

Bulletin

Igud Yotzei Sin

Association of Former Residents of China

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The Israel's Messenger.

A Fortnightly Journal for the Jewish home

Issued on every alternate Friday.

Price, Three Dollars a Year.

Original masthead of The Israel Messenger from 1904

The Centenary of *the Israel's Messenger*, founded by Shanghai's Sephardi Jewish Community, is marked by the IYS Sephardi Division and coincides with the 50th anniversary of our *Bulletin*, as reported in the following pages. This issue includes the expanded version of *The New Israel's Messenger* to six pages (pp. 23-28).

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In Lieu of Flowers: Social Aid to Landsmen

Dear Friends!

As in previous years, Igud Yotzei Sin will give a Rosh Hashana bonus to the recipients of our monthly social benefits. We do it twice a year – for Rosh Hashana and for Pesach.

Most of our needy landsmen are elderly, lonely, or ailing people, whose situation is such that without the assistance of Igud Yotzei Sin, they would not be able to make ends meet.

As of January 1, 2004, we have 99 recipients of our monthly aid, about half of them are new immigrants from the USSR who were part of the Jewish communities of China.

In recent years, the number of contributors to the IYS Social Aid Fund, both in Israel and abroad, has dropped. Consequently, it is much more difficult to meet the requirements of the increasing number of needy elderly people. Our current budget requirement is \$100,000 annually.

We appeal to you to help us meet the needs of our elderly

and ailing landsmen by making a contribution to our Social Aid Fund, which according to the tradition of Yotzei Sin, is a donation in lieu of flowers.

Moreover, we would appreciate your remembering the needy by making a contribution to our Social Aid fund at all other festive occasions and holidays. You can also make a donation honoring a designated person, and we shall send a proper notification to the honoree informing them of your gift. In this way, both the donor and the honoree will derive great satisfaction from the fact that in the hour of joy, a needy person will also be remembered.

Please send your donations to:
Igud Yotzei Sin, Social Aid Fund

P. O. Box 29786, Tel-Aviv, 61297

With best wishes for a Hag Sameah,

IYS Central Committee

Chairman: T. Kaufman

Deputy Chairman &

Treasurer: Y. Klein

Kindly note our new address:

Igud Yotzei Sin

P.O.B. 29786

Tel Aviv 61297, Israel

New Fax: 03-5161631

THEMES OF THE DAY

by T. Kaufman

50 YEARS OF OUR BULLETIN

Who would believe that a thin pamphlet, printed by hand on one side of a page which was born on May 6, 1954 on Israel's Independence Day and named the Bulletin, would stay alive to mark its 50th birthday. How well I remember the first meeting of the Bulletin's Founding Committee at David Rabinovich's apartment on Rehov Yarkon. There were three of us: David Borisovich Rabinovich, Vladimir Samsonovich Zlotnikov, and myself, the youngest of the founders of the Igud Yotzei Sin, the only survivor to tell about it 50 years later.

I remember the late Isia Kotovich printing the first issue of the Bulletin on the copying machine in the office of the attorney Mr. King on Rothschild Boulevard. Neither will I forget the enthusiasm of the IYS members when we brought its first issue to such "far-away" points as Migdal Haemek, Bet Shearim, Ramat Yishai and Givat Olga.

All this happened half a century ago, but it seems that it was just yesterday. And now, when we celebrate the Bulletin's 50th birthday, we cannot but honor its Editorial Committees for all these years who had defined its aims and steered it on a steady course: Vladimir Zlotnikov, David Rabinovich, Mikhail Isayevich Kliaver, Boris (Dov) Mirkin, and those whose names I will mention as editorial staffers.

What makes our Bulletin so successful both in Israel and abroad? Why do hundreds of people await its arrival to read it again and again, and to share

it with friends? What is the Bulletin's secret? It lies in being a friendly magazine, one with no venom or needless gossip or sensational reports. It is a warm, family journal. It is also an Israeli Zionist publication, true to the best traditions of Judaism and to the heritage of our fathers. It reflects our past, our childhood and youth spent on the Good Earth of China.

The Bulletin is read not only in Israel and abroad; it is read by Old China Hands and by those who were never there and those who don't know any of us. Each month we receive dozens of letters from all over the world. Thanks to the Bulletin, people find their relatives and friends. People of our generation read the Russian version; those living in English-speaking countries read it in English, while the Israeli sabra, second and third generations of the original immigrants from China naturally prefer to read it in Hebrew.

For the last 10 years the former refugees who found shelter in the Hongkew district of Shanghai were attracted by the "Chusan Road" section, while "The New Israel's Messenger" is the mouthpiece of the former Sephardi (Baghdadi) community of Shanghai. All are under the common roof of the Bulletin. I laud all those who, together with me, carry the burden of publishing and editing our Bulletin. Our permanent writers and translators from and to the three languages are Emmanuel Pratt (Pirutinsky), Yitzhak Dashinsky and Sara Morgulev. Editorial secretary is Yehiel Ladizhesky, proof-reading and

rewriting is done by Celia Liubman. Vice-Chairman and Treasurer, Yossi Klein, is responsible for the financial side of publishing. David Gutman takes care of the dispatch of the magazine.

Special thanks to Sas Jacoby and Rebecca Toueg, without whom the publication of the Bulletin's English Supplement would be impossible. We are also grateful to Judith and Uri Bein for their contribution in proof-reading and editing the Hebrew section. Compared to the 10 one-sided pages of the first issue, the Bulletin now contains 250-280 pages (160-180 pages in Russian, 48 in English, 40 in Hebrew, and 12 in English for the Israel-China Friendship Society).

The IYS has existed for the past 53 years, but its aims remain the same as stipulated in the first IYS Conference: mutual assistance (social aid to the needy members), care for the young generation (higher education scholarships) and perpetuation of our past (documentation, archives, internet website and keeping in touch with our landmen).

In all these measures, the role of the Bulletin is enormous, and it may safely be said that the IYS would not be able to exist without its three basic pillars: our volunteers, Bet Ponve (our cultural center in Israel) and the Bulletin – the means for our permanent contact with our landmen and its contribution in perpetuating the history of the Jews in modern China. Let us believe that true to our heritage, the Bulletin's future will be as bright as in the past 50 years.

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Bulletin

“Bulletin” - at 50 by Emmanuel Pratt

One morning in 1954 I found in my mail box a thin newsletter with a heading in Russian: “Bulletin”, the mouthpiece of the Igud Yotzei Sin (Association of Former Jewish Residents in China), and next to it an excerpt from its by-laws: “The aim of the Association is to organize its members with the view of mutual assistance and cooperation”. Such was my first acquaintance with the magazine.

Some time later my telephone rang. The caller was Vladimir Zlotnikov, one of the founders of the “Bulletin”, who suggested we meet to discuss the magazine. Despite a considerable age gap, we were long time friends from our Tientsin past, and I gladly agreed, for I always loved to talk to him for his sense of humor.

As I expected, our conversation touched on my possible participation in the magazine. In those days I worked as a correspondent of the Yediot Aharonot, and having gained some journalistic experience from my previous work for Haolam Hazeh,” and Maariv, could supply material that would add an additional (Israeli) dimension to the purely communal newsletter. Besides, Zlotnikov’s enthusiasm was contagious. He spoke heatedly about the important role of the “Bulletin” as a binding factor between the Old China Hands, wherever they lived at that time. I didn’t need much persuasion to agree.

However, there was something that had a cooling effect on me: an absolute absence of the political credo of the

magazine. In those days, no less than now, the Israeli “Left” and “Right” were locked in what seemed to be a death struggle. To dismiss this struggle as nonexistent looked unnatural. In addition, we were half a century younger and our reaction to the current events and opinion was appropriately sharper and more emotional than some of us today. I had a serious talk about it with Teddy Kaufman. His reply showed me how he had matured into a responsible communal leader, calmly and carefully evaluating the situation and evading land mines. He said: “Politics will kill our magazine. We have members of all sorts of political convictions, and a controversial material is sure to lead to unnecessary grudge and quarrels, while our aim is to bring people together.” He added, “Do you know how many parties and organizations offered to subsidize the ‘Bulletin’, and we refused!”

He was right: there are issues not to be touched for the sake of “family peace”. I came to that conclusion the hard way. Once I published a feuilleton on a sham invasion of China by the Chinese Betar force under the command of a woman-warrior (no names mentioned) and her invincible warlord, Trepachevsky. Even the hymn of the invading force had familiar refrain: “Shteig gadot la Yangtzu. Tzu shelanu ve gam tzu! – ‘Yangtzu has two banks. This one is ours and so is the other’”. Some laughed, even Yanka Liberman, but Judy Hasser did not like such jokes, and for some time our relations were somewhat strained.

As time went on, the “Bulletin” began to gain weight. Considering the fact that the new generation of the “Chinese”, living abroad speaks mainly English, an English edition of the magazine was added to the Russian; then, for the sake of the “Sabra-Chinese” readers living in Israel, a Hebrew version was born. Later, in order to incorporate the splendid Babylonian Sephardi community and the Hongkew Ghetto refugees in the general ingathering of Chinese Jews, each was allotted appropriate space in the magazine.

Unfortunately many of the China Old Hands are no longer with us. However the forecast of the pessimists that the “Bulletin” lost its relevance and is no longer necessary proved false. On the contrary, it acquired an unexpectedly new function, that of a home address for those of our old friends who were lured into going to the Soviet Union, and now (better late than never) made the hard way to their Motherland.

The “Bulletin” has long ago overgrown its initial purpose of being merely a technical means of communication between old friends. Now it is also an important historical source of information for the researchers of the Jewish presence in modern China who come from all over the world to sit in a quiet corner of the Bet Ponve library and jot down notes in their writing pads.

No, it will still take a long time for dust to cover the thick volumes of the “Bulletin” collection. The work invested was not in vain.

The Bulletin - Looking Back 50 Years

by Rena Krasno

When our chartered plane landed at Lydda airport in April 1949, we were greeted by the delicate smell of blossoms in bloom. This was another world, far from China, with orange and olive trees, a brilliant blue sky and idealistic, courageous people. From the

moment my family set foot on the soil of Israel, our hearts beat with joy. At last we, the stateless, would be citizens of a state, a reborn Jewish state of our own. No longer were we permanent strangers. We had an identity. We belonged.

My father, David B. Rabinovich, had always been a Zionist. He had left Vladivostok in 1921 on his way to Palestine via Shanghai. However, an appendicitis attack followed by urgent surgery detained him and he was unable to fulfill his dream for the next

28 years. Finally he had come home. Nevertheless, the ties to China were not broken. Some 1000 immigrants in all had arrived in Israel from various Chinese cities: Shanghai, Harbin, Tientsin, Tsingtao and other smaller towns. Many had been born in China, and although they never formed part of the Chinese population, they were attached to the ambiance of Chinese life. For the older generation, China was the country where they had settled after problems and persecution in other parts of the world. For most of the younger generation, China was the only land they knew. Much as the Old China Hands now admired and loved Israel, they could not forget the friends, schools, jobs, clubs they had left behind. Thus the formation of the Association of Emigrants from China was a natural outcome.

But an association of people with similar memories and backgrounds needs a voice, and what more natural than the founding of a newsletter? Thus the Bulletin was born, a result of passionate discussion, hope and hard work. My father was one of its most enthusiastic initiators, together with others such as the brilliant Mr. Kliaver and the young, enthusiastic Teddy Kaufman. It was decided that the main

body of the Bulletin would be written in Russian with an English supplement. Later a section was added in Hebrew.

As time went on, the Bulletin founded by Russian Jews began to include sections on Sephardi Jews and on European immigrants who had fled Hitler. It was a natural development that all three distinctive groups of Jews in China should be represented in one publication. And then, as China recognized the State of Israel and ties between Israel and China strengthened, a separate supplement of the Israel China Friendship Society was included. Now the circle was closed.

The years passed, and doubts that the Bulletin might no longer fulfill a useful function proved to be unfounded. On the contrary, it grew in content and depth. Some of the old-timers passed away, but their children carried on the endeavor. Jews from China living in other parts of the world subscribed and contributed to the Bulletin. They too could not forget their past lives in China and felt a certain nostalgia for the past. Copies of the Bulletin began to cross oceans: to Australia, to the United States, to South America, to Europe and to Asia.

And when China opened its doors once again, former Old China Hands

returned to revisit their past. Some were lucky to meet old Chinese neighbors, some touched the mezuzas still at the entrances of their homes, and some rushed to visit their schools, their clubs, their synagogues, Jewish hospitals and clinics. Many of these structures had been torn down as modernization progressed, but a number remained.

Yes, today some cities in China are hardly recognizable. Shanghai, always an important port, has become one of the most modern, thriving metropolises of the world driven by remarkable energy and optimism. Many of the Jews who returned to their former hometowns in China expressed their joy, wonder, and impressions in letters and essays. They felt a deep need to share their experience with other Old China Hands. What better solution than to publish their thoughts in the Bulletin?

The role of the Bulletin in uniting Jews who had lived in China, in creating new bonds with Chinese officials, visitors, specialists and intellectuals, cannot be overlooked. From a modest newsletter, it has become a source of information anxiously awaited by its many subscribers.

The Bulletin at 50

by Abraham Fradkin

One recalls that at the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s all Jewish communities left China and settled mainly in North America, Australia and Israel. The former Jewish residents of China did not break the bond between them, and it remains strong to this very day due to the enterprising nature of the Igud Yotzei Sin.

It is incredible how time has flown since the inauguration of the Igud half a century ago, and the eventual publication of the Bulletin which reaches the homes of former Jewish residents of China wherever they had settled.

For the first fifteen years, the late David Rabinovich who was among the founders of the Igud, took upon himself the responsibility of running the routine activities of the Igud and the publishing of the Bulletin. It was a modest beginning and an uphill struggle due to the meager means at the disposal of the Igud. For the next thirty-two years it was the able leadership of Teddy Kaufman who in time brought the success of the Igud to its apex as we know it today.

In the past decade the Igud has been blessed by an increase of significant donations from well-to-do former Jewish residents of China living in

Israel and abroad, which enabled the Igud to expand its benevolent and other activities. Our Bulletin is hardly recognizable compared to the issues in the past. It has been expanded with a new appealing format that has won the praise of our subscribers in Israel and overseas. Since 1992 I was fortunate to have contributed a large number of articles on various topics, which I believe had some impact on the readers of the Bulletin, including the English translation of a part of my book "Periods in the Circle" (autobiography).

An unexpected chapter in the history of the Igud occurred at the beginning

of 1992 following the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel. Shortly afterwards the Igud acceded to the request of the Chinese representative in Tel Aviv to establish the Israel-China Friendship Society. A few weeks later we were pleasantly surprised to receive a two-week invitation to visit China from the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries based in Beijing. Our delegation consisted of four members who were among the founders of the Israel-China Friendship Society. The delegation, led by the chairman of the society, Teddy Kaufman, consisted of the late Eliahu Lankin, the late Ya'acov Tandet, and myself. Our itinerary included

Beijing, Shanghai, Harbin, Tianjin and Hangzhou. We visited China's famous historic sights, as well as our homes where we had resided and all the former Jewish institutions. Our excitement was overwhelming, as all of us had spent our formative years in China and this was our first visit after a lapse of more than forty years. In 1994 a second delegation led by Teddy Kaufman was invited to visit China. This time we also took an active part in the International Seminar on Jews in Shanghai. A few years later, a third delegation led by Yossi Klein was invited to visit China. Following the first two visits, we reciprocated by hosting Chinese Friendship delegations from Beijing and Shanghai.

Since 1992 there have been many visits to the Igud by Chinese delegations of various disciplines. The latest visit was the delegation from the Harbin Academy of Social Sciences who donated to the Igud and to the Diaspora Museum the replicas of two synagogues in Harbin.

The annual event of the Igud takes place during Hannuka when over one hundred scholarships are awarded to students of families of former Jewish residents of China as well as to Chinese students attending institutions of higher learning in Israel. At these ceremonious occasions, all members of the Igud are invited as well as the Chinese ambassador, his senior staff, and other dignitaries.

The Bulletin: Our Pride and Witness

by Ya'acov Liberman

Fifty years ago we were all much younger. But those of us who are still capable of remembering, must feel the urge of joining the celebrations in honor of those who composed the first pages of the first Bulletin of Igud Yotzei Sin fifty years ago. Suffice it to say that during these fifty years, some of the most popular Israeli dailies and weeklies are no more. They have folded up due to lack of funds, famine of writers, or drain of readers. Our Bulletin, on the contrary, grew from a few pages in Russian to a solid publication in three languages, with enough pages to compete with the Sunday edition of the New York Times. But quantity is never an important issue of a publication. Newspapers, periodicals or magazines are always graded on their quality rather than volume. And it is in this area that our Bulletin has undergone a remarkable metamorphosis.

With Teddy Kaufman at the helm and the last Boris Mirkin as his deputy, the Bulletin began a steady progress in content, style and diversity of subjects. With years, more talent joined the editorial committee and succeeded in attracting additional participation

from a broader readership including our landsmen from the United States, Europe and Australia. But the major boon came with the opening of the "iron gates" and the blessed flood of our Russian brethren to the shores of Eretz Israel. Some of these new and warmly welcomed "olim" were our very own – former members of the Jewish communities of China.

Today our Bulletin is widely read and eagerly awaited by many hundreds of its subscribers. With Teddy continuing his tireless efforts, we are fortunate to have some "new blood" in the life stream of our Organization. Teddy's right-hand man today is a young "last generation" oleh from China – Yossi Klein. Another is a devoted activist from Haifa, the son of the late Albert Veinerman – Ronny. These and others, who are continuing in the old tradition and example of their parents, constitute our immediate future. May they continue the blessed work begun by the talented and devoted leaders of our communities in China. And then, of course, there are the many contributors and translators such as Emmanuel Pratt (Monia Perutinsky) and countless others who are the mainstay of this

unique publication, so modestly called – The Bulletin.

Whereas our big and small donors have helped the organizers to overcome the financial burden of this publication, it is the unheralded volunteers such as Sara Morgulev and others that keep the "motors running" by attending to boring trivialities such as mailings, correspondence and proof-reading on a daily basis, day in and day out. To all of them we owe our gratitude and admiration.

The Bulletin of the Igud, above all else, is responsible for keeping us together, keeping us informed, and keeping us connected with each other, our Land and our People. For historians, the Bulletin became a treasure of information, and for us, former members of our Jewish communities of Harbin, Tientsin and Shanghai, it is a source of welcomed anticipation and pride.

May we all be blessed with many more years of health, vigor and vitality. And may we continue to enjoy reading our Bulletin – this reliable witness of the memorable times of our collective yesterdays – united in peace and happiness.

PRESIDIUM AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

On April 20 the regular meeting of the IYS Presidium took place at Bet Ponve. Present were: T. Kaufman, Y. Klein, I Brunner, R. Veinerman, R. Rashinsky, A. Fradkin, M. Kamionka, J. Sandel, and members of the Control Committee, M. Likhomanov and Z. Watner. It confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting held last December 12.

T. Kaufman rendered a comprehensive report on the activity of the Presidium and IYS as a whole during the past four months. Y. Klein presented the budget for 2004 which was unanimously approved. Also approved were loans for the amounts of NIS3,500.-, 3,000.- and 2,000.-, and a subsidy for mounting tombstones on the graves of D.A. and L.E. at 2,000.- each.

A regular meeting of the Central Committee took place on April 20. T. Kaufman opened the meeting by requesting those present to honor, by a minute of silence, the memory of the members of IYS and the Far Eastern Associations, who had passed away abroad and in Israel since the past

meeting of Central Committee on Dec. 15, 2003:

Israel – Nika and Emma Germant, Ita Oziransky, Musia Samsonovich, Miriam Vinogradov, Fanya Eliel (nee Yarkho), Ella Lesk (nee Diatlovitzky), Julietta Abramesko (nee Krieger), Shlomo Baranovsky, Ben Reuter.

USA – Miriam Elberg, (nee Slutzker) and Jessie August, in New York; Esther May (nee Madorsky) and Judy Citrin in San Francisco.

In Australia – Eve Gregori, Rachel Kang, Olga Patkin, Liuba Ried (nee Ekkel).

Canada – Raya Weiner.

