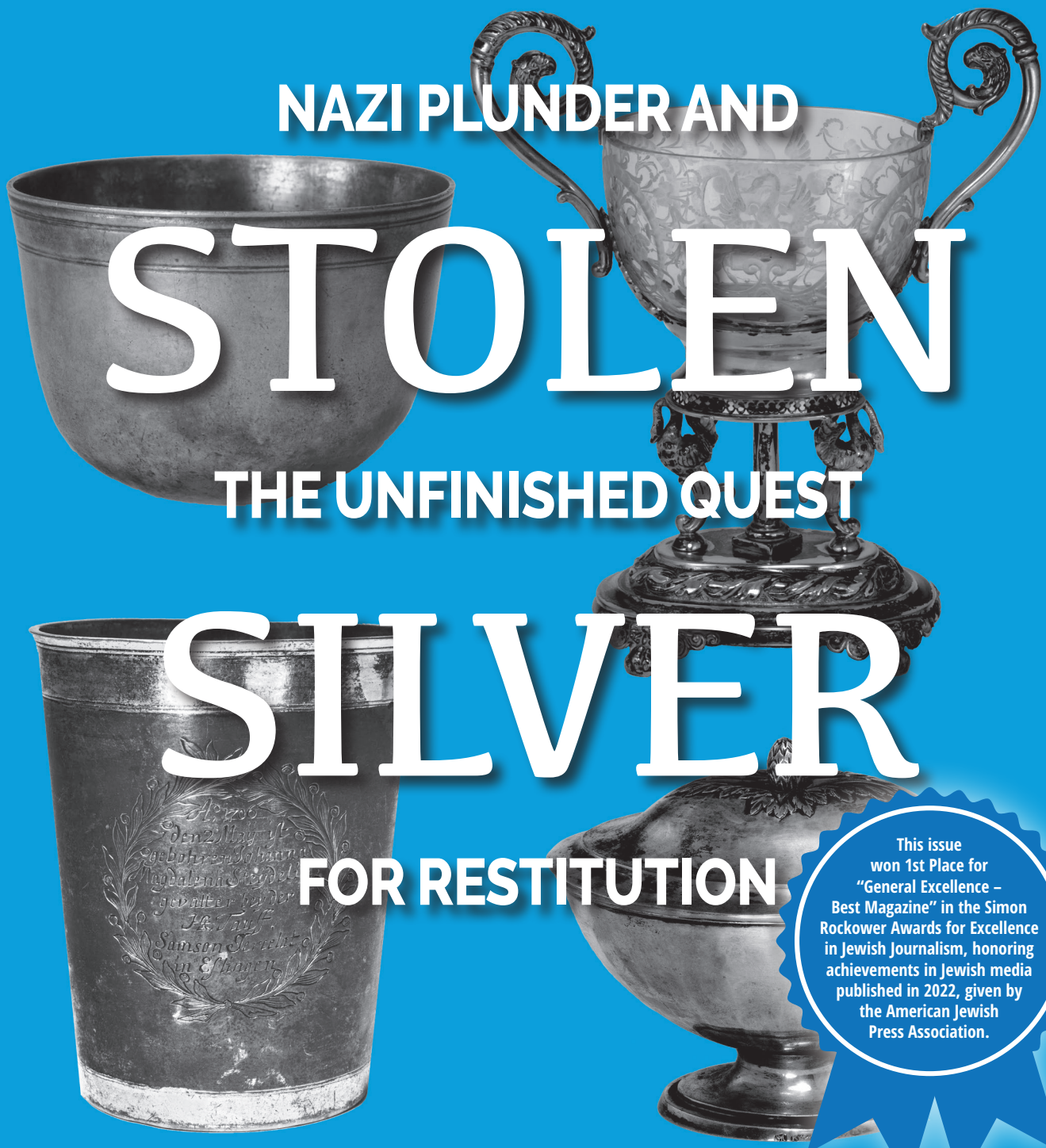
B'NAI B'RITH
MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1886

WINTER 2022

NAZI PLUNDER AND STOLEN SILVER

THE UNFINISHED QUEST FOR RESTITUTION



This issue won 1st Place for "General Excellence – Best Magazine" in the Simon Rockower Awards for Excellence in Jewish Journalism, honoring achievements in Jewish media published in 2022, given by the American Jewish Press Association.



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Editor's Note

Editing an annual magazine can be tricky. Stories must have a long shelf life and be of interest to readers long after publication. They must also not fall victim to "breaking news," events that transpire in the many months before publication that cannot wait to see the light of print (or cyberspace). Such was the case with our cover story "Stolen Silver," a remarkable saga of efforts by Holocaust survivors and their heirs, aided by a dedicated curator at the Bavarian National Museum in Munich, Germany, to ensure that objects Jewish families were forced to turn over to Nazi authorities in 1939 could somehow be "restituted," returned if not to their original owners, then to their descendants. Written and reported by Dina Gold, whose family's Berlin office building became the subject of her book "Stolen Legacy," as well as a 2019 article in this magazine, our cover story was something of a moving target. Mid-production, a silver cup that had once belonged to the great-aunt of two American cousins was, after a family meeting on zoom, presented to a Jewish museum in their ancestral hometown. Other stolen items are in the process of being restituted, Gold reports.

Elsewhere in the magazine, read about a California woman whose collection of some 350 menorahs is her metaphorical way of, as she puts it, "bringing light to the world." Jewish food—beyond bagels, brisket and blintzes—is the subject of another feature. Academy Award-winning deaf actress Marlee Matlin leads up an important article about the growing inclusion movement within all branches of Judaism. And, of course, what would Tel Aviv be without its world-famous Bauhaus architecture, a remarkable collection of buildings designed by German Jewish refugees from Nazism, including, prominently, three women architects.

—Eugene L. Meyer

From the Vault

Recalling Greece's Salonika Lodge 1912-1937

By Cheryl Kempler

The city of Salonika (today called Thessaloniki), a rich enclave of Jewish culture and tradition and home to nearly 80,000 Jews at the beginning of the 20th century, had been part of the Ottoman Empire for 500 years when it was annexed to Greece during the First Balkan War in 1912.

In that year, 43 community leaders established the Salonika Lodge of B'nai B'rith. Among them were future Greek parliamentarian and senator, Zionist David Matalon, the young Jewish activist Richard Juda and other prominent educators and linguists, clergy and businessmen.



Photo credit: Wikimedia.commons.org./Arie Darzie

The Nazis destroyed Salonika's original Jewish cemetery. This Holocaust memorial was erected at the reconstructed cemetery.

The lodge's primary objectives were to help the Jewish community acclimate to the city's new Hellenic culture and to improve the quality of primary and secondary Jewish public schools. This would be accomplished by the introduction of secular subjects like science and biology into the curriculum, as well as Greek and Hebrew. The lodge also awarded scholarships to young men who studied at universities and medical schools in Athens. By 1916, membership had increased to 150.

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10 Stolen Silver: Nazi Plunder and the Unfinished Quest for Restitution

In 1939, German Jews were forced to surrender their cherished silver objects to the Nazis. Many were purchased by Munich's Bavarian National Museum, which, in recent years, has been attempting to restore these pieces to their rightful owners. But the task has not been simple.

By Dina Gold

17 Including Jews with Disabilities: "Not a mitzvah project, but a human being"

People with hearing loss and others with disabilities have struggled for acceptance, both outside and inside the synagogue. Many forward-thinking advocates have forged paths of Jewish inclusion, including a compassionate rabbi who founded the first temple for those who use sign language. He coached his congregant, future Oscar-winning actress Marlee Matlin, for her bat mitzvah.

By Beryl Lieff Benderly

21 Tel Aviv: Building the Magnificent City

A close look at the origins of Tel Aviv's distinctive Bauhaus architecture, designed in the 1930s by German Jewish refugees from Nazism. Among them were three women architects, whose ideas were pivotal in the transformation of the city's private residences, apartments, educational institutions and hotels. Adding to the text, historic photos help to tell the story.

By Cheryl Kempler

25 Students Tackle Issue of Modern Anti-Semitism with 2022 None Shall Be Afraid Essay Contest

This year, B'nai B'rith International created the None Shall be Afraid essay contest. An initiative that invited students to answer the question, what can we do today to help confront the alarming rise in anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism in our society? Featured is our first place winner Adrian Weiss, who wrote on the importance of identifying anti-Semitism in order to combat it, and how it can manifest in countless forms.

27 A Massing of Menorahs: Bringing Light to the World

Meet Madelyn Katz, a retired Jewish educator who has been collecting menorahs for over 40 years. Fun and festive, some 350 of them are displayed in her small San Fernando Valley home, where she thinks of them as bringing "light to the world."

By Eugene L. Meyer

30 Jewish Food: More Than Bagels, Brisket and Blintzes

As the Jewish Diaspora encompassed more regions and countries, Jewish food traditions took on different flavors. Dispersed, Ashkenazi, Sephardic and Mizrachi Jews continued to use old recipes and developed new dishes. Beyond the well-known Ashkenazi foods of Eastern and Central Europe, lesser-known Jewish cuisines have generated enthusiasm and found wider acceptance.

By Jen Lovy

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Tooting Our Own Horn: Rockower Wins for 2021 issue of B'nai B'rith Magazine





You are reading the Award-Winning B'nai B'rith Magazine!

We won THREE American Jewish Press Association Rockower Awards for journalistic excellence for stories published in 2021. **See p. 9 for details.**

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Reflections in the Rear View Mirror

By Seth J. Riklin
B'nai B'rith International President



"May you live in interesting times" is a phrase that has long been ascribed as a Chinese curse, though, according to historians, there is no definitive record of its use in Chinese culture. It has more recently been attributed to Sir Joseph Austen Chamberlain, former secretary of state for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom, in a 1936 address referring to Germany. History has an interesting way of repeating itself, as we are now again facing a rise of nationalism on a worldwide scale.

Some politicians have rediscovered the value of using political division and fear to stoke their followers' anxiety and get them to the polls. The United States has long been a beacon of democracy, yet our own recent political landscape shines a light on the rise of calls for authoritarianism in countries across the globe. The unending quest for power and money is yet again the driver.

As hard as it is to believe, some politicians in the United States have actually aligned themselves with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the world's most powerful authoritarian, as he openly pursues the conquest of Ukraine. Putin's initial claim was that he wanted to "denazify" Ukraine, ignoring the fact that its president and many of its leaders are Jewish. The New York Times wrote about Putin's goal of retaking the port city of Odessa, a city with a centuries-old Jewish community that has also been the victim of some of the worst tsarist Russian pogroms.

The war has continued for many months and unleashed unprecedented and often indiscriminate destruction in Ukraine. However, most of the free world has been united in opposing Putin, and much needed support has been delivered to the people of Ukraine, including from B'nai B'rith International.

We can all be proud of the assistance provided by B'nai B'rith worldwide, with the help of our brothers and sisters in Poland, Germany, Italy, Romania and other European neighbors, who have felt motivated to help the Ukrainian people with aid.

Unfortunately, we are familiar with the other end of the spectrum, when 6 million Jews in Europe were killed by the Nazis while much of the world turned a blind eye. We are all our brothers' keepers and we have been mindful of people in distress, in Ukraine or anyplace else, given our own history. The Martin Niemöller speech, and its subsequent poetic treatment of 1946 in the aftermath of the Holocaust, is the chilling embodiment of the consequences of doing nothing in the face of evil: "First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me."

"We must never forget!" is more than a way to remember the Shoah: It's a call to arms to fight today's anti-Semitism in all virulent forms. With the politics of division evident in political races on every level, we must be unafraid to call out the purveyors of hate in all forms. Whether the haters are attacking Israel, Jews, people of color, members of the LBGTQ+ community or women, we cannot forget that when they come for any minority, they will come for all of us.

In the United States, these purveyors of hate live on both sides of the political spectrum and hide behind their freedom to speak their hate while cloaked in a flag of claimed constitutional protection. The Left typically attacks Israel, conflating Zionism and Judaism. The Right has been more direct, speaking in clear terms of anti-Semitism and utilizing worn tropes of world domination. Many have used new channels of social media, like Gab, to amplify their message of hate. Sadly, too many politicians are turning a blind eye to their fellow party members' attacks on minorities.

This is not just a U.S. problem but worldwide. We have watched recent elections in France, Great Britain and across Latin America in which the politics of division have been applied.

As members of B'nai B'rith, we must be united in our efforts to fight back against

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Then and now. Above: B'nai B'rith reached out to people worldwide during times of crisis, sending food and clothing to the displaced during World War II.
Left: Staff members have worked in refugee shelters and with members of the Polish lodges to provide food, medicine and surgical supplies after Russia invaded Ukraine this year.
Right: In Chicago, B'nai B'rith Vice Chairman Brad Adolph and volunteer Victoria Sushan, mother of Connect Chair Josh Sushan, spearheaded the collection and transport of 2,000 pounds of food and necessities to Ukrainian war victims.





this hate whenever its purveyors make themselves evident. In too many places around the world, people are living in fear of unscrupulous regimes. Together we can exert international pressure to stop the hate, and to pursue goals of common decency and love of our fellow humans.

The hate merchants often invoke anti-Semitic tropes, from both ends of the political spectrum. For many of them, Israel is a stand-in for the larger slander against all Jews. Yet our historic connection to Israel cannot be denied and must not be misused. Never again, whether in Ukraine or elsewhere, must killing and wanton, indiscriminate destruction become the norm. Through Holocaust education and by confronting ignorance, we can live our commitment as Jews to ensure that our children—and all children—and their children never again face a Nazi death machine or its 21st century equivalent.

Thank you for your continued support of B'nai B'rith International and of your local lodges. Forward together.

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Why Jewish Ukraine Matters

By Daniel S. Mariaschin
B'nai B'rith International Chief Executive Officer



My first connection to Ukraine, part of Czarist and Soviet Russia until gaining independence in 1991, came via my father, who told me that he had an uncle who lived in the historic city of Poltava. Over the years I asked him many questions about his shtetl boyhood—he came to America at the age of 13—but he never talked much about that uncle, what brought him there and when, whether he had a family or his livelihood. I was 25 when my father died, and I guess I will never find the answers.

My mother had a first cousin, Rachel, from Kharkov, in northeastern Ukraine. She corresponded with Rachel until the late 1940s, when Rachel wrote asking her to stop. It was too dangerous: The Cold War was on, and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin was beginning a massive campaign of anti-Semitism. It was too risky to receive mail from the United States.

Fast forward to February 2022, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the utter devastation that affects that country. Daily reporting from cities large and small showing videos of destroyed apartment blocks and industrial enterprises, infrastructure and even farmland, together with millions of refugees and internally displaced Ukrainians, has kept us riveted for months. As I write this, the war is ongoing with an uncertain outcome, but the destruction, much of it indiscriminate, continues.



B'nai B'rith CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin in Kyiv in 2018, with the statue dedicated in 1997 to the beloved humorist, playwright and author, Ukrainian-born Sholom Aleichem (Solomon Naumovich Rabinovich, 1859-1916), whose stories inspired the musical "Fiddler on the Roof."

Historians document the earliest Ukrainian Jewish communities from 1,000 years ago. The history of the Jewish people is indelibly marked by its centuries-long presence there. It's a story of great achievements in religious life, industry and commerce, culture and in many other fields, for the benefit of modern civilization.

The number of important Jewish Ukrainians is a Who's Who of its own. The list is pages long. It includes Israel's second president Yitzhak Ben Zvi; former Israeli prime ministers Golda Meir and Levi Eshkol; Israeli activist and leader Natan Sharansky; rabbis The Baal Shem Tov and Menachem Mendel Schneerson, Rebbe of the Chabad movement; Yiddish authors Sholom Aleichem and Sholom Abramovitz; poet Chaim Nachman Bialik; Zionist leader Vladimir Jabotinsky; violin virtuosos Mischa Elman, Nathan Milstein, David Oistrakh and Isaac Stern; pianist Vladimir Horowitz; Cantor Yossele Rosenblatt; writers Vasily Grossman and Isaac Babel; electrochemist Veniamin Levich; Nobel prize-winning biochemist Selman Waksman; stage designer Boris Aronson; actor Jacob Adler; founder of the Yiddish theater, Avram Goldfaden; director Otto Preminger; actress Mila Kunis; and 24 world-class chess players.

Throughout, anti-Semitism has been a part of Ukrainian Jewish history. Seventeenth century pogroms (1648-1649) led by the Cossack chieftain Bogdan Chmielnicki murdered as many as 100,000 Jews and destroyed hundreds of communities.

In the wake of the Russian Revolution, a short-lived Ukrainian state headed by Symon Petliura saw another wave of pogroms (1918-1921) killing up to 100,000 Jews. Petliura was assassinated in exile by the Russian-Jewish poet Samuel Schwartzbard, who is said to have lost 15 family members in the pogroms.

On the eve of World War II, the Jewish population of Ukraine, one of then 15



Erected on the 50th anniversary of the Babyn Yar massacre in 1991, this monument by sculptors Akim and Alexandr Levich at the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center was damaged by Russian bombs on March 1, 2022.



