rabbi or two preparing for Shabbat services; Sylvia (Mrs. Herbert) Brown, once my neighbor, was assembling a group of women to knit baby sweaters as a fundraiser, and family members were taking loved ones in and out for various reasons. This is a far cry from the much quieter nursing home lobbies of today.

One morning I had a patient waiting in the medical suite for her denture appointment. A gift box of chocolate-covered cashews was brought for one of the nurses, who set it on the table next to my waiting patient. How unfortunate, I thought, to sit next to tempting chocolates yet not be able to eat them due to lack of teeth. Time passed, and I was finally ready to see this woman. As I brought her wheelchair forward, I found where she had left a neat pile of perfectly cleaned cashews. She had eaten her chocolate!

The Jewish Home was committed to providing high-quality oral health care for its residents, as it recognized the importance of oral health to overall quality of life. At the time, a brief survey of residents revealed that about half were missing all of their teeth,

Bar Mitzvah at Beth-El, 1974: Sam in front row, far right

which necessitated the use of full dentures. That is vastly different from today, when fewer than 12% of Rhode Islanders over the age of 65 are missing all their teeth. I worked closely with the director of nursing, Muriel Glantz, to provide mouth care education to certified nursing assistants (CNAs), who worked on the floors to brush residents' teeth and clean their dentures.

Eventually, Mrs. Rosen needed to cut back on the time she could work with me due to other volunteer commitments. She introduced me to Roberta Dickens, a dental hygienist related to the family that owned Belwing Turkey in Seekonk. Roberta was a ray of sunshine and made patients feel that we were genuinely glad they had come to see us. I learned from her the importance of always being upbeat and carrying on a pleasant conversation with patients, no matter how tired or cranky I might have felt. On our downtime, we made it a point to label every denture in the home with a resident's name. This way, if a denture got lost, it would be easy to identify the owner.

I was grateful to my many mentors, and I am proud to have earned a good reputation caring for older adults. One day I got a call from Dr. Steven Peiser, a friend and Providence periodontist, who has been a good source of guidance to this day. An older patient whom he had treated reached a point where his few remaining teeth needed to be removed, and he wanted dentures. Unfortunately, this patient also had a physical disability and was unable to leave his home. Would I be able to do impressions of his teeth and other steps toward making dentures in his home? I told him I could and would.

Eventually I learned that the patient was Max Alperin, who had done so much for the Jewish Home, including funding the den-

tal chair. I began a series of visits to his house off of Cole Avenue and did the work in its kitchen. His wife, Ruth, was very gracious and accommodating.[3] Grinding dentures can make a lot of dust; without a good vacuum, it can get all over the place. To this day, whenever I go down Cole Avenue and see the house, I remember the dusty mess I made! Nevertheless, Ruth was very grateful and offered to donate something to the dental clinic. I told her about a new machine which used ultraviolet light to help acrylic resin set quickly for some of the denture steps, and she told me to purchase it.

I typically worked only mornings on those Fridays at the Jewish Home, then went to my parents' house on nearby Lorimer Avenue for lunch, and then caught up on errands in the afternoon. One day I had stayed later, and a nurse came down as I was getting ready to leave. She asked if I'd see one more patient- a retired physician in his nineties with dementia- who had worn his teeth down to sharp little points, which were now cutting his tongue and lip. When the nurse told me his name, my heart stopped. Dr. Banice Feinberg had not only been the pediatrician for my siblings and me, but he had also treated my Dad during the late 1930s, when he was growing up in Taunton![4] Dr. Feinberg gave us all our vaccinations and rewarded good behavior with a lollipop. He had dedicated his life to helping others perhaps at the expense of his own dental needs. Of course, I would stay and see him.

He came down to the clinic, and I used a burr to smooth down sharp areas so they would no longer cause harm. It was a surreal experience providing care to someone who had cared for me. Unfortunately, Dr. Feinberg did not remember me, but with a bit of prodding he remembered my older brother, John, who had had more regular visits for his asthma.

After two years at the Jewish Home, I realized I wanted further training to serve older adults more effectively. I spoke with Dr. Steven Gordon, who taught geriatric dentistry at Boston University. He suggested I do an advanced program in prosthodontics to increase my ability to do difficult dentures, so I pursued training from 1990 to 1992 at what is now Rutgers School of Dental Medicine in Newark. (It had been known as the University of Medicine and

Dentistry of New Jersey). I learned some new skills there, and I also encountered an individual who had done dentistry on a kibbutz. He persuaded me to provide such care during the summer, which I had off.

Israel

I made some calls and applied through American Dental Volunteers for Israel. I was initially assigned to Kibbutz HaGoshrim in the north. It was a posh kibbutz because one of its members had invented EpiLady, an electrical device used to remove leg hair. But the kibbutz was also very close to the Golan Heights, and this made my mother nervous, considering the proximity to Lebanon and potential bombing from across the border. This was mid-1991, and Israel had seen Scud missiles from Iraq. These were most successfully intercepted by Patriot missiles.

So I requested a different location and was assigned to Kibbutz Barkai, a *lo-dati* or non-religious kibbutz located between Hadera and Afula. While farming was its primary work, it also manufactured plastic sheeting and bubble wrap.

Because I was still technically a student, I applied for and was granted funding from Rhode Island's Bureau of Jewish Education to help pay for my flight. I worked on Barkai in a small dental clinic with my assistant, who was from Morocco and perhaps the only adult on the kibbutz who did not speak English. But between Hebrew, which I learned at an *ulpan* in New Jersey, and the French I had learned at Moses Brown, we did okay.

I saw patients of all ages, including some older adults, most of whom had been founding pioneers of the kibbutz in 1940. I remember a patient who came in straight from the farm with mud on his boots and complaining of several cavities. His name was Shaul, and he was a gentle giant. He had significant dental disease, which defied a stereotype I may have held that most Jews had healthy teeth. We scheduled several appointments and completed his fillings. During breaks between patients, my assistant offered me cakes and Nescafe. "*Atah rotzeh mashihu l'shtot?*" he asked. "*Do you want something to drink?*"

Overall the kibbutz was a great place to be with lots of activity, from communal meals to evening tennis. I made a lot of friends that summer and enjoyed being able to contribute to its important work by helping people achieve improved oral health. At night I relaxed at the kibbutz pub and saw many of my patients, including Shaul. I received Goldstar beer for free and played checkers with some of the newly arrived Russian immigrants. They practiced their Hebrew with me; by contrast, the Israelis only wanted to speak English.

The Russians were assigned to the kibbutz's kitchen, and their cooking was awful. I didn't want to eat their food. A couple of times I walked to the Wadi Ara Road, now Highway 65, to catch the Egged bus to the mall in Hadera. There was an Italian restaurant that served spaghetti and meatballs. Ironically, I found out that the Barkai kitchen did a good job with pork, and I should make sure to have the *basar lavan* (the other "white meat"). It's funny to think that the first pork chop I ever ate was in Israel.

I stayed that month in part of an apartment belonging to a *kibbutznik,* who was away for the summer. I had a small fridge and was given a pineapple juice concentrate that I could mix with still or sparkling water to make a refreshing drink. To this day I have looked for such a concentrate here in the U.S., but have not been successful. Outside my apartment was a pomegranate tree.

On weekends I arranged to leave the kibbutz, either to visit friends who were in Israel or Israelis with whom I had been connected by American friends. Larry Rouslin, a longtime friend from Rhode Island, was traveling that summer and was planning to be in Jerusalem. He had grown up in Barrington, studied at Temple Habonim, had been active in its youth group, and we then went to Brown together. Larry heard about a place, similar to a dormitory or a hostel, where we could stay for free in the Old City. He told me I had to arrive by a certain time and if I was late, I would not be able to enter. It sounded strange, but being graduate students, we did not want to question free accommodations.

This dormitory experience gave me my closest exposure to a Hasidic community. Most of the guests were Americans in their

twenties, and about 15 to 20 men shared a big room with bunk beds. A separate room for women was in another part of the building.

Once we were indoors, all dorm residents were required to maintain strict Shabbat observance. There was a nice dinner followed by *Birkat HaMazon (benching),* more singing, and a lecture pushing us to "be more Jewish." In the morning after services, we were all separated into groups of two or three, and each was led to a different home in Mea Shearim.

I went with Larry to a humble home of a family with several children. We all sat around the table as the father said the *motzi,* cut the challah, and salted it. Lunch was fairly sparse, and it was followed by a Torah lesson that was at a level appropriate for children and nonobservant Americans. This and other weekend trips added more depth to my experience in Israel and gave me more stories for when I returned "home" to the *kibbutzniks,* who were eager to hear stories from the traveling American.

Kenya & Uganda

My final Jewish dental experience that I would like to share took place in the fall of 2007. I planned to go to Kenya as a prosth-

Kibbutz Barkai, Israel, 1991

odontist with Operation Smile, an international, nonprofit organization dedicated to helping children with cleft lip and cleft palate. At that time, I was living in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where I was on the faculty, as a prosthodontist, at the University of Michigan. Having joined the faculty in 1996, I stayed there for 17 years.

While in Ann Arbor, I joined a Conservative synagogue, Beth Israel. I was pleasantly surprised that our rabbi, Rob Dobrusin, was a fellow New Englander and an avid Red Sox fan. As coincidence would have it, a visiting rabbi was scheduled to speak at Beth Israel about Jewish communities in Africa, but his visit was scheduled after my departure to Kenya. Eager to learn more about African Jewish communities, I had reached out to Rabbi Dobrusin and asked him to introduce me to the visiting rabbi in advance of his Ann Arbor trip.

That rabbi put me in touch with Dr. Samson Wamani in Uganda, the physician serving the *Abayudaya* community. *Abayudaya* is Luganda for "People of Judah." This is in fact a Jewish community in eastern Uganda. Samson told me that the community works collaboratively with Christian and Muslim neighbors in both the coffee industry as well as in health and social support services. He asked whether I would come for a period of my choice to do dental work in the area. I agreed to stay for five days. I was already going to be in Africa, and the prospect of both helping and learning about a Jewish community so different from my own sounded like a wonderful and rewarding opportunity.

I found myself very busy in preparing for my visit to Africa. The community had no dental supplies, so it was necessary to collect supplies and materials, such as extraction forceps, gauze, suture material, and anesthetic. I reached out to Detroit members of Alpha Omega, the Jewish dental fraternity, for donations, and I brought these items in a big suitcase to Africa. After volunteering with Operation Smile in Kenya for a week, I got a ride to the Kenya-Uganda border. The border crossing was dusty, confusing, and crowded, and required $50 for a temporary visa.