T. Kaufman gave a comprehensive report on the activity of IYS in Israel since the past meeting on Dec. 12, 2003:

- On 22 Dec. 2003 an all-Israel gathering of Old China Hands took place on which occasion annual scholarships were handed to students, the children and grandchildren of our members.

- Two issues of the Bulletin were published (Nos. 378 and 379).

Generous contributions were received from Isia Magid (US\$31,000.-) and from Musia and Dani Berkovich (NIS20,000.-).

- Our Sunday gatherings continued to take place in Bet Ponve. Guests from abroad, Peter Burton of Los Angeles, Dan ben Knaan of Harbin, Dr. Lin Ping-an of Shanghai (Prof. Pan Guang's assistant) and Dr. Sabina Breuard of Paris (researcher of Semion Kaspé's murder) were entertained in Bet Ponve.

- A Russian TV (NTV) team made a short documentary on IYS activities.

- T. Kaufman gave three lectures in Hebrew and Russian in Beersheba and Tel Aviv) on the history of Jews of modern China.

The report was confirmed.

The 2004 budget presented by deputy chairman and treasurer, Y. Klein, was confirmed. T. Kaufman announced that a seminar on the history of the Harbin Jews will be held in 2004.

People and Events

Mazal Tov

Mira Mrantz

Our honorary representative and leader of the American Far Eastern Association of Southern California in Los Angeles, has become a great-grandmother for the fourth time. The newborn, Benjamin, is the fourth grandson of Mira's daughter Ania, and the son of Ania's daughter Tami. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Mira

and her family and wish them health and happiness.

Bat Mitzvah in New Jersey

Jennifer, granddaughter of Dora (nee Segerman) of Shanghai and her husband Joe Wainer (Harbin-Shanghai), celebrated her bat-mitzvah in March. The celebration was held in New Jersey. Jennifer is the daughter of Audrey (nee Wainer) and Donald

Levi. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Dora and Joe and all the Wainer family, and wish them health and happiness. **Bella Goldreich** (nee Segerman) of Shanghai, and her husband Avram, became grandparents for the sixth time. The newborn, Adar, is the son of Tania (nee Goldreich) and Roy Zuretz. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Bella, Avram and all the Goldreich family and wish them health and happiness.

Sarah Morgulev 89

1

Sarah cuts the birthday-pie.

2

Sarah and her nieces: seated (left to right) are Bella Goldreich (nee Segerman) and her daughter Ella; standing is Rasha Kaufman (nee Segerman) and Sarah.



3

Sarah with a bunch of flowers presented by her relatives Rosenstein and Neder.

4

T. Kaufman greets the heroine of the day.

5

Sarah thanks the guests.



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Wedding

Revital, the daughter of Hanna and Ari Nirim, and granddaughter of Celia and Mosia Nirim and Adir, the son of Helen and Robin Shiffman, were married. The wedding, which was held in a very traditional style, took place in Melbourne on January 25, 2004 which was also the 28th wedding anniversary of Hannah and Ari. Celia Nirim, grandmother, and Ilana Eshel, aunt, came especially from Israel to celebrate the wedding with the family. Igud Yotzei Sin sends heartiest congratulations to Celia Nirim and all her family.

Benny Tzur - 75

In February our landsman, a former resident of Shanghai, Benny Tzur, was 75 years old. Before his retirement, Benny worked in the Cabinet of Ministers of Israel.

Benny is now an active member of Igud Yotzei Sin. He translates from Hebrew into English for the Bulletin, comes regularly to Bet Ponve to compose the catalogue of our library and the index of the Hebrew edition of the Bulletin. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Benny and the whole Tzur family and wishes him good health, happiness and well-being till 120!

Bernard Darel - 75

Bernard Darel (Benny Dagilaisky), formerly of Harbin, was 75 in March. It was also the 40th wedding anniversary of Aya and Bernard. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates them both and wishes them health and happiness.

Al Rayson - 85

Our friend, Al Rayson (Lusia Reznikoff) will be 85 years old on June 26. Al lives in Montreal, Canada, and was born in Harbin. He graduated from the First Harbin Commercial School and was an active member of Harbin Betar. He was outstanding in light athletics. All through the years Al Rayson has always been a great friend of our Association, keeping contact with landsmen in Canada, the USA, and Israel. He donates generously to the IYS Social Fund. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Al Rayson and all the family, and wish them health and happiness.

Golden Wedding Anniversary

Pearl and George Kanpol (Grisha Kanzenpolsky) of Tientsin and Shanghai, celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on May 1 among family and friends. Sam Muller welcomed Pearl and George in the name of the friends present. In lieu of presents, donations were sent to the IYS Social Fund by: Ita and Yosef Horol, Zina and Hugo Landwer, Pnina and Bobby Bershinsky, Hannah and Sam Muller, Rasha and Teddy Kaufman, Sara Ichelov, Pearl and Abe Wake, Lily Kanzenpolsky. Igud Yotzei Sin congratulates Pearl, George and all the family and wishes them health and happiness.

People and Events – more additions

Donations

Isia Magid, our landsman from Melbourne, Australia, gave his annual most generous donation to Igud Yotzei Sin in the sum of Aust. \$50,000 for the three funds in memory of his son Ralph Magid: The Social Aid Fund, the Scholarship Fund, and the Scholarship Fund for Chinese Students in Israel connected with the Israel-China Friendship Society, and to the new fund in memory of his wife, the late Ira Magid.

Musia and Dania Berkovich, our landsmen in Israel (Ra'anana), made a very generous donation in the sum of NIS 20,000 to the Social Fund in memory of the Berkovich and Diatlovitsky parents, and to the Scholarship fund in the name of the late Moma Lesk.

Grisha Shannon (Zubitsky), formerly of Harbin and Tientsin, and his wife Bella, now living in Australia, made a generous donation of Aust. \$5,000 towards the Social Aid Fund. Igud Yotzei Sin heartily thanks the donors and wishes them health and happiness.

Guests at Bet Ponve

On March 3, Anais Martane, a photo-journalist from Paris who now works in Peking, visited Bet Ponve. Anais, who is Jewish, visited Harbin several times and took many photos of former Jewish life in Harbin. Another visitor was Nadav Harel, the son of the late Dr. Dan Harel (Kolia Peshkovsky) and the grandson of

Dr. Tovia Nikolaevich Peshkovsky. Nadav Harel is preparing a film about the Jews of Harbin. Both visitors met with T. Kaufman, Y. Klein, and S. Morgulev, and they will work on the information in the archives of Igud Yotzei Sin.

Bet Ponve Gatherings

On Sunday, February 22, two birthdays were celebrated at the weekly gatherings at Bet Ponve – that of Eva Lau and Rasha Kaufman. Eva treated those present with tasty chocolate biscuits and Rasha with her special homemade cake. At the beginning of the get-together, T. Kaufman spoke about Musia Samsonovich and asked for a minute of silence to honor her memory.

On Sunday, February 29, Benny Tzur (Skopez), formerly of Shanghai, celebrated his 75th birthday at Bet Ponve. T. Kaufman greeted Benny warmly and spoke about his voluntary work for the Bulletin and for the Igud office during the past year. Benny was presented with a birthday cake and a gift from the editorial office of the Bulletin, and heartily thanked everyone. T. Kaufman also welcomed Varda Yoran (Rosa Granevsky) of Tientsin, as well as Dr. Lian Pingan, as assistant of Prof. Pan Guang of Shanghai, who is in Israel to study Hebrew at Tel Aviv University.

On Sunday, March 14, T. Kaufman congratulated Aya Rosenblat on the birth of her grandson. The happy grandmother treated everyone with a tasty cake. T. Kaufman also greeted Anais Martane, a photo-journalist from Peking. Finally, a minute of silence was held for the late Galia Cohen (nee Granevsky). May she rest in peace!

On Sunday, March 28, a minute of silence was held for the following landsmen from China who passed away in Israel and abroad.

In Israel: Fania Eliel (Yarcho)

In the USA: Venia Ruter; in San Francisco: Judy Citrin (nee Zirinsky) and Dr. Jan Alban (Yana Abramovich); in Florida: Sandy Nehamkin.

T. Kaufman wished a Happy Passover to all present.

Dr. A. Kaufman, Camp Doctor - 16 Years in the Soviet Union

Chapter 5, Sections D

I am being interrogated daily by the Lieut. Colonel, many times, even at night. One of the night “performances” was dedicated to “Maccabee” and surprisingly it took place during the Chanukah holiday. I found out about the Chanukah holiday by chance. One day a new prisoner was put into my cell. I suspected that he was a “brooder” and avoided entering into any conversations with him. He tried to gain my confidence by asking me:

“Are you a Jew?”

“Yes!”

“I am a Jew too.”

Even this revelation on his part did not put me into any mood to speak to him. On the next day he again tried to draw me into a conversation, he asked:

“Do you know that it is Chanukah today?”

“No”

“Yes, today is the second candle...”

“Thanks” I said “I will celebrate the holiday in my heart...”

At midday he was called, ostensibly, for interrogation but he never returned. I was in the cell with him for nearly a whole day and did not divulge anything to him. On my part I learned that this day is Chanukah. Darkness started to set in, somewhere far away people are lighting Chanukah candles. “In the quiet of the night eight wicks are flickering humbly” * I climbed up the wall by standing on the central heating unit and looked through the grated hatch. Starlit sky! How many stars can be seen, but where is my star? I am looking for it in the small patch of sky that can be seen through the small hatch. Over there, yonder,



are the Chanukah lights, the lights of the Maccabees...

In memory of the days of sorrow and edicts and for those who performed

victoriously and heroically”.*

Through the hatch of the door I hear the rebuking voice of the guard:

“Where did you climb to? What are you looking for? Get down immediately!”

I climb down. But the lights of rejuvenation of the struggle for freedom and honor are still flickering in my brain. I see them clearly.

“Shine my humble but sacred candles, remind us of the wonderful days of the past”.*

Very quickly the command of “lights out” was heard, which meant – get into the bunks. I did so. Thoughts of Chanukah do not leave me. The memories and dreams torture my soul. During the night I was awakened. I was led through the dark courtyard to the “MGB” building. I was already accustomed to these nighttime interrogations. My investigator brings me to the Lieut. Colonel’s office where he is sitting on his “throne” and

browsing through the papers lying in front of him.

“Sit” orders the Lieut. Colonel.

Without lifting his head from the papers he asks me:

“What is Maccabee?”

I explain: “This is a national sports organization of Jewish youth”

“And why is it called Maccabee?”

I explain: “The Lieut. Colonel does not believe what I say; he does not have any faith in history”.

“Tell me everything and do not hide anything”.

I tell him about the heroic war that Judah Hamaccabee waged. On the history of that period. My interrogators did not like what they heard. Nor did the Lieut. Colonel.

“Everything you say is a deceitful lie... There were never any Jewish heroes nor did the Maccabees ever exist. Maccabee is a political anti-Soviet organization which was headed by you. We know everything about the Maccabee” said the Lieut. Colonel lifting the folder he held in his hand, adding: “You listen to me, for the last time, I tell you, tell me the whole truth... confess to everything... we know everything about you. We know who you are and about your counter-revolutionary Zionist activities. If you will lie, it will be to your detriment!”

He turns to my interrogator and says:

“Take him away from here”.

It was with this unpleasant talk with my interrogator in the Sverdlovsk prison that I celebrated the 1946 “Feast of Lights”.

I am again in my cell. I cannot fall sleep. My brain is full of thoughts torturing my soul. It is already 15 months that I am in prison, out of

these, three months in the filthy and somber prison of Sverdlovsk. Most of the time I am in complete solitude, in a cell for one. The food is terrible. There is no nourishment for the prisoners. The year is 1946. I clean the cell by myself. At 6 o'clock in the morning a bell rings to wake the prisoners. I arise. An order is given; I take out the night bucket, and bring in a bucket with water and clean the floor with a filthy rag. I then waste away the whole day either pacing the cell or sitting on a stool, it is forbidden to lie on the bunk and during the day the bunk is folded against the wall. On the wall by the hatch hangs a board with the prison regulations listing the many restrictions and the very few rights of the prisoners. Among the "rights"- appears the right to borrow books from the prison library. I read this with joy. I'll read everything, I thought, as there is nothing else to do but read. My happiness however was in vain. Once in a while the duty officer comes around and asks if there is any message I would like to pass or any other request. I ask for permission to use the prison library. The officer answers with obvious pleasure and ridicule:

"The books are still in print – when they'll be completed you can have them".

I point to the regulations on the wall.

"Nothing is left from this library; all the pages were smoked away"

"You smoked away all the books?" I blurted out.

"Where you came from, abroad, you could get everything, cigarettes, cigars, while we hardly found even "machorka", and where from could we get the paper? So we tore the pages out of the books and smoked..."

For a few days I had in my cell a city compatriot, a lawyer. In the past he was employed as a secretary of the district court, and after the February upheaval he practiced law. He was addicted to alcohol. Everyday he drank himself into a stupor. After that he embraced religion and involved

himself with affairs of the church. In one of his letters to his friend he described Bolshevism as a "multi-headed monster". When Harbin was captured by the Soviets he was arrested. This cultured and educated person has degenerated completely during his tenure in the Soviet prison and is suffering from the lack of vodka. Without it his life is a hell. He is tortured daily by interrogations and even threatened with execution. On his return from interrogations he sits and sobs bitterly. My heart breaks when I see him in this condition. I try to divert his thoughts to other subjects. He, for instance, is very proficient in the ancient Latin language and we spent many hours in trying to recall Latin phrases and proverbs that were adopted by other languages of the world. We recalled over 180 such ancient phrases. This occupation, which we continued for some time, made us forget our grim reality for the time being. However, this unfortunate person was my cellmate only for a little while. One day he was punished and transferred to a solitary confinement cell and I haven't seen him since.

The Lieut. Colonel does not leave me in peace. Every night he summons me for interrogations. He demands that I tell him about the activities of the Jewish community and of its espionage against the Soviet Union in the service of the British. Then, suddenly he came up with a new accusation:

"For what purpose did you travel to Romania?" he asked. "I did not travel to Romania nor have I ever been there in my life."

The Lieut. Colonel goes out of his wits, demands that I confess to the real reason of my visit to Romania, if not "he will destroy me, I shall rot in this prison."

"I was never in Romania in my life, I have nothing to confess, do with me whatever you wish."

The Romanian accusation was thus dropped. Two weeks later I was

accused of being a member of the "Freemason Lodge". I replied that this is a lie, just like the lie about my trip to Romania. "No one accuses you of the trip to Romania", shouted the Lieut. Colonel."

But, I am now accused of belonging to the "Freemason Lodge". Allegedly, a secret Jewish, Zionist Freemason lodge existed in Harbin, and just like the other "Freemason" lodges around the world this lodge too was involved in espionage. Many people of the Jewish bourgeoisie of Harbin were members of this lodge; I was supposed to be one of its heads. The Lieut. Colonel demanded that I reveal "all" on the workings of this lodge, about its "espionage" activities and its contacts with the United States and Britain. Upon hearing this accusation a short laugh of ridicule passed my lips, He became furious.

"What are you laughing about, you evil degenerate" and started spewing at me a torrent of vile swear words which he knew so well "Open your mouth, you scum, tell everything you whore". On hearing these words I raised my voice and shouted at him in anger:

"I will not talk nor tell anything, all these accusations are fabrications and malicious lies."

I was never asked again about this lodge in Harbin. Only much later, when I was interrogated in Moscow was this matter raised again, as "by the way".

* Quoted from the poem of S. Frug translated from the Hebrew.

*From the Hebrew by Benny Tzur
(to be continued)*

MAZAL TOV

A seventh grandchild – a granddaughter – was born to the Pnina and Yossi Klein family. Igud Yotsei Sin and the Israel-China Friendship Society congratulate Pnina and Yossi and all the Klein family and wish them health and happiness

at Beit Ponve

1

In the first row from left to right: Bobby and Pnina Bershadsky of Jerusalem, Aya and Bernard Darel (Dagilaisky). In the second row: Sammy Muller, Mr. Luo Songtao, Secretary of the Chinese Embassy, Varda Priver, Garry Umansky, Blanche and Joe Levoff.



2

From left to right: Nadav Harel, the son of the late Dr. Dan Harel (Kolia Peshkovsky) and a grandson of Dr.T.N. Peshkovsky. Nadav Harel is shooting a film about the Jews of Harbin. Next to him are Sarah Morgulev, Anais Martane and T. Kaufman. Anais Martane is a French Jewish girl from Paris who is a photo correspondent in Beijing. She is shooting a film and working at an album about the Jews.



3

A visitor from the Center for Jewish Studies Shanghai, Mr. Liang came to Beit Ponve to a Sunday get-together in March. He is an assistant of Prof. Pan Guang. Mr. Liang Pingan came to Israel to study Hebrew at a three-month course at Tel Aviv University. He brought a souvenir to Igud Yotzei Sin. Left to right: Avi Podolsky, T. Kaufman, Liang Pingan and Yossi Klein.



The Turning Point

By Emmanuel Pratt

The year 1839, which saw the opening of the Opium War between Britain and China, is the great turning point between old and new China. It marks the end of China's long existence as an independent civilization free to disregard what took place beyond the borders of the Middle Kingdom, and its emergence into a world of rapid and irresistible changes. The outcome of this historic encounter was to insure that eventually and inevitably, dynamic forces from the West would have a large part in shaping China's future.

Up to this time, for almost three centuries since the sails of Portuguese ships appeared on the horizon of China's South Sea, the imperial Chinese court had succeeded in dealing with Westerners on its own masters-vassals terms, in which the Chinese were the masters and the "overseas devils" – their vassals. The trade with the foreigners was confined to a few ports and was conducted under stiff supervision of imperial bureaucracy. Chinese merchants, for their part, had long since learned to live with such "regular" conditions of doing business in China. Westerners, however, began to be increasingly resentful of these restrictions and resorted to smuggling, which proved lucrative not only for the direct participants but for local officials as well, who could be bribed to keep their hands off the illegal traffic and increase it for their self interest instead of stamping it out for the good of all.

Opium was not the only commodity in which the foreigners were dealing, and tensions could have gradually been eased, if not for the traditional Chinese haughtiness and their refusal to establish equal trade relations with the foreigners. For lack of such common ground on which to meet, it was impossible to resolve the constant conflicts that arose in contacts

between Chinese and foreigners over differing conceptions of justice and fairness.

The consumption of smuggled opium rapidly spread throughout the country and the Chinese could no longer ignore the damage it brought to the people. On the other hand, China was no longer able to maintain its isolationist policy. Some sort of showdown was inevitable. China had to once and for all understand the realistic truth of the situation and learn the historical lesson regardless of the price it had to pay. A Chinese leading policy maker at the time, **Lin Tze-hsu**, Imperial commissioner at Canton, helped to interpret for Chinese minds the meaning of the emerging reality. The problem was that he himself misunderstood it.

Lin Tze-hsu

Lin Tze-hsu (1785 – 1850), a native of the southeast coastal province of Fukien, was a product of Confucian educational and service system maintained by China for centuries. By the late 1830's, when opium smuggling became a pressing issue, Lin had already established himself as an able governor, and then governor-general of rich and populous provinces of Central China, gaining a wide reputation for his competence, integrity and humaneness. He called upon the court for an immediate and full-scale assault on the opium menace. As a result, after the Emperor himself questioned him closely, he was appointed as high commissioner at Canton with plenipotentiary powers to deal with the problem.

On his arrival at Canton, Lin Tze-hsu made it clear that his intentions were serious and inflexible and that he is not the type of an official who can be bribed or stalled off. It was at this point (spring 1839) that Lin addressed his celebrated letter to Queen Victoria, demanding assurances to put an end

to the trade. In his letter, Lin argued against the opium trade with all the moral earnestness of a Confucian scholar and the lofty condensation of one speaking for his Emperor. Lin's arguments were unassailable, but his tone indicates how unready the Chinese were to deal with the British as diplomatic equals. From the Chinese point of view the British could aspire to nothing more than the status of a tribute nation. Equality was out of question. The letter remained unanswered.