Dedicated years before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, this 1976 memorial honoring the Soviet citizens and POWs killed by the Nazis is also at the site.

Soviet republics, was counted as over 1.5 million, of which some 500,000 were Holocaust victims, following the German invasion in 1941. In Kyiv alone, Jews numbered nearly 250,000. At a ravine at Babyn Yar (also called Babi Yar) on the outskirts of Kyiv, in September 1941, 33,771 Jews were shot by the Nazis and their Ukrainian collaborators in a two-day massacre. In recent years, led by the indefatigable efforts of the French priest Father Patrick Desbois, many mass graves of Jewish victims have been identified and marked.

A 1959 Soviet census recorded more than 800,000 Jews living in Ukraine.

Which brings us to the present. Since the late 1980s, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian Jews have immigrated to Israel, the United States and other destinations. But the remaining community, estimated between 200,000 and 400,000 before the Russian invasion, has been highly organized. Jews still live in many of the iconic cities of our past, including Odessa, Kharkiv (Kharkov), Chernivtsi (Czernowitz), Lviv (Lvov), Mariupol, Zhytomyr (Zhitomir) and Vinnitsa.

International Jewish organizations have been active in Ukraine, including the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the Claims Conference, which have assisted poor members of the Jewish community, including the aged, among them thousands of Holocaust survivors.

Jewish religious life has enjoyed a renaissance, and Jews have played prominent roles in leading the nation. President Volodymyr Zelensky is the best known, but other Jews have occupied the posts of prime minister, cabinet officers and advisors to senior political leaders.

Since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine has led an independent existence and early on established diplo-

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Recalling Greece's Salonika Lodge 1912-1937



Seal of the B'nai B'rith Salonika Lodge.



In 1931, the Salonika Lodge opened a kindergarten, built with funds supplied by the American B'nai B'rith. Lodge President Leon Recanati is at the podium for the dedication. Four years later, he would establish the Palestine Discount Bank (now the Israel Discount Bank) in pre-state Israel.

The cataclysmic events of World War I impeded the Salonika Lodge's goals, particularly after August 1917, when a devastating fire swept through the city's Jewish section. The water source that would have extinguished the blaze had been diverted to a nearby military base, resulting in the loss of about 50,000 homes. Those unable to emigrate suffered in overcrowded dwellings, creating a situation worsened by thousands of war refugees and soldiers encamped in and near the city. Inadequate sanitation and malnutrition fomented the rampant spread of tuberculosis.

With financial assistance from the American B'nai B'rith and the Joint Distribution Committee, lodge members provided aid, including medical care for fire victims, while implementing Hebrew, French and Greek school classes. The lodge also funded an academy attended by poor Jewish and Greek Orthodox pupils and operated a music high school for Jewish boys and girls.

Members organized programs on topics ranging from the development of Jewish traditions to an analysis of books and plays by Israel Zangwill. A symposium explored "The Jewish Spirit and the Greek Spirit." In addition to supporting a Greek Jewish newspaper, The Independent, the Salonika Lodge published an anthology devoted to the works of important Greek-Jewish poet Joseph Eliyia.

During the worldwide depression in the 1930s, Salonika experienced widespread poverty. Few of the lodge's 136 members were able to continue their charitable efforts. Nevertheless, those who could afford it supported education, including the funding of private tutoring and scholarships, the improvement of the school curriculum intended to facilitate assimilation into Greek society and the forging of interfaith relationships with the city's non-Jewish residents. From the late 1920s, the Salonika women's lodge "Benoth Israel" operated workshops in embroidery, sewing and dressmaking, enabling hundreds of girls to become professional seamstresses and designers.

In October 1937, the Athens and Salonika Lodges sent word that all B'nai B'rith communication cease, perhaps out of concern for the members' safety in the face of growing fascist elements: Germany occupied Greece in 1941. The memoirs of attorney Yomtov Yakoel, the Salonika Lodge president who attempted to save lives while acting as the liaison between the city's Jews and the Nazis, provide the basis of historical information about this time. As the names inscribed on the monument to the Shoah in Paris reveal, almost all of those who belonged to the Salonika Lodge were murdered during the Holocaust.

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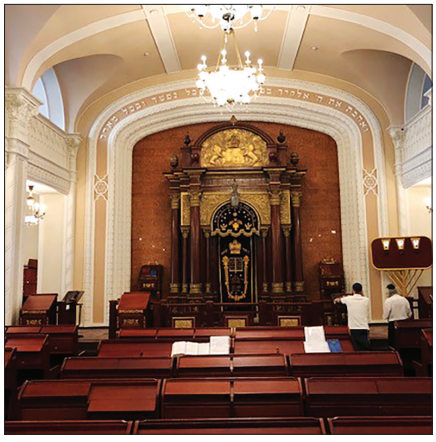
Why Jewish Ukraine Matters

matic relations with Israel. For years, airlines in each country have flown popular routes. American Jewish organizations have met with senior Ukrainian political figures and often sponsored leadership missions to Kyiv and other cities.

Three B'nai B'rith lodges have been established over the years: one by the late B'nai B'rith Europe leader Joseph Domberger, a Munich resident who re-established the lodge in Lviv in memory of his father, (a member in Lvov, then part of Poland), and others in Kyiv and Chernivtsi. All three lodges played a role in our efforts to assist refugees in recent months.

On behalf of B'nai B'rith, I've visited Kyiv, most recently four years ago, as a guest of a Jewish organization devoted to remembrance and to advancing Ukrainian-Jewish relations, and as part of a Kyiv think tank. We met with government officials and visited Babyn Yar.

As of this writing, there have been a few reports of recent wartime damage to Jewish religious and communal buildings. Most, along with the many cemeteries in Ukraine, seem to have survived the shelling and rocket attacks. That said, the numbers of Jewish refugees and internally displaced persons have been estimated in the tens of thousands. Many have left for Israel, joining more than 1 million Jews from the former Soviet Union who emigrated in the past three-plus decades. During lulls in the fighting, reports have spread that some who left are returning to their homes (if still standing), hoping for a turnaround and stability.



The interior of Kyiv's Brodsky Choral Synagogue, built by sugar magnate and philanthropist Lazar Brodsky in 1897. Shut by the Soviets in 1926, it was damaged by the Nazis and functioned as a puppet theater during the Cold War era. Restored as a house of worship in 2000, the synagogue maintains an active Chabad congregation today.

Whatever the outcome, living in the age of the internet, satellite TV and real-time battlefield coverage makes us wince twice; over the destruction and loss of life suffered by Ukraine and its people, and over the uncertainty of Jewish communal life in places that are very much a part of our historical DNA.

The great Sholom Aleichem wrote of shtetl life in Ukraine, where he grew up and lived. He wrote with grace, and with humor, but running through his Tevye stories and so much else was the daily precariousness of Jewish life. As we wait and watch Ukraine, we pray for a better day for all at the end of this storm.

Tooting Our Own Horn: Rockower Wins for 2021 issue of B'nai B'rith Magazine





You are reading the Award-Winning B'nai B'rith Magazine! We won THREE American Jewish Press Association Rockower Awards for journalistic excellence for stories published in 2021. These wins are just the latest in a long line of professional recognition for the unique, well-reported stories you expect from us.

We earned a First Place Award for Excellence in Writing About Food and Wine for our story "In Search of Kreplach: More Than Just Jewish Ravioli" by Kenneth D. Ackerman and Alice Chezar. The Judges noted: "This wonderfully written piece has it all: Jewish history and tradition, a broader sense of the place of comfort foods in all cuisines, and a personal adventure: the arduous task of fine tuning the recipe and mastering the techniques of making kreplach. All told with humor and tremendous warmth."

Our story "Israel's Golden Age of TV" by Dina Kraft was doubly recognized, winning a 2nd place Award for Excellence in Feature Writing AND a 2nd place Award for Excellence in News and Features — Reporting.

When you finish this Winter 2022 issue of B'nai B'rith Magazine, take a few minutes to go back to read these award-winners as well as the rest of the can't-put-it-down B'nai B'rith Magazine Winter 2021 issue: https://bit.ly/3B0Y2YX

This story won 1st Place in the category "The Boris Smolar Award for Excellence in Enterprise or Investigative Reporting" for the Simon Rockower Awards for Excellence in Jewish Journalism, honoring achievements in Jewish media published in 2022, given by the American Jewish Press Association



STOLEN SILVER

By Dina Gold

In early January 2020, Naomi Karp from Washington, D.C., was vacationing in Mexico City when she opened her laptop over breakfast one morning to find "this crazy email from a curator in Germany." Matthias Weniger of the Bavarian National Museum in Munich had written:

"We have in our museum a silver cup that Hermine Bernheimer had to hand in to the German authorities in 1939 as part of the anti-Jewish persecution. We would dearly like to return this and other similar objects to the family."

Naomi forwarded Weniger's email to her cousin, Ellen Kandell, in Silver Spring, Maryland, who was equally astonished. "I felt a sudden, deep connection to my mother's experience as a Holocaust refugee," she says.

Naomi and Ellen are the granddaughters of Eugen Bernheimer, a once successful liqueur manufacturer and wholesaler in Göppingen, Baden-Württemberg, in southern Germany. Hermine was his sister.

In 1920 Hermine had left her hometown of Göppingen to live with her widowed older sister, Rosa, in Munich. In the late 1930s, Eugen (after release from incarceration in Dachau), his wife and one daughter immigrated to New York. Two older daughters had preceded them. Rosa and Hermine were always referred to in the family as "the sisters left behind." Only Rosa would survive the war.

But what was a Munich museum curator doing with a cup once owned by their grandfather's sister—their great aunt, a tragic victim of the Holocaust? And why had it taken over 80 years since she had been forced to relinquish it for anyone to offer to return it to the family? It would take two and a half years more for the process to conclude.

As it turns out, Hermine's cup was not the only item Weniger was trying to give back. He was attempting to trace the heirs to no less than 112 silver items, tucked away in a cupboard in the Bavarian National Museum, which had been taken away from their previous owners during the Third Reich.

Much has been written about valuable artworks the Nazis infamously stole from Jews across Europe, which today attract worldwide press attention when offered for sale. Pieces such as Gustav Klimt's "Woman in Gold" ($135 million), Vincent van Gogh's "Meules de Blé" ($35.8 million), and Camille Pissarro's "Gelée Blanche, Jeune Paysanne Faisant du Feu" ($17.3 million).

None of the silver objects held by the Bavarian National Museum will ever make the front pages or attract the attention of the big auction houses. But the history of how these objects came to be in the museum's possession is heartbreaking. No price can be put on their emotional value for the heirs of their former owners. Most tragically, in some cases, these small silver objects are the only link to a person or family whose existence was erased.

Spanning Countries and Continents

In Bilbao, Spain, Jorge Feuchtwanger thought he might be the target of a fraudster when, in early September 2020, he received an email in Spanish from Weniger, asking if he was a descendant of Jirko Feuchtwanger and inform-

NAZI PLUNDER AND THE UNFINISHED QUEST FOR RESTITUTION





ing him the museum was attempting to return items to his relatives. After checking out Weniger's bona fides, he replied that Jirko was his father. Documents showed the museum held a silver item once owned by Jorge's great-great-grandmother. Weniger told Jorge that his great-great-grandmother Therese (who was murdered in Theresienstadt in December 1942) had been forced to relinquish a silver dish.

David Haas, in New Jersey, was contacted in December 2019 and advised that the museum held a glass bowl in a silver mount once owned by his paternal grandparents Alfred and Elsa. They had managed to escape Munich in late 1938, gone to Britain, and arrived in New York a little over a year later.

In Rehovot, Israel, David Birnbaum was surprised and "greatly moved" to learn that a silver cup, a bowl and salt cellar belonging to his grandmother (Fanny Feust) and great-grandmother (Friederike Feust) had survived. Fanny's husband, Karl Feust, had been killed in Dachau in November 1938, but she had managed to reach London with her mother-in-law Friederike, Fanny's two sons and one daughter, Hanna, David's mother.

Following the November 1938 Kristallnacht pogrom (also known as the November Pogroms), Jewish homes, institutions and synagogues were haphazardly robbed of their precious metal objects. In February, 1939, the Reich issued the third decree of the "Ordinance on the Registration of Jewish Property," known as the Leihhausaktion (Pawn Shop Action). All Jews throughout the Reich (Germany and Austria) were ordered to take their jewelry, gold, silver and other precious metals to their local pawnshops where, to maintain a veneer of legality, the broker calculated a sum to be paid according to the weight of the object, regardless of its sentimental, religious or aesthetic value.

In Munich alone, more than 2,300 Jewish owners parted with 10 tons of precious metals—including many objects from daily life such as bowls and cutlery but often items connected to family religious observances such as silver candlesticks, Kiddush cups and salt and spice boxes.

Pawnbrokers kept detailed records: names and addresses of the previous owner, and a short description of each item.

Museums, as well as individuals, silversmiths and dealers were permitted to purchase objects for their collections; The Bavarian National Museum bought 322 pieces of silverware. The most valuable objects were sent to Berlin, and some of these were later publicly auctioned. Of the rest, vast quantities were smelted down and used in the war effort.

After the war, Rosa wrote to her brother Eugen in New York, informing him that she and Hermine had been deported from Munich to Theresienstadt on June 23, 1942, and that Hermine had perished there on Oct. 7, 1943, aged 73. But she never mentioned that the sisters had handed over their silverware.

Many survivors, or their heirs, lodged claims during the postwar years for the return of their stolen assets. Between 1951 and 1969 the Bavarian National Museum returned 210 silver objects to 88 families. As for the remaining 112 items, even though almost all their previous owners' identities were known (thanks to the meticulous record-keeping of the pawn shop), they went into storage and were almost forgotten.



Photo credit: en.wikipedia.org/Avda

Munich's Bavarian National Museum is known for its decorative arts collections, among the largest and most important in Europe. Before the onset of World War II, curators acquired 322 silver Judaica and table top items, which the Nazis forcibly procured from Jewish owners.

In 2019 the museum published a lavish catalogue containing detailed descriptions and photos alongside an exhibition entitled "Silver for the Reich. Jewish-owned silver objects at the Bavarian National Museum."

The museum uploaded onto the internet photos and documents relating to the 112 objects hoping families researching their ancestors might chance upon this information and get in touch, but only a tiny number did.

Weniger, who is head of provenance research at the museum, obtained funding from the German Lost Art Foundation (about $100,000) and the Bavarian State Ministry for Science and Art (about $50,000) to trace descendants of former owners. Using various online and other sources, he identified about 65 families (some 61 from Munich and four from other parts of Bavaria) with a rightful claim to the 112 objects and established contact with most of them.

As of July 2022, nine families had received their restituted objects.

Eighteen families have promises of restitution from the lawyer at the Bavarian State Ministry for Science and Art, (of which 13 cases were released already before reporting on this story intervened, including Haas and Birnbaum; but Karp—Hermine's cup—and Jorge Feuchtwanger's dish were more recently approved).

"For many," Weniger explained on a Zoom call from Munich, "the object itself is less important than the discovery of new family members."

Due to Nazi persecution, people scattered across the world and often lost contact. "When I started, I didn't think so many heirs would be found," Weniger says.

The process of restitution, however, has dragged on. After their initial excitement, many families have been profoundly disappointed at the pace. Heirs must provide documents—ideally wills, and marriage, birth and death certificates. Weniger says the museum is lenient on what documents must be submitted but is scrupulous in identifying all the potential heirs—in some cases, up to 30. All must agree on what should be done with the object and identify one family representative to sign authorization letters.

Logjam at the Ministry

Weniger collates the paperwork and then passes it to the museum's lawyer, who checks it and forwards it to yet another lawyer at the Bavarian State Ministry of Science and the Arts before an item can be released. In some instances, people have had to wait well over a year for approvals.

Jorge Feuchtwanger's file was sent to the Ministry lawyer in October 2020, and the legal release did not come until late March 2022. "We started this process when my father was alive," he said. "He died in March 2021, and I'm sure it would have meant something to him."

Since Naomi Karp received that first email from Munich, she has employed the same internet search tools as Weniger and, to her delight, discovered 15 extended family members in Australia and two in the United States. But her joy was tempered by her frustration with the Ministry, which received her file in April 2021.

"My two aunts are no longer alive, and it would have meant so much to them," she said. "My mother has advanced dementia and knows nothing about this. It didn't have to be this way. It is a small piece of justice that could have been provided to them."