Upon entry to Uganda, I was met by Samson and another driver. It was Friday, and our goal was to make it to the community in time for Shabbat services, but we first had to stop in the city of

Mbale to pick up another American who was working in the area and wanted to visit. After reaching the crowded city, we drove up to an area where I saw another white person. I figured that she was the one we needed to pick up. She got in the car, and I asked her where she was from. "Providence, Rhode Island," she replied. This was Rachel Salloway, and she had been doing a nursing internship in Kampala, the capital. Imagine being in a place that felt like another world and meeting someone from home!

We arrived just as services were ending but not too late for a nice Friday night chicken dinner. The next morning I attended Shabbat services conducted in a blend of English, Hebrew, and Lugandan. Another surprise: I found that the *siddurim* had stamps indicating they were donated by Brown University Hillel! The melodies sung by the choir were unique and beautiful, but also reflected some traditional African ways of singing, even though the words were in Hebrew. Now you can go on Spotify and type in Abayudaya and hear versions of Adon Olam and Psalms. The service was very lively with a lot of participation from the congregation. Rachel and I were both given *aliyah* honors to say prayers before and after the Torah readings.

I stayed at the three-star Mt. Elgon Hotel in Mbale. A very nice breakfast was served on the patio. Most guests were white and spoke English. One morning I overheard two men at the next table speaking Hebrew. This was a surprise to me, so I introduced myself, and told them what I was doing. I found out that these men worked for a company that was building modern highways in Uganda. Israel had had a strong business relationship with Uganda prior to Idi Amin's presidency during the 1970s, and efforts to resume that relationship were just beginning in the early '90s and continue to this day.

On Sunday, after *Shabbat,* it was time to work. I arrived at the clinic building not knowing what to expect. Samson showed me a room where I could set up and see patients. There was a military-style field chair to perform dental extractions and a bed where I would lay out my instruments and supplies. It was necessary to violate a couple of basic rules of oral surgery. First, it is standard to take radiographs of the tooth in question, which reveal potential problems and assist in preparation. But there was no X-ray machine- only people in pain.

Also, I didn't have any instruments normally used if an extraction turns "surgical." For example, if a tooth fractures below the gumline, I would normally use a "power tool" to relieve some of the binding bone around the tooth. Without that tool, all I could do was just hope that no teeth broke below the gumline!

My luck held out pretty well. I was surprised how easily all of the patients achieved local anesthesia ("got numb"). Was it because I had brought some really good anesthetic or were they already so relaxed and calm that the anesthetic worked well? Or perhaps they're just a very stoic group of people. I placed Surgicel, a resorbable fabric that helps with clotting, in each socket along with a "figure 8" suture for each extraction. Perhaps this was excessive, but I wanted to be sure people would not have problems, especially if I was leaving the country.

I don't consider myself deeply religious or prayerful, but several times, when caring for patients, I have either called on the Almighty for a little bit of assistance or thought that He played a role in the work I was doing and was thus thankful. During my residency in Minneapolis, several colleagues and I treated patients with HIV/AIDS. This was early during that epidemic, and we used a

health clinic, rural Uganda, 2007

special room without an assistant to minimize potential exposures. I remember one patient needed several teeth removed, and his X-ray showed that their roots were deeply imbedded. If his teeth needed more extensive surgery, it would be very hard to do by myself. Fortunately, my small prayer helped him come out without requiring extensive surgery.

Another time, when I was working in Michigan, I drove up to Midland to make a house call on a young man during his last days. He needed a procedure to provide comfort to his mouth. I never drive, let alone work, on Yom Kippur, and it was a challenging visit, but the feeling I experienced driving home let me know it was the right thing to do. My success in doing extractions in Uganda falls into this category of possibly getting help from above.

A young man named Samuel, who was training as a health care assistant, functioned as my dental assistant and interpreter. Some patients spoke English, but most Christians and Muslims spoke only Lugandan. The younger patients were a bit afraid of the needle, but with a little coaxing and help from Samuel, they became stronger and let us work.

Sam is a very common name in both Kenya and Uganda. It gave me a little comfort and made me feel at home.

I taught Samuel how to give post-extraction instructions, and I wrote prescriptions so that Tehilah, the clinic nurse and wife of the Jewish religious leader, would dispense some medications for post-extraction pain control.

Our little dental clinic got quite busy. As soon as one patient exited the chair, a new one was sitting there. But in the beginning, Samuel forgot to clear away the used instruments and the extracted teeth! I had to show him how to do this, clean the room, and perform proper infection control, including instrument sterilization, before seating the next patient.

Time flew by, and I would get very hungry and thirsty. One day, it was 2 PM, and we had been working nonstop. Tehilah took a look at me and could tell I was hungry. She brought me a bottle of water and a *chapatti* (flatbread). That was probably the most delicious *chapatti* I ever had.

After three full clinic days, I began the long journey back to the U.S. Over the years, I have been contacted by several Jewish dentists from North America, who have made a similar journey.

Tikkun Olam

The point of sharing these stories has been both to entertain and to explain that dentistry is a great career to help others and even have some interesting adventures throughout the world. Dentistry provides so many opportunities to fulfill the important Jewish principles of performing *tikkun olam* – helping individuals and repairing the world. Dentistry has also allowed me, even for short periods, to be a part of active and exciting worlds- far different from my own- yet very welcoming.

I never thought I'd move back home to Rhode Island. In 2016, however, I was living in Highland Park, New Jersey, doing clinical work and teaching at Rutgers Dental School. A former colleague approached me about an opening in Rhode Island as the state's dental director. I was intrigued by the prospect of returning to Providence and being closer to family. I was also optimistic that I could have some impact on Rhode Islanders' oral health. I received an offer and moved back in November 2016.

My job at the Rhode Island Department of Health is multifaceted. I love that on any given day I can work to affect state health policy, volunteer at dental clinics for uninsured patients, talk to pre-dental students at local colleges, and teach fellow health-care professionals how to make referrals. There's more.

If you know young people who are creative, like to make things with their hands, and want to help others, please encourage them to consider a dental career. Rhode Island could use more dentists! Anyone practicing here, whether in a private practice or in a health center, will be busy and appreciated. I hope that such a colleague can experience that joy of knowing: that all the training is worth it for the opportunity to help someone.

Endnotes

1
See: Dr. Abraham Schwartz's article, mentioned in the opening paragraphs of this article, pp. 430-1. The clinic has received additional gifts from the larger Samuels family.

2
A Providence native, Dr. Philip D. Finkle (1911-1998) was a graduate of the University of Rhode Island and McGill University Dental School. After completing advanced studies at Tufts Dental School, he specialized in orthodontics. Aside from his military service, Dr. Finkle lived and practiced in Woonsocket from 1941 until 1976, when he returned to Providence. He was a member of numerous Jewish organizations, including Temple Beth-El.

3
Both the Alperins, Max (1910-1994) and Ruth (1911-2003), were outstanding Jewish communal leaders. On June 1, 1975, the new Jewish Federation wing of the Jewish Community Center was dedicated in their honor. Max had enjoyed a successful career as the president of Carol Cable Company and then as president and chairman of Avnet, Inc. As a resident of Pawtucket, he had chaired Pawtucket's United Jewish Appeal, which expanded to become the Blackstone Valley U.J.A. In 1945 he became a founder of Providence's General Jewish Committee and served as its president from 1968 to 1974. At the close of his term, the Committee became the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, and he still holds the record as its longest-serving president and as president of its successor organization, the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island.

Max was a leader of numerous Jewish communal institutions, including: Temple Emanu-El, Miriam Hospital, and the Jewish Home. Both he and Ruth were the major benefactors of the Alperin Schechter Day School, later known as the Jewish Community Day School of Rhode Island, which was founded in 1978. Another of the family's major gifts was the Alperin Building at the Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee, which opened in the Jordan Valley in 1974.

4
Banice was born in Brooklyn in 1901, and he and his family moved to Providence by 1915. It is not known where he may have earned an undergraduate degree, but he graduated from Tufts Medical School in 1925. He served as an intern and a resident at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston before returning to Providence, where he established his independent practice as a pediatrician.

In 1941, Dr. Feinberg became the founding president of the Children's Heart Association in Rhode Island. During World War II, as a lieutenant commander in the Navy, he served in the South Pacific. In 1955, Dr. Feinberg became chief of pediatrics at Rhode Island Hospital, and two years later served as president of the Rhode Island Heart Association. From 1957 to 1962, Dr. Feinberg was Rhode Island's chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics and later served as president of the New England Pediatric Society.

Dr. Feinberg was a member of Temple Emanu-El. He spent his final years at the Jewish Home.

portrait at International Congress of Medieval Studies

In and Out of Judaism

Felicia Nimue Ackerman

A distinguished philosopher and writer, the author earned her bachelor's degree summa cum laude at Cornell in 1968 and her doctorate at Michigan in 1976. Having already joined the Brown faculty in 1974, Prof. Ackerman is quickly approaching a half-century of service. Among her favorite fields of inquiry are bio-ethics and ethical and political issues expressed in literature. She is completing a book, *Ethics and Character in Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur.* Indeed, her first and middle names (and her cat's) are derived from this classic.

In addition to numerous scholarly studies, Prof. Ackerman has published more than 16 short stories. One, which won an O. Henry Award, appeared in *Prize Short Stories of 1990.*

Prof. Ackerman has also written more than 200 poems, several of which have been published. A few poems grace the following article.

The author is well known beyond the Brown campus for her frequent essays in *The Providence Journal.* No doubt, however, she is best known for her recurring letters to the editors of numerous publications. Indeed, she estimates that approximately 300 of her letters have been published over the decades in various sections of *The New York Times.* In the July 31, 2022 issue of its "Book Review," a writer sarcastically suggested "someone should keep a running tally" because her published submissions seem to be "a slow-moving literary equivalent of Nathan's hot dog competition."

But Prof. Ackerman does not yet hold a Guinness World Record for her letter-writing endeavors. In 2020, a Spaniard won for 84 letters published in one newspaper that year. And in 2006, an Indian had won for 456 letters published over a lifetime.

Among many issues raised in the following article, Prof. Ackerman discusses the extent to which she considers herself a Jew. In a profile published in the April 3, 2020 issue of *Jewish Rhode Island,* Michael Schemaille asked this question and several others.