When it was evident that the British did not take him seriously, Lin ordered the British Superintendent of Trade, Captain Elliot, to surrender the 20,283 chests of opium in their possession to be burnt. Elliot complied after issuing receipts to the owners of the drug that they will be fully reimbursed by the British government. Lin also demanded that the foreign merchants sign a document, promising never again to import the drug. They were held hostages at the opium factories until they signed it -- with no intention of ever keeping their promise. Elliot left Canton for Macao, taking the entire British community with him. As a final token of victory, Lin obtained an imperial edict terminating all trade between China and England.

Soon after Elliot's departure, British warships appeared off China's southern shores. The Opium War broke out.

Lin Tze-hsu paid the full price for having misunderstood the tragic circumstances that led to the confrontation. He was dismissed from his office and banished to the Central Asian province of China, where again he showed himself to be a capable administrator. By 1845 he had been rehabilitated and in 1850 was again made an imperial high commissioner, this time to suppress the Taiping rebels. He died en route to his new posting.

Traditional Games and Sports in China

By Emmanuel Pratt

Throughout their history the Chinese have been extremely fond of games and sports, and their weakness for gambling (*tu-po*) has been an anathema to Chinese moralists (as well as successive governments from ancient times to the present). Recent archaeological excavations in the PRC have yielded rich material on games in use from the Han to Tang dynasties which adds to our knowledge gathered from written sources. Among the most ancient games mentioned are *po* and *yi*. The former seems to be a game of dice played by two people with six black and six white pieces each on a board of 12 squares. A similar game, using marked bamboo sticks instead of dice, was *liu-po*, which became popular during the Han dynasty, and is well documented by pottery tomb figurines of this period. A more complex game was *shu-p'u* of the 4th to 6th centuries, which was played by five people using 20 pieces of five different colors and five marked bamboo sticks on a board divided into three sections of 120 squares each. There was also a game called *shuang liu*, invented in the 3rd century and still popular during the Sung dynasty, which has survived in Japan in various forms by the name of *suguroku*. This game, corresponding to the Western game of backgammon, was played by two people using 16 pieces each and two dice on a board divided into eight sections. Original boards of several varieties of this game survived in the Shosoin treasure house in Nara, Japan and among archaeological finds in Chinese Turkestan. The second type

of ancient game mentioned above, *yi*, is usually identified with the *wei-ch'i* of later periods. In its earliest form this game seems to have been played on boards with 17 rows of 17 squares, as shown on a T'ang dynasty painting discovered in Chinese Turkestan. Specimens of boards with 18 rows of 18 squares have been preserved in China from the Sui dynasty, and it was not until after that period that the present form of 19 rows of 19 squares gradually became popular. The game, which in the West is better known by its Japanese name of *go*, is played by two people with 120 black or white pieces each, and the goal is to encircle as many pieces of the opponent as possible. More similar to chess is the Chinese *hsiang-chi*, which in a somewhat altered and more complicated form, became popular in Japan by the name of *shogi*. It is played by two people using 16 red or black pieces each, on a board divided into two sections of 32 squares each. There is also an ancient version of this game for three players, with a board having three rows of 32 squares (based on the three armies of the Three Kingdoms).

Also mentioned should be a group of racing games with dice, the *sheng-kuang-t'u*, which exists in various forms and is played on a plan divided in up to 98 sections arranged in a spiral, each representing a step in the hierarchy of Chinese officialdom. There is a similar game, *chuang-yuan-ch'ou*, consisting of 63 sticks, each carrying one of the academic titles that could be gained by passing official examinations.

Among the numerous games with dice and dominoes, *mah-jong* (*ma-chiang*) and domino (*t'ien-chiu* – heavenly wine) are the most popular even at present (the former being well known to most of our ladies). *Ma-chiang* is played by four people with 136 tiles marked by symbols, of which certain combinations have to be acquired. *T'ien chiu* seems to have developed from a game of dice and consists of 32 pieces with eyes from double one to double six, of which 11 occur twice.

Many of the games mentioned above can be played with cards (*yeh-tzu*), the history of which can be traced back to the T'ang dynasty. These already show all the characteristics of the more recent money cards (*chih-p'ai*).

The Chinese are also known for their puzzles, some of which became popular in Europe. There are numerous lottery type games of chance, such as guessing the winners of imperial examinations (*wei-hsing*), or the names of historical personalities (*tzu-hua*), betting on the characters from the book *Ch'ien-tzu wen*, as well as games of social entertainment, such as guessing the numbers of fingers (*ts'ai-ch'uan*), also very popular with the European children. Among the most popular children's games and toys are flying the kite (*feng cheng*), and shuttlecock (*chien-tzu*), self-righting dolls (*pu-tao-weng*) and various other dolls made of clay, wood, straw and rags. In games of competition animals used to fight each other, or men, pitched against each other as in rowing, tug-

of-war, polo, a kind of hockey and football (*tzu-ch'iu*). In the case of the latter, the traditional ball was made of rags and was not supposed to touch the ground.

Some of the martial arts can be traced to the first millennium BCE. Among them the different kind of boxing attracted attention in the West. Two kinds of boxing are distinguished in China – *nei-chia* (internal), and *wai-chia* (external) systems. The former is based on spiritual training similar to yoga (such as the well-known *t'ai-ch'i*, characterized by subtle yielding, *hsing-yi*, stressing direct confrontation, and *pa-kua* – circular evasion and sudden attack. It is believed that Chinese wrestling was invented in Mongolia and became popular in China during the Yuan (Mongol) Dynasty. All these were later adopted in Japan as *judo*, *jiu-jitsu* and *karate*.

Friendship first, competition second"

Western sports were initially introduced into China by the YMCA in the treaty ports. Basketball was introduced in 1896, shortly after its invention in the USA., and by 1910 knowledge of track and field events, football, basketball, tennis and ping-pong was widespread enough for the First National Athletics meet to be held in Nanking. The Communist educational authorities made special efforts to encourage swimming – possibly after the sad experiences of the Long March.

Constitutionally, sport is an integral part of Chinese socio-cultural life and the common slogan "Friendship first, competition second" emphasizes that sport is for the common good, not for personal glory. Action taken to popularize sports has included 'Radio Exercises' allowing office workers and students to limber up during the day, as well as widely publicized gestures such as Mao Tse-tung's swim down the Yangtze River in 1966. Systems of standards to be attained in sports such as running, jumping

and swimming were introduced in the 'Labor Defense System' in 1959's. In the countryside the absence of facilities has popularized games requiring a minimum of equipment, such as basketball, volleyball and ping-pong.

China's participation in international sports began with the Far Eastern Championship Games, held 10 times between 1913 and 1934. China participated in the Olympic Games in 1932, 1936 and 1948. After 1949, arguments as to whether Peking or Taipei should represent China led to China's withdrawal from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in August 1959. China applied for readmission to the IOC in 1975, and by 1979 a formula was devised allowing Taiwan to participate, though not as China. Taiwan withdrew in protest, resolving the issue in favor of the PRC.

Since the 'normalization' of China's international status in 1971, it has won regional and world championships in several sports, including diving, badminton, tennis, ping-pong and volleyball. The indications are that China will continue to play an increasing role in international sports.

(From the "Cambridge Encyclopedia of China" brought to press by Emmanuel Pratt)

Something to bear in mind

A water bearer in China had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole that he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walk from the stream to the housel, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went

on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and half pots of water to his house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what was perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself because this crack at my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house". The bearer said to the pot: "Did you notice that there are roses on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful roses to decorate the table. Without your being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house".

Each of us has our own unique flaw. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take people for what they are and look for the good in them. So to all my crackpot friends, have a great day and remember to smell the roses.

(from The Jerusalem Post)

MAZAL TOV


Shura Veiler - 85

Shura Veiler, formerly of Harbin and Tientsin, is 85 years old. Shura has been an active member of our Haifa Branch for many years. She has also been a volunteer all through the years at the Rambam Hospital in Haifa, always receiving high praise for her devoted work at the hospital. Shura has many friends and is loved and respected by all who know her. Igud Yotsei Sin heartily congratulates Shura and all her family, and wish them health and happiness.

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Great success of the clothing collection campaign

At the last meeting of the Relief Committee of SACRA Mr. D.B. Rabinovich made a short report regarding the recent clothing collection campaign carried out by the Jewish youth of the Ashkenazi community in the districts of former French Concession and Settlement. This campaign, he said, must be considered as fully successful. It is true, as mentioned, that not all Jewish families responded to the appeal for clothing fullyheartedly, and that there was quite a number of persons who met our young collectors rather coldly, even with animosity; but on the other hand, there were many who considered themselves honoured by the visit and gave our collectors valuable winter clothing. On the whole, as result of the campaign, over 140 parcels were collected and it is safe to assume that the clothing collected will enable to provide a few hundred needy refugees with warm things for the winter. Mr. Rabinovich especially praised the youth who carried out their task with greatest energy and enthusiasm. Their task was not an easy one; it was often necessary for our young boys and girls to walk up sixth and seventh floors of apartment houses, carry with them the parcels and go a few times a day to the Jewish School to store the parcels there. However, there was not an instance when any boy or a girl refused assistance in the campaign. Our youth fully justified our hopes and we may be proud of it -- concluded Mr. Rabinovich his report.

This short report greatly impressed all members of the SACRA Relief Committee who unanimously carried out a vote of thanks to all the young boys and girls who participated in the campaign and to Mr. D. Rabinovich who organized and supervised it. As to the clothing, it has been decided to hand it over to the Ladies Committee of SACRA jointly with the Winter Relief Committee for distribution.

In the evening of the same day leaders of the seven groups of youths who carried out the collection, were invited to the Jewish Club for a cup of tea. At the friendly meeting were

also present: chairman of the SACRA Ladies Committee, Mrs. Jedaikin, chairman of the SACRA Relief Committee, Mr. A. Oppenheim, chairman of the Kitchen Fund, Dr. Berglass, and Mr. D. B. Rabinovich. While greeting the representatives of the youth Mr. D. Rabinovich said that he considers it a great honour to express on behalf of the SACRA Relief Committee and the whole Jewish community sincere thanks to the youth for the campaign just carried out by them. They had taken a great task upon them but they carried it out with energy and enthusiasm. Our youth showed a deep understanding of our social problems, its readiness for sacrifices and we are proud of it. In Hongkong, likewise, the youth has also energetically participated in the Winter Relief Campaign. With such a youth we may look into future with hope and optimism.

A short address was also made by the chairman of the SACRA Relief Committee, Mr. A. Oppenheim, who appealed to the youth not to forget the refugees and to be always ready for active support and cooperation. Mr. Oppenheim quoted a few figures, which clearly showed the great need among the refugees. You are not children any longer -- continued Mr. Oppenheim -- you are already entering into life and you must feel responsibility towards our nation. You have carried out a great work, you have shown a deep social feeling--permit us to rely upon you in the future too. And we are expecting you to help us awaken the apathy of many of us -- your fathers and mothers.

Speaking next, the chairman of the Kitchen Fund, Dr. Berglass, expressed his thanks to the youth on behalf of the refugees. Never during all these years -- he said -- was the Winter Relief Campaign here as successful as this year. In the Designated Area alone we have succeeded to collect a hundred thousand dollars and much clothing but we are especially pleased with the success of your campaign. It is the first time that you, the Jewish youth of the Ashkenazi community, have come to our assistance giving your time, work and energy to the cause of helping

your less fortunate brethren. I am happy to note that never before was there such mutual understanding between the local Jewish community and the refugees and I feel certain that by our coordinated efforts, with the assistance of our splendid youth, we shall weather all the difficulties.

An informal conversation followed and the youth related of their impressions of the campaign. One of the boys told that through an error he and his group visited a house of a non-Jewish family. Not knowing how "to escape" they told of the campaign carried out by them and in result they were given two large parcels of clothing. Some told that they were stopped on the streets several times by strangers, who were not even mentioned on their lists, were invited to visit them and were given clothing for the refugees. They called also upon some people by chance and found there ready wrapped parcels. There were also many stories of people whom they had to visit a number of times and who met them with animosity.

The meeting passed very lively in a friendly atmosphere and we can be certain that in the future our youth will eagerly respond to further calls for assistance.

Below is a complete list of boys and girls who took part in the campaign: Messrs. R. Tsokuchinsky, D. Tsokuchinsky, L. Shalim, K. Ashkenazi, E. Sherman, M. Pogrebnitsky, L. Abramovich, L. Rir in, Isesa Rabinovich, Isa Rabinovich, A. Rabinovich, R. Wilkens, I. Ginsberg, D. Zeigerman, E. Ahmann; Messrs. J. Luvvsky, M. Tsokuchinsky, M. Chaikin, G. Terk, J. Jedaikin, M. Aronovsky, B. Koblenz, I. Zimmerman, I. Shpout, A. Binkor, H. Kogan, I. Vainer, A. Pradkin, B. Miller, K. Landsay, N. Wainland.

The bicycle cart was kindly loaned by Messrs. D. G. A. Miller while general assistance was given by the Shanghai Jewish School at Seymour Road and Jewish Boy Scouts. Mister J. Luvvsky acted as Hon. Secretary of the youth groups and he shouldered a large work in organizing and supervising the campaign.

Artists' Soiree and Street Collection in Benefit of Jewish Winter Relief Campaign

The Jewish Winter Relief Campaign had its appropriate start on December 25th when an Artists' Soiree was held at the Eastern Theatre. Energetic propaganda has been carried on, and the result was a full house. The program consisted of solo performances by best refugee artists, musicians, singers, actors and children's ballet who have contributed their very best. On the whole it must be said that it was an evening of a high cultural standard worthy of any large European centre. This is a good enough tribute to its artistic value. In the intermission a bar was established in the hall, coffee, cakes and hotdogs being offered by the ladies of the Kitchen Fund. Since all this was contributed by the suppliers, all the proceeds went to the Winter Relief Fund.

The financial result of the Artists' Soiree couldn't be estimated as yet, for the donations have been pouring all the next week.

The street collection in benefit of Winter Relief took place on Sunday Dec. 26th. Commissioners of the Judi-

ache Gemaine, Members of Kitchen Fund Committee, Economic Department and about 150 volunteers carried the collection-bases, and their lady-companions distributed the hotdogs. The collection brought in \$36,000.

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I g u d y o t z e i S i n

My Life in China

By Shmuel Rosenblum

(Shmuel Rosenblum, son of Rachel and Faivel, ז"ל, was born in Harbin in 1937. As a boy of 13 he came to Israel. After graduating from the Ben Shemen Agricultural School, he served his military term with Nahal. Then he joined the Israel Police Force, where he spent the next 35 years as a detective. Now he is retired. Shmuel's wife died at an early age, and he had to bring up his three sons all by himself. His oldest son and his family live in Switzerland, while his other two sons are with their families in Israel. Shmuel has four grandchildren. – Ed.)

When the new bundle of Bulletins arrive, I invariably pick up the Hebrew part and leave the rest aside: firstly, because Hebrew is my language of preference, as my Russian is not what it used to be, and my English is not sufficient for me to enjoy the magazine.

As a rule, I begin by checking if there are any stories about my native city, Harbin, where I spent the first 13 years of my life. My special interest is to see pictures of the streets and the buildings, some of which I still remember. Regretfully, such material is rare. And yet, I somehow feel the ties that bring me back to the past in that far away land, and I often think, what brought my parents to China, of all the places! For me, the center of the world is Israel, and I know that my home and my homeland is here to find peace and happiness with my family. However, the word homeland symbolizes the homeland for the Jewish People as a whole, while the land where I was born, my personal homeland, my personal roots, are in Harbin. That is a fact.

As a child, the names of the Harbin Jewish pioneers did not mean much to me, if anything at all, although I heard them being mentioned on certain occasions by my parents and other adults. Now some

of these names appear in the Bulletin's memorial notices, and obituaries help me add to my knowledge of the history of the Jewish presence in China, and to adjust my past to my present.

In my childhood I was always surrounded by Russian and Chinese children. At first I studied in the Talmud Torah, then in the Soviet Russian school on Kazachya Street, for which, I had to pass entrance examinations. I don't remember why I was transferred there, but I think that the neighbors convinced my parents that it was a better school.

When I first stepped into the new classroom, I was met by curious glances, because my name revealed my Jewish identity. This prompted me to work hard and try to be first in the class to avoid any jeering. I was pretty good at sports: especially sprinting and football. I was as good, or sometimes better than my Russian schoolmates, which helped me make friends. My closest friends then were Yuri Perminov, Nikolai Belonogov, Nikolai Parhimenko, Konstantin Roskov and Yuri Golsky. I remember how my parents made me stay and prepare my home work carefully in order not to be censured by the teachers. The annual examinations made me all but ill with fright that I may fail.

Sometimes we clashed with the Chinese children in our neighborhood. When one of us was ever attacked, the whole class was mobilized. During these "wars" I was not classified as a "Jew", but as a "comrade in arms". Having done my homework, I used to go down to the yard behind our house, where I met my Chinese friends, most of whom spoke Russian. Some of them were children of mixed marriages. I spoke Chinese pretty well.

Once I, too, was in need of my schoolmates' help: next to us lived a Chinese boy by the name of Chang-fei (his parents owned a timber yard). I had

a fight with his younger brother, Lang-fei, who was of my age, 11 or 12. Now I don't even remember what the fight was all about, but then it seemed to have been something serious. The fight ended with Lang-fei fleeing from the battlefield, holding his bleeding nose and yelling for all Harbin to hear. There were no witnesses to our fight except for a small Chinese girl who may have seen it from a distance.

I thought that Lang ran home to wash his face and that it was the end of the fight, but the next morning I learned that he did not return home at all. On the way to school a Chinese boy came up to me and said that I was responsible for Lang-fei's disappearance, because "I know that yesterday you had a fight!" My heart sank and my blood froze.

That day was probably the worst in my life. I was paralyzed with fear. I could not think. I could not hear people speak to me. I imagined the most terrible things which surely happened to Lang-fei. On the way home my classmates asked me what was the matter. I told them. The whole class immediately mobilized to protect me from the Chinese, "who were surely there, waiting for us." But to our great surprise the street was empty and quiet.

Approaching my home, we saw Lang-fei's elder brother, Chang-fei, sitting in the porch. Seeing our "army", he approached us and said, "Why do you make such a fuss? My brother had his nose injured. He hid himself under the kang (a huge Chinese family bed, sometimes as large as a room) for fear that father would punish him for picking up a fight. The little girl who saw you fighting told him that you punched my brother on the nose, but Lang said that it was not true and that he fell and hurt himself."

A ton-heavy stone rolled off my heart. (From the Hebrew: E. P.)

A Jew from China - Pioneer of Modern Chinese Music

By Ernest Salzberg (Toronto)

It seems that Jews have a built-in trait of not only successfully adapting themselves to any cultural environment, at times quite foreign to the one they were used to, but also of becoming a sort of fermenting element, furthering the growth and development of that environment. The life and work of Aaron Avshalomov, a composer and one of the founders of modern Chinese music, may serve as a proof of it.

Aaron was born in Nikolaevsk-on-Amur in October 1895 in the family of a successful fishery owner. His grandfather, a Caucasian Jew, was banished to Nikolaevsk together with his wife and son, Asher. The reason for such a severe punishment was the broadly practiced Caucasian custom of conducting a vendetta in the course of which a man was killed.

Getting to Nikolaevsk took two whole years. At first the prisoners traveled by rail, then on horseback, then on foot. In Siberia, Asher's father launched an intensive commercial enterprise. He opened two factories for fish conservation – one at the site of his banishment, another in Petropavlovsk, Kamchatka. Both factories were inherited, enlarged, and modernized by Asher, so that at the time of Aaron's birth the Avshalomovs (Asher, wife and three daughters) were an affluent family, deeply rooted in the Nikolaevsk soil. Aaron went to the local school where English was taught alongside with the regular Russian educational program. The school had a brass band, in which Aaron had his first try as a musician and conductor.

At home, the Avshalomovs had a considerable literature and music library, and whenever the city was visited by an opera or theater troupes

from the capital or abroad, they never failed to be present. However, the deepest impression cast on Aaron was that of Chinese popular music. Nikolaevsk was annexed by Russia in the middle of the 19th century, and at first the city consisted of a mixed Russian-Chinese population. Asher had a number of Chinese employees, and Aaron used to visit them. In the Chinese quarter of the town Aaron heard ancient Chinese legends, listened to the classical Chinese opera and was at home with the traditional Chinese music. All this determined the taste and leaning of the future composer.