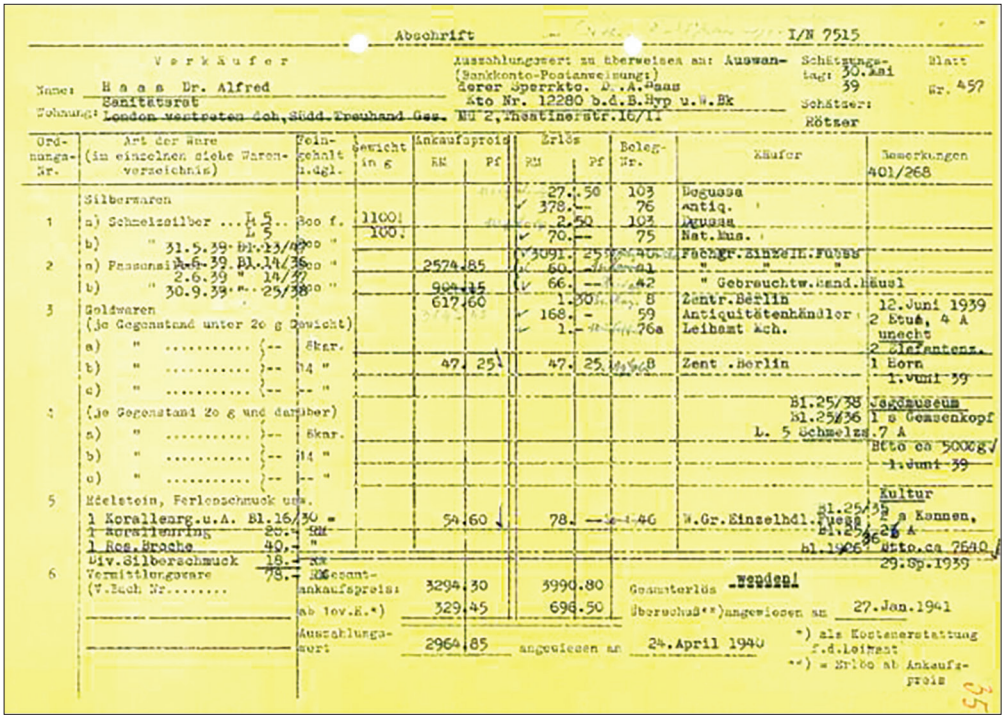
Photo credit: Courtesy David Haas

David Haas' grandfather, physician Alfred Haas, escaped from Germany to England in 1938. One year later, he and his wife, Elsa, settled in New York.



Photo credit: Bayerisches Nationalmuseum/Bastian Krack

Among their possessions was a small 19th century centerpiece, possibly one of a pair, which may have decorated a luncheon or dinner table. Swan motifs dominate both the glass bowl and the silver mount.



Abschrift

I/N 7515

Verkäufer

Name: Haas Dr. Alfred
Sanitätsrat
Wohnung: London vertreten durch Südd. Treuhand Ges.

Auszahlungswert zu überweisen an: Auswanderer Sperrkto. d. A. Haas Kto Nr. 12280 b.d.B.Hyp u.W.Bk

Schätzungstag: 30.Mai 39
Schätzer: Rötzer

Blatt Nr. 457

Ordnungs-Nr.	Art der Ware (in einzelnen siehe Warenverzeichnis)	Feingehalt i.dgl.	Gewicht in g	Ankaufspreis RM	Pf	Erlös RM	Pf	Beleg-Nr.	Käufer	Bemerkungen 401/268
	Silberwaren					27.50		103	Degussa	
1	a) Schmelzsilber ... L 5 L 5	800 f.	1100			378.--		76	antiq.	
	b) " 31.5.39 Bl.13/39	800 "	100			2.50		103	Degussa	
						70.--		75	Nat.hus.	
2	a) Passau 2.6.39 " 14/39	800 "		2574.85		3091.25		42	Fachgr.Einkeln.Fulda	
	b) " 30.9.39 " 25/39	800 "		904.15		60.--		41	" " "	
						66.--		42	" Gebrauchtw.Hand.Häusl	
3	Goldwaren			617.60		1.50		8	Zentr.Berlin	12.Juni 1939
	(je Gegenstand unter 20 g Gewicht)					168.-		59	Antiquitätenhändler	2 Stück, 4 A
	a) "	8kar.				1.-		76a	Leihamt Kch.	unecht
	b) "	14 "		47.25		47.25		8	Zent .Berlin	2 Elfenbeinz.
	c) "	-- "								1 Horn
										1.Juni 39
4	(je Gegenstand 20 g und darüber)								Bl.25/38	Judaeum
	a) "	8kar.							Bl.25/36	1 g Gemsenkopf
	b) "	14 "							L. 5 Schmelzs.	7 A
	c) "	-- "								Brto ca 5000g
										1.Juni 39
5	Edelstein, Perlenschmuck usw.									Kultur
	1 Korallearg.u.A. Bl.16/30 =			54.60		78.--		46	W.Gr.Einzelhdl.	2 g Kannen,
	1 Korallenring 20.-								Bl.25/36	2 A
	1 Res.Brosche 40.-								Bl.1906	Brto.ca 7640
	Div.Silberschmuck 18.-									29.Sp.1939
6	Vermittlungsware 78.-									
	(V.Buch Nr.....									



Photo credit: courtesy of Naomi Karp



Photo credit: Katharina Sophia Hardt

Years before she and her sister were imprisoned in Theresienstadt in 1942, the great aunt of Naomi Karp and Ellen Kandell, Hermine Bernheimer, surrendered an 18th century partially gilded engraved silver beaker to the Nazis. It was accessioned by The Bavarian National Museum in 1940. Hermine was murdered in October 1943. Through the efforts of Curator and Head of Provenance Research Matthias Weniger, ownership was restored to Karp and Kandell, who donated it to the Göppingen Jewish Museum. Family members around the world witnessed the online presentation ceremony on July 25, when Weniger (right) presented Hermine's beaker to Dominik Gerd Sieber, head of the museums and archives of Göppingen. In her remarks, Karp thanked B'nai B'rith Magazine and writer Dina Gold for assisting in the transfer.

Why does it take so long? Bureaucratic hurdles, it seems, and funding.

B'nai B'rith approached the Bavarian State Ministry for Science and Art to interview the minister and lawyer responsible. The Ministry responded by email on March 4, 2022, that "we strive to accelerate the procedure of restitution as much as possible without falling short of the high diligence standard required by the legal framework." The unit was dealing "with an unusually high number of restitution cases," but "we currently are aiming at positively closing as many cases as possible in a very timely manner."

Another email response on March 18 cited the need to confirm that "the prerequisites for a restitution are met," and "the beneficiaries of the restitution (respectively the signatories of the restitution agreement) are indeed to be considered as the legal successors of the former owners."

By the end of March, approval was given for restitution of several pending files on the lawyer's desk, including the Karp and Feuchtwanger cases.

Although funding has been provided for research, none had been provided to complete the task of physically returning objects.

As long ago as April 2020, David Haas received approval from the Ministry for the restitution of his grandparents' glass and silver bowl. But it was still sitting in Munich as of August 2022. "The Nazis stole it, and you'd think the German government should take full responsibility to return it," he says. What perplexes him is that "they went to the bother of funding the determination of ownership, so why not finish it by completing the task?"

The Bavarian Ministry, having partly funded Weniger's research, said the museum was "in charge of putting into effect the single restitutions."

In early March, B'nai B'rith requested an interview with Frank Matthias Kammel, general director of the Bavarian National Museum.

On March 21, Kammel responded by email that funding remains an issue. He stressed that it would be "irresponsible" to use regular mail "simply because these objects are not our property." It was essential that "the best possible care" be used and that these objects needed to be shipped "like every work of art in our possession." He ended with assurances that he was "convinced that we will very soon have found suitable solutions."



Photo credit: courtesy of David Birnbaum

This footed drinking cup was crafted in 1743 by Christian Franck in Augsburg, known for the production of silver, including Judaica. It is one of three Munich Museum pieces that belonged to David Birnbaum's grandmother, Fanny Feust, and great grandmother, Friederike Feust, (seated, right). Although both escaped to England, Fanny was killed in London by German bombs in 1940.

The German Lost Art Foundation, which helped fund the research, operates the Lost Art Database of cultural property seized between 1933-1945 and provides advice, mediation and support to institutions and individuals relating to looted works. In April, the foundation told Weniger that some of the money allocated to him for research could now be used for the physical restitution of objects.

For Birnbaum in Rehovot, when he comes to finally hold his grandmother's and great-grandmother's silverware, it will feel as if history "has come full circle." He says it will be like "a hello across the chasm of time."

All of Hermine Bernheimer's inheritors met on Zoom and together decided to donate the cup, whenever it was restituted, to the small Jewish Museum in Göppingen where, sadly, no Jewish community currently exists. The museum, which opened in 1992, was keen to accept it. "I would like to make a family trip and see the cup appropriately displayed alongside its history" says Ellen Kandell.

Intriguingly, far from being connected to Jewish religious observance, Hermine's silver-marked cup bears an inscription denoting that it was made for the occasion of the baptism of Johanna Magdalena Steydelin, born on May 2, 1706, and donated by her godfather, Samson Tercelat. How, and why, it came into her possession will likely forever remain a mystery.

Finally, on July 25, Weniger presented Hermine's cup to Dominik Gerd Sieber, Göppingen city archivist and head of the Jewish Museum. Family members watched on Zoom, from the United States, Australia and Germany.



Photo credit: courtesy of Jorge Feuchtwanger

Above: German dignitaries were in attendance during a ceremony on May 13, 2022, when Weniger restored the bowl to Feuchtwanger (left) and his family. The event (in German) can be viewed at: bit.ly/3DdRd6q
Right: Therese Lippmann, killed in Theresienstadt in 1942, owned a footed bowl and lid with a pineapple-shaped knob from Nürnberg, another important silver city, dating from the late 18th century. In September 2020, Weniger contacted Lippmann's great-great-grandson, Jorge Feuchtwanger, about the bowl and other pieces in the museum collection.

Sieber said the donation will become part of the museum's permanent exhibit alongside an explanation of its history.

Naomi Karp thanked B'nai B'rith Magazine for hastening the return of Hermine's cup and recognizing the importance of its restitution. Adding "this little cup, its history mostly unknown, could keep the legacy of Göppingen's Jews alive." She also praised Weniger's "tremendous dedication to undoing the wrongs of the past."



Photo credit: © State Archive, Munich

For Weniger, the mission to return these silver items to the families has become personal. "It's very late, but better to do this now than never," he says. "It's been satisfying for me to do something to heal some wounds after such a long time."



Including Jews with Disabilities: "Not a mitzvah project, but a human being"

By Beryl Lieff Benderly

A leading role in CODA, winner of this year's Academy Award for Best Picture, plus a personal Oscar for best actress for the 1986 film "Children of a Lesser God" make Marlee Matlin perhaps the nation's best known Jewish person with a disability. Her Jewish background, she has said, played a foundational role in her success in a profession that many people might consider an unlikely goal for a girl who lost her hearing at the age of 18 months. Beyond that, her recent prominence reflects a growing change—and continuing challenge—in the Jewish community.

Matlin's hearing parents joined an extraordinary Jewish congregation, Bene Shalom of Skokie, Illinois, where for decades deaf and hearing people have worshipped together through sign language and speech. It was revolutionary then for a group of deaf families and a recent rabbinical graduate, Douglas Goldhamer, to found a synagogue that defied not only long-standing customs and stereotypes, but a Talmudic proscription.

For the next 50 years, until his death in February, Rabbi Goldhamer helped open possibilities for countless deaf and hearing persons, and established a model of inclusive Judaism that defied stereotypes and practices long ingrained in Jewish tradition and American culture. He was one of the leaders who, over recent decades, pioneered changes in how the Jewish community treats the 1 in 5 of its members—an estimate based on the typical rate in the United States, according to the Census Bureau—who have a disability.

"There have been some amazing strides," says Rabbi Julia Watts Belser, associate professor of Jewish Studies and core faculty in the Disability Studies Program at Georgetown University, who herself uses a wheelchair. In addition to practical efforts at inclusion, "we're seeing an increasing number of people teaching [and] working to develop more inclusive readings of Jewish texts." But, she adds, "It's also really important to continues thinking about understanding some of the ways in which exclusion or marginalization continues to happen."

Ending exclusion

Leviticus 19:14 enjoins us not to "curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind." But the deaf—one of three categories of people the Talmud exempts from the obligation to observe the mitzvot—were essentially excluded from Jewish worship, recalls Rabbi Shari Chen, professor of Hebrew language and executive director at Hebrew Seminary, the rabbinical school Goldhamer founded to train deaf and hearing rabbis to serve a wide range of Jewish communities.



Photo credit: courtesy Bene Shalom, Skokie, Ill.

For half a century, pioneer of inclusion and champion of the deaf Jewish community, Rabbi Douglas Goldhamer, (1945-2022), led the hearing-impaired congregation at Bene Shalom, a synagogue which he founded in Skokie, Ill. He also established a rabbinical seminary to train clergy to lead hearing-impaired worshippers.



Photo credit: commons.wikipedia.org/State Farm

Oscar-winning actress Marlee Matlin, who has been deaf almost all her life, attended Congregation Bene Shalom with her parents and studied for her bat mitzvah with Rabbi Goldhamer. In a Chicago Sun-Times interview published this year, she remembered that he helped her learn "about my religious history, but more than that, really connecting [me] to my faith. Understanding that it was a very real part of who I am, beyond the Friday-night shabbat dinners and Hanukkah candles and presents."

"Because the deaf could not communicate" with the hearing in an ordinary way, they, along with those below the age of majority and those perceived as lacking mental acuity, had traditionally been "not welcome in temple," she says. She recalls a deaf Jewish family who, knowing they would not be welcome inside to worship, parked their car outside a Chicago synagogue on the High Holidays to be near the community at prayer.

In the early 1970s, Goldhamer, then a rabbinic student at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, first began visiting a group of Chicago Jewish families with deaf members and learning sign language. "I fell in love with the deaf community and fell out of love with the laws treating the deaf miserably," he told The Forward in 2021. After his ordination, Chen says, Goldhamer was told he couldn't serve the deaf, who in any case had no money to pay a rabbi. Undeterred, he went to live with families to cut expenses, meanwhile improving his sign language. In 1972, the group founded its own synagogue, choosing Bene Shalom as a spelling clearer to deaf people than the more traditional B'nai. All events and activities in both speech and sign were open to both deaf and hearing, and hearing people also began to join.

Matlin found in Bene Shalom "a community to belong to," she told The Forward in 2015. (She declined to be interviewed for this story). She attended services, met other deaf and hearing Jews, learned about her religion and celebrated her bat mitzvah like other young members. Achieving that always-challenging milestone, she said, "gave me the drive, it gave me the foundation to believe in myself, despite what other people say."

Having worked "frenetically" with Goldhamer to prepare, she told JewishBoston in 2017, she spoke Hebrew aloud and delivered the English in sign language interpreted orally for non-signers. Catching sight of her family's tears of joy and pride brought tears to her own eyes, but she saw that "my tears stained the Torah, and I was mortified." Goldhamer, though, noted that tears of both joy and sorrow fill Jewish history. "Many times, it was only the stain of tears that allowed us to

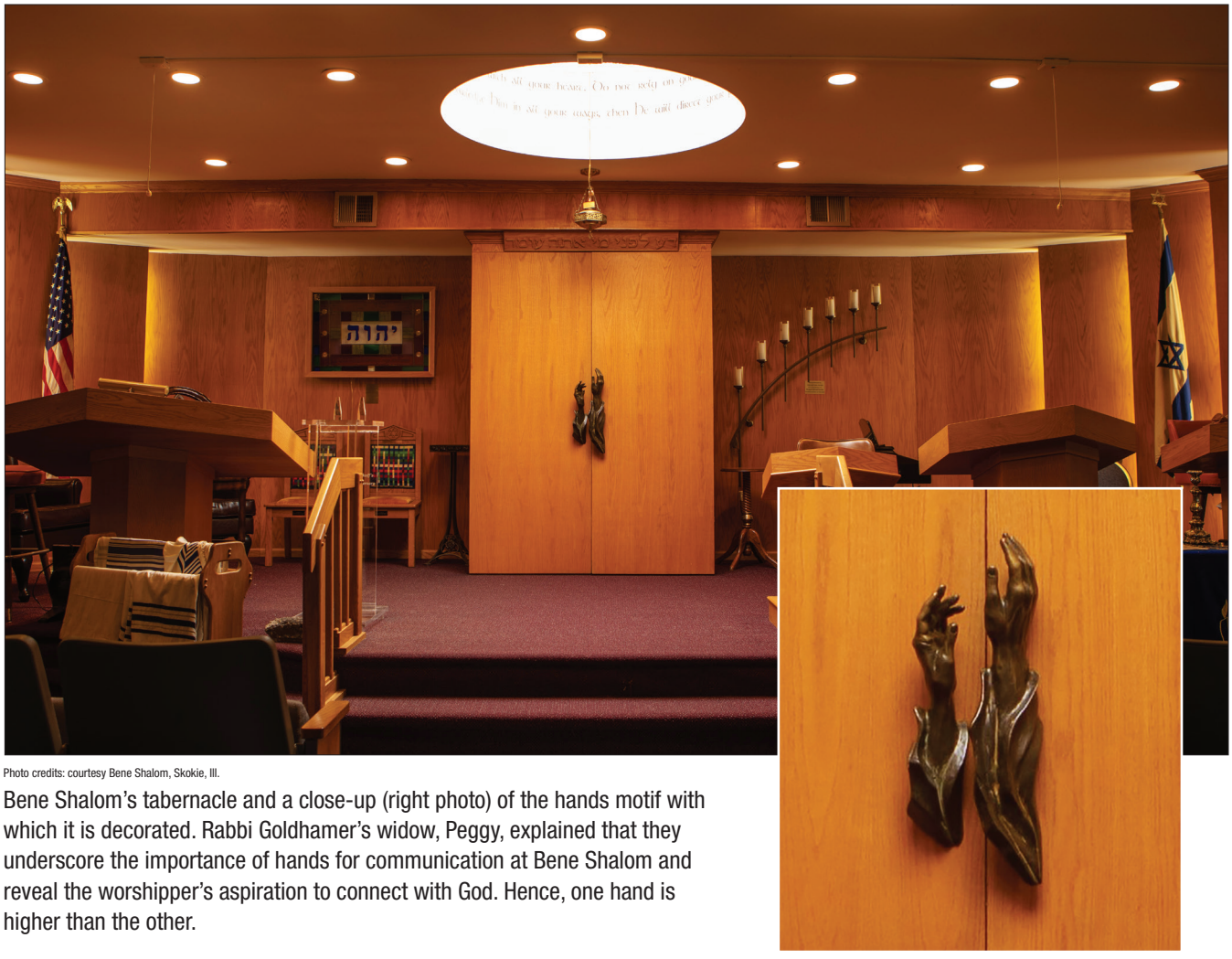


Photo credits: courtesy Bene Shalom, Skokie, Ill.