A Poem: *At the Beth Elohim Sunday School, 1956*

"Who in the Bible would you like to be?"
That's what Miss Rosenthal asked in grade three.
"Esther," said Judy, and "Moses," said Lee.
I said, "Methuselah's perfect for me."

1

"Are you Jewish?"

People sometimes ask me that. I assume they are going by my last name, face, or Brooklyn Jewish accent. Having met me at ACLU meetings several years ago, George Goodwin could have had any of these things in mind when, after reading some of my letters in *The New York Times,* he recently sent me an email saying, "I do not know if you are Jewish or the degree to which Judaism or Jewish civilization is important to you. I'm wondering, however, if you may like to discuss some of your thoughts in an article for my journal."

I replied that I stopped being Jewish when I was twelve. I added that this hadn't kept me from publishing in Jewish periodicals and that I would be happy to include his.

Like many people, he figured I meant I had become a nonobservant Jew. He was right that I had become nonobservant. I had never been very observant, but I had accompanied my parents to temple on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. At twelve, I stopped doing that. I also dropped out of the Beth Elohim Sunday school mentioned in the poem above, which is modeled on a real incident there, although I have altered all the people's names to fit the meter. (By the way, Janet Yellen, the current Secretary of the Treasury and a Pembroke alumna of 1967, who, I am sure, has no memory of me, was in my Sunday school class. I triumphed over her and all the other Beth Elohim students by winning the school-wide "hot potato" contest at the tender age of nine.)

My parents, Reform Jews and orthodox liberals, took my departure from Judaism in stride. They were receptive to my argument that it would be un-American to deny freedom of religion to anyone, including one's own children. They even agreed to summon me when the main ceremonial part of family seders was over so I

could join the family for the delectable meal. Having abandoned the Orthodox Judaism of their own parents, my parents were accustomed to the idea of making fundamental changes in one's life. The following poem is accurate, except that my immigrant father, although initially unquestioning of Orthodoxy, was not a Talmudic scholar:

How Thrilled

My father came from a fleck of a town
That was sometimes in Russia and sometimes in Poland.
He spent his youth shivering over the Talmud,
Scarcely noticing he was hungry and cold,
Except to call it God's will.
Can you imagine?
Can you imagine how thrilled he was
To learn in America that he had the right to pursue happiness?[1]

My departure from being Jewish, however, went beyond nonobservance. It meant giving up my Jewish identity and no longer considering myself a Jew at all. For me, being a Jew is like being a New Yorker. It is part of my background and has undoubtedly shaped me in deeper ways than simply giving me some nice memories. But is not who I am now. I do not feel a special bond with Jews any more than I feel a special bond with New Yorkers. My bonds are based purely on shared interests, values, and personal interactions.

2

Like virtually all religions and ethnicities, Judaism and Jewishness offer much that I can value. For example, I value Maimonides's view that ideally, charity will be anonymous. This protects the dignity and privacy of recipients. Another aspect of Jewish charity that I value is reflected in Hugh Nissenson's marvelous short story "Charity," which I use in my Brown University course on "Ethical Themes in the Contemporary American Short Story," where we also discuss Maimonides's eight levels of charity.

The story's narrator is a twelve-year-old Jewish boy whose

mother is in the hospital with pneumonia in the days before antibiotics. Although the family is desperately poor, every Friday the father brings home an even poorer Jewish scholar to share the family's meager Sabbath dinner. He persists in this practice even when his wife is hospitalized, telling his son, "Charity saves from death" and inviting the scholar to stay for the night and next day. This convinces the son that his mother will recover (although the reader is told at the outset that she did not). When he conveys this belief to his father, the father demands indignantly, "Is that what you think a mitzvah is? A bribe offered the Almighty?" Here is how the story ends:

> "'But you said so. You said that charity saves from death.' Rivkin [the poor scholar] groaned in his sleep."
> 'No, not Mama,' my father said in a hoarse voice. 'Him.'"[2]

The charity in this story is obviously not anonymous. But it offers an enlightening contrast to the idea that the purpose of charity is to help the giver gain favor with God. Moreover, Maimonides's eight levels of charity do not take into account whether the charitable donation poses a hardship for the giver, an omission reflecting a similar Jewish focus on the recipient. That is precisely where I think the focus belongs.

Fiction is the area where Judaism has had the most influence in my life, since I read lots of fiction and also teach it. I write it as well and have had four short stories in Jewish magazines, three in *Commentary* and one in *Moment.* The one in Moment has the most in the way of Jewish content. The protagonist is a Holocaust survivor who goes to a series of group meetings for survivors. She hopes to find individual attention and affection. Misreading the group leader's fascination with her life story, she is devastated to learn that he is interested in her only as a Holocaust survivor and research subject.[3]

My only other story with any Jewish content first appeared in *Commentary.* The protagonist, an American philosophy professor like me, mentions in passing that she has taught in Israel. She says, "[T]here I was, halfway around the world, and I didn't know anyone,

and I didn't know Hebrew, and I couldn't find my way anywhere. And everyone kept saying to me, 'Now that you're in Israel, don't you feel that you've come home?'" She adds, "I liked it there, though. A country where three times as many people smoke as jog obviously has plenty going for it."[4]

I have also taught in Israel, not for Jewish-identity reasons, but for the same reason I have taught in South Korea: I was invited to do so. I travel abroad to experience cultures that are new to me, not to feel at home. When I want to feel at home, I stay at home. Like my story's protagonist, I loved Israelis' lack of self-righteousness about health and fitness. I also loved their propensity for intellectual argument, their music and folk dancing, and the physical beauty of the country. Moreover, Israel was the only place I have lived since leaving Brooklyn where no one suggested I was peculiar for disliking booze. But the child-centered and communitarian nature of Israeli society was unappealing to me as was the gulf between Israel's Arab and Jewish citizens. And I think Israel simply has got to get out of the Occupied Territories.

Israel has also figured in my only newspaper letter about a specifically Jewish issue. I write lots of letters to editors of newspapers and magazines. Only a miniscule proportion get published, but over the decades I have had about 300 letters in *The New York Times* alone. Here is the one about Israel, which was published in 2007:

> "How wonderful that a book has been published criticizing America's pro-Israel lobby. How wonderful that the pro-Israel lobby is defending itself. What could be more American than political controversy? Let freedom ring!"[5]

3

Many writers of Jewish fiction have been important to me. One of the first was Herman Wouk, whose novel *Marjorie Morningstar* was filmed near the upstate New York village where my family was spending the summer. Several girls in the summer colony were extras in the crowd scenes, and I regretted being too young to join them. I never identified with Marjorie, though. She aspired to be

an actress and feared ending up a housewife who was "just another overdressed mama from the suburbs," but I didn't know any overdressed housewives and mamas from the suburbs. My own mother worked outside the home as did most of my friends' mothers. My pediatrician and my dermatologist were both women. My fear was of ending up like Marjorie's lover, whose lack of self-discipline made him fritter away what abilities he had.

Another Jewish writer I value is, unsurprisingly, Philip Roth. I'm not crazy about his novella *Goodbye, Columbus,* which strikes me as full of cheap shots pandering to urban Jews, like the ones I grew up among, who enjoy feeling more sophisticated than their suburban counterparts. But I love the five short stories in the same book. My favorite, "Eli, the Fanatic," conveys the idea that Orthodox Judaism offers a more profound outlook than psychoanalysis. This resonates with me, because, although Orthodox Judaism clashes with my own outlook, psychiatric ideas about mental health clash even more and have always been much more pervasive in my circles. I also admire Roth's essay "Writing About Jews," which demolishes such criticisms as that he failed "to provide a balanced portrayal of Jews as we know them,"[6] as if that were what fiction was supposed to do.

Chaim Potok is an additional Jewish writer whose response to ethnocentric criticism has impressed me. I attended a lecture of his where someone in the audience asked whether Potok thought writers like Roth were contributing to antisemitism. Although Potok's reply began, "Well, they're certainly not doing us any good," he went on to point out that novels and stories could not be dismissed on that basis without undermining the most important thing about fiction.

I admire Potok's fiction too. *The Chosen* has been especially interesting to me for its portrayal of the Orthodox Talmudist David Malter as liberal and daring in his innovative method of Talmudic textual criticism. Liberal and daring hardly fit my image of Orthodox Jews, but Potok made me appreciate how these traits are relative to context. So did *The World of the Yeshiva,* a study by the sociologist William Helmreich, which made me aware of variety in the ultra-Orthodox word I had formerly assumed to be monolithic.

4

Helmreich is hardly the only Jewish sociologist whose work I admire. I also admire those who joined the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, and Anti-Defamation League in objecting to the parochial view that director of a college Jewish Studies program had to be a Jew.[7]

David Gelernter is yet another writer whose Jewish fiction I value. There is probably a context in which even this ardent Trump-supporter and climate-change denier counts as liberal. But his series of short stories in *Commentary* exudes hostility toward liberal ideas as I understand them. The stories celebrate Steven Eskanazzi, a strictly Orthodox rabbi obsessed with a glamorous and sexy irreligious woman whom he despises and longs for. Gelernter himself despises much of what I believe in, but he has enriched my life through his riveting stories exploring the conflict between moral conviction and sexual passion.

The final Jewish writer I will discuss here is Joanne Greenberg. Not all of her vast output has Jewish content, and her most famous novel, *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden,* although very well-written, has a salvation-through-psychiatry theme that I find tiresome. Far more original is her science-fiction short story "Things in Their Season,"[8] in which a group of Talmud students go to great lengths to prolong the life of their terminally ill 71-year-old rabbi. As the poem opening my article here indicates, I value longevity. So I think the Jewish value of life-prolongation could hardly be more important and timely in the face of the rampant present-day pressure on the old and ill to accept death and bow out promptly, gracefully, and inexpensively.

Not all Jews share this value, of course. A prominent exception was Leon Kass, an observant Jew who served as head of President George W. Bush's Commission on Bioethics and opposed attempts to extend the maximum human life span. But he admitted he was an outlier among "Jewish commentators on . . . medical ethics [who] nearly always come down strongly in favor of medical progress and on the side of . . . longer life."[9]

So do I. Here are three of my poems along these lines:

Death Can Be Good

Death can be good.
I'll tell you how.
Just have it come
Decades from now.[10]

A Writer May Clamor

A writer may clamor
To give death some glamour,
But this reader thinks:
Quite simply, death stinks.[11]

I'll maintain to my last breath
Loving life means fearing death.[12]

And here is my poem imagining a future person's reaction to naysayers like Kass:

Song of a Better Day

Children of the present age,
Reading this indignant page,
Know that in a former time,
Longer life was thought a crime.