After graduating from school, Aaron was sent by his parents to Switzerland to study medicine. However, not having any call for a medical education, the young man joined a music school, which he left at the end of the first year. He returned to Nikolaevsk, but the 1917 revolution prompted him to leave Russia for the United States. On his way to America, in Tientsin, he met the conductor Jacques Herschkowitz. The two became life-long friends. Jacques was going to Tokyo to conduct an orchestra. Aaron decided to go to San Francisco. There he married Ester Magidson, whose parents, too, were Russian emigrants.

Life in post-war America turned out to be very difficult for an immigrant, and Aaron was still under the spell of the Far East. In 1918 he and his wife returned to China and settled in Tsingtao, where their son, Jacob, was born in 1919 (in the future he became a well-known American composer and conductor).

Except for three years (1926-1929), the Avshalomov family lived in China till 1947, first in Tsingtao, then in

Tientsin and Peking, where Aaron worked in a bookshop and as a librarian in the French library. Here he began seriously studying Chinese classical, popular and religious music, as well as to intensively compose. His main task was to synthesize Chinese music with the European form and ways of harmonization and counterpoint.

In 1925 he finished his first opera "Guang Yin" (The Goddess of Mercy) which was performed in Peking the same year. The part of the goddess was played by Aaron's sister, Sarah. A few months later he composed his first ballet, "The Soul of Chin".

In 1926 Avshalomov returned to the USA, trying to produce there some of his compositions. The family settled in Portland, Oregon, where his old friend, the composer J. Herschkowitz lived. Under his baton the Portland Symphony Orchestra performed Aaron's "The Soul of Chin" while the New York Neighborhood Playhouse presented his "Guang Yin". Despite this success, he was obliged to return to China after the American immigrant authorities refused to prolong his tourist visa.

During the next 18 years Aaron and his family lived in Shanghai, working as chief librarian of the Shanghai Municipal Library, and later conducting the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. His work at the library did not demand much effort, leaving enough time for leisurely talks with his friends, Somerset Maughan and Pearl Buck, as well as for composing. During these years he created his opera "The Great Wall", four ballets – "The Dream of Wei Lien", "Feng Huang", "Chang Guei", and "Buddha and the Five Earthly Spirits", a symphonic poem "The Alleys of Peking", concertos for

piano, violin and flute, some pieces for pipe and “erh hu” (a two-string Chinese violin), vocal compositions and orchestrated miniatures.

One of his best known compositions is the symphonic poem “The Alleys of Peking” (1934). The poem is laconic (12 minutes only) with a vividly dynamic development and a colorful orchestration in the best Rimsky-Korsakov tradition. It begins with a description of dawn and the awakening of the city. Then comes the crescendo of business everyday life: the shouts of knife sharpeners, street barbers and vendors. Street musicians play traditional melodies on Chinese “erh hu” violins and pipes. A funeral procession passes by with drums and horns. A gentle prolonged diminuendo closes the poem: the city sinks in darkness and tranquility.

This work of Avshalomov was performed time and again in the main cities of China. On November 8, 1935 it had its premiere in Philadelphia, USA, conducted by Leopold Stokowsky. The Violin Concerto was completed by the composer in July, 1937, under the bombing of Shanghai by Japanese planes.

In spite of the unfavorable conditions, his next composition, dedicated to his second wife, Tatiana, is saturated with a light and carefree mood. In 1938 Avshalomov wrote his Symphony Opus 1. The most impressive part of this composition is the Andante, giving one the impression of a mountain monastery. It ends in a dark, somber march, developing from a pianissimo to forte and back to pianissimo, as though a line of monks arrives from somewhere afar, beating drums and chanting Buddhist chants, and continues towards the dark horizon.

Avshalomov also experimented with Indian tunes and harmony. As a result, a number of Indian Dances for Symphonic Orchestra were composed and staged. His career reached its peak with his opera “The Great Wall”. The theme of the opera goes back to the glorious period of the Chin Dynasty (3rd century BCE), when the First Emperor of the unified China gave an order to erect the Great Wall. In order to truthfully

render the characteristic details of this distant period, Avshalomov had to do an enormous amount of research in costumes, hair style, armor chariots, etc. He made a thorough study of ancient drawings, tomb inscriptions and ivory carvings of the Chin period. An army of tailors, embroiderers, hair stylists, carpenters and builders ere employed to create one of the greatest stage sets in the history of the modern Chinese theater.

In his “Great Wall” Avshalomov changed the mannerism and behavior of the actors from the stereotype manner of performance that they had been using until then to the modern natural style of the Western art of acting. In “The Great Wall” the actors had to embody characters and use methods different from the traditional ones they were used to. Actually, this was the first Chinese opera in which Chinese and Western harmonization and orchestration were combined.

The opera was completed in 1943 and was performed for the first time in 1945 – at first in Shanghai, then in Nanking – 30 performances in each city. Amongst the sponsors of the production was the widow of Sun Yat-sen and the wife of Chiang Kai-shek. The production was hailed by the Chinese press, and although some of the music critics expressed their skepticism about the “Westernization” of Chinese music, the majority greeted the innovation as “opening a new path for the Chinese theater”. On the other hand, the Nanking music critic Ting Han wrote that making use of Western musical instruments and minimizing the use of percussion, so typical of traditional Chinese opera, “distorts the Chinese style”.

Summing up the general opinion, the critic Pei Yu-wen wrote: “The ‘Great Wall’ is certainly the first serious attempt to produce a musical drama in which all the forms of theatrical art – music, lighting, costumes, decoration and the actors’ skills – are joined together to create a show which answers the highest aesthetic demands. This announces our theater’s entrance on the international stage”.

Aside from his musical activity, Avshalomov was also a dedicated

pedagogue, instructing young composers and performers, some of whom became well-known conductors in China and abroad. One of his pupils, Xiang Xiang-hai went on an expedition to the interior of China, collecting Chinese folksongs and dances. Later he made broad use of the collected material in his compositions.

In his efforts to modernize traditional Chinese music, Avshalomov was careful enough to preserve its national character. He wrote: “The contemporary generation is influenced by European music so strongly, that Chinese music may be completely westernized within 10-12 years. If this happens, we shall regret the fact that classical Chinese music will be unable to become the basis of the true contemporary Chinese music. On the other hand, it has to develop and adopt new elements. It is only by following this road that the old Chinese music may acquire the right of existence”.

* * *

During the Sino-Japanese war, Shanghai was occupied by the Japanese. Avshalomov and his wife, Tatiana, were under home arrest until the Japanese capitulated in September 1945. After the Second World War the Soviet authorities invited him to return to Russia. He was also invite to head the Peking conservatory. He declined both offers, and in 1947 he and Tatiana went to the US where his son, Jacob, had been living since 1937. They settled in New York.

In America Avshalomov failed to win recognition. Only a few of his compositions saw the footlights of the American stage. He died in New York in 1964, achieving neither affluence nor fame. But China did not forget him. In 1995, his centenary year, his birthday was celebrated in Peking, Shanghai and Nanking. His son, Jacob, in conjunction with the Chinese authorities, established the Avshalomov Archives in Shanghai. In his manuscript, “Avshalomov’s Winding Way”, Jacob wrote: “My father was convinced that the time would come when a generation of talented Chinese musicians will achieve international recognition of the new music of their country”.

Breaking New Ground 2004 Report on a Trip to North America

By Xu Xin

Accompanied by my dear wife Kong Defang, the primary goal for my latest foray -- the 2004 U.S./Canada trip -- was to learn how to design a curriculum of courses on Jewish religion for the Department of Religious Studies at Nanjing University -- my new academic home. This transfer from the School of Foreign Studies to a newly established department followed my return from Israel after receiving an honorary doctorate from Bar-Ilan University in late May 2003. At the suggestion of the University President, I considered it a "natural" move (from Judaic studies to its core: Judaism) although it may seem rare for someone my age to attempt such a transition.

One challenge is that now I will shift my pedagogy from Jewish history and culture to Jewish religion. Therefore, it becomes extremely important for me to discover ideas from abroad about university curricula and to generate support for the program. I felt quite fortunate and pleased when I received invitations from both Professor Martin Lockshin, Director of the Center for Jewish Studies, York University in Toronto, and Professor Nathan Katz, Chair of the Department of the Florida International University in Miami, to visit their institutions and share their knowledge and resources. Many discussions that were held among the three of us and with other

interested professors, centered on teaching Judaism to non-Jews. I sat in more than 15 classes on religious subjects. By the time I returned to China, I had a full and varied selection of programs, syllabi, and materials on religious studies. All will be helpful in breaking this new ground of academic study -- promoting the study and teaching of Judaism -- in China.

As in previous trips, I was invited to deliver a number of lectures. At the York University in Toronto, I lectured on "The Jewish Diaspora in Modern China" for a program sponsored by the annual "Leonard Wolinsky Lecture on Jewish Life & Education." This attracted more than 200 people although it was a cold wintry Sunday. As a scholar-in-residence, I spent two days with congregates of Temple Emanuel of Toronto and spoke to them on three different occasions. Many members of the congregation had traveled with me in China in 2003. It was a great pleasure to see them again in their synagogue. I felt so much at home.

During my Canadian visit, I was also invited to Winnipeg and spoke on "Relations between China and Israel since 1949" and "Chinese Policies towards Judaism" at the Jewish Community Center there. The lectures were co-sponsored with the Jewish Heritage Center by The Yunnan Project Hope of Canada, Inc. headed

by Mr. Len Hew, who has provided scholarships for some Kaifeng Jewish descendants. Although we had never before met, we discovered much common ground for a very productive relationship.

In Miami, I lectured at four different sites: each attracting a large audience, before heading to and lecturing at Kennesaw State University in Atlanta, and then back north to Skidmore College in New York.

At the final stop of the whirlwind tour, the talk given at B'nai Yehoshua Beth Elohim at Glenview (a Chicago suburb) turned out to be very special and personal. This is the synagogue of the Friend family. Tracy Friend, daughter of Beverly and the late Jim Friend and current vice president of the congregation, introduced me, and it was a natural evolution to relate my journey to Judaic studies which was so closely linked with the life I experienced living with the Friends in 1986. What a great moment, filled with reflection and warm memories. My last appearance, on the eve of my departure, was before the Faculty and Friends of Hillel organized by the Citywide Faculty Program of the Hillels of Illinois. Although it was my third appearance before this organization, once again we had a full house. We watched the documentary "Minyan in Kaifeng" and discussed my filmed experience leading this group of 12 Jews as they set out for

Kaifeng to initiate and experience a Shabbat with descendants of the 800-year-old Jewish community in 1997. Once again, it was a pleasure to see so many familiar faces and have another opportunity to share thoughts.

The entire trip was filled with adventure and excitement. In Toronto, we stayed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Sarick, whom I had met in March 2003 when they traveled to China with a delegation of Temple Emanuel. As friends of York and the Center for Jewish Studies, they actually made the connection between myself and the Center at York. Moreover, staying with them turned out to be a vast enrichment because in opening both their home and their hearts, the Saricks presented us with the opportunity to share their life. Their home is a museum of Judaic art. Besides paintings and sculptures, their fine collection of Judaica, from Torah scroll, Torah cases, Torah shields, scrolls of Esther, to Chanukah lamps really impressed us. I do not believe I have ever seen such a fine personal collection, and it was a wonderful forerunner of the more formal exhibit that Esther Sarick arranged, enabling me to fulfill my wish to visit the Royal Ontario Museum, while in Toronto. Thanks to her special arrangements, I was able to view the collection from the Kaifeng Jewish community, brought to Toronto by Bishop Charles White, who lived and served Kaifeng in the early 20th century. While scholars like me who study the history of the Kaifeng Jews are familiar with those items, it was still amazing to actually view and touch the originals -- to see evidence of the historical contacts between the Chinese and Jewish people.

We also made a special visit to Beth Tzedek Museum to view the renowned Judaica collection of Dr. Cecil Roth, particularly its unique Scroll of Esther illuminated with motifs taken from important Chinese symbols of good fortune and showing

the figure of the executioner from the Purim story in the form of an archer. Much has been written about this scroll but nothing can compare with my satisfaction in seeing it.

The Saricks' daughter-in-law, who always makes her own challah bread for Sabbath, kindly taught my wife how to make it. Kong was very enthusiastic and learned so quickly that she baked two loaves for the Sabbath dinner. They tasted as delicious as they looked -- the best I ever ate! Of course, I beamed with pride. Our lives are enriched in so many ways!

I also took the opportunity to visit friends in order to generate support for our programs. In New York City Rabbi Arthur Schneier, President of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, and Dr. Alfred Gottschalk, former President of Hebrew Union College, and I discussed the development of programs for teaching Judaism in China. Rabbi Marvin Tokayer and I discussed the future of the Kaifeng Jewish descendents and possible assistance we might be able to provide for them. I visited the headquarters of the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation to thank Mr. Baruch Tenenbaum, Founder and President of the organization for arranging our stay in New York. Though I was not able to see Mr. Tenenbaum because he was on his trip to South America, I was kindly met by his daughter, who is a senior official there. We discussed the possibility to set up an office of IRWF in China.

When my wife and I visited Mr. and Mrs. Shalom Yoran at their home in Long Island, I reported on the progress in translating his book, "The Defiant," into Chinese and asked him to write a preface for Chinese readers. Both my wife and I are involved in the project and hope that the Chinese version will see publication in 2004. Over breakfast with Mr. Bernard Scharfstein, President of the KTAV Publishing House and publisher of my two books in English, we

discussed the publication of my third book, on the history of Jewish Diaspora in Modern China. I hope the book will come out in 2005.

During a telephone conversation, Dr. Herbert Dobrinsky, Vice President of Yeshiva University, invited me to speak at Yeshiva, but regretfully my schedule did not permit it. He and I discussed a possible exchange program in future.

I also saw Professor Samuel Heilman at Queen's College and many other friends, such as Dr. Yiping Wan, Dean of Bagwell College of Education of Kennesaw State University, Dr. Cai Rong at Amony University, both my college mates, Irwin Berg and his wife, and Lucille Gudis.

In Fort Lauderdale, I called on Dr. William Fern, an old friend and a great supporter of Jewish projects. He pledged to generate more support for our ongoing project of constructing a building for the Center for Judaic studies at Nanjing University.

Dr. Zion Zohar, Associate Director of the Institute for Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, Sephardic/Oriental Studies Program, Florida International University, who arranged my speech at FIU, invited me to contribute an article about the Sephardic Jews in modern China for inclusion in a book entitled "Sephardic Jewry-From the Golden Age of Spain to the Modern Times" which he will edit. It is a great honor to be invited, and I gladly accepted.

An interview with "The Canadian Jewish News" resulted in the publication of an article titled "Scholar Promotes Jewish Studies in China" on the front page of the January 22 issue. I was also interviewed and taped by Helen Freedman, President of the Americans For a Safe Israel as part of the TV program: "Israel Update" and Cynthia Zeiden for her "Safe Haven in China" project.

How lucky we are with the friends we have made over the past 15 years. We are so grateful as we look towards the future -- not standing still, but ever breaking new ground.

American Far Eastern Society of Southern California Bulletin #92

(Feb/Mar/Apr 2004)

Dear Friends and Fellow Members,

We are happy to report that Lou Grossman is at home slowly recovering from his lengthy illness. Dora and Mike Medavoy are also recovering from their recent bout of illnesses and we are happy to hear that they are doing well. Vic Roland underwent surgery and is now at home recovering. Mika Cantz has had hip replacement surgery and is already up and around and almost her usual self. We wish all of the above the speediest of recoveries.

Our thanks go to Mara Grossman who, due to her untiring efforts, very successfully organized and handled all of the donations made for the last Memorial Day Services held for the High Holidays. The board of directors wishes to express thanks to all of our members who participated and sent in donations for that occasion.

You will be happy to know that AMFESOSCA sent to the IGUD \$1500 last December. In addition, we now plan to forward another \$2000 for Pessach. Our thanks go to all of

you for making this a good start this year – every dollar going to Israel accomplishes our goal and helps so many who are in need in Israel.

The latest from Joe Levoff in Israel is that he is gradually getting accustomed to his life there. He has asked to convey his warmest regards to our entire membership.

The board wishes to take this opportunity to wish you one and all a Hag Samayach.

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75th Birthday of Benny Tzur

On a fine Sunday morning in March, numerous guests of Beit-Ponve celebrated the 75th birthday of Benny Tzur. Left: Benny cuts his birthday cake with Shosh at his side. Right: Eti Ginansky (Nee Beim) greets the hero of the day.





Exactly 100 years ago, a Jewish journal devoted to the interest of Jews in the Far East was born in Shanghai on April 22, 1904. Its founder and editor, N.E.B. Ezra, and his associates named it "The Israel's Messenger". Happily, and perhaps coincidentally, this, our 24th issue, has the honor of being the namesake of that journal which was the first English-language Zionist publication to appear anywhere in the world. This is a little-known fact of which we are so proud. Seven years ago, our first editorial pointed out this fact, stressing that the original Messenger covered the events and social life of Jewish communities not only in Shanghai but also elsewhere in China and the Far East.



The Messenger appeared three months before the death of Theodor Herzl and eight years after the First Zionist Congress in Basel. There is no doubt at all that Ezra's journal had a profound influence on the Zionism of those days and on the life of the Jewish residents of China. Born in India and educated there, Ezra was an Anglophile and an ardent believer of the British influence for the establishment of a sovereign Jewish state. When the Balfour Declaration was announced during World War I for a Jewish homeland, he made unceasing and successful efforts for its recognition by China and Japan. There is also no doubt that Ezra was influenced greatly by the activities of Herzl at the turn of the 20th century.

Ezra was a prolific writer and made great efforts, following the influx of Russian Jews to China after the Bolshevik revolution, to promote relations with the Baghdadi Jews in Shanghai. He was also in contact with the leaders of the Russian Jewish communities of Tientsin and Harbin, and had constant communication with Dr. A. Kaufman, father of our Chairman of the Igud Yotzei Sin. Ezra edited his journal with an assiduity worthy of his purpose, and many of our local community had

nothing but praise for his work which was appreciated by many of the English-language newspapers in Shanghai.

My father had a pleasant relationship with Ezra, and at home we received The Israel's Messenger which was read by most of us, although the editor's impeccable Victorian English was somewhat beyond my father's comprehension. But there was no doubt that we benefited from it. Ezra's work was tragically cut short when he passed away from a massive heart attack in 1936 at the age of 53. His funeral,

the service of which was conducted by my father, was attended not only by the Jewish members but by many of the foreign community, while the daily newspapers were full of eulogies and descriptions of his activities.

On our part, since the appearance of The New Israel's Messenger, we have been attempting to follow Ezra's cardinal aim of passing on the history of our former community to posterity. We simply won't allow our history to slowly creak into oblivion. Posterity is our only judge. We feel we have made modest progress, although we have seesawed between joy and despair. We can only say now that the generations after Ezra are certain that he had left his distinctive and positive mark within the society he had loved.

There is no forgetting – people like us all over the world are different from others who can never understand the place where we were born or where we were brought up. How can we forget that Shanghai was the hub of our universe?

N.E.B. Ezra - The Israel's Messenger Centenary

A hundred years after the first issue of The Israel's Messenger, all of the generation that saw its advent are long gone. Of the succeeding generations a century later, some of those members of the Jewish Sephardi Community who are still with us all over the globe, now in their sixties, seventies and eighties, may have scant or no knowledge or remembrance of the man who founded the Jewish journal that had made such an impact on Jews in China and elsewhere in the Far East. The following is an excerpt of the history of the man who founded and edited The Israel's Messenger as printed in our first issue seven years ago.