Bene Shalom's tabernacle and a close-up (right photo) of the hands motif with which it is decorated. Rabbi Goldhamer's widow, Peggy, explained that they underscore the importance of hands for communication at Bene Shalom and reveal the worshipper's aspiration to connect with God. Hence, one hand is higher than the other.

remember and to never forget and to continue," he said, as reported in The Forward. Matlin's "tears of joy," thus, "represent [her] and [her] parents' dreams—accomplishments and achievements of a young girl who happens to be deaf [and] are a wonderful message of inclusion and voice."

Growing change

Despite a long history of discriminatory attitudes, policies and laws focusing on persons with a variety of disabilities, the United States began to change in the last three decades of the 20th century. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 laid the initial legal groundwork for much broader inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life, and elements across the Jewish community also began to move with the times.

Decades later, all the branches of Judaism encourage the inclusion of people with all manner of disabilities in Jewish life. Denominational websites and organizations offer extensive resources, activities and training to help make this possible. Other groups also provide such resources and fill many specialized needs across the Jewish community.

But these steps in no way imply that the goal of full inclusion is near. The ADA, passed more than 30 years ago, exempted religious and related organizations. "Thus," says RespectAbility, a nonprofit that advocates for systemic change, "many such organizations do not yet have the attitudes, physical facilities or training they need to appropriately welcome people of all abilities." Only 24% of Jewish persons with disabilities who answered a survey that RespectAbility ran in 2021, for example, said that they believe the Jewish community is doing "extremely" or "very well" at including them in "synagogues, Jewish organizations and communal activities," while 40.7% answered "somewhat well" and 23%, "not so well" and "not at all well."

Though hardly impressive, these figures do represent some improvement over the results of a 2018 survey, when only 15.7% reported the community doing "extremely" or "very well"

but 22% answered "not so well" or "not at all well." Taking a longer view, 18.7% of the 2021 respondents with disabilities believed that "compared to 5 years ago," the Jewish community is "much better" at inclusion, though 39.6% said it is only "a little better." Meanwhile, 24.1% found the situation "about the same," with only 2% finding it "somewhat" or "much worse." Overall, persons without disabilities and those people involved in work concerning disability tended to view the situation somewhat more favorably than those with disabilities.

Founded by Jewish philanthropists to foster inclusion for individuals with disabilities from a wide range of backgrounds, RespectAbility has made helping religious organizations achieve inclusion one of its major program areas. Focusing initially on the Jewish community, it offers a range of resources and training on the practical issues involved in including persons with various disabilities in Jewish religious and community practices, customs and events—covering everything from synagogue services to service animals.

The fact that congregations, organizations and community institutions want and need such information indicates a growing consciousness of disability in Jewish life. We must "make sure that people with disabilities and those who love them belong, as part of the community, as valid and respected members," says Shelly Christensen, who became RespectAbility's senior director of Faith Inclusion in April.

The birth of a son with developmental disabilities first introduced the issue of inclusion to her. After years of struggle to obtain appropriate services from Minnesota public schools, she earned a graduate degree in developmental disabilities and worked professionally in the special education field. In 2002, she began attending annual meetings of the Jewish Special Education International Consortium, which brings together leaders in Jewish special education.

"In 2008," she recalls, "we discussed a way to collaborate on raising awareness, [deciding to] designate one month out of the year" for "a grassroots initiative, a community initiative, and we had enough members in different communities to serve as the central point people."

Studying the school and Jewish calendars, they chose February, a month with no major Jewish holidays. Those that do fall then, Purim and Tu B'Shvat, have messages "very applicable to disability awareness, inclusion, advocacy," she says. Purim teaches that "people wear masks. Their true selves are not necessarily what everyone sees when they see a person." In Tu B'Shvat "we're celebrating diversity, the diversity of nature, [that there's] …not one way of being a person and we're all unique."

Christensen served as the initial central organizer of the first Jewish Disability, Awareness, Acceptance and Inclusion Month (JDAIM). From six communities the first year, 13 years later, "JDAIM is now recognized in synagogues, schools, youth programs and community and national/international organizations around the world," she writes in the 2022 edition of the JDAIM Program Guide. "JDAIM has elevated inclusion of people with disabilities and mental health conditions well beyond February. Many organizations have created formal structures to address inclusion concerns, hired professional staff and created lay committees."

Rethinking norms

Fostering true inclusion requires thinking "explicitly about disability and disability experience as part and parcel of the very fabric of our communities," not as welcoming marginalized people to join "us," but as envisioning people in many community roles, including leadership, says Belser. But, she emphasizes, actually accomplishing this is complicated and challenging.

Customary—and often unnoticed—ways of doing things, she notes, can often unintentionally make some individuals feel excluded or even actually be excluded. Communities need to examine and rethink norms to try to prevent this.

For example, how do we lay out the spaces where we gather for prayer, ceremonies, socializing and learning? How does that affect how people can move and relate and function? What about the pace at which we do things, and what does that mean to people who require more time?

What are the expectations we hold for people in leadership positions, which, Belser says, often assumes that a person should "be able to give and give and give some more and then do another late-night meeting?" What does that say about persons who could be valuable leaders but lack such energy?

Belser continues, "the second thing is thinking about bringing people in, or allowing people to find their way in, or making it possible for people to find their way in who might not previously have been considered in the central group."

"Belonging is the heart of inclusion," Christensen says, "And the only way to really know what gives a person a sense of belonging is to ask." Placing the individual's desires at the center, she says, represents "a huge change" from the notion of, say, "running a special program for Sukkot so that they can visit the sukkah undisturbed." The huge challenge lying before the community is that each person be "not a mitzvah project, but a human being, being seen."

Tel Aviv: Building the Magnificent City

By Cheryl Kempler



Photo credit: The G. Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection, Israel

A photo of Dizengoff Street taken during the 1930s.

In 1910 Ahuzat Bayit (Homestead), a nascent seaside community settled by families from nearby Jaffa, was renamed Tel Aviv ("ancient well of spring"), after the Hebrew title of Theodor Herzl's 1902 German novel "Altneuland" (The Old New Land). In his popular book, Herzl told the story of dedicated settlers who transformed a squalid land into a place of incredible beauty.

Loving the "Old New Land's" heritage and traditions, its inhabitants are committed to building a new society, symbolized by its architecture: "Splendid things had grown up. Thousands of white villas gleam out of luxuriant green gardens…A magnificent city had been built beside the sapphire blue Mediterranean."

The name change was prophetic: Planned and designed by those who made it their home, pre-state Israel's "magnificent city" would be identified with the gleaming white buildings that Herzl envisioned.



Photo credit: Kestenbaum & Company Auction House, New York

The cover of an early edition of "The Old New Land" by Theodor Herzl.

Three successful women architects would leave their mark on pre-state Israel's first modern city. Lotte Cohn, Genia (Eugenia) Averbuch and Elsa Mandelstamm Gidoni chose a profession that was open only to men during the 1930s. Once obscure, the work they produced has been researched and re-evaluated to reflect its significance in the communal and architectural history of Tel Aviv, a destination celebrated and experienced by thousands of art and design devotees annually. In 2003, the city was named a World Heritage Site by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), which helped protect and conserve its buildings.

The city evolves

Populated by successive waves of European immigration, pre-state Israel was recognized as a Jewish homeland by the Balfour Declaration and governed by the British from 1919 until 1948, when Israel became independent.

As early as 1934, the arrival of refugees from Nazi Germany precipitated a housing crisis in Tel Aviv. More than 100,000 people—about 60% of those who came to pre-state Israel—settled there, tripling the number of its inhabitants by 1939. In their former lives, these educated, often erudite professionals had embraced progressive ideas about culture, society and politics. They brought their beliefs and lifestyles to Tel Aviv, whose already cosmopolitan atmosphere reminded them of what they left behind. Included in this group were recently trained architects: the men and women who would be hired to design residences whose standards would meet the expectations of their countrymen.

Built to house the immigrants, apartment buildings rapidly rose on land that had been reserved for parks and backyard gardens in Tel Aviv's newest neighborhoods, located in the central



Architectural traditions from both the East and the West characterize Tel Aviv's eclectic construction during the 1920s. This building was designed in the Secessionist style, popular in Europe during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

"Old North" section. United by their whitewashed exteriors, blocky concrete construction, flat roofs and balconies, their design was rooted in the groundbreaking innovations pioneered at the Bauhaus (translated as "house of building"), the German art school founded in 1919 that continues to define modernism in the 21st century.

When the Nazis shut the doors of the Bauhaus in 1933, teachers and students who left the country spread the Bauhaus style and philosophy to many parts of the world. Using affordable and mass-produced materials like steel and glass, these architects constructed simple, geometric buildings with efficient, hygienic and comfortable living spaces—intended to elevate the quality of life for people of all economic classes. In accordance with Bauhaus thought, their ultimate goal was the radical reinvention of society, similar to the mission espoused by Zionism.

Although only eight of pre-state Israel's 100 practicing architects attended the Bauhaus school, its aesthetic would cast a long and pervasive shadow in Tel Aviv, where more than 4,000 modern buildings were constructed during the 1930s and 1940s, constituting the world's highest concentration of Bauhaus-style architecture. As historian Michael D. Levine wrote: "The architects of the period arrived in this country and immediately started working at the same time as the style came into use all over the world."

Tel Aviv's women architects

Why did Tel Aviv's female architects achieve success? Scholar Sigal Davidi, whose original research is the primary source for this article, suggests: "Although women architects were a minority among the Tel Aviv architectural community, they stood out in the field. They were involved in every type of architectural planning and in diverse projects on different scales. They planned urban neighborhoods and city squares as well as educational and welfare establishments, family homes and interior design projects. They played an important part in introducing and promoting the idea of modern architecture…. The prizes awarded to women architects reflected confidence in their professional abilities."

Some individuals and organizations refused to hire women architects, but given the demand for new construction, municipal authorities did not have the luxury of discriminating against anyone who was qualified.

photo credit: commons.m.wikimedia.org/Harald

Walter Gropius designed the dormitories at the Bauhaus School in Dessau.

Lotte Cohn (1893-1983)

The daughter of a Zionist physician, Israel's first female architect, Lotte Cohn, grew up and studied in Berlin, where she was involved in the renovation of Germany's war-damaged buildings before immigrating to pre-state Israel in 1921. Beginning in the office of the great modern architect Richard Kauffmann, Cohn assisted him in the planning and design of the country's first kibbutz. She shared his patriotic dedication to Zionist values.

Cohn's elemental style was in keeping with both Bauhaus principles and the functional austerity associated with Zionism at this time. Proclaimed "the mother of Israeli architecture" by her biographer Ines Sonder, she had "a mission to fulfill…. She devoted her life to work and architecture. Zionism was like a religion, and she was its nun."

Like Gidoni and Averbuch later on, Cohn operated her own firm in Tel Aviv, where she lived for 50 years. She designed and often managed the construction of numerous public buildings—offices, settlement houses and subsidized apartments,





Credit: en.wikipedia.org

A 1924 photo of Lotte Cohn.



Cohn's popular Kaete Dan Hotel (demolished in 1960) was the place to see and be seen during the 1930s in Tel Aviv.

an agricultural school, women's and children's health centers, a cafeteria for training restaurant workers and a public housing complex in the Rassco (Rural and Suburban Settlement Company) neighborhood. Most of these municipal and national contracts were awarded by competition.

With her friend and client Kaete Dan, Cohn planned and designed the eponymous hotel (1932), a building that Davidi describes as a pivotal collaboration between the two women and an early modernist landmark. The Kaete Dan was "an important social meeting place in Tel Aviv…rooms were equipped with the latest amenities…. Its European atmosphere attracted British officials and recent immigrants."

To keep the building cool, Cohn kept window size to a minimum—contrasting with the large glass panels typical of Bauhaus design—and fronted the façade with tiered balconies that shaded the hotel's whitewashed exterior. This "tweaking" of the Bauhaus style may have provided a template that enabled her contemporaries to incorporate changes suitable for a hot climate.

Elsa Mandelstamm Gidoni (1901-1978)

Born in Latvia, Gidoni (her married name) was an interior decorator and furniture maker in Berlin before immigrating to Tel Aviv, where she worked as a pavilion designer for the 1934 Levant Fair, an international showcase of inventions and products that attracted thousands of tourists to its Yarkon Peninsula [Port of Tel Aviv] site. Delighting visitors with its glass walls, floating domed ceiling and ocean view, Gidoni's futuristic Café Galina, a 1,500-square foot circular restaurant, roof deck and auditorium designed in collaboration with her married colleagues, Genia Averbuch and Shlomo Ginsburg, paved the way for the acceptance of modernism in Tel Aviv and brought recognition to both women.

Gidoni went on to win competitions for the designs of both a King George Street residence for single girls and women, Beit ha-Halutzot (Women Pioneers House, 1936), and the Domestic Science School (1935), an important facility run by the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), founded by the wife of Chaim Weizmann, the first president of Israel. Gidoni's L-shaped building is characterized by historian Despina Stratigakos as an ingenious integration of dormitories, administrative



Photo credit: Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Café Galina, the acclaimed modernist dining pavilion designed for Tel Aviv's 1934 Levant Fair by Elsa Gidoni and the husband-wife team, Genia Averbuch and Shlomo Ginsburg.



Photo credit: Bauhaus Center of Tel Aviv

A contemporary photo of the renovated Women's Pioneer Building, located at 35 King George Street, originally designed by Gidoni in 1936.

offices and teaching kitchens equipped with the latest labor-saving appliances. Acquiring the skills necessary for kibbutz life, female enrollees studied everything from the management of the institutional-sized dining halls and the cooking of eggplant and other indigenous foods unknown in Germany, to the operation of agricultural equipment used in the fields and gardens.

Gidoni received high marks for the homes and apartment houses she planned for private clients. Photographs reveal a decidedly horizontal emphasis, underscored by sharp angles and the play of light and shadow emanating from the high-walled porches and balconies.

After four years in Tel Aviv, Gidoni relocated to the United States in 1938. There she submitted designs for the building for the General Motors pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair and later served as project manager in the office of master architect Louis Kahn. Gidoni is credited with the planning of major large-scale buildings, including the Manhattan landmark 1407 Broadway, the interiors of corporate headquarters and department stores in New York, Boston and other cities. In her published articles, Gidoni disavowed what others classified as "the feminine touch" in architecture and continued to insist that her gender made no difference to her perception, working methods or resulting product.



Photo credit: en.wikikipedia.org

Genia Averbuch.

Genia Averbuch (1909-1977)

Born in Russia, Averbuch was raised in Tel Aviv, where she returned in 1930 after studying in Rome and Brussels.

Averbuch's style blends elements derived from the Bauhaus and the more organic "International Style" popular in France and the United States. Basking in her Levant Fair triumph, the 25-year-old architect competed with seasoned male designers to win the commission for Zina Dizengoff Square (named for the wife of Zionist leader and urban planner Meir Dizengoff, who served as the city's first mayor from 1922-1936), a landmark in the heart of Tel Aviv.

Harkening back to the spherical design of the Galina, Dizengoff Square is conceived as a harmony of concentric circles, which radiate from the central fountain of the traffic roundabout. Averbuch also designed the facades of the surrounding buildings, whose curved, ribbon-like balconies produce a sensual effect.