Elders needing doctors' care
Cost us more than we can spare.
Elders who retain their health
Rob the young of jobs and wealth.

Fourscore years are all you need.
Seeking more reveals your greed.
Live your numbered years with zest.
Then go sweetly to your rest."
So the pundits used to say
Till we reached a better day.
Children, how our lifespans grew:
I'm 300 – you'll be too.[13]

I admire Jewish views about the beginning of life as well. I was not surprised to read that, when it comes to reproductive rights, Jews are the most pro-choice religious group in America.[14] But it did surprise me to learn that Orthodox Judaism, although generally opposing abortion, mandates it when the mother's own life is at stake.

5

In the 1960s, Levy's Jewish Rye bread ran an advertising campaign employing the slogan, "You don't have to be Jewish to love Levy's," which portrayed ecstatic eaters who were supposed to be obviously not Jewish, such as a Black child.[15] Of course, this was off the mark, because there were Black Jews even in those days. But the underlying idea was spot-on. You don't have to be Jewish to love Jew-

ish food (I don't love rye bread, but I adore hamantaschen, matzo *brei,* and especially *teiglach*), and you don't have to be Jewish to love Jewish fiction, Jewish music, Jewish philosophy, and Jewish sociology. You can love anything. Everything is everyone's heritage.

Endnotes

1
This poem first appeared in *The Providence Journal,* February 16, 2009: C4.

2
Hugh Nissenson, "Charity," in his *The Elephant and My Jewish Problem* (Harper & Row, 1988), p. 81.

3
"Have an After Eight Mint," *Moment,* April 1987: 50-57.

4
"The Forecasting Game," in W. Abrahams (ed.), *Prize Stories 1990: The O. Henry Awards* (Doubleday): 315-35.

5
https://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/18/opinion/l18israel.html (accessed August 1 2022).

6
Philip Roth, "Writing About Jews," Commentary, December 1963.

7
https://jweekly.com/1996/08/16/debate-rages-over-non-jewish-head-of-jewish-studies/ (accessed July 27, 2022).

8
Joanne Greenberg, "Things in Their Season," in her *High Crimes and Misdemeanors* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977), pp. 19-48.

9
Leon Kass, *Life, Liberty and the Defense of Dignity: The Challenge for Bioethics* (Encounter Books, 2002), p. 258.

10
Felicia Nimue Ackerman, "Death Can Be Good," Time Magazine, March 20, 2017: 2.

11
https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/10/books/review/letters-every-college-girls-dream.html (accessed August 1, 2022).

12
https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/28/opinion/letters/death-dying.html (accessed, August 1, 2022).

13
A version of this poem appeared in *The Providence Journal,* January 31, 2014,

14
https://www.jpost.com/international/article-706418 (accessed July 27, 2022).

15
https://fontsinuse.com/uses/14355/levy-s-ad-campaign-you-don-t-have-to-be-jewis (accessed July 27, 2022).

Fink at Wayland Manor

The Wayland Manor and Other Curiosities

Michael Fink

This is Mike's eighteenth annual contribution to *The Notes* during my editorship. Yes, his *chai* article. He skipped my first issue, in 2004, probably because he was still recovering from his own editorship of our journal, which spanned three years (1985-87). Or perhaps I was not yet fully aware of his magical, mysterious, and migratory powers!

The first of Mike's articles that I was privileged to publish was entitled "Mr. RISD." It began with his induction as a faculty member in the summer of 1957. Thus, his appointment, which reached its culmination in May of this year, lasted no fewer than 65 years! Yes, nearly two-thirds of a century. This record will never be surpassed at RISD, another Rhode Island institution or probably anywhere else! But Mike was not yet ready to retire! Indeed, he recently mentioned that he has applied for a lectureship at a nearby institution.

I regret to report, however, that the completion of Mike's extraordinary tenure was barely noted at RISD. Yes, he was invited to lead the graduation ceremony's academic procession, but he was not presented with a heartfelt letter of appreciation, let alone a framed proclamation. How about an honorary degree? Yes, I'm aware that he was designated an honorary alumnus after 40 years of service.

Fearing that the lights in his office would merely be turned off, I showed up at the last session of one of his courses. Yes, I again wanted to see and hear this legendary professor in action, but I also wanted to share a short and simple message with his students: "Thank you, 'Mr. RISD', for your extraordinary inspiration and impact."

In the same spirit, I would like to publicly thank Mike for the wit and wisdom that he has thus far so graciously and generously shared with our readers, another category of students. We are so deeply grateful. *Yasher Koach! Vivre Professeur Michel!*

After enjoying a coffee rendezvous at L'Artisan, the East Side's sidewalk café, our editor, George Goodwin, and I were crossing Wayland Avenue. As we passed the Wayland Manor, my companion came up with a suggestion about this seven-story structure built in 1927. "Can you discuss the company that you have kept right here, in this mock-European castle?" At first I was caught off-guard, but in a moment I realized with some surprise that, in truth, I have been connected in multiple chapters to the story of its ever-changing society.

In 1967, for example, I had the marvelous opportunity to host Isaac Bashevis Singer as my guest in a new elective course at RISD entitled "The Jewish Narrative." I had made hotel reservations for this distinguished guest downtown, but he somehow preferred the Wayland Manor over the Biltmore Hotel, and he settled in there comfortably. I invited him to my home, where I prepared a simple salad luncheon.

His lecture in my class and in the evening to a wider audience proved to be a smashing success! A real hit! He was breaking then-new ground with his bold tales of unusual loves, unlikely friendships. And because of these breaks from sentimental clichés, the very typesetters at *The Forward* headquarters made him feel unwelcome in person. He would stop at mailboxes to send in his stories to the office on the Lower East Side.

I myself liked his children's tales and fantasies best, such as the wild idea that the souls of the unborn choose parents and determine their own futures creatively and independently. Sometimes these fantasies were satirical, but never convention-bound. Is this world hell and death? Do we confuse life and birth with their opposites?

Decades later, in 1991, my mother-in-law, Florence Weintraub, called to say that she liked my memoir about my famous visitor. I replied, "I sent it in many years ago." It turned out that *The ProJo* had saved my piece in its "obituary morgue" to use when he passed away! History holds many surprises for us, of course.

In time my brother "Chick" (Charles) resided in the Manor. His own home was in Newport, but he liked being closer to his ar-

chitectural office in Providence, so he took an apartment for weeknights. The lobby became a center for my social life. The "concierge," Chris Hayes, had been my student. He tamed the campus pigeons and befriended the human residents of this amiable set.

One of the apartments belonged to another RISD artist, Patricia Allen, who married Jim Weiss. Her paintings were often inspired by snapshots of friends along the pathways of her progress. The paintings departed from literal illustrations, with creative designs, symbolic and surreal animals, and patterns. She was so prolific that the corridors of the Manor's hallways resembled a special traveling exhibit from the Providence Art Club, of which she was a prizewinning member.

And then, after the passing of my mother-in-law, my father-in-law, Morris, joined Joan Gelch, and they too created a home in the Wayland Manor. They had met while mourning their spouses at Beth-El's daily minyan service. Morris and Joan welcomed each other's families, both in Wayland Square and in Frenchman's Creek, their winter headquarters in West Palm Beach. Indeed, they were hospitable and collaborative for nearly two decades. Morris, who reached 100 years before passing away this year, especially enjoyed welcoming his great-grandchildren. They flew down like a flock of migrating souls.

The Manor's longtime bartender, a welcoming and winsome elderly blonde named Mae, drove in from her home in East Providence. She knew everybody by name and by favorite drink, and she was a special friend of my chum, Bernard Bell. He told me that on the night of his son, Daniel's, death, he turned to Mae for solace and a cocktail.

Now here comes another little anecdote. I went through public school with my neighbor, Bruce Selya. He switched to Classical High, and I stayed at Hope. In later years, Harvard and Yale separated us. But once Bruce sent me a drink that Mae served, and I was pleasantly touched by this amiable gesture of recognition. At the time, there was a simple, little bar with tables covered in a dull, jade-colored tile. Very dignified and subdued.

The Wayland Manor's bar is where I once invited the dis-

tinguished *New Yorker* writer and Providence native, Jane Kramer. We did not get along, neither of us impressed by the other. No regrets!

Let's move along to another bar, the once-upon-a-time Falstaff Room at the Biltmore Hotel (now known as The Graduate). Remember the enormous mural of the good-natured but boorish villain and friend in Shakespeare's tribute to the rights of the regal to make and then abandon friends from one's past? Well, when I was a copywriter for Bo Bernstein's advertising agency in 1958, I used to stop at the Falstaff Room, which had some nice surprises. The serving staff wore red vests and brought crimson telephones to your table (with their shiny copper tops). It was of course long before the cellphone. This may help to explain why I loathe and detest what we take for granted as "conveniences" and "progress." I accept that in the current chapter of my life, I sound occasionally like a "grumpy old man."

Please allow me to mention still another bar, which stands at the northeast corner of Third Street and North Main- not far from my home. Originally known as the Penalty Box, it stood opposite the former hockey rink and rock concert venue known as the Rhode Island Auditorium. Erected in 1926, this vast facility was demolished in 1989. The bar is now known as The Parlour. I particularly enjoyed this establishment when its clientele included acrobats, clowns, and "freaks," who performed in the spring or autumn with visiting circuses.

When Lady Michael and I spent the 1978-79 academic year in Rome at RISD's campus, I noted that, during the Renaissance, businesses and residences often occupied two levels of the same structure. Just so, the Penalty Box/ Parlour has an apartment right above the bar. I had a humble, but genuine, ambition to purchase this package and thus fashion my own particular version, my Rhody Renaissance. Instead, I made a movie about its present incarnation!

The Narragansett Hotel once stood "down city" at the corner of Dorrance and Westminster Streets. As a schoolboy I wanted to earn my own keep, mostly in order to get a proper date with a pretty girl and treat her to a fancy cocktail in a glamorous lounge- with or without a dance floor. So I got a job as a dishwasher at the Narragansett and much enjoyed working with fellow employees.

When my aunt Edith chose to be married upstairs at the hotel, I was of course an invited guest and wore a rented tuxedo. I showed off my finery to my dishwasher companions in the kitchen before taking an elevator up to the splendor under the chandeliers.