* * *

Nissim Benjamin Ezra was born in 1883 in Lahore (then in British India and now in Pakistan). In his youth he went to Bombay where he attended the Jacob Sassoon School and furthered his education through private study, acquiring a wide range of knowledge in world affairs and in Jewish scholarship. He was employed later by the E.D. Sassoon firm and subsequently sent to Hong Kong, and in 1899 to Shanghai. He was young, but apparently was marked early on for future promotion. He left the firm in his twenties to become General Manager of the China Palestine Trading Company, although he kept his connection with E.D. Sassoon until the great rubber boom in 1910 when he became a broker on a full-time basis. He was able to exert a great spiritual influence upon Far Eastern Jewry

through his gifted abilities in public affairs and the high level of popularity he enjoyed. With the cooperation of friends such as S.J. Solomon and D.E.J. Abraham, he disseminated a wide knowledge of Judaism and Zionism among members of the Jewish community. He rapidly came to the conclusion that these aims could best be achieved by the publication of an English-language journal which would provide readers with news about events in the Jewish world and promote the spiritual and traditional values of the Jewish heritage so that its past glories would not be forgotten. Many of his wealthy and socially prominent friends supported him, such as E. Jonah, I.A. Lewis, S. Moussa, and M. Myer, and by his twin brother, J.A.B. Ezra.

At the suggestion of Miriam Solomon, the journal was named "Mevasser Israel" which in English became "The Israel's Messenger." Its first issue appeared in 1904, initially as a fortnightly with 12 pages, but grew rapidly larger until December 1941 (the start of the Pacific War with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor), with an interval during World War I – from February 1916 to October 1918.

The journal began appearing just after the foundation of the Zionist movement which had its influence on the Jewish community in Shanghai, encouraging the traditionally observant Babylonian Jews to see in it signs of redemption. It became the official organ of the Shanghai Zionist Association. High standards were attained and it was widely praised and compared favorably with other

Jewish journals appearing then in Europe and the United States.

Ezra edited the journal for 32 years until his death in 1936, and the final issues were edited by David Elias under the ownership of Mrs. K. Ezra. Ezra himself had published hundreds of articles on the subject of Zion and Zionism, Jewish heritage and all the national, international and traditional values of Judaism and Jewish life. He was seen as a founder of Zionism in the Far East and fought all forms of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. When he died, the English-language press in Shanghai was fulsome in its praise of Ezra and his journal. The Evening Post & Mercury said: "He vigorously edited The Israel's Messenger to champion Jewry here and abroad and edited it until his death." The North China Daily News reported the stirring tribute paid by the Rev. Mendel Brown at his funeral. The Shanghai Times provided the lengthiest coverage, running a large picture of Ezra above an editorial which said he was "a keen Zionist and an unequivocal defender of every measure designed to realize the conception of a Jewish National Home in Palestine ... a widely-read man and a good Talmudic and Hebrew scholar."

Ezra was survived by his widow and two daughters in Shanghai, and another daughter in New York. He left two sisters, Mrs. I.E.Sargon and Mrs. Flora Ezra. In the last article he wrote before his death, he said: "My principles ... are my belief in God to eternity ... it is the duty of everyman to live in hope."

Our Regards to the "Israel's Messenger"

This month marked 30 years since the establishment of the "Israel's Messenger" journal in Shanghai. During the past thirty years this publication has been serving the great ideal of the return of the Jewish people to their historic Motherland, breaking through the indifference of the Shanghai Jews who live far away from the centers of the world Jewry. For 30 years this publication has watched over the interests of the Jews, defending their rights, national dignity and honour. For thirty years now the "Israel's Messenger" calls the Jews of China to wake up and do their duty

to their people and its country, calls them to join the ranks of the fighters for the cause of national liberation of the Jewish people, proclaims the idea of redemption of the Land of Israel. Its call, its voice have been heeded by the Jews of Shanghai and it has brought good results.

May the "Israel's Messenger" keep on being the messenger of Israel in the Far East and like a bell call the Jews of the remote part of the Jewish world to do their great national duty to the people and land of Israel.

Our sincere regards go to the

indefatigable Editor-in-Chief, a devoted son of our people, Mr. N.E.B. Ezra.

Editor Dr. A.I. Kaufman
"Jewish Life", 1934, # 11, page 23
(From the Russian – Y.L.)

OURSELVES

*The following article is
N.E.B. Ezra's introduction
in the original issue
of The Israel's Messenger*

For a very long time past the appearance of a Jewish newspaper in Shanghai has been ardently desired. We believe that the existence, among us, of a journal devoted to the interest of the Jews and Judaism in the Far East, a necessity of such absolute importance that we are sure its appearance will be hailed with delight and that it will receive the warm support of our coreligionists. We, therefore, feel assured that we have taken such a step in the right direction in bringing out THE ISRAEL'S MESSENGER which we think will supply that which has been considered a great desideratum. We confidently hope that, with God's help, we shall secure the aim we have in view, which is, to establish a strong



N.E.B. EZRA:

"My principles are my belief in God to eternity...it is the duty of every man to live in hope."

bond of union and brotherly goodwill and a means of communication amongst the scattered remnants of the House of Israel in the Far East. We have undertaken this task with great diffidence, but at the same time we feel absolutely confident that the cordial sympathy and support of the

Shanghai Jewish Community will be extended to enable us to achieve our object. We need hardly say that we have no desire to glorify ourselves in our mission: our sole aim is to serve the Jewish cause and to place before our readers a compendium of all foreign and local news and other literary matters of interest to the Jewish public. If we succeed in a small measure in attaining our aim, we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that we have not laboured for nothing, nor have we toiled in vain. We earnestly request our readers to consider our columns always open to contributors on all matters that concern Jews as a body, as well as for the frank expression of their views, and we expect that our anticipations will, in the process of time, be fully realized.

We close this brief outline in the sincere hope, that commensurately with the help we receive, we shall always crave the indulgence of our readers for any shortcomings in this, our first issue.

Tribute from Harbin

A fresh issue of The Israel's Messenger, the first English-language Jewish newspaper in the Far East, founded and edited in Shanghai for the past 33 consecutive years by the tireless Nissim Benjamin Ezra, lies on our desk. Reading all this rich material – editorials, polemics, which react to each and every vital question of Jewish life, valuable commentaries, witty sketches, extensive correspondence with the readers and all-embracing topical news items concerning Jewish life, it is hard to believe that the creator of all this material is no longer with us. It is difficult to get used to the idea that this highly talented journalist, historian, thinker and a tireless fighter for the Jewish Cause is plucked so untimely out of our ranks. Altogether, it is difficult to imagine the Jewish community of Shanghai without N. E. B. Ezra. His enormous will and energy were contagious. Thirty-three years ago he created in Shanghai the first mouthpiece of Jewish thought. Does anyone have a notion what the Jews of Shanghai, or the Far East on the whole represented then? He sowed the seed of goodness and reason in this desert; till his last day he stood guard and faithfully defended the Jewish Cause. Having arrived in Shanghai in 1898, he did not miss one moment, not one important event in the Far East without exploiting it in the interest of his suffering nation. And later, when rich communities of former residents of Eastern Europe and Siberia grew up on the Far Eastern soil, he was the only one amongst our Sephardi brethren, then alien to us, who urged the two tribes to draw together and close ranks,

and stressed the community and reciprocity of interests of all Jews, no matter where they come from. Thanks to him the gap that existed till then between the Sephardi and the Ashkenazi groups began to narrow. He also acquainted the Jewish rank and file reader with the life and reality of Jews in the neighboring countries (the Philippines, the British, French, Dutch Indies, Persia, Baghdad, etc.) of which we know so little. Nissim Ezra was the nucleus of all the cultural and social activities in Shanghai. He was one of the leaders of the so-called “Brotherhood of the Nations”, he initiated. He lectured before Moslem, Buddhist and Christian audiences. He was active in the Shanghai Order of Bnai Brith. He was among the first organizers of the Rescue Association of the Kaifeng Jews. As an influential public figure, a prominent journalist and a man of impeccable integrity, Nissim Ezra was welcome in the drawing rooms of the first rank statesmen and policy makers of the time, and later, when the dark clouds began to appear over the European Jewry, he used all the weight of his influence to relieve the plight of the persecuted. He utilized all means at his disposal, knocked at all the doors, corresponded with the best humanitarians of our time, argued, lectured, and was always there to appear as a dignified and noble defender of the Jews. The readers of The Israel's Messenger remember well his latest visit to Japan and his meetings with the Japanese foreign minister, Shigimitzu, and a number of statesmen in Tokyo, in Nanking and at his home in Shanghai, and his interview of the ambassadors

of Britain and Iran. These meetings took place three weeks before his death and were published in the last November issue of The Israel's Messenger”.

“Yevreiskaya Jizn” (The Jewish Life), # 43, Harbin, 30.12.1936.



SHANGHAI—57 YEARS AFTER

By Cissy Abraham Flegg

Children of Moshie Hai and Ramah Katie Abraham

We are now a family of eight children, seven of whom were born in Shanghai. Four of us were little when we left Shanghai after World War II. They did not remember any of it, but they were anxious to see the country. My brother Abe Abraham, a year and a half younger than myself, had organized the trip with every minute detail, having traveled to China many times on business.

My sister Mozelle Kanner and her husband live in Toronto, Abe the organizer in Los Angeles, myself in Israel, Leah Bald, Rachel Sultan, Mickey and his wife Helen Abraham, Gertie Reingold and Moshe son of Leah Bald all from New York. There were cousins, our children, nephews and nieces who were very anxious to join us, but we had to refuse them, as we would have been to large a crowd and too much work for Abe. Moshe was allowed to come because the whole idea was his.

Except for me, they left New York after Shabbat on October 25 and arrived in Hongkong in Kowloon on Monday; I had left Israel on Sunday night arriving in Hongkong on Monday night.

We visited Hongkong island, the synagogue, nursery and restaurant run by Chabad. There is also a Chabad synagogue and restaurant next to our hotel where the men were able to pray with a minyan.

We left on Wednesday for Shanghai, all seven brothers and sisters all returning to the place of birth, traveling together after an absence of 57 years. What an historical moment! We checked in at a hotel

The Abrahams: Abe, Cissy, Leah, Mozelle Gutu, Rachel, Mickey, outside what was the Yu Yuen interment camp.



in Hungjao. When I left Shanghai in 1946 that area was farm land, with many beautiful homes and no paved streets. Now it is beautifully built up with modern skyscrapers. That hotel was suggested to us because it is near to the Chabad Center. There was a daily minyan and a kosher restaurant.

We visited the homes where we had lived; they were exactly as we had left them, only the streets leading to the lanes were totally different. They were much wider with fine tall buildings. The Chinese were well dressed and they walked along very fast. There were no women with bound feet, there were lots of food shops, people shopping for take-home food, feeding their children. So unlike the Chinese I remember 57 years ago.

The lanes where we lived had parks but these no longer exist, being replaced by buildings. We also visited the hospital where we were born and where we were treated and the school which we attended. But we were not allowed to visit the Ohel Rachel synagogue. We tried to bribe the guards but that did not help,

and they were afraid of us having hidden cameras.

We also visited Marble Hall, the former home of Sir Elly Kadoorie and his sons. It was such a beautiful home where royalty were guests. British VIPs were hosted there, and children from the Shanghai Jewish School were invited there once a year. We visited a large park which once was a Jewish cemetery where our two brothers, my mother's parents and my father's

mother were buried. It was a prime location and the Chinese authorities turned it into a park, where the Chinese now are able to exercise, using the many gym facilities there. Abe seemed to remember the area where our brothers were buried. We stopped for a few minutes there to recite tehilim [psalms]; it was the best we could do.

Our parents were born in Bombay when Queen Victoria was Empress of India, and that made all of us British by birth. During the war years we were interned by the Japanese, our first camp being in Lunghwa, on the outskirts of Shanghai. Abe had the driver take us there and without Abe we would never had found it. The entrance was the same but the buildings inside were entirely different. During the war my mother gave birth to Gertie, but during her pregnancy our family was moved to a camp closer to a hospital where she gave birth. We also visited that camp. Leah, Rachel and Mickey have no recollection of that place.

During our stay, we visited the Bund and the hotels there and it was all greatly improved.

Social and Personal

Visit to Israel

Dear Rebecca,

My wife Jackie and I were privileged to be invited by the American Friends of the Bar Ilan University leadership delegation to Israel last December, 2003. Our hosts, the Bar Ilan Team, could not have been more generous and gracious in taking care of us. We had two or three meetings dialing with professors and scientists who were extremely interesting, educational and inspiring.

For five days we had an exceptionally packed program of lectures at the campus, a tour to the Rehabilitation Center at the Sheba Medical Center, Tel Hashomer, a trip to the Golan Heights border with Syria, and much more. We spent time with the military and witnessed a tank demonstration, at the conclusion of which Jackie mounted a tank and presented the Commander with a backgammon set. Our leader was Brig. General Yehuda Halevy who is the Executive Vice-President of the Bar Ilan University in Israel, and we always look forward to his visits. He was born in Shanghai and came to Israel in 1950. I am aware that both Jackie Guri and Yosef Yaakov know him.

I have been a Trustee of the Aaron and Marie Blackman Foundation for many years and it was truly very heart-warming and emotional to visit the Aaron and Marie Blackman Hall on the University campus. A highlight of the event was the Shabbat Dinner at the King David Hotel which was a very joyous occasion. I asked Yehuda Halevy if he could give us time to ourselves to celebrate the Sabbath with you, Joe, Jackie and Sas and others of our family members which I also would have enjoyed, but he was insistent that we participate with



Left to right: Joe Jacob (Yosef Yaakov), Matty Nissim, and Sasson Jacoby. Coincidentally, the end of 2003 saw Joe, Matty and Jack Guri, schoolmates in Shanghai, mark their 80th birthdays.

the group Friday evening. We did see Joe and Arlene and the family at their home for breakfast on the Sabbath and I was truly happy to see Sas again after such a long absence, since Shanghai days.

We could not thank the Bar Ilan Team enough for their generosity, graciousness and warm welcome. Both Jackie and I have made some great friends and wish to thank Yehuda and Yona Tillman, Director of Public Relations who really outdid themselves, Gila (I will never forget her “whistle”), Judy and all the others.

I was sorry we could not spend more time with all of you.

Matty and Jackie Nissim

The Sephardi Division of the IYS would like once again to acknowledge their thanks to the Blackman Foundation and to its Trustee, Matook Nissim, for their support of its research activities.

From page 27

We had a wonderful Shabbat at the Chabad Center. On Sunday we left for Beijing. More touring and shopping. Of course, we visited the Great Wall and the Forbidden City. Fortunately, we were able to take cable cars to the Wall, which was well worth seeing. One of the seven wonders of the world.

There is a Chabad family in Beijing where we were able to order kosher dinners in advance which we were able to eat in their home in the evenings. A delightful family. On Wednesday we parted. Abe remained in China to conduct his business affairs. Mickey, Helen and I flew to Hongkong and I had a direct flight to Israel.

It was a wonderful and historical trip for the seven of us, but I was very happy to land again in Tel Aviv.



Saving a Jewel of Shanghai

by Sheridan Prasso

Shanghai

Until a few months ago there was a thriving community here along the waterfront of the North Bund, the American / International Settlement that had harbored more than 20,000 Jews who fled Nazi Europe from 1933 to 1941. The early morning hours promised animated scenes: Young men loading newspaper inserts onto the backs of motorcycles, and old man in his underwear playing tennis against a backboard with his pants folded nearby, vendors hawking mung beans and tofu from carts.

“Then the buildings started to disappear,” said Christopher Choa, an architect from New York who jogs through the area every morning and has become involved in its preservation and development. “Now there’s just cranes and pile drivers”.

The wrecking ball is slowly making its way towards this old Jewish ghetto. The area known in Chinese as Hongkou (or Hongkew), was a haven for stateless refugees in a city that did not require a visa, and the Jews fleeing the Nazis joined 5000 to 10,000 others who had fled Stalin’s Russia.

After most of the refugees resettled in the United States, Canada, Israel and Australia as the Chinese communists took power in 1949, they left behind

a charming neighborhood with pink-and-gray-brick row houses, a synagogue, a park, schools, a hospital, even a Little Vienna Café. It is still there. But now, as part of Shanghai’s rapid gentrification, the city government has declared its intent to turn the North Bund in “a masterpiece of the 21st century,” a modern business and residential district with skyscrapers, apartment blocks, cruise ship docks, even an enormous Ferris wheel. It held an architectural design competition to put forward a master plan for the new North Bund a year and a half ago. Choa’s firm, HLW International LLP – one of New York’s oldest, which designed The New York Times building – was one of the three foreign firms that won the competition.

The gleaming metropolis that Shanghai city planners have in mind doesn’t necessarily leave room for a quaint old ghetto whose run-down old buildings are now inhabited by working-class Chinese, some of whom live in rooms lit by a single hanging bulb and with three or more families sharing a kitchen and bathroom. Planners have earmarked for preservation about 400 old buildings across the city, but in the old ghetto, only the synagogue, Ohel Moshe, and a block or so of row houses made the list. It seems

likely that much of the old ghetto may be torn down. The developers essentially have free rein. They hire their own architects to draw up plans for the buildings they will construct. Their profit motive means they will pack as many residential units into as small an area as possible to ensure the highest returns per square meter. That means high-rises, said Choa, not quaint old row houses. “The winning schemes are used only as a guide to the Chinese planners’ work, which is done privately”.

But the government recently signaled that all might not be lost. An article in the March 2 Shanghai Daily News indicated that city officials may consider including in the final development some Canadian-Jewish businessmen, led by Lan Leventhal, who hope to raise hundreds of millions of dollars for a more comprehensive preservation. “Some have put forward half-baked plans to build ridiculous fun fairs or high-rises in this area,” the article quoted the professor and preservationist Ruan Yisan as saying. “If priorities are not set correctly, and much is focused on profit, the project will flop.” The development plan is to be released in April, the article said.

Ohel Moshe synagogue is already something of a tourist attraction.

(Continued on next page)

No longer a place of worship (Judaism is not among the religions recognized by the government), it operates as a small museum and Jewish cultural center supported by private donations. A panel that lists visitors over the last few years included photos of Hillary Rodham Clinton, Madeleine Albright, Gerhard Schröder, Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, Benjamin Netanyahu, Chaim Herzog and a number of rabbis. Also listed is W. Michael Blumenthal, President Jimmy Carter's Treasury secretary, who according to his official biography, spent his teenage years in the ghetto before going to the United States. The neighborhood was featured in the 2002 documentary "Shanghai Ghetto" and the North Bund as a whole appeared in Steven Spielberg's 1987 movie "Empire of the Sun".

The preservation plan designed by

Choa, whose great grandmother was a Sephardic Jew but is himself a Roman Catholic, keeps a few more of the ghetto structures than the city requires. His plan makes the synagogue the center of a memorial park that would include gravestones of former Jewish inhabitants and link the part in "a symbolic connection" to the waterfront on one end and an ornate Buddhist temple on the other. The headstones would come from four Jewish cemeteries in Shanghai. The graves were moved to a central location in 1958, said Dvir Bar-Gal, an Israeli who guides tours of Jewish Shanghai, but that cemetery was then destroyed also, and the tombstones scattered during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. Bar-Gal has been collecting the tombstones, and said he has come up with about 80 so far "from villages in the west of Shanghai; locals were using them

in many trivial and degrading ways, such as stepping stones, washing boards and construction."

Because the city has not yet released the development plan, no one knows what, if any, buildings will be preserved. All Choa, Bar-Gal and the other would-be preservationists can do is keep urging the government to consider the tourism potential of the area, so that they will transfer that pressure onto the developers who are ultimately chosen. "You're just trying to save as much as possible," said Choa with a sigh.

(From the International Herald Tribune, March 12, 2004)

Sheridan Prasso, former Asia Editor for Business Week, recently completed a Knight International Press Fellowship in China, and is at work on a book about East-West relations.

Fred Kort: A Treblinka Survivor

Fred Kort, US businessman and philanthropist, one of only nine people known to have survived the Treblinka death camp, died last year at the age of 80 in Los Angeles. Demonstrating the same resourcefulness and willingness to take risks that helped him survive the beginning and end of his internment at the camp where 800,000 Jews died, Kort made his fortune by leaving the toy company where he was employed for 20 years and starting his own manufacturing company, the Imperial Toy Corporation. Born Manfred Kort in Leipzig, Germany, he was deported with his Polish-born parents after Kristallnacht. In Poland, the family was separated by the Germans when they invaded. After spending time in the Warsaw Ghetto and a labor camp, Kort ended up in Treblinka in July 1943. On arrival, he was assigned to be among those to be gassed, but from among the huddle he declared in German that he was an electrician, and was waved to a work detail.