A few of the numerous apartment houses and large private residences Averbuch designed in Tel Aviv during the 1930s remain; some have been restored. After World War II, she devoted nearly all her time to projects that would serve immigrants and the cause of Zionism. Forging connections with almost all the country's women's agencies, she took on commissions for vocational and religious schools, as well as a number of single women's communal residences. Averbuch became the first woman in Israel to design synagogues. Turning to new projects during the late 1940s, Averbuch specialized in planning children's villages, institutions devoted to the care of children who survived the Holocaust. Among these is the Jerusalem Children's Home founded by B'nai B'rith Women in 1955.

Keeper of the flame: Bauhaus Center Tel Aviv

In the 21st century, discoveries detailing the history and evolution of Tel Aviv's Bauhaus style are ongoing. Exhibitions and catalogues produced by the city's Bauhaus Center on Dizengoff Street focus on a fascinating range of topics, including the contributions of women architects. Just as important, the Center's curators do not only preserve but also advance the living spirit of Bauhaus design by producing installations that showcase multimedia works by contemporary artists inspired by the city's urban landscape.



Photo credit: en.wikipedia.org

Averbuch conceived her prize-winning design for Dizengoff Square as a total environment, bringing together architectural and landscape elements. This photograph dates from the 1940s.



Photo credit: courtesy of Tel Aviv Bauhaus Center

History comes alive at Tel Aviv's Bauhaus Center, a museum that mounts exhibits and displays contemporary works with a connection to the historic Bauhaus legacy.

Students Tackle Issue of Modern Anti-Semitism with 2022 None Shall Be Afraid Essay Contest

This essay won 2nd Place Award for Excellence in the category "Single Commentary" in the Simon Rockower Awards for Excellence in Jewish Journalism, honoring achievem

As attacks on Jews in the United States, Israel and around the world, online and in person, spiked at an alarming rate, B'nai B'rith International invited young people to respond to these incidents through the 2022 None Shall Be Afraid Essay Contest.

Open to students aged 18-22, the contest encouraged the next generation to offer suggestions on how a community can identify and stop this hatred. The essays were judged blindly by a panel from B'nai B'rith International. The three winners received scholarship funds. First place was awarded a $2,500 scholarship, second place, $1,000 and third place $500.

B'nai B'rith International created the None Shall Be Afraid initiative to keep a focus on anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism in our society. None Shall Be Afraid was inspired by the 1790 letter from George Washington to the congregants of Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island, where he quoted Micah 4:4, "Everyone shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid."

The NSBA Essay Contest called on college-aged people to take their place in combating the world's oldest hatred.

First place winner Adrian Weiss, whose essay is published on the following page, is 19 years old and a sophomore at the University of Texas at Austin. He plans to graduate in 2025. Weiss wrote on the importance of identifying anti-Semitism in order to combat it, especially in a world where it comes from all sides of the political spectrum and manifests in countless forms.

Second place winner is Jennifer Karlan, 19, Harvard College, class of 2026. In her essay, she discussed anti-Zionism as a form of Jew-hatred and the importance of educating young Jewish people so they can combat this hatred.

Third place winner is Daniel Evans, 20, University of Rochester, class of 2024. Evans wrote on education and information as essential tools in the fight against anti-Semitism.

To learn more about B'nai B'rith's None Shall Be Afraid initiative, visit our section on Combating Anti-Semitism on our website, bnaibrith.org.

WINNING ESSAY BY ADRIAN WEISS

University of Texas at Austin, Sophomore

"It's not like anti-Semitism really exists anymore," insists a boy I considered a close friend. *"The Jews are just manufacturing oppression."* Still dressed in my Shabbat clothes and wearing a kippah, I'm at a loss for words. I'm surrounded by liberal, college-educated social justice advocates, and not a single person notices, let alone responds to the blatantly anti-Semitic claim. These are people with whom I've gone to Black Lives Matter rallies and protested alongside for women's rights. They consider themselves anti-racist, feminists, and champions of the downtrodden. But for them, as for many other young progressives, Jews don't count.

I feel a responsibility to educate, to point out the harmful global conspiracy trope and trace its lineage to the foundational anti-Semitic text *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion.* But I, like many Jews, feel the futility of addressing the internalized anti-Semitism that's so prevalent in today's society.

It's not enough to bring up the neo-Nazis that linger outside the campus Hillel, the graffitied swastikas in the university bathrooms and the "from the river to the sea" chants heard during my college's annual anti-Israel protests. These are isolated symptoms of the greater disease of anti-Semitism, ingrained so deeply into the fundamental beliefs of the modern world that it's virtually unnoticeable. After all, how can you fight anti-Semitism in a society which remains largely convinced of its nonexistence?

continued on next page



Adrian Weiss, who won the first prize for his "None Shall Be Afraid" essay, wrote about the anti-Semitic messages that emanate from all sides of the political spectrum.

WINNING ESSAY BY ADRIAN WEISS

continued from previous page

I grew up in Austin, about a three hour drive from Colleyville's Congregation Beth Israel, the synagogue held hostage this January in one of the most recent acts of American anti-Semitic violence. In its initial response, the FBI declared the attack "was not specifically related to the Jewish community," a statement that received backlash from multiple U.S. Senators and was later updated to define the event as an act of anti-Semitic terrorism. This failure to recognize, and therefore address, acts of anti-Jewish prejudice isn't uncommon, and contributes to the survival and prevalence of the world's oldest hatred in the modern era.

Anti-Semitism is on the rise and only through clear identification as such can it truly be eradicated. There are several theories: a rise in inflammatory rhetoric and political polarization. Frankly, the cause isn't nearly as important as the response – or lack thereof. In the last decade, right wing anti-Semitism has grown exponentially more hostile in the echo chambers of the internet, transforming from regurgitated anti-Semitic tropes into widespread dissemination of conspiracy theories, inspiring numerous hate crimes and anti-Semitic incidents. In return, these attacks are met with, at most, verbal criticism from the non-Jewish community. As anti-Jewish hatred skyrockets, it's simply not enough.

But anti-Semitism isn't inherently on one side of the political spectrum – it's just a tool to unite people under a common Jewish enemy. There's an innate hypocrisy to leftist anti-Semitism, often disguised as attacking "Zionism, not Jews" as it translates what would otherwise be considered hate-speech into the language of social justice activism. Emotionally charged and inaccurate phrases like "apartheid state" or "ethnic cleansing" are overused to the point that many young, well-meaning liberals don't even realize they're parroting the centuries-old anti-Semitic tropes of Jewish replacement and the blood libel. A misplaced sense of moral righteousness lies at the heart of the anti-Zionist movement, making it even more difficult to confront. Beyond the buzzwords and Instagram activism, their words seem exponentially less harmful than the terror attacks from far-right anti-Semites.

But words have power and an insidious ability to alter our thought processes. Repeating the false claim that "Zionism = Racism" won't directly harm a Jew in the same way as a neo-Nazi's bullet, but it has equally dangerous consequences as it delegitimizes the Zionist movement, shaping the public perception of Israel and by extension, the Jewish people, singled out as ineligible for the basic human right of self-determination. Yes, there's a difference between criticizing the State of Israel and anti-Semitism. But when the rhetoric shifts from critiques of specific Israeli policy into rallying cries for the complete destruction of the country, when Jews in America, many of whom have never even been to Israel, are being attacked in the streets for their perceived Zionism, it crosses the line into Jew-hatred.

But anti-Semitism isn't just a Jewish issue, and it isn't just hate crimes. It transcends isolated incidents and fringe conspiracy theorists to strike at the heart of a democratic system of governance. The rise of anti-Semitism is a signal of social failure, its very existence incompatible with the social equality essential to liberalism. Its bigotry deconstructs democracy, framing government actions as a conspiracy run by a shadowy cabal (a word derived from kabbalah) of Jewish elites. It transforms Jews into a cultural Other, defined solely by social alienation on account of an intrinsic "Jewishness."

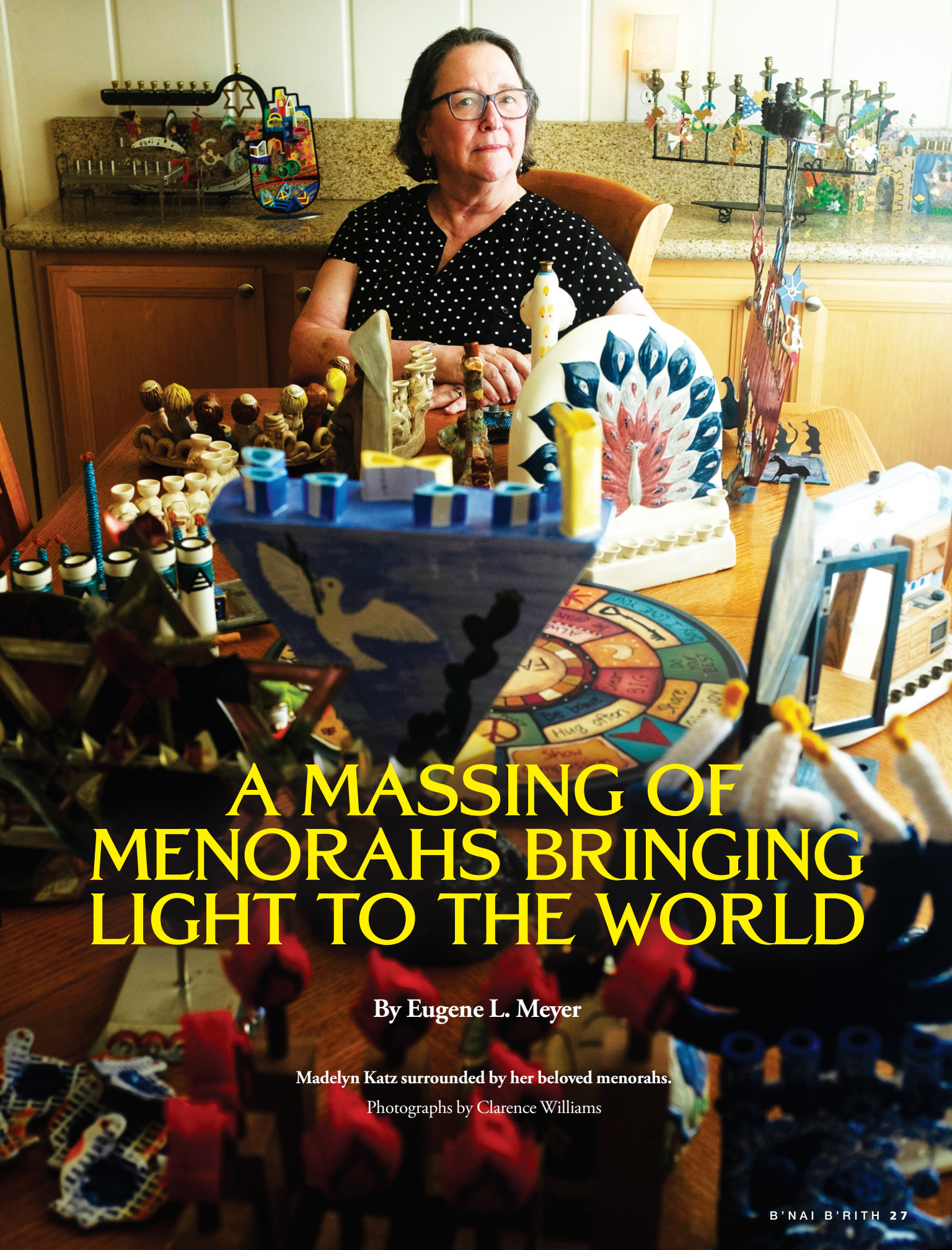
A society that normalizes anti-Semitism is a society which accepts individuals as inferior by virtue of ethnicity, religion, or culture. It's a society that spits in the face of social values such as tolerance and equality and creates an "Us versus Them" culture. Anti-Semitism isolates us from each other, from community participation. Anti-Jewish hatred kills Jews, but it also kills society.

So how do we fight this hate?

The first step towards preventing anti-Semitism is identifying its existence. We have a responsibility to establish a clear understanding of what constitutes an act of anti-Semitism, identify harmful rhetoric and dog whistles, and understand the structural anti-Semitism of Western society. As anti-Semitism isn't just a Jewish problem, we need to cultivate partnerships with non-Jews and inform them about the patterns of anti-Semitic discourse.

After defining acts of anti-Semitism, they need to be honestly addressed and dealt with as a form of hate crime. Authorities should be held accountable – by Jews and non-Jews alike – for their reactions, or lack thereof, toward anti-Semitic incidents. Finally, we can engage in discussions with the people around us and share our personal experiences with anti-Semitism.

In the face of hatred, we can either remain silent or stand up and fight anti-Semitism. And now, more than ever, it is time to fight.



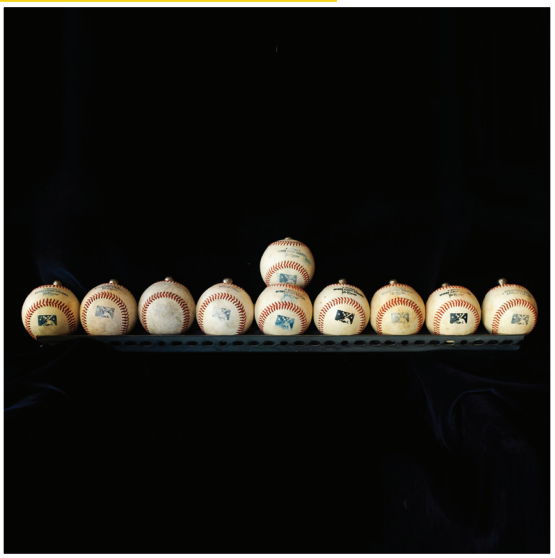
A MASSING OF MENORAHS BRINGING LIGHT TO THE WORLD

By Eugene L. Meyer

Madelyn Katz surrounded by her beloved menorahs.

Photographs by Clarence Williams







It is called the Festival of Lights. But how many lights? At least eight, one for each night, plus the shamus to light the others. But if Madelyn Katz, a retired Jewish educator in suburban Van Nuys, California, lit all her 350 menorahs at once, she might light up her entire block and beyond.

"People always ask, 'which ones do you light?'" she says. "We wind up lighting the same as when our kids were little," including a "Chanukah Crayons" menorah, one with a swing set and two little bears. But the unused and unlit are everywhere.

They include one with nine baseballs found outside a minor league ballpark in Arizona: "Somebody took a whole bunch and made a menorah out of them." Then there is a wedding scene with the bride and groom kissing under a chuppah. She bought that one on eBay for $35 or $40. "The guy said, 'I'm getting divorced and want to get it out of my house. I don't want to look at it anymore.'"

Says Katz: "My home is never going to be in Homes and Gardens, but it's a fun collection to look at." In addition to the 350 crammed into her modest three-bedroom, two-bath house, she has 100 in boxes in the garage: She plans to give them to the National Council of Jewish Women. "We don't live in a mansion," she explains.

To her, the menorahs are a metaphor for "bringing light to the world."

Once upon a time in Texas

She began collecting almost 40 years ago when she was education director at Temple Beth El in San Antonio. Her first was a thank-you gift from the Sisterhood as she was leaving to move to California, where she first taught Judaic studies at the Stephen S. Wise Temple Day School.

In 1999, she became director of student life at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in Los Angeles and eventually associate dean, a post from which she retired in 2020. By then, she also had 100 menorahs in her office, which came home with her.

In addition to her omnipresent menorahs, she has, consistent with the Chanukah theme, 115 dreidels.

"When [people] see these collections, everybody goes, 'wow!'" says her husband, Ricky Katz, a jazz musician and music teacher. "You walk into this house, and you know this is a Jewish home. No two ways about it."

Ricky owns some 30 guitars but says they are just for his work as a performing artist and guitar instructor. He gives lessons in the only room without menorahs, a former bedroom. "I don't collect guitars. I just buy what I need to do my job," he swears.

The house in suburban San Fernando Valley is where Madelyn and Ricky Katz raised their two daughters—Rachel, an aspiring actress, and Amy, a social worker.

"Think how crazy it is to dust the shelves," says Rachel. "They're just filled." Growing up, during Chanukah, each sister would light one—

not one candle, but one menorah—and, of course, their mother would also light one. "There were plenty to choose from," Rachel recalls.

Amy cherishes memories of her mother coming to her classroom with suitcases full of menorahs to show the students. "I loved being my mom's helper. It's the part of the year I really looked forward to," she says. Her husband made one with a 3D printer for her mother. It is in the form of an octopus with candle holders at the ends of eight tentacles.

The Katz menorahs are not untouchable. "It's not like a museum," Madelyn says. Amy's four-year-old son Asher loves to play with them and is even allowed to take some home, on loan.

"Whimsical" describes most of the collection. There's a transportation section, including a bus, a trolley, a Cadillac and an airplane, and a music section with a piano/tzedakah box and guitars. There are animal menorahs, featuring a giraffe, Noah's Ark, clay turkeys and a peacock. Not limited to Earth, the collection also includes one menorah modeled on the solar system.