The whole of our smallest state is a scrapbook of such small memories for me. I remember when, after the liberation of Paris, France sent a *"Merci"* train (actually a boxcar with gifts) to each of the 48 states. I visited ours and wrote about it for Nathan Bishop School's *Bugle,* our mimeographed weekly newspaper.

Not so many years ago, I searched for the ruins of France's once glittering gift, with brightly painted symbols of each province. Amazingly, I found it in a junkyard in South County! It is now a showpiece, restored proudly, and displayed at the Museum of Work and Culture in Woonsocket. I could have and should have framed the newspaper account of my adventure of helping rescue that souvenir, but I could never lay my hands on the report that appeared in *The ProJo.* So I let it pass, with only the few snapshots I took as private souvenirs.

You see, this is the way that all our lives move along – at least here in the USA. All or most of our literature deals quite directly with this critical theme: from Rip Van Winkle through Thoreau. I may get a smile when I label myself Rip van Finkle. Time erases the scenery of our solitary searches.

My youngest aunt, Edith again, who lived a few houses uphill from my nearly lifelong residence on Creston Way, used to like to join me occasionally on just such journeys to the nearby sites of our quests and questions. The places where our family had once lived or dwelt only for some summers or the work places where they had put up proud signage and then left it behind like an abandoned snow sculpture. This seems to be an American obsession, the endless hunt for higher lodgings, better homesteads. Not me!

My voyages are pilgrimages, phantasms. I desire to know where I came from and then leave a pebble like a pearl or a smooth seashell as a token.

Since my mother had moved from Montreal to Providence, a drive up and over the border held something of a quality connect-

ed to this theme. If we drove simply to Woonsocket, with its touch of a French accent in its local pronunciations, the little motor cruise meant a bit more than it might seem to a non-Rhode Islander.

Most of us cling to a strange pride in being the smallest coastal culture in New England or even within the entire continent. We can explore the history of clan or even one's climb from childhood to the height of acceptance and a sigh of satisfaction.

These themes were evident in two illustrated books that haunted my boyhood: Ruth Crombie's *Christopher the Canary* (1935) and Munro Leaf's *The Story of Ferdinand* (1938). I adapted the texts into the tale of my own lifetime. I too had journeyed to many continents and then found what I had been seeking right here, where my life had started. Whew!

When I confided that intimacy to a class at RISD, not one, but two of my students somehow managed to find copies of those humble children's books of long ago and gave them to me. I keep them safely in state on my shelves.

Now back to L'Artisan, my sidewalk, mini-Parisian café on Wayland Square. A group of friends who gather regularly often claim a table with an umbrella and drag over a few extra chairs. We set up camp for a collective coffee hour.

But sometimes our "gang" takes off for a nearby diner, once labeled Ruffuls, but known since 2011 simply as Wayland Square Diner. It has lots of hooks and poles to hang a coat, scarf or cap. The long-serving staff will fill your cup a second time and sort out separate checks.

Suddenly, however, half a piece of buttered toast may appear on my saucer, an offering by Murkje DeVries (a retired teacher). Or there may appear a hunk of coffeecake or a blueberry muffin, kind gifts from Alice Miles (a former president of the Providence Art Club) or Wendy Ingram (a creator of the Art Connection, which gives art to such public spaces as hospitals and schools).

Alice and Wendy were in fact among my earliest RISD students, back in the 1950s. But maybe their kindnesses are due to the fact that I am often the only gent among the ladies. Sadly, such dear friends as Bernie Bell and Mel Blake have gone to their rewards.

Since Rhode Island is the land dedicated to "soul liberty," it is worth noting that our group has included both a convert to Judaism and one from Judaism. The first lady is Murkje, who is also quite proud of her Dutch heritage, especially her upbringing in Friesland. Geraldine Wolf, who left Judaism, eventually became an Episcopal bishop of Rhode Island. But she also faithfully attended minyan services at Temple Emanu-El to mourn her sister's passing.

Judith Queen, who was born a Jew, rejects all religious thinking. As such, she proudly proclaims herself a scientific foe of all magical thinking. But she is genuinely benevolent toward animals, especially as a generous friend and supporter of the Audubon Society. She invited our coffee community to a grand reception at the society's Bristol festival and reigned there in gentle splendor. All of us L'Artisan friends get along just fine!

But there's still another story related to Wayland Square. There was a pleasant person who would greet me, with his dog, while seated on his motorcycle. One day he invited me to sit on the rooftop garden of his apartment to sip a glass of bourbon. And then I read, among the obits in *The Projo,* that he had died! I went to his funeral, met his family, and wrote a letter describing our alliance. I received an invitation for a reunion with his relatives – his sisters, his parents – at L'Artisan café. They all showed up and decorated the sidewalk table with a little wooden vase… containing… my late friend's ashes! It was a strange but somehow fabulous gesture that moved me profoundly.

Yes, I celebrate these gallant, Wayland Square gatherings as my homage to friendship itself! We miss, but endlessly need, the company of those who care about our welfare, who listen, lean in, and learn in turn. We might even describe our lives within chapters of particular friendships. So, for some time after our collective gatherings, I privately review such relationships during the epochs of my own evolution. For the present moment, however, I will leave it at that.*

* "I'll leave it at that" were the words with which Mike concluded his 2004 article in our journal!

Hebrew typewriter

From Orinin to Providence: *The Story of a Typewriter, a Language, and a Poet*

Kate-Lynne Laroche

Having worked for our Association since May 2017, the author is well known to and much appreciated by so many of our members and others who seek information from our Segal Archives, our Sherman Photography Collection, and other records. But perhaps I can tell you a little more about her.

A native of Rumford, Kate-Lynne grew up in the same home as her father, Robert. Not merely the eldest Mastrostefano child, she inevitably set an example for both her brothers. She may still be doing so.

Our executive director graduated from East Providence High School in 2009 and Rhode Island College five years later. She majored in history and minored in art history and public history. In March of last year, Kate-Lynne earned a master's in public history, magna cum laude, from Southern New Hampshire University, while working for the Association nearly full-time.

Many readers may not know that her passion for history began at 14 years of age, when she was studying the Reformation in preparation for her Lutheran confirmation. Kate-Lynne and Derek, who have been married since 2016, belong to the Lutheran Church of the Way in Raynham, Massachusetts. The Laroche family, which includes two youngsters, Madeline and James, resides in North Providence. If given an opportunity to enjoy some spare time, Kate-Lynne would select travel and photography.

Perhaps it goes without saying, but our executive director, as a member of Generation Y, is quite a computer maven. This may help explain her fascination with such an antiquated contraption as a typewriter. I wonder if she ever had to remove or install a ribbon or even knows that they came in a variety of colors.

If you have ever visited the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association's office or entered the Dwares Jewish Community Center through its backdoor, you probably noticed one of the Association's more unusual artifacts – a typewriter. Placed atop a small bookshelf,

it has fascinated many who have peered through the window or ventured inside. Until a few months ago, I was unable unfortunately to say much about it. Thanks to my tenacious research and encouragement from Linda Lotridge Levin, a journalist and RIJHA's first vice-president, this typewriter now has a story.

It began to unfold in preparation for our 2022 annual meeting, whose theme was "An Evening in the Archive." In order to assist two board members with their presentations, I began researching two artifacts. When I began investigating a third, the typewriter, I wanted to answer some of the following questions. Who donated the typewriter? To whom had it also belonged? How old was it? Where was it made? What was it used for? Is it a Hebrew or a Yiddish typewriter or could it be used for writing both languages?

Underwood Universal

The typewriter itself has a few markings that helped launch my research. The words "Underwood" and "Universal, made in USA" are clearly visible on its front, and it is obvious that the keys have Hebrew letters. The serial number is F19879406, which I hoped would help identify it. What I wanted to learn next was if the typewriter was primarily for Hebrew or Yiddish use.

So I searched the Internet, looking at dozens of photos of Underwood typewriters. But without the expertise to differentiate between a Hebrew and a Yiddish typewriter, I knew that I was not going to get very far.

I soon discovered, however, that the Yiddish Book Center, in Amherst, Massachusetts, has assembled a collection of 26 Hebrew and Yiddish typewriters. They were gathered more by chance than intention. The oldest example, from 1906, is a Hebrew typewriter manufactured by Remington in 1906. A later example was manufactured by Corona in 1926. I also found a quite unusual typewriter, a Hammond Multiplex, manufactured somewhere between 1921 and 1927, which uses English, Hebrew, and Yiddish letters.

I found that more than 10 typewriter museums are found abroad- in such places as Britain, Canada, and Italy. The United States does not have a museum, but the Behring Center of the

Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History has a few typewriters, including Underwood's Model 5, which was manufactured in 1914.

Soon after these discoveries, I stumbled upon a forum for typewriter enthusiasts. Though a "Nick" commented about Yiddish typewriters, his posts were from 2016. I said a silent prayer as I clicked his profile, hoping I could find his last name and possibly his email address. By a stroke of luck, his full name, Nick Block, was posted on his profile, so I headed to Google!

The stars truly aligned for me that day. Nick Block, an assistant professor of Eastern, Slavic, and German studies at Boston College, also has expertise in Yiddish. According to his online faculty profile, he is currently completing a book, *Schlepping Culture: The Jewish Renaissance between German and Yiddish, 1880-1940.*

I sent Prof. Block an email with a few photos of our typewriter and some questions, and he was kind enough to report back. The Association's typewriter was indeed primarily used for Hebrew, not Yiddish, but it could be used for Yiddish if a typist did a bit of extra work. Prof. Block informed me that the telltale signs of a Yiddish typewriter are a double *yud* key, which our typewriter does not have. He went on to explain that this specific Underwood typewriter would have been special ordered. Most likely it was manufactured right after World War II, probably in 1946. Why then? During the war, Underwood Corporation ceased manufacturing typewriters at its factory in Hartford, Connecticut, in order to produce M1 carbines. Prof. Block added that the typewriter would have cost about $50 (possibly more because it was customized), which equates to about $900 today. This is actually the current median price of a 1940s Underwood typewriter on eBay.

I learned online that the Connecticut Historical Society owns a few early typewriters, which makes perfect sense because Hartford was once the world's largest manufacturing center for these machines. Having been founded in New Jersey in 1895, Underwood Typewriter Company relocated to Hartford in 1901. Originally occupying space on Capitol Avenue, it soon built a massive new factory on Parkside Avenue, which, by the early 1920s, produced two million

typewriters per year. The number quickly grew to five million per year. Underwood also established a Computing Machine Company, which relocated to Hartford in 1909 and eventually built a factory on Arbor Street. Meanwhile, Royal Typewriter Company, which had been founded in Brooklyn in 1906, also relocated to Hartford and built a huge new factory a year later. Royal became Underwood's principle rival, but by 1927, Connecticut had 29 typewriter manufacturers employing 7,000 workers.