As the gunfire of the approaching

Russian army was heard in Treblinka in June 1944, the 550 remaining Jews knew that they would soon be shot by the Germans so as not to leave any eyewitnesses. When guards burst into his barracks and ordered the inmates to lie down, Kort ran to a storage shed which was subsequently searched but he was not discovered. Rejected by the anti-Semitic Polish resistance fighters, he made the dangerous crossing into Russian-held territory, followed by a stint with the Polish army.

Renowned for his clear and accurate memory for places and dates relating to his experiences during the Holocaust, Kort testified at the Nuremberg Trials, drawing from memory a detailed map of Treblinka that served as a reference throughout the trial. Kort was a major benefactor of the Holocaust museums and one of the first survivors to join Steven Spielberg in partnership for the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation.

Together with his second wife, Barbara,

a native of China, he created a special scholarship fund in 1996 for Bar-Ilan University which brought 100 Chinese post-doctoral fellows in the arts and sciences to do their research with Israeli counterparts.

(Adapted from an article by Abigail Radoszkowicz in The Jerusalem Post)



Varda Yoran (Rosa Granevsky) formerly of Tientsin and now residing in New York, made a new sculpture "Catastrophe and Rebirth" which was presented to Tel Aviv University by Ruta and Felix Zandman



Books

New Book

“Hertzlia” (first decade 1924-1934) by Shoshana Mirdan Klein Bindiger.

Published in Hebrew (2004).

Book Review

By Eliahu Bar Yosef

The Jews in Harbin, editors:

Qu Wei, Li Shuxiao

**Social Science Documentation
Publishing House**

**White Harbin: The Mid-Twenties,
by G.V. Melichov**

**Moskva: Rusky Put, 2003, 440 pp.
ISBN 5-85887-165-8**

These books are dissimilar in content and design. The first is an album that is artistically designed and done in a refined Chinese style, with English and Chinese texts, while the second is a modest popular publication in Russian – a documentary fiction with photographs. The connecting link is in the topic – both revive the history of the Russian-speaking citizens in Manchuria and their role in the agricultural and industrial development of the region during the first half of the 20th century. Those 50-60 years covered by the books were the climax of versatile achievements and activities. But both volumes have a somewhat hard to understand shortcoming. The editors and the author had ignored mentioning the history of both Russian and Jewish sports, then a very popular pastime in the three regional provinces.

I had some doubts when writing this article, bearing in mind a Russian proverb “An uninvited guest is worse than a Tatar invader”, that is, trying to meddle in a historical subject to which I was not invited. But the necessity to relate the historical truth combined with the laws of biology reminded me once again that with the passing of my generation (I am over 90 years old today) if nothing was done, all past achievements in sports would disappear leaving no mark whatsoever. And it is exactly one of the main reasons of the need to revive the history of former sports activities during life in China.

It is not necessary to prove that sport continues to be one of the many-sided activities connected with culture and civilization. From ancient Greece and Rome to the modern Olympics, sport continues to attract and is loved by humanity. Unfortunately the sports activities of the Jews in Harbin, the “white” émigrés and practically all Russian speakers living in this city were left out and unnoticed by the authors with several pages in the Chinese album giving only a slight glimpse of the problem.

My participation in sports when living in China, and my indulging in studies connected with the history of sport, possibly give me the moral right to criticize these highly respected authors with the hope that such judgment can bring positive results. The Culture Commission of Igud Yotzei Sin could solve the problem

with the Editors in future re-publications, while G.V. Melichov, using his esteemed experience, could even write a book on the history of sports associated with the Chinese Eastern Railway and Harbin by using essays and studies on the problem published in our Bulletin both in the Russian and English editions.

Website News

A new contact request was posted through the contact form on the IYS organization website:

His/Her details are as following:

Full Name: kenneth neiman

Email Address: kenmyr@hotmail.com

Phone Number: 847-679-3634

His request is:

Gentlemen: My mother was from the Skidelsky family. I believe the family built the Harbin Talmud Torah shown on your website. Is there a clear picture I can purchase of the Talmud Torah. I would like to see the writing on the building if possible. Do you have other pictures or information about the Skidelsky family in your records? I would be willing to send a check for any materials you can send me

Many thanks, Kenneth Neiman,
Lincolnwood, IL, USA.

.....
IYS Automatic Contact System
– info@catom.com
IYS Website – info@jewsofchina.org

Passport to Freedom

By Barbara Sofer

Curious brown booklets are arranged next to some of the haggadot on the Jerusalem Seder table of my neighbors Bruria and Dr. Shmuel Adler. Each is a personalized facsimile of an old German Reich passport. In keeping with the Pessah theme, "Germany" has been replaced with "Egypt". Each passport bears the names of one of the Adlers' grandchildren.

"Transit visas granted for Ansbach, Mir, Kedan, Vilna, Kobe, Shanghai, Aktuibinski, Gorki, Karaganda, Kok Uzed, Odessa, Vienna, Brooklyn, New Jersey and Basel reads the interior page. The original passport belonged to the children's great-grandfather Leo Adler, whose journey and reunion with his beloved wife Bella have become inseparable from this Jewish family's Exodus experience.

Sixty years ago, Bella Hamburg and Leo Adler met in Lithuania. They came from different circles of the large, dynamic Orthodox world. Bella had studied languages and history at the University of Kovno and taught in a high school. Leo was a pious yeshiva student and a German refugee. So unpredictable was their match, that after returning to the yeshiva, Leo wrote his new bride: "I don't know what other people will think and say about our marriage. Don't be fooled by other people regarding as crazy that in which you and I have dedicated our whole lives. I suspect that we will face many painful experiences". Little did he suspect how correct he was.

Through the creative thinking of the late Zerach Warhaftig, and the righteousness of Dutch consul Jan Zwartendijk and the Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara, passports to Japan became available to yeshiva students.

In December 1940, Leo left on the Trans-Siberian railway with the Mir Yeshiva. Bella expected to join him soon. On Leo's notepad, she scribbled the address of her post box in Kovno and, as an afterthought, the address of her cousin Soroh Berman in America. 200 Windsor Road in some place called Hartford, Connecticut. As Leo journeyed to Japan and later China, Bella's last words rang in his ears: Get me out of here as soon as you can.

The Japanese exit closed. Bella went to Moscow to try to arrange an exit visa. There she gave birth to their son Marek. The Soviets jailed her and the baby because she was married to a German citizen. They were moved from one prison camp to another, traveling 2,000 kilometers in a cattle car to the steppes of Karaganda in Kazakhstan. There Jews were forced to do slave labor growing straw and making bricks. Bella washed Marek's diapers in the snow. She caught typhoid dysentery; Marek had diphtheria. Bella refused to relinquish her son to a state institution.

Two years later, Bella convinced the Communist political supervisor to allow her to open a school for the 99 children of the prison camp. There was no blackboard or paper. She taught the children to read and write using a nail on a thin piece of wood. "This is a butterfly", she said, pressing the nail into the slate to draw wings. The children had never seen one. Bella worried that if she died Marek would never remember that he was a Jew. She crafted a tiny kippa from rags. Over and over she repeated: Shema Yisrael, Hear O Israel, until he had memorized the words.

Even after the Nazi defeat, Bella and Marek remained in the Soviet slave camp. As Pesach 1946 approached, Bella decided to hold a Seder in her classroom. The observant Jews wanted to prepare matza. They insisted that the articulate Bella speak to the camp commander on their behalf.

"You, too, really believe in this?" The Soviet officer asked, not believing that the erudite camp teacher could follow the teachings of religion. Amazingly, he allowed the use of the camp kitchen for two short hours. Bella was given the honor of making the first matza.

On the day of the Seder she covered the classroom windows with blankets. "Wine" was made from coloring water with beets stolen from the field. Bitter herbs weren't necessary, they decided. They had their share of bitterness. On hearing the story of the Exodus, Marek, five, pointed to the barbed wire that kept them prisoners. "Here we are just like the slaves in Egypt".

A freed Finnish prisoner was grateful for her daughter learning to read. She offered to take a single letter from Bella to mail from Finland. To whom should Bella write? Who was alive? Bella remembered the address of her cousin Soroh. 200 Windsor Road, Hartford, Connecticut. She didn't know that Soroh had moved. The Connecticut postman didn't find any Bermans on Windsor Street. Just as he turned to leave, a neighbor came out of the building next door and asked him who he was looking for.

"What a coincidence" she said, when she heard the name. "I'd planned to visit the Bermans this afternoon. I'd be happy to deliver the letter". A year had gone by since Hitler was defeated. Soroh Berman had despaired of finding any of her relatives. With shaking

Jean-Jacques, Where Are You?

By Balfoura Friend Levine



Jean-Jacques Levy and Lady "Bo" Friend in his limousine, both three years old

All this talk about war in the Middle East got me thinking of the wars that I've experienced in my life – World War II, 'Nam, Korea, and the Gulf War among them. But my earliest recollections are of the Sino-Japanese conflict when the Japanese shelled the Chinese areas of Shanghai. I won't bore you with the details of that mini-war, except to note that the International Settlement and the French Concession (we called it "Frenchtown") were the only areas safe from Japanese cannons.

My father decided that Mama and I should take refuge with some friends, a Jewish couple in the French Concession. Monsieur and Madame Levy had a son, Jean-Jacques, who was exactly my age. He and I had played together since we were two years old. The Levys were well-to-

do, so Jean-Jacques had lots of toys, tricycles, and later bicycles, all of which were wonderful to play with, especially for a poor child like me, the proud owner of one doll.

Papa stayed behind in our house, which was close to the areas being shelled. Since our cat, Meemee, had just blessed us with another litter of kittens, Papa had to feed the gang as well as guard the house. He opened a tin of sardines for what he called "that damn cat", and said that if she didn't eat that, she'd have to hunt a mouse for her brood. (Of course, there was no commercial pet food back then.)

Jean-Jacques and I played well together, but during my stay at the Levy's house, he became angry about something, grabbed my precious dolly, and snatched off her head, spilling her body stuffing all over

their beautiful flower garden. My loud crying brought out his mama, who spanked him, so then both of us were crying. I think she gave us some chocolate to keep the peace.

Soon after the conflict was over, the Levy's returned to their native France, and we lost touch with them. I often think of Jean-Jacques. He, too, would now be 77 and probably a grandparent. Of course, he was of army age when Hitler overran France, so he might have been killed in World War II or perished in the Holocaust. Perhaps he was lucky enough to emigrate to Israel, the United Kingdom, or Canada. What if he's somewhere in the United States? My daughter Sandy tried to find my little friend on the internet – so far to no avail.

Jean-Jacques, where are you?

Passport to Freedom (continued from page 32)

hands Soroh tore the letter open.

Dear Sorohle, it began. Tears swam in her eyes. Her heart pounded. It was hard to read. Bella was alive! And she had a son. Did she know where Leo was?

In Shanghai, Leo Adler's friends had thought he was made to go on hunting for his beloved Bella and the baby. How could they be alive? Then I'm made, he'd told them. I know they're alive. He had written to Bella's cousin, whose name was still in his notebook.

On May 17, 1947, Leo Adler recalls, a cable from America reached him in Shanghai. Getting to America, and making arrangements for Bella took another six months. Finally, on

January 14, 1948, Bella and Mark arrived on Pan Am Flight 115 to La Guardia Airport in New York. Seven years had passed since she and Leo had waved goodbye at the train station in Kovno. Waiting in the long line at customs and passport control, Bella spotted her husband. She lifted up Marek. "There's your Daddy". A New York policeman took pity on them and let Marek go forward. The pale little boy ran into the arms of the father he had never seen but already loved.

Shmuel Adler and his brother David were born after their parents' reunion. Leo Adler eventually became the rabbi of Basel, Switzerland. Bella Adler was renowned for her hospitality and

candor.

Every one of their great grandchildren lives in Jerusalem. To make sure that they remember their family exodus, each great-grandchild gets a passport. In the family tradition, Grandpa Shmuel tells them they have only 12 hours to leave the Kingdom of Egypt. Which toys will they take? Transit visas granted from Ansbach, Mir, Kedan Vilna, Kobe, Shanghai, Aktuibinski, Gorki, Karaganda, Kok Uzed, Odessa, Vienna, Brooklyn, New Jersey and Basel, says the document. One more stop has been added – the final stop – Jerusalem.

This year in Jerusalem.

(from The Jerusalem Post)

Letters

Eliahu Bar Yosef
Omer, Israel

To T. Kaufman: Many thanks for your friendly congratulations on my 90th birthday. A supplement is attached to this letter headlined "What was not mentioned in the two recently published books" and the contents of the article speak for itself. The main reason for writing it is due to the absence of any mention of sports activities in the album "The Jews in Harbin" edited in China. This is also the case in G.V. Melichov's book "White Harbin: The Mid-Twenties" published in Moscow, 2003. Despite this, the deficiency could still be corrected while it is not too late. Participants in the Jewish sports sections – Maccabi, Beta, Recreation Club and individuals had often shown high-level results in international athletics of which we should be proud. But, alas, as time passes, I am afraid that with the passing of our generation all that remains of the "famed sporting past" would simply be forgotten. In my opinion, you, Ted, as the leader and historian of our Jewish past in China could help by giving the Cultural Committee the job of collecting all that is now left of former sports activities – diplomas, media clips, photos, letters, etc. Our former sports stars: Iza Yarho-Kondakova, Paula Fainserg, Raya Dovry-Beiner, Fira Gershkevich, the table-tennisists: Shura, Danya Berkovich, Mark Gendlin, Yana Lieberman, Leliya Roisberg, Vardy Volovik – we can all narrate many interesting facts concerning this field of youth activity, thus saving our heritage for future studies and history.

Mark Erooga
England

To T. Kaufman: Thank you for publishing my letter. So far I have not heard from anyone. I am planning to visit Harbin. Regretfully you did not publish my original letter in English in the English Supplement. It might have reached more readers. However, I see that a Seminar and Reunion is planned by the Center for Jewish Studies in Harbin (ICFS No.47). Would it be possible to let me know when the date is announced. I was recently presented with a copy of the South Atlantic Quarterly (99:1) Winter 2000 – ISBN 0-8223-6475-1 entitled 'Harbin and Manchuria: Place, Space, and Identity'. It contains a dozen scholarly articles by a number of international authors. Some of the topics have been covered in the Bulletin (which is cited as a source), but there is a lot of other very interesting information. I do not recall these articles mentioned in the Bulletin and it occurred to me that you may not be familiar with this publication.
Email: markerooga@hotmail.com

Congratulations on yet another interesting and well presented issue of the Bulletin (No. 378). I am interested in revisiting Harbin (last in 1938) and would like to know of any group planning a visit in 2004, whom I could join, say, in Beijing. I can be contacted at 17 Foxbury Close, Luton, LU2 7BQ, U.K. or by e-mail: markerooga@hotmail.com

The American Far Eastern Society of New York
Frances Greenberg, President
Rose Marie Peiser, Treasurer

To the IYS: A very happy 50th anniversary to the Bulletin of Igud Yotzei Sin! Congratulations on your half century of printing achievement. Thank you for exciting our memories with photos and stories. We wish you many more vintage years of successful publishing to "One Hundred and Twenty"

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Far Eastern Society of San Francisco Inc. and all our members, we join you in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the publication of Igud Yotzei Sin Bulletin.

The Bulletin plays a great role in helping to collect funds for different charitable endeavors. It also plays a great role in our lives by keeping us in touch with what is going on in Israel and in the lives of our friends.

Many thanks to the Board of Editors for publishing such an informative Bulletin.

I. Kaufman, President G. Katzeff, Hon. Secretary

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FAR EASTERN SOCIETY OF S. F. Inc

Anais Martane
China

To T. Kaufman: Just one month after leaving Israel, I'm already in China for two weeks with a new exciting job. My visit to Israel was so rich and I really want to thank all of you in your association ... I am now working for French and Chinese co-production film companies headed by Mr. Sylvain Bursztejn and Mr. Fang Li who are making Chinese movies such as "The Floating Landscape", "Hollywood Hong Kong", "The Anyang Orphan", by Wang Chao, the next movie of Lou Ye ("Suzhou River", "Purple Butterfly"). Mr. Bursztejn has begun writing a script about the part of the Shoah that most people ignore ... the story of the Shanghai Jewish Refugees in the Forties. Since that time, I have been engaged to work actively in China on the project in order to produce a feature film for the cinema about this subject. We are today at the stage of development. A French and a Chinese scenarist are working on the script, and our team is doing the documentary research in the archives of Beijing and Shanghai. I am contacting you today because I am in Kong Kong for a week and I would like to know if you have some contacts in Hong Kong with the Jewish community members who must be interested in this subject ... also in Shanghai and Beijing. I need to meet all the people who are interested in this topic.

Email: Anais.martane@rosefilms.com

Mira and Joe Mrantz
California, USA
(On behalf of the American Far Eastern Society of Southern California)

To the IYS: To all of you at the IGUD, congratulations on a job superbly done! It is with the greatest of pleasure that Joe and I commend each and every one of you! You have done and continue to do a remarkable job of keeping all ex-residents from China, throughout the world, informed with your wonderful stories and history about our past. Dr. Kaufman's experiences in Russia, etc. In particular, we wish to mention what an outstanding issue the last bulletin was. It was a pleasure to read from start to finish. Thank you again for all the energy, knowledge, love and passion that went into the bulletin, and we look forward to receiving it for many years to come. Special thanks to Teddy Kaufman, who is irreplaceable.

Lily Frank
Honorary Representative
Montreal, Canada

To T. Kaufman: I am pleased you asked me to send a message on the wonderful occasions of the 50th anniversary of the Bulletin. I look back with deep nostalgia as I remember so vividly the beginning of the Bulletin. As you know, my beloved father Phillip Frank, of blessed memory, was very involved and deeply committed to this magazine. It was his pleasure to work with Messrs. Kotz, Rabinovich, Kliaver and Zlotnikoff, all of blessed memory. They were a very creative, highly intelligent, and motivated team. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you and all those whose devotion has resulted in an outstanding magazine, including the addition of special supplements in English and Hebrew. The Bulletin serves as an important connection for the thousands of former residents of China spread around the world. The only sadness is that each issue also lists the passing of so many of our compatriots. The work undertaken by you and your board with the second and third generations of our brethren is commendable. Through education and scholarships a vital difference has been made and many youngsters have been given a better future. At the same time a valuable contribution has been made to many older people in need. There are so many who have had their lives enriched through the activities of Igud Yotzei Sin.

I am very moved to be able to wish you, the members of your committee and all our dear friends at Igud Yotzei Sin in Israel continued good health, success, and personal happiness for years to come.

We hope and pray that Israel will be blessed with the peace and security that it has been seeking for the past 56 years. To you and yours Hazak v'Ematz. With admiration and much affection always.

Maisie Meyer

London, England

To T. Kaufman: Thank you for printing Jonathan Goldstein's review of my book *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Whangpoo: A Century of Sephardi Jewish Life in Shanghai* (Bulletin #379 – March-April 2004). I am please to clarify some of the points he raises.

With regard to the label Sephardim, I explained in the book that Baghdadis deliberately chose the title "The Sephardi Jewish Community of Shanghai". It was how they wished to be identified and I have suggested various reasons for their preference (pp. 34-8). The Baghdadis wished to differentiate between themselves and the Russian Jews (their first encounter with an Ashkenazi community) who began arriving in Shanghai in 1895. The "Sephardi" label balanced with the "Ashkenazi" one. With regard to the question of opium, I specifically made it a point not to mention the names of the Baghdadi families involved in the trade, as it served no useful purpose and would have been insensitive to the feelings of their descendants. The debate on the propriety of the pernicious opium trade was outside the scope of the book, which merely examined the Baghdadi involvement in it.

Heppner's statement with regard to aid to the refugees is flawed. Heppner himself noted "every effort was made to alleviate the refugees' suffering and restore their dignity". ("On the Relations" draft paper for Harvard Conference p.1). He seems to overlook the fact that although some Baghdadis were conspicuously wealthy, the majority of this community, which numbered some 1,000, was poor. Many Baghdadis tried to alleviate the plight of the refugees on a personal level – individuals provided discreet help, gifts of fruit, furniture, tea, and most notably invitations to meals. (p. 209 cites Israel's Messenger, June 9, 1939, p. 13). However, because of the vast number of refugees any relief work was just a drop in the ocean. As the ripples affected only a few, many were of the opinion that nothing was being done.