A serious backstory

A few have a serious backstory. A menorah she'd ordered with the New York City skyline arrived in the mail on Sept. 12, 2001, the day after terrorists crashed airplanes into the Pentagon and the World Trade Center's twin towers, killing thousands. "When I opened it up, it was cracked down the middle. It was spooky."

Then there is a figurine of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, standing resolutely in her judicial robe and holding a gavel, behind eight candle holders and the words "I DISSENT." But there is no shamash. "Oh my God!! I never noticed!!!" she texted. "Maybe that's why it was cheaper than the others." Then she recalled a "spare" candle holder sitting in a jewelry box. "I guess it fell off her head!!"

What she calls her "breast cancer menorah" hits close to home. It stands upright with glass shards painted bright colors and candle holders on top. The menorah was the collective work of students and Sasha Kopp, a glass artist and Jewish early childhood educator enrolled in HUC-JIR's School of Education. Katz found it on her desk when she returned to work after her own breast cancer treatment. For her, it was metaphorical: "It said that I was broken but I was coming back."

Katz's collecting is eclectic but, she says, not expensive. She scours eBay and Etsy in search of new acquisitions and sometimes finds them in the Judaica sections of drug store chains. "I don't think I ever spent more than $150 on one," she says. She jokes that one of her husband's guitars costs as much as all her menorahs combined.

"You want to buy a couple of menorahs? I got some for sale," Ricky Katz says, adding, "Just kidding! I just think it's a great hobby for her. She really enjoys it. She's enjoyed it for years. I'll just stick to the music."







Jewish Food: More Than Bagels, Brisket and Blintzes

By Jennifer Lovy



Photo credit: Courtesy Jenifer Lovy

An intrepid researcher, author Lovy always goes the extra mile in her unrelenting pursuit of journalistic accuracy, as she demonstrates in this photo.

It may be hard to argue against a crispy fried potato latke, fluffy matzah ball or decadent chocolate babka. Still, Jewish cuisine is more than a top-10 list of popular food with Ashkenazi origins. Sephardic and Mizrahi foods bring a unique and flavorful serving of diversity to the table.

A Pew Research Center survey published in May 2021 asked American Jews about their heritage. Were they Ashkenazi, rooted in Central and Eastern Europe; Sephardic, following the Jewish customs of Spain; or Mizrahi, from the Middle East and North Africa? Or something else? Sixty-six percent said Ashkenazi, 3% Sephardic and 1% Mizrahi. Since a vast majority of Jewish immigrants to the United States were Ashkenazi, most talk of "Jewish cuisine" has revolved around the food of the shtetls.

Sephardic Jews, expelled from Spain and Portugal during the Spanish Inquisition, fled to places like Turkey, Italy and areas once part of the Islamic world. As a result, Sephardic food reflects that influence, emphasizing lamb and ground beef, stuffed vegetables, olive oil, lentils and rice. But the world of Jewish cuisine is much larger and more diverse.

Mizrahi food also highlights ground beef and lamb, stuffed vegetables, olive oil, lentils, fresh and dried fruits, seasonings and chickpeas. According to Leah Koenig, author of "The Jewish Cookbook," some of the most popular Sephardic and Mizrahi dishes include bourekas, haraimi, shakshuka and tahdig.

Tahdig is an ancient Persian rice dish loved by Jewish and non-Jewish Iranians that recently gained popularity on Instagram, Koenig explains. Haraimi is a North African, spicy tomato-poached fish served at Shabbat and holidays in countries such as Morocco and Libya. Best known are shakshuka, which are basically tomato-poached eggs, and bourekas, a version of savory-filled pastries.

"All [Jewish] food started out in ancient Israel and Iran," says Joan Nathan, author of several award-winning cookbooks. "There was no such thing as Ashkenazi, Sephardic or Mizrahi food. It was Jewish food, and it was based on the dietary laws of ancient Israel and the food that was available from the land. I don't think there's a Jewish food as much as there is a Jewish way of cooking," says Nathan, who lived in Israel for



Photo credit: commons.wikimedia.org/Luca Nebuloni

Shakshuka, a spicy mélange of tomatoes, eggs and onions, is popular in the Middle East and North Africa, where the dish originated. It's paired with pita, or with a chewy French baguette.



Photo credit: commons.wikimedia.org/Tal Safran

Bourekasim (the plural of boureka) is served with Israeli salad at Café Nol in Virginia Beach, Va. Made with filo dough or puff pastry, these savory fried or baked pies can be crunchy or flaky; ingredients for the fillings run the gamut from cheese and spinach to mushroom, eggplant and poppy seeds, to the most popular, a mix of egg, tuna, potato and onion.

three years and has traveled extensively, collecting recipes while researching and writing about Jewish cooking in other countries.

Foods worthy of a wandering people

"We're looking at the food of a wandering people who were finding ways to follow the laws of kashrut." Nathan says. "They were constantly roaming, fleeing prejudice and persecution or seeking opportunities, constantly modifying and adapting the local cuisine."

Rachel B. Gross, a religious studies scholar at San Francisco State University, defines Jewish cuisine broadly. To her, it's simply "things Jews eat."

Gross, author of "Beyond the Synagogue: Jewish Nostalgia as Religious Practice," contends that Crisco, a vegetable shortening, is a Jewish food because the hydrogenated cottonseed oil was advertised to Jewish consumers as an alternative to animal fat. "And the Jews embraced it," she says.

So many cultural and religious practices of Judaism involve food, enhancing celebrations through distinctive dishes. Such meals reinforce the meaning of the holiday and provide families with a deep feeling of connection to their ancestors through shared recipes.

"Sometimes, when the holiday comes, and your family is not around, and your culture is not there, recreating it can get you out of the blues," says Ayah E. Johnson, a Tunisian-born Jew living in Chevy Chase, Maryland, with her American-born husband. "Even though I was a young girl when I left Tunis, I still have the basic culture embedded in me. It's dormant, but it's there."

Growing up, Johnson didn't pay much attention to what was happening in the kitchen. She remembers her parents cooking, using taste and smell as a guide. Without stoves and ovens, as they were not available in North Africa in the 1960s, they prepared their meals over a small, portable kerosene stove. Food was made daily and focused on fresh fish, meats, chicken, vegetables and fruits. Because there was no refrigeration, dairy wasn't consumed, except for a café au lait, with a baguette, delivered to their home daily.

Johnson says cooking wasn't something she enjoyed or did much of until she married and had children. Her lack of fondness for being in the kitchen shifted many years later when she felt a longing for her family and her culture, including the music and the smells of the holidays. She decided to try to recreate a Tunisian Rosh Hashanah Seder and Haroset for the Passover Seder.

She wasn't familiar with gefilte fish, so the first time her husband came home with a can, she assumed that because it was fish it needed cooking. She combined it with vegetables. Ironically, it was a hit. Later, she created a fusion and made it into a soufflé. Fish, she said, is never eaten cold. "I don't look forward to making it, but they like it, so I still make it," adds Johnson, blending a new tradition with an old one.

A Google search of Tunisian recipes yielded some results, but nothing as complete as the foods she remembered. Relying on her memory, she says, was the only way to reconstruct the Seder.

Johnson made spinach patties, squash fried in tempura batter, fava beans, pomegranate, sesame candy and specially prepared garlic, with each item symbolizing an omen. During the Seder, blessings are recited to welcome the New Year and wish health, peace and safety to those gathered around the table.

"I thought I would do it one time, and my kids wouldn't like it. But I wasn't that lucky," she says with a laugh before explaining that Tunisian cooking, with African, Italian and French influences, is very labor-intensive as it involves a lot of vegetables and spices.

Popular spices include harissa—a hot chili pepper paste,



Photo credit: Lauren Volo for The Gefilteria

Celebrating remembrance of holidays past, The Gefilteria's Shabbat "tablescape" brings together a mouthwatering array of Ashkenazi cuisine, rebooted to appeal to contemporary taste.

garlic, paprika, black pepper, cumin, cardamom, curry powder and cinnamon. Parsley, cilantro, onion, olives, olive oil, capers, anchovies and tuna are other common Jewish Tunisian foods and ingredients.

Gross's book devotes a chapter to examining how artisanal, or what she calls hipster delis, are reshaping American Jewish food.

"Jewish delis, in general, tell a story of a certain type of American Jewish food developing in the United States in the 20th century," she says. Some newer delis are taking a different approach, trying to introduce "contemporary food trends of sustainability, sourcing local foods….

"If you're in a place like Berkeley, California," Gross says, "you need to provide vegetarian alternatives. And often, the Sephardic and Mizrahi foods appear as side dishes to the Ashkenazi main dish. But, if you're a deli, you're telling an Ashkenazi story by necessity; the Sephardic and Mizrahi foods are not the main story."

Trending for the times

The Gefilteria, not a restaurant but a food venture launched in New York in 2012, is also part of this trend. Founder Jeffrey Yoskowitz and his partners noticed there wasn't much in the world of Ashkenazi Jewish food beyond the Jewish delis, which were dwindling significantly. They decided to provide the missing ingredient at workshops and other events.

Yoskowitz, 37, and co-founder Liz Alpern discovered a shared affection for Ashkenazi cuisine. However, the two lamented that it wasn't a sentiment shared by other millennials. Together, they authored "The Gefilte Manifesto: New Recipes for Old World Jewish Foods," and they added the adjective "artisanal" to what had once been food for the impoverished.

Like a lot of ethnic food, gefilte fish arose out of poverty and need. Gefilte fish, which means stuffed fish in Yiddish, is made from a variety of fish—typically pike, carp or whitefish. This much-maligned dish served at least two essential functions. First,



Photocredit: Lauren Volo for The Gefilteria

Leading immersive culinary workshops and collaborating on dynamic events and media projects, The Gefilteria founders, Jeffry Yoskowitz and Lauren Alpern, bring people together through innovative reimagining of traditional Jewish food.

by adding matzah meal, eggs, spices and other fillers, poorer families could make smaller amounts of their fish last longer. Second, because gefilte fish is made by grinding up deboned fish, it allowed religious Jews to eat fish on Shabbat without having to separate bones from flesh, which, by Jewish law, is prohibited during the Sabbath.

"It felt like a lot of people looked negatively upon the cuisine. We use gefilte fish as an example of that. The food was mocked, yet we both liked gefilte fish," recalls Yoskowitz, who also prepares and sells gefilte fish during the holidays. "My grandmother made it from scratch, and many of my peers only knew of it in the jar. They didn't know what it could be or its history, and we felt like it was erasing some of the richness of Ashkenazi cultural heritage....

"We started The Gefilteria to re-instill a sense of pride, love and excitement in this food tradition, drawing inspiration from the old world, the shtetels and the cooks of generations past."

Yoskowitz is all about tradition if modernized. Traveling to promote his book, he learned this firsthand. "People cried, talking about memories of these foods, memories of their families and memories of cultures lost. There are a lot of foods that [their] parents made, but they never learned how to make, and now those recipes are gone. I've seen people cry eating stuffed cabbage because it reminded them of their mother's."

Although Jewish food may defy simple definition, there is a commonality in the kitchen in what Jews look for when cooking and eating. "They want good food," says cookbook author Nathan, "and they want an attachment to whatever background they have."

B'NAI B'RITH IMPACT

B'NAI B'RITH IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND AROUND THE GLOBE

Welcome

By Andrea Cure
Director of Developmentt



Welcome to our newest edition of B'nai B'rith IMPACT. I am sure you will enjoy reading through the rich content featured, which is only made possible by our members and supporters who believe in the vital work of B'nai B'rith International.

I want to remind our IMPACT readers that we have an abundant amount of estate planning information on our bbilegacy.org website designed specifically to help navigate wills, including donations and legacies, which can often seem complex. This specialized site offers ample information related to estate planning and charitable giving, free downloadable guides and more.

People often shy away from making wills and other estate plans; it is often viewed as an uncomfortable topic. However, the peace of mind you will have in knowing your wishes are outlined and that your family and loved ones are protected is priceless.

Visit bbilegacy.org or send us an email at plannedgiving@bnaibrith.org to get started. We are here to help.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership.

IMPACT is published quarterly, online – posted on the home page, with back issues archived. Please visit the website to read new additional content for the December 2022 IMPACT.

Israel-Hellenic Forum Reconvenes in Athens for First Time Since COVID-19 Outbreak

For the first time since its inaugural November 2019 meeting, the Israel-Hellenic Forum reconvened in Athens from June 27–June 29, 2022. The B'nai B'rith World Center established the forum to further relations between academics, public intellectuals, journalists and leaders in Greece, Cyprus and Israel. The inaugural meeting was held in Jerusalem.

"Israel, Greece and Cyprus—which until some 12 years ago did not enjoy close trilateral relations—have made major strides cooperating on the political, governmental and military levels," said Alan Schneider, director of the B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem, who initiated the forum. "Through the forum we hope to foster closer relationships among its members and through them to impact on society at large. The three liberal democracies in the eastern Mediterranean must form bonds that will help weather the threats posed by other bad players in the region."

This year's forum, titled "Athens Discourse: A World in Transition," was held in cooperation with the Institute of International Relations (IDIS) at Panteion University in Athens and with partial funding from the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

More than 40 leading academics, politicians and community leaders from Israel, Greece and Cyprus met for the three-day forum to discuss the tripartite relationship between the countries, the effect of the conflict in Ukraine on the region, regional political developments and threats to security.

Participants included Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikolaos "Nikos" Dendias; Member of Hellenic Parliament Professor Dimitris Keridis, the Greece-Israel Parliamentary Friendship Group chairman; Nikos Christodoulides, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus; Israel Ambassador to Greece Yosef Amrani; B'nai B'rith CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin; Professor Kostas Ifantis, Scientific Director of the Centre for Foreign Policy Planning at the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Maj. Gen.

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B'nai B'rith World Center Director Alan Schneider and Israeli Ambassador Yossi Amrani at the forum's closing dinner.

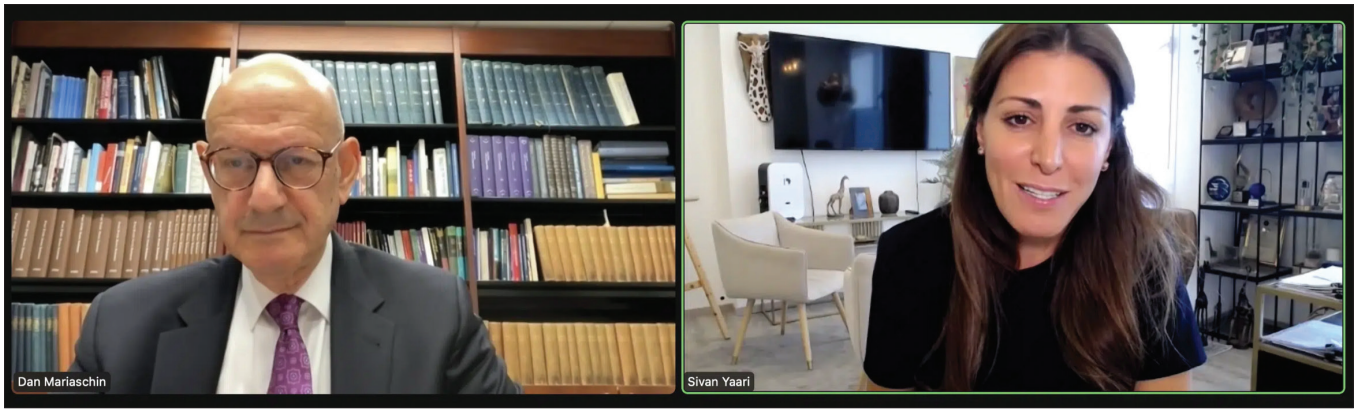


Bringing together prominent regional leaders, officials, writers and academics for presentations and an exchange of ideas, "Athens Discourse: A World in Transition," B'nai B'rith's second annual Israel-Hellenic forum, convened in June after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. The three-day meeting was held in cooperation with the Institute of International Relations (IDIS) at Panteion University in Athens and partially funded by the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. B'nai B'rith CEO Dan Mariaschin (left) with Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias.



Left to right: Professor Efraim Inbar; Greek Deputy Minister of Education Angelos Syrigos; Amrani; Mariaschin; Schneider.

The Emerging Israel-Africa Relationship: B'nai B'rith Holds Webinar with Guest Experts



B'nai B'rith CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin in conversation with Sivan Ya'ari, founder and CEO of Innovation: Africa, one of the speakers who participated in the online June 29 discussion "The Emerging Israel-Africa Relationship: Innovation, Diplomacy and Security."