Our editor, George Goodwin, is proud to point out that many of his paternal ancestors, the Feingolds, who had emigrated from Ukraine to New York City during the 1880s, worked for Underwood in Bayonne, New Jersey, while living in Elizabeth. Having become machinists and foremen, they were encouraged to relocate to Hartford. David Feingold was the first in 1901.

The youngest relative, George's great-great-uncle, Gustave Feingold (1883-1948), worked for Underwood in Hartford before receiving a scholarship to attend nearby Trinity College, a small Episcopal institution for men. In 1912, he earned a Phi Beta Kappa key, became one of its first Jewish graduates, and then earned a Ph.D. in psychology at Harvard. Unable to find a position as a professor, he eventually became Hartford's first Jewish high school principal. Ironically, Gustave's parents, Samuel and Miriam, are buried in Zion Hill Cemetery, which is adjacent to the gorgeous Trinity campus.

The Lightmans

Fortunately, around 1991, when the Association received the typewriter, its new office manager, Anne Sherman, typed up some key information. It had belonged to Solomon Lightman, and his granddaughter, Jeanne Diamond Feldman, donated it. Using Lightman's name, I conducted an online genealogical search, which led to almost all the answers I was seeking.

Thanks to census records found on an invaluable website, www.Ancestry.com, I was able to find much about Solomon's immediate and some of his extended family. Some of this information is contradictory, however. Some records show that he had been born in Chotin, Romania in 1882. Other records show that he had been born

in Orinin (also spelled Orinen), Russia in 1883, but this is surely the same person. In fact, Solomon's grave in Lincoln Park Cemetery bears the birth date of July 6, 1886. He emigrated from Rotterdam to New York City, arriving on May 17, 1921, and then went immediately to Providence. According to the 1922 Providence directory, Solomon already operated a delicatessen at 222 Willard Avenue, in the heart of South Providence's Jewish neighborhood.

Solomon's wife, Eva, had been born in Orinin in 1887. She emigrated with him and their three children: Julius (known as "Gene"), who was 12 and had been born in Russia; Rose, who was 11 and had also been born in Russia; and Benjamin, who was one and had been born in Romania during the family's journey to the United States.

On June 22, 1927, Solomon, on behalf of his family, filed a petition for naturalization in Rhode Island's District Court. The Lightmans, who lived at 218 Willard Avenue, were "admitted" to citizenship on September 30 of that year.

According to the 1930 federal census, the Lightmans lived at

Lightman Family, ca. 1920: Eva & Solomon with kids Julius & Rose in Europe

34 Harriet Street in South Providence and owned their own home. Solomon managed a "delicatessen store," where Julius worked as a clerk. A decade later, the Lightmans were living in the same home, but Solomon was listed in the federal census as the proprietor of a "retail grocery store," where Julius continued to work. On his 1940 draft registration card, Julius, 31, reported that he worked at "Lightman's Market" at 222 Willard Avenue. Two years later, on Solomon's draft registration card, the business was identified as "Lightman's Grocery Store."

According to the 1940 federal census, Solomon's mother-in-law, Mary Orodenker, who had been born in Russia, was also living with the Lightman family. Solomon's parents, Myer and Miriam, had also settled in Providence. Both would be buried in Lincoln Park Cemetery: he in 1927, she in 1956.

After studying many more genealogical records, I eventually found that Solomon and Eva's daughter, Rose Lightman Diamond, had died quite young, in 1944, at the age of thirty-three. She is buried besides her parents in Lincoln Park, as is her husband, George, who died in 1977. (Julius Lightman, who operated Lightman's Liquor Store at 500 Cranston Street in Providence, eventually relocated to Ft. Lauderdale and died there in 1999. Benjamin, the youngest Lightman child, died in 2016. In recognition of his military service during World War II, he is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.)

I surmised that Jeanne Diamond Feldman, the woman who donated the typewriter to our Association, was Rose's daughter. Through further research, I unfortunately came across Jeanne's 2015 obituary, so any hope I had of gaining information from her was dashed. Fortunately, because of information found in Jeanne's obituary, I was able to locate and connect with her younger sister, Harriet Diamond Adelberg, who lives in Grinnell, Iowa. But why Grinnell? Her husband, Arnold, now retired, was a math professor at Grinnell College.

I found out about other Diamond relatives who had a connection to this small town east of Des Moines. Following Rose Lightman Diamond's early death, her husband, George, married Sylvia Holster of Brooklyn. After his death, Sylvia moved to Grinnell to live

with her step-daughter, Harriet Diamond Adelberg. Sylvia died in 2000, and she is buried in Lincoln Park Cemetery. I also found that George and Sylvia Diamond had two other daughters, but there is no need to discuss them in relation to the Association's typewriter.

A Zoom Call

Through a Zoom call, Linda Levin and I were pleased to speak with Harriet Diamond Adelberg about the Lightman family and her upbringing. We asked what in particular she may have remembered about her "beloved *Zaide*." She shared that he was a kind and gentle soul, who loved her and her elder sister. She remembered him typing poetry on his typewriter and that he also wrote cantatas. He even recorded one that he had written when he and Eva were wintering in Florida.

Harriet also recalled that Solomon, a fervent Zionist, was a member of Providence's chapter of *Poale Zion,* the labor Zionist organization. She said that when he and Eva traveled to Israel in 1955, Solomon had the privilege of meeting Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion. He did not hold that office at that time, but would do so soon again. Harriet said that a family member had a photo of the meeting with Ben-Gurion. She also mentioned that Solomon was involved in publishing a Yiddish newspaper, and that he got together with friends to discuss politics and current events.

When Harriet mentioned a Yiddish newspaper, I asked her, rather incredulously, "Do you mean the *Providence Passover Journal?*" She responded, "Yes!" Then she proceeded to tell us how Solomon Lightman, Beryl Segal, and Alter Boyman got together. In fact, this was the group of friends who got together to discuss politics, education, Zionism, Israel, business, literature, and all manner of topics. My mind began racing with the knowledge that the man who owned the Hebrew typewriter that I see nearly every day was a close friend to two of the seven founders of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association in 1951.

I said as much to Harriet and mentioned that not only had Beryl Segal been an Association president, but so had his daughter, Geraldine Foster. In fact, her son, Harold, is our current president.

The Segal family represents a kind of Jewish Historical dynasty!

Then Harriet began telling us, so fondly, of some of her memories of Jerry while she was growing up on Willard Avenue. And that she was taught Yiddish while in high school by Jerry's mother, Chaya Segal. Harriet suggested that I contact Jerry and ask her if she knew where Solomon's poetry was published; that she, unfortunately, did not have any copies of her grandfather's work. We ended our Zoom call with the promise that Harriet would share a few old family photos, and that I would report back to her after speaking to Jerry.

A Surprising Phone Call

Geraldine Foster, now 93, is the person with the greatest knowledge about Rhode Island Jewish history whom I know; she never disappoints! So I called her a few days after my Zoom call with Harriet and asked, "What do you know about Solomon Lightman?"

She proceeded to give me even more information than Harriet did! Having grown up knowing Solomon, or *Shloyme,* as she called him, Jerry reminisced about Lightman's store and how Alter Boyman (1882-1966) – her uncle on her mother's side- and her father, Beryl Segal (1900-1980)- would "hold court" and discuss various topics for hours on end.

Jerry confirmed that in about 1929, *Shloyme* was one of the founders of *Poale Zion*'s local newspaper, *Providence Passover Journal* (originally known as *The Pesach Blott*), which published articles in Yiddish and English. This newspaper was published annually until about 1944, when it then appeared sporadically until its final issue in 1964. Our Association recently completed the digitization of its run. The *Providence Passover Journal* also publicized and helped celebrate an annual banquet known as "The Third Seder."

Jerry has a few copies of the newspaper at her home in New Jersey and looked at them and said, " Oh yes, some of *Shloyme*'s poetry is here in the *Journal*!" I was delighted – to say the least! Jerry had, at long last, led me to Solomon's poetry.

Jerry went on to tell me a few stories and bits of information she remembered about the Lightman family. One story was

about Miriam Orendenker, whom she affectionately called "Little *Bubbie.*" She had visited Jerry's mother, Chaya, when she was convalescing from surgery. "Little *Bubbie*" saw that Chaya had been given a poinsettia and was taken with the leaves' vibrant color. Jerry also recalled that Eva Lightman was known for how thinly she sliced smoked fish and how personable she was in the family's store. She remembered too that *Shloyme* was often quiet and reserved in the deli, while the rest of his family schmoozed with customers. When I asked Jerry why she thought *Shloyme* was so reserved, she responded that he was more of a scholar than a businessman. Jerry talked about how he wrote cantatas, and that his father, *Reb* Meir, was her father's first teacher back in Orinin, Ukraine.

I recalled that Solomon stated on his naturalization papers that Eva was from Orinin. So I asked Jerry, "Was Solomon from Orinin as well?" She said, "Oh yes! So were his wife, my mother, and my uncle. That whole group knew each other in the old country before they emigrated to the United States."

I was shocked! For some reason, I was also comforted knowing that a hundred years ago, a group of immigrants from a *shtetl* in the Ukraine was able to remain friends after settling in a new city. This insight, I feel, gave me a better understanding about the camaraderie that existed in South Providence's Jewish community. These immigrants were not simply connected by religion, customs, language, and lifestyles; despite having traversed half of Europe and an entire ocean, they were also connected by family bonds and friendship. They found each other again and remained lifelong friends.

I did not ask and Jerry did not actually state that her parents had settled in Providence primarily because of their bonds with the Boymans, the Lightmans or other families. We do know, however, that Solomon and Eva Lightman came directly to Providence because his brothers, Hyman and Harry, were already living here.

Solomon Lightman's Poetry

After my conversation with Jerry, she sent me her copies of the *Providence Passover Journal.* One copy has a photo of a person who is probably *Shloyme.* I sent a scan to Harriet Diamond Adelberg,

who quickly confirmed that the photo was of her grandfather. At long last, I was holding proof of what had been typed on the Hebrew typewriter in RIJHA's office!