David Kranzler has pointed out (*Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938-1945*, pp. 454-5) that about one-third of the "Sephardi" (notice that he uses this label) Jews had chosen British protection or citizenship. Some 340 Baghdadis were considered "enemy nationals" and placed in detention camps with British, American, and other civilians. These included the wealthier members, who were the community leaders at the helm of the refugee relief organizations. They were therefore unable to give the refugees any further assistance.

Regarding "Jewish residents" who were not interned or in the ghetto, these stateless Baghdadis and those with Iraqi citizenship were overwhelmed with their own struggle for existence in the war torn city. Many middle class Baghdadis lost their jobs. Their assets were confiscated and with their bank accounts virtually frozen, it became impossible to conduct private business. They were reduced to selling their possessions to survive, and envied Baghdadis in the camps. They, nonetheless, graciously sent food parcels to their interned relatives. Some Baghdadis "created" jobs for the refugees to enable them to get passes to leave the ghetto (pp. 222-223). As Kranzler pointed out (*Japanese*, p. 454), the United States, the chief source of funds for the refugees, was at war with Japan after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee was unable to remit money and broke off contact with the Shanghai refugees till December 1943 (*Japanese*, p. 462). Heppner seems to have overlooked this important fact. Goldstein misquotes Joan Roland's statement referred to in the book – "many Shanghai Baghdadis had become the "Rothschilds of the East". In fact the comparison was made solely to the Sassoons (p. 32).

Finally, "Hardoon was probably the only Westerner interested in promoting Chinese technology and preserving China's rich cultural heritage" (*Israel's Messenger*, June 3, 1927; July 1931). This statement clearly applies to the time in which it was written and may well not be true currently.

Email: mjmeyer@email.com

Gerda Wolf (nee Kossowsky)

To the IYS Editors: For several years now I have a subscription of the *Igud Yotzei Sin English Supplement*. I like your paper very much and I would like to contribute my share by writing about things that happened during my life in Shanghai. For your information: I arrived in Shanghai in December 1938, aged 7, from Vienna with my parents. I left Shanghai in January 1949 aged 18. You can imagine that I felt very much at home there. I am still in touch with most of my friends, which I think is wonderful. Just to let you know a bit of my educational life in Shanghai: When we arrived in Shanghai in 1938 I went to the Shanghai Jewish School. Although I was already after the first grade in Vienna, I was put in kindergarten in the SJS because I didn't speak a word of English! But very soon (I think it was about two months) I was in my normal class. Then, when we moved to Hongkew I went to the SJYA (Kadoorie School) and after than to the Public School for Girls and in the end to the Shanghai American School. Hoping to hear from you soon and with best wishes –

P.S. Please let me know if there are any restrictions as to the length of an article, or anything else.

Email: Gerdawolfmunich@aol.co

Legends of the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng

(continued from the previous issue)



6. What's in a Name

What should the Jews be called in Chinese? The answers ranged from an only partial attempt to pronounce the word “Israelite” to various descriptive appellations, including “The Sect That Plucks Out the Sinews”.

Shortly after the Jews settled in Kaifeng, then the capital city of China, they discovered that they did not know what word to use in describing themselves to their Chinese neighbors, that is, how to tell their Chinese friends that they were Jews. Naturally, there was no ready-made Chinese word meaning “Jew” since previously there had been so few direct contacts between the two peoples. To solve this problem, Levi, the chief rabbi, called a special meeting of the congregation. He asked everyone to put their heads together and derive an appropriate Chinese name.

“While we have lived here for many years,” the learned rabbi began, “we still do not have a Chinese name for ourselves as a separate people. You know the inconvenience this causes. On different occasions our neighbors refer to us by different names, and as a result confusion arises. Today I have invited you here to solve this problem. When a people name themselves, it is a very serious, complex matter, for the name they choose becomes a sign, a symbol, an indicator of their beliefs and philosophy. A good Chinese name must represent our people, our tradition, and our faith”.

And he called on every member

of the congregation to participate, saying that two heads were better than one, and that everyone’s wisdom was needed for such a major project. But almost before the rabbi had finished his opening remarks, a heated discussion began as members vied with each other to voice their opinions. Because the Kaifeng Jews had already been living among the Chinese for several years, they were fluent in the language, and many were highly proficient.

One such, Yaakov, stood up and declared his idea: “How about Gu Jiao?”

While saying this, he wrote two Chinese characters, Gu Jiao, on a board prepared by the rabbi.

“Why this choice?” his friend Yehuda asked.

Yaakov explained: “We Israelites are known as a religious people. Our religion is known to be a very ancient one. Gu means ‘ancient’ in Chinese, and Jiao means ‘religion’. When we combine these two Chinese characters, we are saying that we are an ancient religion. This name reflects a basic part of our heritage and fits us very well”.

Several agreed, but not everyone.

“The problem with the character Gu is that it might also mean ‘old’ or ‘out of fashion’, even ‘waning’, Yehuda commented. “I don’t want our Chinese name to have associations of that kind”.

Yehuda then suggested an alternative: Tian Jiao.

When questioned by Yaakov (who refused to give in so easily), Yehuda

defended his choice, arguing not only that Tian Jiao meant ‘heaven’ in Chinese, but that it was a magnificent word, used by China’s emperors when they called themselves Tian Zi, “sons of heaven”.

Yehuda then called on Rabbi Levi, asking if he remembered how the Song emperor had used the word Tian in the same way the Jews used the word “God”.

“Tian also means ‘God’ in Chinese”, Yehuda said.

The rabbi nodded his head as he remembered his meeting with the emperor.

Yehuda continued, “If we use Tian Jiao as our name in Chinese, we convey the idea of ‘Heavenly Religion’ to our Chinese friends, and this is the very essence of our faith, for we all believe that it was God in heaven who gave us our religion”.

Members of the congregation began to applaud, delighted with the new suggestion, until they were interrupted by Israel, normally a very quiet man, who was driven to speak because of his dissatisfaction with the word Jiao, “religion”, in each of the suggestions made so far.

“Both choices emphasize Jiao”, he said, “and while they may be appropriate names for our religion, are they sufficient for us as a people? We want a name for us as a people – not only for our religion, don’t we?” he asked, making a significant distinction between the two.

But while he had made a valid point, Israel was unable to suggest any other name.

(continued on next page)

Noting that Jews were also called Israelites, another member of the congregation proposed a direct transliteration of the word “Israelite” into Chinese.

Now they needed the help of Ezra, the best Chinese linguistic scholar among them. When called upon for his opinion, he murmured the sound of the word i-z-rei-l, i-z-rei-l over and over until he gradually shifted to a possible Chinese equivalent: Yi-ci-li-ye.

He then wrote the phrase down in Chinese on the board and, in response to questions from the congregation, explained his choice of characters.

“Yi”, Ezra began, “stands for ‘one’ in Chinese. According to our religion there is only one God. This would stress our faith. Yi also means ‘first’ in Chinese. This will symbolize that we are the first nation in the world with faith in one God.”

“Ci” means ‘bestow’ or ‘being bestowed’. Think of it – if a people is bestowed, what is it?”

“The chosen people”, several members of the congregation cried out in response.

People leaned forward eagerly to hear the rest of Ezra’s explanation.

“In Chinese, the third character, le, has three meanings: ‘happy’, ‘optimistic’, and ‘content’. Aren’t we a happy, optimistic, contented people?”

“And the last character, ye, stands for ‘business’, trade’, or ‘occupation’”.

“Thus”, Ezra pointed out, “when the Chinese hear the name Yi-ci-le-ye, they will know that Jews are the chosen people endowed by God, and contented with their lives and work”.

And so the name was chosen.

Years later, when Kaifeng’s Jews decided to carve a tablet to bear their history, they proudly wrote as the opening words: “We are Yi-ci-le-ye”.

(Chapter 6 is to be continued in the next issue)

Tianjin Exhibition

600 Years of Urban Development and Planning
In and Around Tianjin - 1404 - 2004

The exhibition was opened on Wednesday, April 7, 2004 at the Cornell University Library and the Watson Collection on East Asia. The keynote address was given by Brett Sheehan, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Kaufman Auditorium, Goldwin Smith Hall. A reception was held at the Hirshland Gallery in the Carl A. Kroch Library.

The Chinese port city of Tianjin is home to more than six million citizens. Located ninety minutes by train east of Beijing, it was and still is a highly important municipality. Tianjin was a trade and treaty port during the colonial era (ca. 1840-1949), and is the third largest port in China today. Its unique history or urban development comprises ten discreet but highly interconnected spatial entities: nine foreign concessions – American, Belgian, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Austro-Hungarian, Italian, and British – representing different approaches to building styles, and the Chinese walled city itself which is celebrating its 600th anniversary in 2004.

With the largest number of foreign historic buildings on Chinese soil today, Tianjin represents a textbook case regarding the political dimensions of colonial architecture, urban planning, and the complex socio-economic relations between the East and the West. The city also was home to important historical figures, including the last emperor of China (Pu Yi) and former U.S. president Herbert Hoover, who was stationed in Tianjin (with his wife, Lou Henry Hoover) as an army engineer in 1899-1900.

This exhibition aims to show how

Tianjin developed as a colonial, urban “collage city” of very diverse styles; how its various components were defined architecturally and socially; and how the parts constituted a functioning whole that dominated most of the economic and cultural landscape of northern China for almost one hundred years.

Drawn from the holdings of Cornell University Library’s renowned Watson Collection on East Asia, the exhibition includes historical photographs, architectural drawings (such as the 1897 “Palace Maps” which depict modifications to be made to an imperial palace for the Chinese emperor’s visits to Tianjin), geographical maps, and great variety of other documents and artifacts.

Visit the exhibition on the Web at <http://watson.library.cornell.edu/Tianjin/>

Exhibitions

As part of a cooperative initiative between the “Freud” Jewish Community of Birobidjan and the Heilongjiang Academy, a series of Harbin landscapes painted by a Birobidjan native, Vladimir Tsap, is now being exhibited in the Harbin Jewish Museum. The Jewish community of Birobidjan also actively supports historical research on the Harbin Jewish Community. Founded at the end of the 19th century, Jewish settlement in Harbin was connected to the construction and maintenance of railways in the Far East. Harbin once had a Jewish population numbering 25,000 people. Even until this day, Harbin has two synagogues, a Jewish bank, school, orphanage, and some Jewish stores. The local administration in Harbin and the Heilongjiang Academy organized a number of activities to recreate the history of this Jewish community.

Roman Grigorievich Livenson

by Abram German

When imprisoned in a Gulag camp situated near Vorkuta, a town in the Komy autonomous region, Russia, I met and became acquainted with Roman Grigorievich Livenson, a Harbin born Jew also kept at the same camp. As much as I can remember, our close friendship began in February 1949 and continued after our release with family contacts. I well remember that he searched in vain for traces of some of his relatives and intimate friends, and his first aim was to let them know that he had not disappeared without a trace. Alas, Livenson died in 1986 in Vorkuta and was buried there. His family – widow and married daughter – are living in St. Petersburg. So I undertook the task to continue his search by approaching Igud Yotzei Sin, sending his short biography, photos and some of his documents kindly supplied by his widow. Each of us living has a family name which should never be sunk into oblivion, thus disappearing forever. And it is my sincere hope that by publishing this brief record of Roman Livenson's life, once a former "Harbinets", then an innocent prisoner of the Gulag and my sincere buddy, all who knew him should feel his everlasting anguish for them.

* * *

Roman Grigorievich Livenson was born in 1919, a native of Harbin. His mother came from Latvia and his father from France. Both arrived in Harbin before the First World War. His parents passed away when Roman was quite young. In 1936 he graduated from the Tientsin Grammar School. The headmaster was Mr. Yates, his deputy – Woodan; History teacher – Price; Physics

– Foxley; Mathematics – McArthur; French – Lawless. The school was a Cambridge University subordinate and the examination papers were sent that university for marking. In December 1941 the school closed after the outbreak of the Pacific War. With the arrival of the Red Army forces in Harbin, and after severe psychological pressure, Roman decided to resettle in the USSR. He was alone and his sister had moved to the USA before the war. In Sverdlovsk (now Yekaterinburg) he worked in the Ural Wagon building factory, but then was suddenly arrested and moved to the Lubianka jail. He was soon condemned to an eight-year term of imprisonment by a special "Troyka" court after a false verdict of his supposed spy activities for Japan and the USA.

Roman passed through several transit prisons before becoming a political prisoner in the Gulag's "Rechlag" system connected with the "Vorkutaugol" coalmine No. 7 and an assembly company "Coalmines Constructin Administration" No. 13. Vorkuta is situated well within the Arctic Circle and has exceptionally harsh cold winters. The prisoners suffered much when they were ordered to sit from five to eight hours in snow before entering the camp during the shift changes or due to other problems. Roman once tried to warm himself by clapping hands, but an Alsatian dog made a sudden jump and bit through his left hand and carried the glove away. As a result of this incident, Roman was placed in a medical barracks with a severe frostbitten hand. A surgeon – a former Wehrmacht doctor – helped much but nevertheless his hand stopped

functioning ever since and in fact was paralyzed. Being kind in relation to the "non-Soviets", the German doctor managed to secure work for Roman in the medical barracks as his assistant. Roman stayed on this job, toiling all the years to which he was so unjustly condemned until rehabilitation and release.

Having no home of his own, Roman decided to settle in Vorkuta. He worked in a local mental psychiatric hospital and lived in a hostel. Knowing English and Russia, Roman was qualified to enter the local Pedagogical Institute, so he approached the MGB to return his documents and school diploma. Despite the fact that his personal file had a stamp "To be kept forever" their answer was that the documents were lost and not available. Later, when the medical personnel had to have diplomas in order to work in that field, Roman was fired. So he found work as a signal man in an underground life in a colliery "Yujnaya" until he reached pension age, but in order to receive it he had to continue to work ... due to the shortage of work years. So he was employed in one of the laboratories belonging to the Northern Scientific Research Institute connected with underground construction until his sudden death on January 6, 1986, at the age of 73.

Roman married Emma Shevchenko, a hydrogeology engineer. They lived in a one-room shabby apartment at a workmen's settlement from where the Gulag capital city Vorkuta had begun. Roman had to walk daily on foot to his job about six kilometers through the tundra. His daughter was born in the settlement and only in 1975 the

(continued on page 41)

My First Steps in Israel

By Moshe Lihomanov

At last! After an exhausting flight of 36 hours our plane touched down at Lod Airport at dawn on June 6, 1950. We formed a queue in the arrivals hall of a small terminal building, holding our passports to be stamped by the Border Control officials. A Jewish Agency official in charge of the new immigrants issued us Immigrant ID booklets. The work proceeded quietly; we were all exhausted after a long night spent in a plane seat.

We brought with us US\$70, all we could scrape together in foreign currency before leaving Harbin. My father hid the money in his shoes for fear of theft or of being reported to the Chinese authorities by “unwanted elements”. In those days the export of foreign currency from China was strictly forbidden. In Lod \$70 became 23 Israeli Lirot, at the official rate of IL1.00 = US\$3.00 (!).

We boarded an olive-colored Egged bus for Haifa. On both sides stretched an endless green carpet of pardesim. What an unforgettably sweet aroma! What an unforgettably bright morning! Our First Morning in Israel. The beginning of a new life.

On the horizon we could already discern the bluish contour of the Carmel range. The bus arrived at the gate of Sha’ar Aliya, formerly a British army camp, now used for the temporary reception of new immigrants. A city of tin army huts and khaki tents. We were allotted a tent to be shared by another family. We traveled lightly: two bags were all we had. The rest was loaded on a ship, scheduled to arrive as “surface cargo” in another six months.

It was hot and humid. Loudspeakers never ceased to pour out information and instructions. Now we were requested to come

for lunch at the “dining hall”. We preferred to take the food (potatoes and canned beef) to our tent rather than be crowded in the huge mess hall.

After breakfast we heard over the loudspeaker that Sha’ar Aliya was a “closed quarantine camp” not to be left without a special permit. In nine days we were to be transferred to an “open camp” in Athlit, from which we would be able to leave wherever and whenever we wanted.

In the evening most of the tents were dark: people were exhausted after the first day of their new life and went to sleep early. My father hung his shorts on the rope stretched across the tent. At last all was quiet. We fell asleep on the iron Sochnut beds and straw mattresses. Outside, people stumbled in the darkness over the pegs and ropes of the tents, swearing in all the tongues of the Galut. My first day in Israel faded away.

Day two: June 7, 1950. Early morning. My father awoke and discovered that his shorts were gone. He looked at the floor under the rope. No, they were not there. They were stolen. Later it became a family joke, but at the time it wasn’t funny. What was there to do? How could he leave the tent in his underwear? The situation was saved by the man who shared our tent, who happened to have two pairs of pants, one of which he lent my father. Now we could go out and have our breakfast.

It consisted of bread, jam and cheese. Standing in the queue, I saw a man in front of us.... wearing my father’s pants. I was about to shout, “Thief! Thief!” but my father stopped me, saying, “Perhaps he, too, had his pants stolen at night!”

Another day passed: June 8. It’s

my birthday. In Harbin, on such an occasion, there was a festive meal with a lot of guests, adults sitting at one table, children at another. Everybody brought presents. “What sort of a present will I get this time,” I wondered, “there are no shops in the camp, and we can’t go out to buy one outside!” The problem was solved by an ice cream vendor, who sold artikim across the wire fence. Mother bought me a large chocolate artik for five grush, saying, “This is all I can buy you this time, my son!” I didn’t mind it: it was delicious.

The nine quarantine days passed quickly and we were transferred to the camp at Athlit. Again hundreds of British army tin huts and double tents. In the recent past Athlit was a British detention camp where the Jewish “illegal” immigrants were kept before being deported. Now it was a lively “open” camp, full of new immigrants from all over the world: Rumanians, Hungarians, Poles, Moroccans, Iraqis, and us, a few families of “Chinese”. In those days, the first question at an introduction was, “Where are you from?” Nobody believed us that we came from China: “Stop fooling! You don’t have Chinese eyes! Jews from China? Ha-ha-ha!”

Children were the first to organize themselves into groups. My playmates were Rumanian. We did not get along too well. There was a lot of tension, sometimes even coming to blows.

There was an Ulpan for those who wanted to study Hebrew. Every morning at 10 a Tnuva truck came to distribute among the children plastic bags with sweet, tasty cocoa. The amplifiers blared non-stop, in Yiddish, for the Ashkenazim, in Arabic for the

(continued on page 41)

Moroccans and Iraqis. On Saturdays we went to the beach. For me, life seemed to be one big “dacha”, free from worries and school.

What impressed me the most were the tall palm trees, standing prim and erect like two rows of soldiers on both sides of the main street, joining the camp with the old Haifa – Tel Aviv road. On Saturdays people used to walk at leisure along the street, buy an ice cream cone (2.5 grush a cone), or a glass of raspberry gazoz (1.5 grush a glass) at the only kiosk in the camp. They had no money, but they were content. Much more than today.

The new immigrants were offered a choice: Shikun or Moshav. That is, either to be allotted a small apartment in a housing project in a city, or to

participate in building a cooperative agricultural village. My parents chose the latter for the reason that “in a moshav there would always be food for children – milk, eggs, vegetables and fruit”. My parents and some other families went to inspect various places offered to us by the Sochnut (amongst them, the newly established Amikam, which we discarded for its remote location from any rural center and the sea, and the lack of a decent road).

The decision was made when we visited what was then called Moshav Zahal, whose nucleus of demobilized soldiers already existed. It lay right on the seashore between Rosh Hanikra and Achziv, an abandoned Arab village, some seven kilometers north of Nahariya. There the heads

of families of the future settlers were to build the houses and prepare the land for cultivation, returning to their families in Athlit for the weekend.

My father and nine other heads of the families who worked with him, had never done any building or agricultural work, but they learned quickly and did all they could to help establish a new settlement. And so, at last, at the beginning of September, 1950 we boarded an open truck loaded with beds, mattresses, blankets and boxes of canned food given to us at the Athlit camp, and sped northward to our new homes.

(To be continued)

From the Hebrew: E. P.

family managed to get a more or less normal apartment.

Roman Grigorievich was buried in permafrost earth in the cemetery of the Arctic town of Vorkuta. May he rest in peace!