Highlighting the burgeoning Israel-Africa relationship, B'nai B'rith CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin hosted a webinar—"The Emerging Israel-Africa Relationship: Innovation, Diplomacy and Security"—to explore the topic with six distinguished guests:

- Ambassador Sharon Bar-li, deputy director general and head of the African Affairs Division at the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ambassador J. Peter Pham, distinguished fellow at the Atlantic Council and former U.S. special envoy for the Sahel Region
- Togo Foreign Minister Robert Dussey
- Sivan Ya'ari, founder and CEO of Innovation: Africa
- Yosef Abramowitz, president and co-founder of Energiya Global
- Former U.S. Ambassador Herman J. Cohen



Watch the full program here: bit.ly/3ze1v4W

Israel-Hellenic Forum Reconvenes in Athens for First Time Since COVID-19 Outbreak

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(ret.) Yaakov Amidror, former Israeli National Security Advisor and Senior Fellow at the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security.

"Our partnerships with major academic institutions, think tanks, publications and government offices are testimony to the high regard in which the forum is held," Schneider said. Major programs have spun-off from the forum, such as the first course on diplomatic relations between the countries, now taught at Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Be'er Sheva, Panteion University and the University of Cyprus in Nicosia.

Schneider said the plans for a third meeting are already being made, to be held in Nicosia following the country's elections early next year.

Senior Housing Network Holds First In-Person Managers and Service Coordinators Training Since 2019

The B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Network held its first in-person Managers and Service Coordinators Training since May 2019 in June in New Orleans. From June 22 to June 24, on-site building personnel gathered to learn from B'nai B'rith Center for Senior Services (CSS) staff and other experts in the affordable senior housing industry.

"I heard from a lot of the attendees about how much they needed this meeting," said Janel Doughten, associate director of CSS. "After two very long years working during the pandemic with a vulnerable population, it helped bring a sense of normalcy to their lives. Everyone talked about how other people don't understand the sacrifices they made, but this group gets it. These are their peers more than anything."

To kick off the meeting, participants held a Day of Service, working along with B'nai B'rith disaster relief partners, the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly in the Greater New Orleans area (PACE Center) and SBP, an organization helping homeowners to rebuild their residences. Participants in the training sessions assembled and distributed emergency preparedness kits for the PACE Center, assisted with serving lunch, played bingo with participants and helped make pillows. At the SBP construction site in the Lower 9th Ward, 11 volunteers helped install subflooring for a house that will be made available for a low-income family.

The Managers and Service Coordinators Training was created for building administrators to learn about and discuss issues that impact day-to-day activities of staff and residents of B'nai B'rith affordable housing buildings. Training sessions this year included panelists from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Social Security Administration and the New Orleans affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Doughten and Evan Carmen, CSS legislative director for Aging Policy, also hosted sessions. Topics covered in these training sessions included Social Security, emergency preparedness, mental health, leadership training, Congressional updates, HUD updates and more.





Highlights from the June 22 Day of Service, an integral component of the annual B'nai B'rith Managers and Service Coordinators Training meetings, held this year in New Orleans. Attendees and B'nai B'rith staff, in tandem with volunteers from the disaster relief SBP Program (formerly the St. Bernard Project) and the All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly in the Greater New Orleans area (PACE Greater New Orleans), helped out at an affordable housing site and made emergency preparedness kits for the PACE headquarters.







World Center-Jerusalem Celebrates the Best in Diaspora Coverage

An audience of distinguished guests filled the Konrad Adenauer Center on July 6, when B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem honored the recipient of its Award for Journalism Recognizing Excellence in Diaspora Reportage, and other outstanding individuals who worked to further connections between Israel and the global Jewish community.

The Award, first presented in 1992, is regarded as one of the Israeli media industry's most prestigious prizes. World Center-Jerusalem Director Alan Schneider, who oversees the selection process, noted: "The B'nai B'rith World Center is proud to have made a major contribution to Israel-Diaspora relations through this program, for 30 years."

Israel's Ambassador to Ukraine Michael Brodsky's keynote speech, "~~Not~~ our war" outlined the close ties between Ukraine and Israel and delineated the urgent consequences, including significant food shortages, which have resulted from Russia's war on Ukraine. Regarding the future, Brodsky warned: "This is indeed Israel's war, although so far it has been exposed only to the tip of the iceberg; the most significant implications lie ahead."

Political correspondent Ariel Kahana received this year's award for his writings on the growth of anti-Semitism and Israel-United States relations during COVID-19.

Hamodia reporter and commentator Yisrael Katzover received a Certificate of Merit for his coverage of Jewish communities in Arab countries.

Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Yedioth Ahronoth journalist Shlomo Nakdimon, has dedicated his 60-year career to publishing books and articles about Israel and its impact on world history and events.



A special citation established in 2014 for Fostering Israel-Diaspora Relations through the Arts in Memory of Naomi Shemer was awarded to renowned Jewish song specialist, composer and performer Shuli Natan.

The awards jury includes: Ya'akov Ahimeir, former editor and anchor, Israel Public Broadcasting Corporation, and 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award winner; Yehudith Auerbach, former head of the Department of Journalism and Communication Studies, Bar-Ilan University; Professor Emeritus Sergio DellaPergola, the Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University; Sallai Meridor, former Israeli ambassador to the United States and former chairman of the Zionist Executive and Jewish Agency for Israel; Professor Gabriela Shalev, former Israeli ambassador to the United Nations; journalist Yair Sheleg; and Asher Weill, publisher and editor of Ariel: the Israel Review of Arts and Letters (1981-2003).

The award was established in memory of the late journalist Wolf Matsdorf, editor of the World Center-Jerusalem's journal, Leadership Briefing, and his wife, social worker Hilda Matsdorf, who both worked in Australia and Israel. The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented in memory of Luis and Trudi Schydlowsky, lifelong Zionists, leaders of the Peruvian Jewish community and publishers of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's daily news bulletin in Peru for 30 years.

The Award is funded by the Matsdorf family and B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem board member Professor Daniel Schydlowsky.

Tooting Our Own Horn:
Rockower Wins for 2021 issue of B'nai B'rith Magazine





You are reading the Award-Winning B'nai B'rith Magazine!
We won THREE American Jewish Press Association Rockower Awards for journalistic excellence for stories published in 2021. **See p. 9 for details.**

Second Annual Central America Israel Forum Aims to Strengthen Ties Between Jews and Christians

The Second Annual Central America Israel Forum, held in early September in Panama City, Panama, brought together Latin American Jewish leaders, dignitaries and Evangelical representatives to strengthen ties and shared values between Christians and Jews, and to discuss relations between Israel and countries in the region, as well as challenges and opportunities in combating anti-Semitism globally.

B'nai B'rith International was a co-sponsor of the forum, which was organized by the Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM), the Center for Jewish Impact and the Panama-Israel Interparliamentary Friendship Group.

"The gathering of the Jewish and Christian communities is a very important step forward in the fight against discrimination and anti-Semitism," said Eduardo Kohn, B'nai B'rith director of Latin American Affairs. "This second forum shows that this work is getting stronger. B'nai B'rith is an important partner of CAM and its mission in this regard."

Kohn was featured on a panel moderated by Rev. Carlos Duran, president of the National Hispanic Pastors Alliance. Kohn urged democracies to take the rise of anti-Semitism seriously and to work together to fight Holocaust denial and anti-Jewish hatred.

B'nai B'rith CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin delivered a virtual message to the forum, thanking organizers and participants for their efforts in fighting anti-Semitism and strengthening ties between Israel and Central American countries.

Mariaschin also thanked Evangelical and non-Jewish leaders present at the forum. "It is very important that you know how much we value your friendship and support. It is comforting to know that we are not alone in the fight against anti-Semitism, and in the sometimes-uphill battle against those who seek to delegitimize and demonize the State of Israel, the only true democracy in the Middle East," he said.





B'nai B'rith CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin welcomed the online delegation to the conference.

David Djemal, B'nai B'rith senior vice president for Latin America, closed the forum's opening session, emphasizing the shared fight against anti-Semitism for Jews and Christians alike. He also noted the importance of B'nai B'rith's alliance with CAM and underlined B'nai B'rith's historic role in defending the Jewish people and the State of Israel and in combating anti-Semitism for 179 years.

In total, 14 countries in the region took part in the forum, which was supported by the government of Panama and attended by congress members, as well as Latin American and U.S. religious leaders. Distinguished guests included Natan Sharansky, former Soviet prisoner of conscience and chair of the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy; Mario Bucaro, foreign minister of Guatemala; Maruja Gorday, Panamanian minister of education; Gerardo Amarilla, vice minister of environment in Uruguay; and Fernando Lottenberg, Organization of American States commissioner to monitor and combat anti-Semitism.

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B'nai B'rith France Outreach

Since its founding in 2019, the 20 members of B'nai B'rith France's National Commission of Solidarity have met to fund worthy projects in all regions of the country.

Helping Jewish children is the commission's primary aim. Fearing the rise in anti-Semitic violence, many French Jewish families have made the decision to ensure the safety of their sons and daughters by enrolling them in private academies and yeshivas. Income-challenged students apply for various grants and scholarships through these schools' social service departments to cover additional school fees, including the costs of kosher meals served in the school cafeteria.



Faculty and personnel at a reception at their yeshiva in Sarcelles, a suburb of Paris, where the B'nai B'rith France Regional Commission awarded a grant to the school that covers the costs of kosher meals for income-challenged students.

Holding fundraising events and seeking contributions from individual B'nai B'rith France members, the commission supports these students by funding their meals. The school applies to the commission to obtain the grant of about $1,000 (USD) and, according to the rules, places the grant monies in a special account. Care is taken by the social service departments to make sure the names of the recipients are not revealed.

To date, yeshivas and religious academies in Strasbourg, Marseilles, the Parisian suburb of Sarcelles, Toulouse and Lyon have applied for and received grants. Private Jewish schools in regions throughout France are eligible to receive them.

Members of B'nai B'rith France have also taken the first steps in initiating a program for senior citizens. It has begun with weekly Shabbat "check in" phone calls, with hopes for its expansion.

Second Annual Central America Israel Forum Aims to Strengthen Ties Between Jews and Christians

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In addition to the forum, a special meeting was held between the Jewish Community of Panama and participants attending from outside of the country.

Following the forum, a joint statement from the organizers and sponsors of the forum, including B'nai B'rith, marked the importance of:

- The ongoing support of the forum attended by Christian and Jewish leaders to the State of Israel
- The support of direct negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis to find real peace
- Support of the Abraham Accords and encouraging other Arab states to join these peace agreements
- Encouraging all countries to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism in order to have a strong tool to combat anti-Jewish hatred
- Full support of Israel in its decision to reject the Iran nuclear deal and making every effort in the forum's power to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.

Kohn said the third forum is scheduled for the second half of 2023 in Uruguay and will be a larger one, titled the Latin American-Israel Forum for Combatting Antisemitism.

125th Anniversary of First Zionist Congress Events Features Large B'nai B'rith Delegation

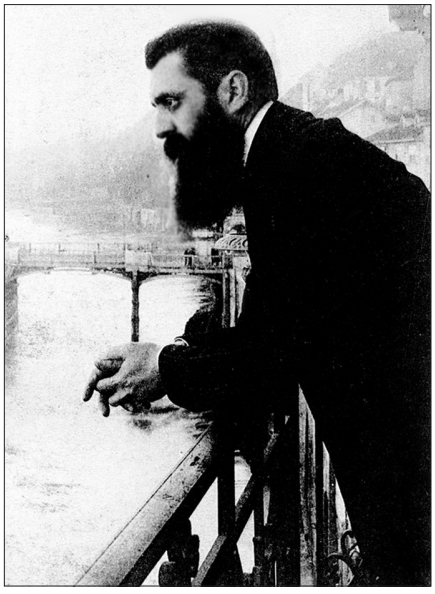
B'nai B'rith CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin and former President Charles O. Kaufman, who represents B'nai B'rith on the WZO Executive, led a 20-person delegation to a conference in Basel, Switzerland, in August commemorating the 125th anniversary of first Zionist Congress, convened by Theodor Herzl in 1897. Inspired by his message, the 208 congress members who attended at that time founded the Zionist Organization (today named the World Zionist Organization or WZO) and initiated plans for the establishment of a Jewish homeland.

Mariaschin observed: "The 125th anniversary gathering in Basel linked the history of our people with the present and future, in which we can all play a meaningful role. That means working assiduously to support a strong and vibrant Jewish State, the very same objectives Herzl laid out when he and Jewish leaders gathered in that congress hall in August 1897."

The WZO today works with philanthropies and agencies like B'nai B'rith, a member since 1989. B'nai B'rith assists in fulfilling the mission of WZO, which partners with B'nai B'rith on projects in Israel and elsewhere.

"The WZO's historic 125th anniversary meeting validates the many layers of Theodor Herzl's dream. Israel is not only the legal homeland of the Jewish people, it is an innovative, modern country that's working tirelessly to improve the world. New chapters in the Zionism story are being written every day. It is a story without end. And we must teach the world the true meaning of the word. We must not let our adversaries weaponize 'Zionism' in promoting Jewish hatred," Kaufman said. "Equally important, we must educate the Diaspora that Zionism means ensuring that the homeland serves to build an advanced, productive and enterprising nation that solves human problems—among them health, hunger, poverty—throughout the world."

World Center-Jerusalem Director Alan Schneider coordinated the B'nai B'rith International delegation, which included World Center Executive Member Nachliel Dison, who also represents B'nai B'rith on the WZO Executive. Other B'nai B'rith delegates included: Dr. Sandra Horowitz and Dr. Steven Horowitz, Elham Yaghouban, Ira Bartfield, Millie and Larry Magid, Paolo Foa', Richard and Phyllis Heideman,



Credit: commons.wikimedia.org. /public domain

Artist E.M. Lilien's iconic photo of Theodor Herzl on the balcony of his hotel room in Basel during the Fifth Zionist Congress in 1901.



B'nai B'rith's delegation at the WZO Basel Conference.



Katharina von Schnurbein, European Union coordinator on Combatting Anti-Semitism and Fostering Jewish Life, speaks at the WZO Conference in Basel marking the 125th anniversary of the First Zionist Congress.

Sheila and Alan Mostyn, Simone and Ralph Hofmann and Stéphane Teicher.

The Conference's 1,100 participants attended meeting sessions at the Stadtcasino, where the First Congress was held. Focusing on Zionism's impact worldwide, the Herzl Leadership Conference presented panels with top ranking Israeli leaders, philanthropists and others. The Herzl Social Impact Entrepreneurship Summit surveyed Israeli advancements in fields including medicine, technology and popular culture. Networking events, concerts and a gala reception were programmed for the evenings.

The list of speakers included, among others, Guest of Honor Israeli President Isaac Herzog; the president of the government of the Canton of Basel, Beat Jans; visionary architect Daniel Liebeskind; Katharina von Schnurbein, European Union coordinator on Combatting Anti-Semitism and Fostering Jewish Life; and WZO Chairman Yaakov Hagoel.

Hagoel has noted: "Looking forward to the future of our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, we will continue to strive for an exemplary society through extensive Zionist activity, strength, shared destiny and unity."

B'nai B'rith Talks



Policy experts, diplomats, historians, authors, chefs, actors, athletes, tech experts, scholars, musicians and more—what have we talked about recently?

- Yaky Yanay, CEO of pioneering Israeli biotechnology company Pluri, spoke about next-generation cell-based products Pluri is creating to improve human well-being, increase sustainability and advance solutions to humanity's greatest challenges.
- Borsht Beat, a radio program launched by a Vassar College alumnus featuring Jewish music, old and new.
- AMIA: Another Anniversary Without Justice. July marked 28 years since the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, which killed 85 people and injured hundreds. B'nai B'rith commemorated this painful but important anniversary and urged the Argentine Congress to adopt the "trial in absentia" procedure so those accused of this heinous crime can be brought to justice.
- The Apartheid Slander Against Israel. Renowned international law experts Eugene Kontorovich and Thane Rosenbaum responded to dangerous and false accusations that Israel is an "apartheid state." Both contributed significantly to B'nai B'rith's groundbreaking report on the topic.
- The Emerging Israel-Africa Relationship: Innovation, Diplomacy and Security. B'nai B'rith explored the burgeoning Israel-Africa relationship with six distinguished guests, each bringing their own unique set of experiences and expertise to our discussion.

We also launched Lens on Latin America / Con El Lente En Latinoamérica, an interview series in Spanish with English subtitles focusing on pressing issues across Latin America.

Watch it here: bit.ly/bnai-brith-talks-watch

Students Advocate for Respect in Words and Actions in Atlanta Lodge's Enlighten America Essays

In June 2022, B'nai B'rith Atlanta's Achim/Gate City Lodge announced the names of the talented middle schoolers from the city and its environs who submitted the winning entries to its annual Enlighten America essay contest, this year promoting equal rights and respect for all individuals, regardless of origin, disability, faith or sexual orientation.

Lodge President Helen Scherrer-Diamond commented: I am very proud of our essay contest winners. Their compassion and words show the true meaning of tolerance and understanding for others. They show true caring and sharing by their words. Now I challenge their generation to 'say what they mean and mean what they say' with KINDNESS.