I then Googled the Yiddish alphabet and, within an hour, taught myself how to read Shloyme's name in Yiddish. I scanned the Yiddish portion of the 1929 *Providence Passover Journal* for Shloyme's name and, sure enough, I found it. I portioned off what looked like something typed in verse and then saved the file. Then I continued these steps with 26 issues of *Poale Zion's Providence Passover Journal.* So I finally had Solomon's poetry, but it was not translated. That was the next step in the process.

I asked around the Dwares Jewish Community Center and contacted several people who might know someone who would be able to translate Yiddish, but I hit a roadblock. I then thought of contacting the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst. Consequently, I was directed to a listing of dozens of Yiddish translators from all over the world- all with different specialties. I found a woman, Lila Thielemans, living in Belgium, who specializes in Yiddish poetry translations. After I agreed on a fee, Lila set to work. About a month later, she sent all of Solomon's translated poems from the *Providence Passover Journal.*

Having read them, I can fully understand why Solomon seemed to be such a quiet storekeeper. His gift was indeed writing, and Israel was his passion! Solomon had the mind of a businessman, but he had the heart of a poet.

In this first poem, he mentions organizations and places that are familiar to us even today: the Workman's Circle, Pioneer Women, and Pawtucket– where, during the 1930s and '40s, a Jewish community once thrived. Here is that poem from 1929:

Our Campaign
by Shloyme Laytman/ Solomon Lightman

This campaign of ours
As everyone knows surely
With a Third Seder
Commences once yearly.

The air with Seder beams
The city runs smoothly
Even though nothing is heard there but the Haggadah's call
And no-one eats a single matzo ball.

Many organizations lend a hand
By way of their representatives
And those who at a distance stand
Will surely come along later.

The Workman's Circle
Is also present
Even Branch 110
Has made peace and apologized, it's most pleasant.

Poale Zion and the Alliance
Are the most important in-laws (activists) here, truthfully
And they do everything in their power
To raise more and more money.

The Pioneer Women too
Are working very skillfully
For they know and feel
How important their work is in actuality.

For many years already
Pawtucket has made sure
That to the Third Seder
Come masses galore.

And they bring along
A sum not at all insignificant
For our Pioneers in Palestine
This gift is magnificent.
When the Pioneers receive
The money that is sent to them, great will be its yield
A greater appetite to spend
Working on the green field.

And they build a home that's free
For all of our People
And when a hard day's work is done
They will be dancing to a melody, utterly gleeful.

In the following poem, written in Yiddish in 1944, Solomon used strong visualization to represent the branches of the *Farband,* the fraternal order of the American Labor Zionist movement, which was continuing to organize new chapters.

The Branch and the Tree
(On the Occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the *Farband*)
by Shloyme Laytman/ Solomon Lightman

When a branch sprouts from a tree,
Splendid, beautiful and big,
And grows into all directions far and wide,
It brings great joy unto the tree.

It's a joy, it's a delight to see with her own eyes,
How the children, the branches which she has nursed,
Continue to stick together
Around their mother's apron.

The eldest branch, very successful indeed,
Protects the tree with its shadow.
And lights up the garden
With all kinds of fruits.

It helps to build the Jewish homeland
And to work in the Diaspora too it lends a hand –
It founds schools for Jewish children,
It has an "Undzer kemp," a miracle for everyone.

If there needs to be a protest somewhere,
To have an evil law repealed,
To march in the streets,
It will be the first to join the ranks.

It was the first patron of the Jewish Congress;
Of the Jewish Conference in the very midst:
It helps so nicely
With the union campaign.

It has outgrown,
Overrun everyone,
Has already founded

Even a colony in its own name.
And like that, continuously, together,
With Poale Zion side by side,
Grows and bloom
The Jewish National Workers Alliance.

The following words are brief, but I also feel heartfelt. He published them after finally visiting Israel in 1955.

"On the road stands a tree
Standing bent and curvy,
A Jew goes on his Israel-journey
How his eyes are teary."
– *from a folk motif*

The following article by Solomon was written in English and published in the same issue (though the caption was written by somebody else). Presumably it was composed on the same typewriter as the one in the Association's collection.

The above picture was taken on Friday, the first day of Chol HaMoed (in Israel), when, along with a group of comrades from Baltimore led by Dr. Seidel, [we] were received by President Ben-Zvi; in his left hand, Comrade Lightman is holding the poem to the occasion of the 50 year anniversary of Poale Zion, Second Aliyah, as well as the 70th birthday of the President, which after the greetings he gives to the President as a memento. The third person is Dr. Seidel, the National Chairman of the Poale Zion Party in America.

Jews used to observe this custom – to lament the destruction of the Temple, and go to die in Israel in their old age.
Times have changed – nowadays, Jews go to settle, live and work in Eretz Israel.

Tourists go too, wanting to at least catch a glimpse of the Jewish country. Jews no longer come with teary eyes, but tourists also are well advised to come with open minds, not dazzled, so they'll be able to observe, to see the land in all of its facets, not one-sidedly…

I had the pleasure of visiting Israel last year; I was one of its several thousands of tourists, and I decided to forget for a minute all of my Zionist sentiments… and examine everything with an open mind.

I traveled the country from Dan to Be'er Sheva, visited cities.

There's not enough space here [to] write down all of the peculiarities of each place. Every place is unique in its own way (my diary from during the journey is more than one hundred pages long); but I will try to briefly describe what I've learned during my visit.

The Cities

The cities in Israel aren't "mane strim" like over here in America. Over there, every city has its own look, character and individual charm… This is what they say about the three major cities in Israel: you go to study in Jerusalem, to dance in Tel Aviv, and to work in Haifa (lomdim, rokdim, ovdim). That explains something about the character of each of these cities.

The population in the cities has gotten much bigger; Haifa has grown from a population of 70 thousand to 210 thousand. Mount Carmel and the sea at the foot of the city make it extraordinarily beautiful, especially at night; thanks to its industrious mayor, Abba Hushi, the city has become embellished with new parks and playgrounds for children.

In Jerusalem too, the population has grown. At the moment, new buildings are being built in Jerusalem- for the government, the university, and the Hadassah hospital; the Histadrut building, too. Once those buildings are done, combined with the beautiful panorama surrounding them they will make Jerusalem into the prettiest city in the world.

New cities have emerged too. Be'er Sheva, which used to be a small Arab village, has grown into a modern city with a population of more than 25 thousand inhabitants. But Tel Aviv's growth is unbridled; it stretches so far it will soon encroach into Ramat Gan, Bnei Brak, stretching all the way to Petah Tikva, and that's not such a good thing for a country, for too much of its population to be concentrated in one area. And so, when in Israel they say the slogan "*Min ha'ir el ha'kvar,*" "from the city to the village," they're talking about Tel Aviv.

A couple of new towns have been added to the list over the past ten years, every one with its particular charm. They are: Naharia, Holon, Bat Yam, Kiryat Haim. A new city is being built in Galilee, and some of the larger old colonies have morphed into cities with a bigger population.

Moshavim (villages)

Many moshavim have sprung into existence since the found-

ing of the State. Wherever you go, you see new villages where new olim have come to settle. We, however, visited two villages, Kfar Herut and Kfar Vitkin, where we have friends, compatriots and former Hebrew teachers, who settled on Keren Kayemet soil 25 years ago. Their beginnings were rough (their fathers and grandfathers hadn't been farmers), but through their love of land and labor, they were able to establish quite a successful business over time, expanding and modernizing their houses. In the yard, they were blessed with some cattle, a big hen house, a garden full of vegetables, fruit trees, and an orchard of ten dunams, citrus trees; they love the land, happy to live in a country of their own.

From this we can learn that it will be much easier to get to their level for those who settle in the villages nowadays, if only they take to their work this love and devotion, for these days, a new farmer receives much more aid than they used to.

To read more examples of Solomon's poetry, please send me an email at office@rijha.org.

Additional Findings and Thoughts

One of the most important pieces of information I gleaned from my conversation with Jerry Foster about Solomon Lightman was that her father, Beryl Segal, had written a eulogy for Solomon in April 1968. This article, part of his column, "Friday to Friday," published in *The Jewish Herald,* is a loving and honorable tribute. Beryl gave some of the details that I had gathered during the journey of putting this story together: that they were from the same town in Ukraine and that Shloyme's father had been Beryl's teacher.

The one thing I had not known until reading Beryl's eulogy was that Alter Boyman and Solomon Lightman had founded a Yiddish library in Orinin. Both men believed in keeping Yiddish an important part of Jewish life. I have not yet been able to determine if the library still exists- probably not, because the Jewish community no longer exists. But I hope that Solomon's memory somehow survives.

Serendipitous stories like this one about a Hebrew typewriter keep Rhode Island's Jewish history alive and relevant. They

help us to document the history of families who may no longer even live in this proud community. These stories remind us that a strange artifact like a typewriter can unravel the story of a family and its connections to organizations and a community, one it was helpful in creating. I am forever grateful to Jeanne Diamond Feldman for donating her grandfather's typewriter to the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association; in so doing, she somehow ensured that her family's story would not be forgotten.

In Memoria:
November 1, 2021-November 1, 2022

Helen Abrams was a daughter of the late Julius and Rachel (Brenner) Abrams. She was predeceased by her husband, Henry Abrams.

Mrs. Abrams was born in Boston but enjoyed her upbringing in East Greenwich. For most of her life she savored swimming in Narragansett.

Mrs. Abrams was advertising manager of the student newspaper, The Beacon, and graduated from the University of Rhode Island in 1941 with a degree in business. She and her young family moved to Cranston, where she became active in numerous organizations, including Girl Scouts, PTA, Potowomut Golf Club, Hadassah, and Temple Sinai. She was president of the Cranston League of Women Voters and helped develop and implement the Cranston Home Rule Charter.

Mrs. Abrams taught English at Cranston High School East from 1964 through 1979. As lifelong learners, she and her husband enjoyed world travels.

Mrs. Abrams is survived by her daughters: Anne Schwartz, Dr. Jane Abrams, and Ellie Wasser.

Died on November 12, 2021 in Cranston at the age of 101.

Carolyn S. Brodsky, a daughter of the late Dr. Ezra A. and Sarah (Goldman) Sharp, was born in Providence. She graduated from Lincoln School in 1956. A year before her graduation from Connecticut College for Women, she married David, also a Providence native, upon his graduation from Brown.

The couple brought up their children in Providence and Newport and then lived part of each year in Newport and Palm Beach. Having earned a certificate in interior design at Rhode Island School of Design, she decorated homes for her family and friends.

The gardens she designed at Honeysuckle Lodge, the Brodsky home in Newport, won many awards.