Documents related to Roman Livenson

USSR Ministry of Interior

YTL “J” AX-H

23 July 1956

Certificate No. 096101

Given to Livenson, Roman Grigorievich. Date of birth: 1919, Harbin, CHINA.

Nationality: Jew

His arrest and imprisonment in camp from 20 Jan. 1948 to 23 July 1956 is confirmed. Rehabilitated according to Decree issued by Presidium of The Supreme Soviet, USSR, dated 24 March 1956.

Place of future settlement: Vorkuta, The KOMY ASSR.

Prison Executive

Head – signature: Rogachev

Department

Head – signature: Muchin

Photo, Seal

.....
TO THE RED CROSS. Letter No. 329050/15 dated 27 Feb. 1957 – Attached

Roman Livenson is searching for his nephew KAPSTAN Anton Moyseevich, born in Shanghai in the early forties.

.....
THE RED CROSS AND THE RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

Moskva K-3, Kuznetsky most No. 18/7

No. OS32681, 13 Feb. 1958

Komy ASSR, Vorkuta P.O. General Delivery.

Dear Mr. Livenson,

We continued search of your sister in USA. The Red Cross USA Society

informed us that Mrs. Irena Kapstan-Livenson, wife of Maurice Kapstan, born in Harbin, China, 1914, died in N.Y. on 26.05.1953.

Foreign Search Department Manager – signature: Sidorov

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THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

Executive Committee. Mockva K-31, Kuznetsky most No. 18/8

Dear Mr. Livenson,

We contacted the USA Red Cross according to your enquiry...

The USA Red Cross informed our Department that it could not find the location of Anton Moiseevich KAPSTAN. Sorry.

Foreign Search Dept. Submanager, Y. Volkova.

Mr. Chen Yonglong, the Ambassador of China to Israel, and his wife visited the Synagogue in Memory of Jewish Communities in China, 31 Golan Street, Tel Aviv



Tientsin - A Heavenly Ford for Jews in the 1920s and 1930s (continued from Bulletin #379)

By B. Kobuliansky

Tientsin in the 1930s - some reminiscences

Many sites of that period were described in numerous articles, including those published in the IYS Bulletin. I will mention with some details those spots which I remember and where one even or another took place.

- An Italian circus, a traveling show, presented in a large tent (“the big top”) somewhere close to the Recreation Ground. The main attraction that fascinated me was an elephant standing on a board with nails placed on the chest of the man below. And of course, we never missed a chance in Tientsin or Peitaiho to watch small Chinese circus presentations given by one or two jugglers, the most common show of skill being a whirling dish of water on a pole, placed on the forehead of the juggler; a monkey-macaque was also a must.
- An Italian company presenting Verdi’s “Rigoletto”, the first opera I ever saw.
- When the famous Russian bass Shaliapin on a tour of China came to Tientsin, my father took me to the “Hai-Alai” hall in the Italian concession and I enjoyed one of the best concerts I ever heard in my life. I don’t know whether that hall is still functioning, but at that time I had the pleasure of watching the Spanish game, when one of the players would catch a solid ball (the size of a tennis-ball) with a prolonged basket attached to his wrist and throw it against a high, concrete (or marble?) wall; when it bounced back, the opponent would catch it and throw the ball against a

wall on the other side of the playing court.

- The Recreation Ground was the place where football games were played; I remember that the best team at that time was the Italian one, and the best player was Jiacomelli.
- On the territory of the Recreation Ground in winter, a temporary light-roofed skating rink was erected, inside which children and grown-ups skated. Both Chinese and foreigners came to skate from all parts of Tientsin.
- When I was about 13 years old I began playing tennis. After classes, or on holidays, I would ride on my lady’s bicycle to the tennis courts which, as far as I remember, belong to the TGS or were rented by the school.
- Our family lived on Dublin Road in the 1930s not far from the TGS. I liked to watch the long pontoon boats being propelled along the narrow canal (“creek”) with the help of poles; the Chinese boatmen were skilled in their business. I recently heard that the creek had been eliminated.
- Across the Haihe River, there was a drawbridge allowing the passage of vessels under it. I am sure that there are still some Tientsineers who remember the day when a mishap brought the bridge into motion in the morning when it was full of pedestrians and vehicles. There were some serious casualties.

The Tientsin Grammar School

The Tientsin Grammar School was located in the English Concession. All basic subjects were taught in English

by native speakers. The high standards of teaching allowed children to take the Cambridge University Junior Local Examination, and a year after that, the Cambridge School Certificate Examination. I was admitted in 1928 and placed in Form I of the Lower School. I left the school in 1936. During the 1920s and 1930s quite a lot of foreigners lived in Tientsin. In the photograph of my class taken in 1930 or 1931 we see the teacher M. Stuckey from Australia and 19 children: 7 were English, 5-Jews, 3-Russians, 1-American, 1 was Danish, 1 girl was Italian and 1 came from Jamaica. I think that this was more or less a typical picture for the school as a whole. As far as I remember, there were only a few Chinese children in the whole school.

Thus kids of different nationalities studied together for 10 years. I remember only one case when there was something like an argument of a nationalistic nature. Our schoolmate, the Italian girl, spoke in favor of Mussolini, the Italian dictator, while the other children were against the invasion of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) by the Italians. I would say that despite the multi-national character of the classes, the atmosphere was quite friendly. As to the Italian girl – she was a real tomboy and once in a while would give a licking to a boy or two. She surpassed most of the boys in jumping from a swinging board. Eventually, she proved to be a splendid schoolfellow. After coming to Israel I got in touch with her; she had been living in the USA for many years. And what was also important for the Jewish children – there was practically no anti-Semitism. This was in harmony

(continued on next page)

The Heilongjiang provincial Academy of Social Sciences Herbin Jews Research Center

The International Conference and Seminar of the history of the Jews of Harbin will take place in Harbin from August 30 to September 2, 2004.

All those who wish to participate in the Conference as guests must inform us as to their names and dates of arrival in and departure from Harbin.

Address: 501, Youyi Road, Daolidist, Harbin, China 150018

E-mail: LSX111@hotmail.com

e-mail: hantiannian69@163.com

e-mail: christy722@sina.com

tel/fax: 86-451-86497956

Cost of staying in Harbin

"Shangri-La" five-star hotel

Approximately 420 YUAN = U.S. 51\$ for a single occupation per day

450 YUAN = US\$55 for double occupation. With B/B (bed & breakfast)

The cost of lunch and dinner will not exceed 200 yuan = U.S. 24\$.

"Modern" – three star Hotel

Approximately 350 YUAN = U.S. 43\$ for a single occupation per day

450 YUAN = US\$51 for double occupation.

The cost of lunch and dinner will not exceed 150 yuan = U.S. 18\$.

All the sightseeing expenses in Harbin and visiting Jewish places of interest will be paid for by the organizers of the Conference.

It is advisable that you book hotel accommodation through Harbin Jews Research Center – it will be convenient and will allow for discount.

From page 43

with the environment away from school: this seems to be in agreement with the common notion that China was traditionally tolerant to the Jews.

My best friend in class was Dennis Hall. He and his brother came from Scotland, and their sister, Mary, came to teach us after graduating from the University. In 1992 I found Robin Hall: he was living in England. He wrote to me about Dennis, who died during a bombing mission over Germany in World War II. I had a very nice correspondence with Robin until he passed away. Among other reminiscences he reminded me of the following episode: Sammy Dvorkin invited all the boys from his class to his birthday party. Mrs. Dvorkin had some very smart lamps consisting of naked women holding torches aloft; one of the boys – Josh, borrowed Sammy's crayons and painted them slightly "to make them more realistic" and got thrown out of the party for his pains!

I have to mention that during my course of education at the school I was caned twice, so I became a full-fledged pupil of the TGS. It was Miss Leitch, the Headmistress, who, after drawing down my shorts, caned me for the first time. That was for kicking around a can in the school yard with the other boys; this exercise ended up in an accident: the can landed on the forehead of a girl. Later on, the Headmaster, Mr. Yeates, caned me – he thought that during the morning assembly I pulled grimace. This time the punishment was performed in quite a civilized way: through my shorts.

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The Jewish High School in Harbin.

The construction began in September 1917, and was completed in December 1918.

Now it is the Harbin 2-d Korean Middle School.



IN MEMORIAM

Musia Samsonovich

The funeral of Musia Samsonovich was held on February 28 at the Kiryat Shaul cemetery. Friends, landsmen and her daughter Genia's colleagues gathered to say goodbye to Musia. Wreathes and flowers were laid on the fresh grave. T. Kaufman recited the Kaddish and spoke emotionally about Musia's life. S. Morgulev and R. Kaufman laid a wreath from Igud Yotzei Sin.

Tribute to Musia Samsonovich

On February 17 our landswoman Musia Samsonovich (nee Bro) who formerly lived in Harbin and Shanghai passed away at the "Beilinson" Hospital. Musia was born in Harbin and graduated from the First Commercial High School. Later on, Musia moved to Shanghai where she married Pana Samsonovich with whom she lived 61 years. Musia was an active member of "Betar" in Harbin and Shanghai. Musia and Pana had two children who were born in Shanghai: son Abram and daughter Genia.

In 1949 the Samsonovich family came to Israel. The first years of their life in Israel were very hard; their life in the Yazur district where Pana worked and lived at the Trigusin factory was very difficult. Despite all the hardships Musia and Pana were very active in our Association, Igud Yotzei Sin since its first days of existence in 1951. Musia was a member of the Central Committee and the Tel Aviv Committee of IYS for scores of years and a very active member in Beit-Ponve.

In the Six-Day War of 1967 Musia and Pana lost their son Abram. But Musia continued to be an activist who was always working hard to help our

landsmen.

During the last few years Musia was seriously ill, she was surrounded by the love and care of her daughter Genia and son-in-law Zvi. Her grandchildren and great grandchildren loved her dearly. Musia was one of a glorious tribe of those community workers for whom loyalty to the ideals was an inseparable part in their lives.

Pana passed away two years ago, and now Musia joined him to be together with him eternally in the other unknown world of eternity.

The memory of Musia will remain with us forever!

T. Kaufman

Noel Jacobs

A memorial prayer in memory of Noel Jacobs was delivered in Mod'in, Israel by a Mod'in resident, Barry Chamish, an investigative reporter. Noel Jacobs was the leader of the Jewish Company, Shanghai Volunteer Corps, China.

Eva Gregory

Eva Gregory (nee Prosterman) died in Sydney, Australia at the age of 99. May she rest in peace!

Rahil Kant

Rahil Kant (Kantzepolsky) died in Sydney, Australia. Igud Yotzei Sin tenders condolences to her son Alfred Kant, her daughter Tania, and her brother Al Rayson (Reznikov) and family in Canada. May she rest in peace!

Lia Elbaum

Lia Abramovna Elbaum, formerly of Harbin, died in Israel at the age of 89. She arrived in Israel from the USSR in 1990. She left a son, Kopel Elbaum and his family. May she rest in peace!

Judy Citrin

Judy Citrin (nee Zirinsky) of Shanghai died in San Francisco. Judy was the widow of Walter Citrin who was a well-known community leader in Shanghai and in the Jewish Community in Tokyo (Chairman of Palamt). She left three sons and their families. She was a member of the Far East Association in San Francisco. May she rest in peace!

Fania Eliel

Fania Eliel (nee Yarho) died in Kfar Tabor on March 17 at the age of 75. Fania was born in Harbin on January 29, 1929 and came to Israel with her late brother Shlomo (Monia) on January 28th 1950 with the first group of Harbiners who flew to Israel from Hongkong. She and her brothers Shlomo and Aron settled in Kfar Tabor. She married Abram Eliel of Kfar Tabor and had three children – Yossi, Esther and Miriam. Her son Yossi fell on June 5 1982 at the age 21 during the war of "Shlom Hagalil" (the war of Lebanon). His death devastated Fania completely, and for the past few years she was very ill and suffered much. Fania left her husband and two daughters with their families. May she rest in peace!

Emma Germant

Emma Germant, the widow of the late Nika Germant (who died recently), passed away on March 22 at the Ichilov Hospital, Tel Aviv. She was buried on March 23 in the Yarkon Cemetery, Tel Aviv. Igud Yotzei Sin is greatly saddened by Emma's demise and tenders condolences to the bereaved family.

Ania Grubner

The consecration of the tombstone on Ania Grubner's gravesite was held

on March 30 at the Holon Cemetery. Ania Grubner (nee Zelvansky) was born in Harbin, graduated from the First Harbin Commercial School, and was active in “Maccabi” in Harbin. Ania married in Israel and worked in the old age homes of the Mishan Association of the Histadrut. She was an active member through all the years of Igud Yotzei Sin and Bet Ponve. Friends, landsmen, her nephew and his wife attended the consecration. T. Kaufman recited “El Maleh Rahamim” and said Kaddish for Ania. R. Kaufman laid flowers on the tombstone in the name of Igud Yotzei Sin.

Elia Lesk

Elia Lesk (nee Diatlovitsky) formerly of Harbin, died in Ra’anana on April 6. Elia was the widow of the late Shlomo (Moma) Lesk, who was the head of the Betar Ken of Harbin. The young couple came to Palestine in 1935 on Betar Aliya. Here Elia played an active part in the underground association of Irgun Zvai Leumi. Two children were born to Elia and Shlomo in Israel – daughter Carmela and son Giora. For many years Elia was a member of Igud Yotzei Sin. Shlomo Lesk was Vice-Chairman of the IYS and one of the founders of Bet Ponve. Elia was very ill for the past few years. She left her son and daughter with their families and her sister Musia and her husband Dania Berkovich.

Elia was buried in Kiryat Shaul in Tel Aviv, next to her late husband Shlomo. Despite the short notice, many friends, family and landsmen came to follow Elia to her last resting place. Her son Giora and brother-in-law Dania recited Kaddish. The gravesite was covered with flowers. T. Kaufman laid a wreath in the name of Igud Yotzei Sin.

A youthful daughter of Israel, our dear landswoman, beautiful both physically and morally, has left us. She belonged to the glorious generation that fought for the independence of Israel. May she rest in peace, wife,

mother, sister, fighter, and patriot, daughter of the generation to whom we are indebted for our present and future. The memory of Elia will live in the hearts of all who knew her. We, friends and countrymen, share with Carmela, Giora, Musia and Dania and their families the heavy loss of Elia.

T.K.

Nadia Sternberg

An azkara (memorial ceremony) was held on April 2, 2004, marking the second year of the passing of Nadia Sternberg (nee Hanin), at the Yarkon cemetery.

Dr. Jan “Yana” Alban

a generous and devoted pediatrician and philanthropist, who cared for thousands of San Francisco’s children during his 50 year pediatric career, died peacefully surrounded by his family on March 12, 2004, after a courageous and painful struggle with complications from a neck fracture. He was 75 years old.

Yana was born on September 2, 1928 in Shanghai, China’s French Concession to Asya and Isai Abramovitch, joining sister, Lily. By the time he reached adolescence, he spoke four languages fluently: English, Russian, Chinese (Mandarin), and French. He knew from an early age that he wanted to be a baby doctor, and after WWII ended he received his US student visa to attend the UCLA where he graduated in 1950, and Stanford Medical School where he received his medical degree in 1955. He completed his post doctoral education Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland (pediatric intern) and the University of Minnesota (pediatric resident) where he met Donna Lorraine Waterman, an X-ray technician at the Mayo Memorial Hospital. They married on March 3, 1957, and in July traveled to Kyushu, Japan where Jan served as Chief of Pediatric Services, 6160th United States Air Force at Itasuke Air Force Base. In addition to caring for the American children on the base, he provided medical attention, supplies, and food from his own table

to Japanese orphans. Upon his return to the US in 1959, he became Chief Resident Pediatrician at Baltimore City Hospital and was a Fellow of the John Hopkins University. Daughter Andrea Elisabeth was born in Baltimore in December 1959, and the young family moved west to San Francisco where daughter Laura Michelle was born in June 1962.

Dr. Alban started his private practice in the Presidio Heights neighborhood and maintained a thriving, bustling office for the next 42 years. He was forced to retire in June 2003 after a fall that fractured his neck. Dr. Jan was an “old school” doctor who spent ample time examining patients, dispensing free medicine and diapers, and waiving fees to those who could not afford to pay.

Career highlights include: Pediatrician for the USSR Consulate; Assistant Clinical Professor of the UCSF Department of Pediatrics; Mentor to medical students; service to the SF Public Health Department; and widely published author of papers on Dermatology and Mycology. A doctor committed to promoting the highest standards of medicine, he was a Diplomate of the American Board of Pediatrics, a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and Affiliate Fellow of the American Academy of Dermatology. He was a long-term member of the International Society of Topical Dermatology, the San Francisco Medical Society, the California Medical Association, the American Medical Association, the Pediatric Society of Dermatology, the American Society for Microbiology, and the California Perinatal Association. He actively served on the Perinatal Committee and Emergency Committee of CPMC, the Crippled Children’s Service Committee of the Academy of Pediatrics, the San Francisco Utilization Review Committee of the Health Care Foundation, and the Medical Review and Advisory Committee of the San Francisco Medical Society.

Jan’s devotion to his practice left little time for leisure, but when he was able

he spent pleasurable hours fishing on his boat 'Pediafishin' at Lake Tahoe, collecting stamps, and attending the San Francisco Symphony.

Jan will be sadly missed by his beloved "Donnachka", wife of 47 year, his two loving daughters, Andrea (Carl Gosline) and Laura (Tom Walsh) and his adored grandchildren, Jacob and Lily Gosline, and Brenden and Sara Walsh, his brothers-in-law, Bernard Gross (husband of the late Lily Abramovitch Gross and Dr. Bruce Waterman (Rebecca), sister-in-law Gail Berman (Frank), his many nieces and nephews, cousins Lora Bekelman (Abram) and Yuri Khimovich (Natalia) and their children.

(" SF Chronicle" – March 15-16, 2004)

Fuchsia Busel

Fuchsia Busel, nee Henkin, was born on July 6, 1922 in Harbin, China (then

Manchuria) to the wolf-known and respected family of Wolf (William) and Ella Henkin. She was the youngest of the family and the sister of Benjamin Henkin and the late Moussia (Mary) Honigstock. She was educated in the First Harbin Commercial School (IXOKY) and when the family moved to Tianjin (Tientsin), in the Tientsin Grammar School (TGS) from which she graduated with distinction, having successfully passed the Cambridge University Senior School Certificate examinations. When the family moved to Shanghai, she received her secretarial training and worked in S. Iland's Travel Office until the outbreak of World War II when fleeing Jewish refugees from Europe started arriving in Shanghai. She volunteered her services to help look after the students of Mirer Yeshiva and married one of them, Rabbi Yehoshua Abba Busel, shortly after the end of the

war. Their first child, later to become Rabbi and Rosh Yeshiva, was born in Shanghai, and after the students of Mirer Yeshiva emigrated to the USA, they established their home in Brooklyn, New York, where their daughter Pessie was born. After the untimely death of her husband, she started working for the Yeshiva as an all-round administrator. She was witty, gentle, imbued with a great sense of humor, very intelligent and very religious. She spoke Yiddish, Russian, Mandarin, French and English, and was familiar with Hebrew. For her work and activities she was awarded a plaque designating her as A Woman of Valor. She leaves behind to grieve and to mourn, her children, 15 grandchildren, 33 great grandchildren, her brother and her niece and nephew with their families. She will always be in our hearts. May her soul rest in peace.



Torah Scrolls in the Tel Aviv Synagogue in memory of the Jewish communities in China.

From The Album of The Past



The Kadoorie School in Shanghai. 1942

IGUD YOTZEI SIN BULLETIN – English Supplement – ISSN 0793-8365

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"The aim of the Association is to organize the former residents from the Far East for the Purpose of mutual assistance and cooperation."
(from the by-laws of the Association)

In publishing the Bulletin the IYS IN Israel aims to meet the following needs:

1. To promote a sense of community among the former Jewish residents in China.
2. To maintain a channel of communication for the members of the above community
3. To assist in collecting, preserving and publishing historical materials dealing with the life of the above community.
4. To assist IYS in meeting its goals, particularly those dealing with social assistance and educational stipends to members of the above community living in Israel.