This year's competition, which directed entrants to address the subject of human rights as they were perceived by the Founding Fathers, was chaired and coordinated by Marcus Brodzki, who acknowledged: "Achim/Gate City Lodge executive committee and our Enlighten America sponsors for their support. We also congratulate this year's winners on their essays focusing on respect and inclusion in our society. Respecting another person's differences is a cornerstone of civil society. The hyper-polarization among adults we are seeing today is frightening and these students' essays reflect a breath of fresh air and illustrate the need for continued efforts with our youth."

Judges included: Mimi Anapolle, Rabbi Jeff Feinstein, RuthE Levy and Margie Simonoff.

$350 First-Place Winners:



"Harmony and Equality," the essay written by Fayetteville seventh-grade student Skylar Robinson, was inspired by the beliefs of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela.



Eighth-grader Kyle Tie, Johns Creek, was selected for his essay "Stop the Hate," which touched on the origins of negative stereotyping and hate crimes.

$250 Second-Place Winners:



Brookhaven seventh-grade student Francis Clark's composition "Unity in Diversity" was described by the judges as "Amazingly well written! The writer took a complicated idea and made it understandable."



Eighth-grade student Santoshi Puttagunta, Johns Creek, wrote "Love Conquers All," which envisioned a world where charity and love would put an end to discrimination.

$100 Third-Place Winners:



In the third-place category, no eighth-grade winner was named, but two students tied in the seventh-grade division. Sandy Springs seventh grader Arun Piyasena's winning essay, "A United Society," described the successful outcomes of the No Hate Pledge project that took place at his school.



George Sloan, a seventh grader from Alpharetta, wrote "Hope for Harmony," focusing on the problems of gender and race prejudice in schools and in the workplace.

Denver B'nai B'rith Celebrates its 25th Annual Leadville Cemetery Cleanup

Now in its 150th year, B'nai B'rith Colorado held its 25th Annual Leadville Cemetery Cleanup during the weekend of June 17-19. Volunteers of all ages traveled to Leadville, an historic silver mining town about 100 miles from Denver, where they worked together to clean the 141-year-old Jewish cemetery's headstones and walkways, weed, trim and cultivate the grounds, and discard trash. The team also had the opportunity to attend the Friday night Shabbat observance at B'nai Vail synagogue and enjoy Saturday morning services and lunch at Leadville's Temple Israel.

B'nai B'rith Colorado President Frank Goldman, who took part in the Leadville experience, observed: "This important 25th annual mitzvah project of preserving the memories of those who have come before us takes on added meaning during B'nai B'rith Colorado's 150th anniversary. It is a unique and extraordinary opportunity to perform meaningful acts of service while socializing with members of the Jewish community."

Dedicated to the spirit of the Jewish tradesmen, miners, teachers, journalists and other community members who pioneered Leadville's settlement,



The Leadville weekend of service involved the participation of several generations of volunteers, who worked as a team to clean up, tend and plant the mining town's Jewish cemetery.

the Temple Israel Foundation supports both the cemetery and the town synagogue and has established a museum where visitors can view documents and artifacts related to Jewish life there.



Demonstrating his gardening knowhow, Wyatt Goldman shows his dad, B'nai B'rith Colorado President Frank Goldman, just how it's done. Wyatt's mom is B'nai B'rith Colorado Senior Vice President Margo Rocklin Goldman.

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B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL



Garsek Lodge Summer Activities

On June 12, 2022, Fort Worth's 143-year-old Isadore Garsek Lodge celebrated a tradition that began in 1951, when it honored board member Jim Stanton with its Garsek Jewish Person of the Year Award. Friends and family from all over the country were there to join in the celebration.

Rabbi Sidney Zimelman also received a Lifetime Community Service Award.

During the event, scholarships were presented to high school seniors including Gianna Razack, Maya Kiselstein and Lia Bloom, who are enrolled at The University of Texas at Austin, and Dylan Mandel, who attends Texas A&M University.



Left to right: Garsek's Robert Chicotsky and scholarship recipients Gianna Razack, Maya Kiselstein, Lia Bloom and Dylan Mandel.



Garsek Lodge President Alex Nason (left) with Jim Stanton, who displays his "Garsek Jewish Person of the Year" award.



Rich Hollander of the Garsek Lodge (left) with lifetime achievement awardee Rabbi Sidney Zimelman.

B'nai B'rith would like to recognize and thank the Ruby Diamond Foundation for its recent generous contribution.

Female Jewish Graduate Student in New York Awarded the 2022 Sally and George Schneider Scholarship

Grace Ohayon, a New York resident and first-year master's student at Bellevue University in Bellevue, Nebraska, was the recipient of the 2022 B'nai B'rith Sally and George Schneider Scholarship.

Ohayon, who received her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from Excelsior College in Albany, New York, is currently enrolled in Bellevue's online Master of Science in the clinical mental health counseling program and plans to graduate in the fall of 2024. After graduating Ohayon intends to enroll in a doctoral program and go on to be a licensed counselor who is able to work with a diverse range of clients. Ohayon said she is particularly interested in understanding mental health issues within the Jewish community, including why eating disorders are on the rise, and the possibility of replicating Israeli policies in the U.S. regarding a "get" (divorce decree for Orthodox women). Some Israeli policies assist agunot women (women who are denied a "get" by their husbands), who often grapple with financial hardship and are the sole caregiver for their children. When not studying, Ohayon devotes some of her free time to assisting agunot women in her community.



Graduate student Grace Ohayon is the 2022 winner of the B'nai B'rith Sally and George Schneider Scholarship.

Ohayon would also like to gain experience lecturing on mental health at Jewish higher education institutions, particularly on childhood mental health.

"I have many people to thank for my academic achievements and financial assistance. This scholarship has made it easier for me to continue to pursue my academic goals. By awarding me this scholarship, my financial burdens have been eased, which has allowed me to focus more on my studies instead of working all the time," Ohayon said. "I have also been afforded the opportunity to give back to my community."

The Sally and George Schneider Scholarship is awarded each year to a female Jewish graduate student in the metropolitan New York area attending a graduate program in a field benefiting humankind.

Sally Schneider, born in Brooklyn in 1919, was a voracious reader and a passionate supporter of Israel who felt strongly that women should be independent and educated. She and her husband, George, were longtime B'nai B'rith members. In 1998, after Sally's death, the family set up an endowment fund in their honor.

Great Lakes Region Hits the Links to Raise Funds for Annual Scholarship Event

Enjoying a day of gourmet dining and golfing on the course at the Tam-O-Shanter Country Club in West Bloomfield, Michigan, on June 6, 135 people took part in the B'nai B'rith Great Lakes Region's 40th annual Stephen B. Zorn Memorial Golf Outing, supporting Great Lakes endeavors serving young people including its college scholarship fund and its Temple Israel Camp scholarship fund.

This year, 36 individuals and corporations also participated as event underwriters and sponsors.

A Hole-in-One competition, a putting green contest and silent and live auctions were highlights of the day.

The Outing was organized through the efforts of a committee headed by David Lubin and Jeffrey Tackel.



Playing for a good cause at the Great Lakes Region's Peter B. Zorn Memorial Golf Outing are (left to right): Gary Klinger, Howard Meyers, Aaron Herskovic and Ben Milgram.

Backstory: Cleveland's Jewish Orphan Asylum Through the Years

High mortality rates for young mothers and fathers in the United States in the 19th century were not the only reason B'nai B'rith recognized a need to establish Jewish orphanages as far back as the 1850s: Those that existed were run by Christian charities, where Jewish children were usually converted. In addition, the number of children living in these crowded institutions had increased further, as more of them were left or abandoned by parents who could not support them. After the start of the Civil War in 1861, deaths of mothers and fathers resulting from this long conflict, or from disease or starvation added urgency to what had already been a crisis.

Established by B'nai B'rith's District 2 in 1868, Cleveland's Jewish Orphan Asylum boasted the latest advancements in child development and a curriculum that far surpassed those in similar institutions. While the older of the 80 Civil War orphans who lived there attended community public schools, younger children were educated on the premises, learning not only reading, writing and arithmetic, but also religion, German and Hebrew; the boys were taught industrial skills. The need for such places did not diminish; numbers reached 400 by 1900.


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BELLEFAIRE BRIEFS

Here are pictured some of the members of the girl's choir which participated in observance of the recent Holy Days at Bellefaire. The services were most impressive and inspiring, instilling appreciation of the finest Jewish traditions.

At Bellefaire, cultural, educational and recreational activities frequently are combined. The children are keenly interested in musical programs and already are discussing production of an operetta in the spring. The current year also will see increased emphasis on dramatics.

A photo from a fundraising pamphlet for the institution, circa 1939-1941.

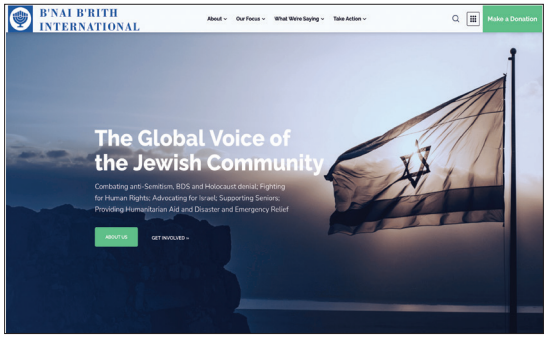
After several moves to other locations in and near the city, a new campus planned on the cottage system—a switch from large dormitories to "family style" housing in cottages—opened in 1929, with a new name: Bellefaire.

Two years after Bellefaire merged with the Jewish Children's Bureau in 1941, the orphanage closed its doors. At that time, known as Bellefaire-JCB, it transitioned into a residential treatment clinic, daycare facility and a foster home placement office. It continued to change its mission as time passed. Today, the agency provides educational and counseling services for students with emotional and behavioral problems, many of whom attend a special school, which is also located on the grounds.

B'nai B'rith's Reimagined, Redesigned and Restructured Website

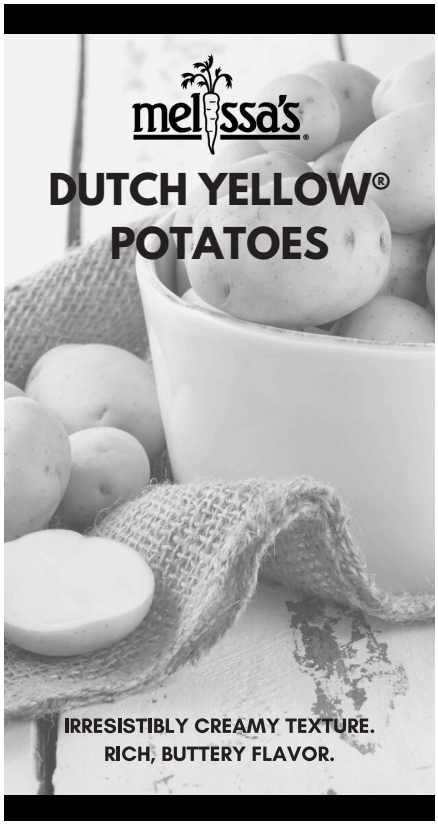
B'nai B'rith launched a new website in June 2022. The site is a significant update from our old site (which launched in 2012). The new site includes a modern look, streamlined content organization, faster page load times and the ability to better engage with web visitors via easier navigation. On the "back end" the site is on a more robust management platform and allows for better internet searches.

This new site is a wonderful showcase for B'nai B'rith's global work. Check it out here: www.bnaibrith.org



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On the Road Again

By Mark D. Olshan
Associate Executive Vice President, B'nai B'rith International

While attending graduate school in California and working summers at a camp in New Hampshire for children with developmental issues, I drove my 1966 Volkswagen "bug" cross-country on a somewhat regular basis and made stops at the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone National Park, the Badlands and Mt. Rushmore, as well as countless vineyards and tasting rooms in the Napa Valley. There wasn't a geographic region in the United States I didn't drive through on one of my cross-country jaunts. That said, besides the unbelievable scenery and experiences that I can't talk about in a family publication, I could also tell you the cost of parts and labor rates for car mechanics in virtually every state in the continental United States.



"Prominent local officials joined forces with B'nai B'rith administrators and leaders to break ground for our 1992 addition to the Irving B. Matross Covenant House, in Brighton, Mass. I'm sporting the beard and trendy aviators. District 1 leader, Walter La Raus, a force behind the building of this senior residence, is in the second row, wearing sunglasses."

And my almost 40 years working at B'nai B'rith has only afforded me further opportunities to travel throughout the country. With only 10 B'nai B'rith sponsored properties up and running when I started, we now are the largest national Jewish sponsor of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) subsidized buildings for low-income seniors in the United States, with 28 locations in 16 states.

Whether taking a small "prop" flight to snowy Peoria, Illinois, or traveling the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast in my personal vehicle (the VW was long since retired), there has been no shortage of trips.

Throughout the 1980s, the 1990s and early 2000s, my travel increased as I visited countless B'nai B'rith lodges, synagogues and local groups wanting to start a B'nai B'rith housing property in their community. We scouted suitable properties, worked with architects and consultants from coast to coast, broke ground and cut ribbons, evolving and expanding the B'nai B'rith affordable housing program.

Unfortunately, over the last 10 years, funding for affordable housing has been severely limited and we have had to come up with alternative business models. Since it is more difficult to build new buildings, we wanted to preserve the housing stock that we currently have. But where do we get the money? We looked to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) to raise funds. The LIHTC raises private equity to provide public good, like rehabbing older affordable housing. So, we stopped trying to create new properties and found ourselves looking to rehab and preserve our existing buildings.

How times have changed

Earlier this year, I visited B'nai B'rith House in Reading, Pennsylvania. During the trip I pondered how times have changed. In the 1980s and 1990s, B'nai B'rith's mission was to build affordable senior housing. But now, this trip was about preserving those very units for the next generation.

The meeting provided a great opportunity to reconnect with old B'nai B'rith friends and work with the current board to secure the building's legacy. Our relationship with the property dates to its construction in 1978.

The building was the site of the B'nai B'rith Annual Conference on Senior Housing in the fall of 1998. We received significant media coverage in the Reading Eagle Times and even the news broadcasted live from the



"Another groundbreaking ceremony, with canopy to shield the crew from the Arizona sun. Land developer and B'nai B'rith member Gerd Strauss (4th from right) was pivotal in the initiative that led to the construction of B'nai B'rith Tucson Covenant House, which opened in 1995. I'm wearing the suit, 4th from the left."



"Built in 1997, Elmwood House in Marlton, N.J. was the brainchild of its first president, Bernard Platt (left), president of the Southern New Jersey Council of B'nai B'rith. Owners of the land benefitted from tax breaks extended as an incentive for the inclusion of below-market or subsidized rents in new condominium developments. Breaking ground for Elmwood House got me on the road again."

Inn of Reading, where we held many of the meetings. The main issue being discussed in the meeting was the "aging in place" of the residents and how to provide the array of service support to keep them living independently for as long as possible.

Updating for today and tomorrow

Fast forward to now. During our meeting in Reading last winter, I presented plans for a substantial rehabilitation that would position the property for the future.

The goals for B'nai B'rith House in Reading apply to our entire housing network—that is, repositioning our sponsored properties for long-term success.

In the summer of 2019, I attended a re-dedication ceremony at Adelstein Family Project H.O.P.E. B'nai B'rith House in the Bronx, New York, for a renovated building. Residents were excited to be in apartments with new bathrooms, kitchen cabinets, counters and appliances, and all-new lighting and paint. Additionally, safety systems had been updated, including security cameras. Last was the installation of brand-new air conditioner units in each apartment's bedroom and living room.

Additionally, funds have been set aside for a variety of services not previously available. Through partnerships with local providers, for the first time, residents have access to referrals to community resources and supportive casework services, as well as a host of new classes, workshops, events and activities.

Fortunately, our efforts to update these buildings have resonated in Congress. In 2018, Congress passed a law making it easier for HUD senior housing properties to preserve their buildings. Consequently, we are working with B'nai B'rith sponsored properties in New Haven, Connecticut, and Chesilhurst and Marlton, New Jersey, to cement their long-term success. It's not just the modernization of the property. It's also about additional services for residents. Working with our developer and management partners, a plan is in place that includes a further assessment, resident/stakeholder input and leveraging the resources available through partnerships, grant opportunities and staff training. Future programming might include adult education on such topics as food and nutrition, health and wellness, personal finances, local transportation and veterans' benefits.

At B'nai B'rith, we pride ourselves on being more than bricks and mortar. Each property provides a strong, supportive and inclusive environment where residents can "age in place" with dignity.

In today's economic climate, the ability to preserve and renovate safe, supportive housing for low-income seniors is paramount in being able to provide for the next generation of older adults.

Yesterday, I was opening new buildings, today and tomorrow, it's about preserving those very buildings well into the future. And I'll be hitting the road again to make it happen.

Mark D. Olshan, who holds a doctorate in psychology, is associate executive director of B'nai B'rith International and director of the organization's Center for Senior Services.

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