Mrs. Brodsky enjoyed sailing with her husband in Newport and elsewhere along the New England coast. She also enjoyed golf, long walks, foreign travel, and raising pairs of dogs.

A former member of the Hope Club and the Agawam Hunt Club, she also enjoyed memberships in the New York Yacht Club, the Sailfish Club of Florida, and the Palm Beach Country Club.

One of her favorite philanthropies was Newport's Salve Regina University, where a dormitory was named in her honor. In February of this year, her husband established the university's first endowed professorship, the David & Carolyn Brodsky Chair in United States Heritage and Culture.

Mrs. Brodsy is survived by her husband, their two daughters, Anne Sternlicht and Jane Sprung, and their son, James.

Died on December 13, 2021 in West Palm Beach at the age of 83.

Martin B. Feibish, a son of Max and Ada Feibish, was born in the Bronx. He earned his bachelor's degree in business at Long Island University.

In 1962, Mr. Feibish and his wife, Gloria, moved to Providence, where he soon gained recognition in the financial services industry. Having been designated a Chartered Life Underwriter, he taught courses on insurance in the University of Rhode Island's extension division. He was also inducted into Phoenix Mutual Insurance Company's Hall of Fame.

Mr. Feibish was active in numerous Jewish communal organizations, including the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center and the Bureau of Jewish Education, which presented him with its Builder of Jewish Education Award.

As a lifelong sports enthusiast, he enjoyed playing baseball and tennis. Being particularly fond of golf, he twice won hole-in-one awards. Though forever loyal to the Yankees, he also cheered for the Patriots.

Mr. Feibish is survived by his wife, Gloria, and his niece, Carol Desforges.

Died on November 12, 2021 in North Providence at the age of 90.

Robert T. Galkin

(Please see the article about him in the preceding pages.)

Barbara Levine, a daughter of the late Herman and Selma Bennett, was born in Providence. She was predeceased by her husband, George Levine, and her children, Bennett Greenstein and Nancy Carolyn Greene.

Mrs. Levine graduated from Hope High School in 1948 and attended Wellesley College and Brown University. Her passions included art, music, food, fashion, and world travel. She was a longtime member of Temple Beth-El, and its chapel was named in honor of her father. She was a life member of our Association.

Mrs. Levine is survived by her daughter-in-law, Elaine Greenstein, and her stepdaughters, Marsha Books and Patricia Boochever.

Died on January 2, 2022 in Providence at the age of 90.

Ronald C. Markoff, one of three sons of the late Henry W. and Florence (Shapiro) Markoff, spent most of his life in Providence. He was predeceased by his first wife, Lynn, in 1998.

Having attended Camp Alton in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, for 15 consecutive summers, he wrote an article about his glowing experiences in the 2015 issue of our journal. Following his graduation from Classical High School in 1967, Mr. Markoff studied classics at Brown, where he received bachelor's and master's degrees. Even after graduating from Boston College's Law School in 1975 and practicing law for decades, he remained fascinated by Latin.

Mr. Markoff began practicing with Roberts & Willey in downtown Providence before relocating to Wayland Square, where he spent most of his lengthy and prominent career. At the end of 2021, Mr. Markoff's firm, specializing in real estate, merged with Roberts, Carroll, Feldstein & Peirce, which was the successor to Roberts & Willey.

Mr. Markoff's abiding interests including playing trumpet and enjoying classical music. In 2005, he was a founder and the principal trumpet player of the Narraganset Bay Symphony Community

Orchestra, and he also played with the Rhode Island Wind Ensemble. He performed with his twin brother, Joe, who was a professional musician with the Buffalo Symphony.

Mr. Markoff was an active member of Temple Emanu-El and for many years was a board member of Jewish Collaborative Services, whose annual Moes Chitim fundraising campaign he recently chaired. He also received JCS's Lifetime Service Award. He was a life member of our Association.

Mr. Markoff is survived by his wife, Karen Triedman, and his daughters, Stephanie Cohen, Sidra Scharff, and Allegra Scharff.

Died on June 13, 2022 in Providence at the age of 73.

Simon I. Nemzow, a son of the late Abraham and Sophie (Newman) Nemzow, was born in Newport, where he developed his nearly lifelong love of swimming, surfing, sailing, and fishing. He was predeceased by his wife, Shirley.

After graduating from Rogers High School, Mr. Nemzow attended the University of Rhode Island. During World War II, as a master sergeant in the Army Air Force, he was stationed in Europe. Having moved to Providence in 1950, he became a cofounder of and partner in Allied Fluorescent Manufacturing Company and remained with the company for four decades.

As a 32nd degree Shriner, Mr. Nemzow played baritone horn in its marching band, often performing in Bristol's Fourth of July parade. He was also a subscriber to the Rhode Island Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony for more than 50 years. He enjoyed photography too.

Mr. Nemzow served on the boards of Providence Hebrew Day School, Brown University Hillel, and the Jewish Seniors Agency. He grew up at Touro Synagogue and became a member of Temple Emanu-El.

Mr. Nemzow is survived by his children, Sally Esakov and Martin Nemzow.

Died on August 8, 2022 in Providence at nearly 101 years of age.

Susette Rabinowitz, the daughter of Fred and Ruth (Wolfe) Herz, German refugees, was born in and spent her early years in La Paz, Bolivia. She was predeceased by her husband, Warren.

Mrs. Rabinowitz, who graduated from Cranston High School in 1959, was not merely a longtime resident of this city. Following her graduation from the University of Rhode Island in 1963, she became devoted to the care of seniors and directed the city's Senior Services for two decades. In 2000, having also been a co-founder of Volunteers in Cranston Schools, she was inducted into the Cranston Hall of Fame.

Following the closure of the Jewish Home in 1993 and extensive consultations with Jewish leaders, Mrs. Rabinowitz became executive director of the Jewish Seniors Agency, from which she retired in 2005. In 2015, she received its Maurice Glicksman Leadership Award.

Mrs. Rabinowitz and her husband retired to Boca Raton, Florida, but she spent her final years at her crowning achievement, the Phyllis Siperstein Tamarisk Assisted Living Residence, which she had helped create in 2003. She was a life member of Hadassah and our Association.

Mrs. Rabinowitz is survived by her sons, Gary and Jon.

Died on February 18, 2022 in Warwick at 80 years of age.

Harris N. Rosen, the son of Samuel and Gertrude (Woolf) Rosen, was born in Providence in 1932 and spent most of his life there. For decades, he was a key leader in Rhode Island's Jewish community and far beyond.

In 1909, his maternal grandparents, Isaac and Betty Woolf, had built a grand, three-story home at 321 Hope Street, which still stands. It is adjacent to Moses Brown School, surely one reason Harris became interested in studying there. The first Jewish boy had graduated from this Quaker school in 1920, and Mr. Rosen was probably the 26th, with the Class of 1950. He was an outstanding tennis player.

Mr. Harris became the first Jewish president of Moses Brown's board of overseers (later known as board of trustees),

serving from 1972 to 1976. One reason for his service? Unlike his colleagues, he was never shy about the necessity of raising money. He also must have played a leadership role in the board's decision to return to coeducation in 1977.

Mr. Rosen, who graduated from Harvard College with the Class of 1954, established a fund for Jewish music, in memory of his parents, within the college's library. A lieutenant, he served as a financial control officer in the Army's Ordnance Corps.

Mr. Rosen returned to Rhode Island to help lead his family's business, School House Candy, which had been founded in 1912 by his grandfather, Ephraim, and his father, Samuel, and later included other relatives in the manufacture and sale of sugary treats. Including his years as president, Harris remained with the Pawtucket-based company for more than 40 years.

Even during his retirement, he continued to strengthen his leadership skills by serving Temple Emanu-El, the Miriam Hospital, and Women & Infants Hospital. Especially dedicated to the former Jewish Federation of Rhode Island (now known as the Jewish Alliance), he served as campaign chair in 1990 and in 1991 and was president from 1993 to 1996. Following the departure of two executive directors, he served as interim executive director in 2000 and in 2005, thereby growing even closer in his respect for and appreciation of Federation staff. In 2016, through a gift made by Sally E. Lapides and her husband, Arthur Solomon, the Alliance's executive suite was named in honor of Myrna, also a longtime leader, and Harris Rosen.

Mr. Rosen's extensive interests also included Trinity Repertory Company, Boston's Handel and Haydn Society, Rhode Island's Small Claims Court, and the Community Mediation Center of Rhode Island. Accordingly, Mr. Rosen wrote three books to guide families following the loss of loved ones.

He was also a member of Temple Beth-El and a life member of our Association.

Widely known as "Hershey," Mr. Rosen is survived by his wife, Myrna, and his three children, Elizabeth Payne, John, and Robert, as well as two stepdaughters, Sally E. and Wendy Lapides.

Died on October 22, 2022 in Providence at the age of 89.

Erwin B. Summer, a son of the late Morris and Bertha (Resnick) Summer, spent nearly his entire life in Providence.

A wrestler, he graduated from Hope High School in 1945. Four years later, having majored in business and belonged to Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity, he graduated from the University of Rhode Island. Following in his father's footsteps, Mr. Summer became a highly regarded haberdasher and the owner of Richard's and Richard's East in Providence. An avid golfer, he belonged to Ledgemont and Metacomet Country Clubs.

Mr. Summer is survived by his daughter, Jill Goldstein, and his son, Mark.

Died on September 6, 2022 in Providence at 95 years of age.

Jonathan Weiss, the son of Howard and Elaine (Spitz) Weiss, was a 1980 graduate of Classical High School. He earned a bachelor's degree at Georgetown University's School of Business Administration and a master's degree at George Washington University's School of Computer Science.

Mr. Weiss returned to Rhode Island to help run his family's business, National Business Furniture, with his paternal grandfather, Nathan, and his father, Howard. He eventually became executive vice president and held a similar position with various Weiss family real estate holdings. Mr. Weiss also worked with his maternal grandfather, Saul Spitz, and his own wife, Aleen, as a managing broker at Spitz-Weiss Realtors.

Mr. Weiss was active in Georgetown's Alumni Association and was a board member of Temple Beth-El. He also enjoyed being a member of the Aurora Civic Association and remained in close touch with friends from Camp Bauercrest in Amesbury, Massachusetts. He was a serious fan of classic rock music.

Mr. Weiss is survived by his parents, his wife Aleen, and their daughters, Marni and Nina.

Died on March 15, 2022 in Providence at 59 years of age.

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Compiled by Lynne Bell

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