

THE IVANSK PROJECT e-NEWSLETTER

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Mendy's brother Jerry, and fellow Ivansker Gary Lipton pay homage to a man who left his mark on many people. Mendy was man who held solid values, who was passionate about his family and who served his community.

- **Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society Seventh Annual Banquet, January 2, 1938.**
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The booklet commemorating the anniversary is reproduced in this issue of the e-Newsletter.

- **Memories of Lagov.** *by* J. B. Salsberg
With an Introduction by **Ettie Taichman,**
Remembering Joseph B. Salsberg (1902 – 1998)

Lagov was a stone's throw from Ivansk and both shtetls had a Jewish population of about 2,000 individuals. Joe Salsberg's recollections of his childhood, as well as his return to Lagov just before the outbreak of WWII, would probably have produced almost the same memories had he been born in Ivansk.

- **The Last Naiman Children of Ivansk.** *by* Mindy Horrow

Mindy and her family pay a memorable visit to Israel to meet with relatives who were born in Ivansk.

- **Tragic Artifacts.** *by* Randy Cohen

Randy Cohen of The New York Times considers whether it is ethical to purchase articles that were "looted" or "abandoned" during the Holocaust.

- **On-Line Broadcasts of Interest to Descendents of Polish Jews.**
Part 1: My Fear of Poland. **Part 2: A Conversation with Yale Reisner.**
by **Natalie Kestecher**

Natalie Kestecher embarks on a journey of self discovery in Poland. While visiting her family's shtetl, she finds the house where her father was born. She also learns about the past and the present world of Polish Jewry.

In Memoriam: Mendy Shuman, z”l (1932 – 2010)

Mendy, My Brother. by Jerry Shuman, Toronto, Canada

The third of four children, my brother Mendy was born on October 11, 1932 to our parents, Alex and Bella Shuman. He grew up in Toronto in the Spadina and College Street neighbourhood of Kensington.

Mendy attended school until he began working alongside our father in the family business, *Majestic Fur Company*. But after our dad’s untimely death, the business was sold, and Mendy went into sales at *Toronto Barber and Beauty Supply*. He stayed with the company for 38 years until his retirement.

His wife Susan, daughters Andrea and Toba were central to Mendy’s life. Often, he would remind them of the importance of Judaism and the State of Israel ... not surprising coming from a proud man who suffered the loss of nearly three quarters of his extended family during the Holocaust.

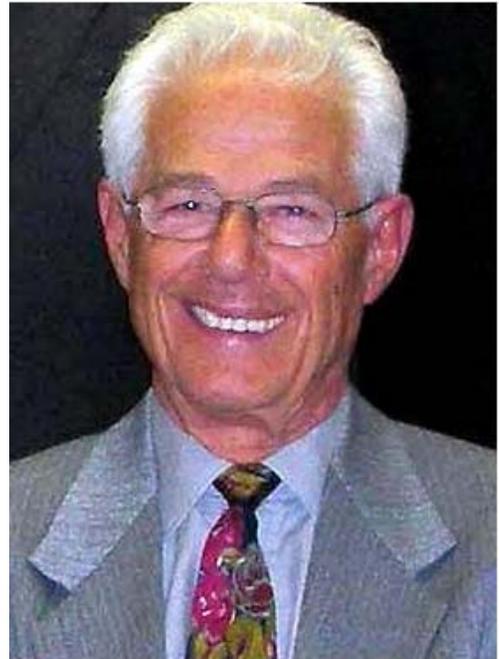
Mendy held his friendships close to this heart as well. He cherished many relationships dating back to his childhood days. His involvement with *Club DuMaurier* spanned over 60 years. His week would not be complete without speed-walking at the YMHA or kibitzing with the guys over lunch at the *Bagel World*.

As an adult, Mendy fondly recalled the Ivansker Society meetings held on Cecil Street, As a youngster he regularly attended these gathering with our father. Little did he know that one day he would serve loyally and faithfully for many years as the Society’s most recent president.

In the spring Mendy invariably became an avid gardener. He had a green thumb and took great pride in the lush grass and the attractive floral display that surrounded his home. He delighted in the result of his horticultural prowess and spent hours admiring his garden and the bevy of birds it attracted.

Mendy was a modest yet passionate man who held firmly to his beliefs, whether they revolved around politics, religion, world issues, sports or the stock market. Well-read and articulate on many subjects, Mendy was a force to be reckoned with, always offering a plausible opinion and argument during discussions on a variety of such subjects.

Mendy was taken much too early from us, and his family and all his friends miss him dearly.



In Memoriam: Mendy Shuman, z"l (1932 – 2010)

A Tribute. by Gary Lipton, Toronto, Canada

Mendy Shuman died on October 19, 2010. He served as president of the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society in Toronto for more than 12 years, succeeding Arthur Lipton (see: Ivansk Project e-Newsletter No. 44, September - October 2010). Under Mendy's leadership the IMBS experienced a period of stability and growth. While many other Toronto landsmanshafts have become redundant and have disappeared, the IMBS continues to grow in membership and vitality.

Mendy possessed a fundamental sense of history and context rooted in his Ivansk ancestry and his Spadina and College Street childhood. As a little boy he attended Society meetings with his father. He grew up admiring the way his elders were so involved in the organization, and he became committed to the ideals that the IMBS espoused.

Mendy was a soft spoken gentleman, yet never afraid to offer his own well thought out opinions. During his presidency IMBS executive meetings were spirited affairs, a long standing tradition. But Mendy made certain that everyone had the opportunity to offer their opinions on any subject. As well, he was open to change, and when it came time for the Society to extend membership to women, he enthusiastically supported the idea. It may have seemed like a simple thing to do, but in fact the entire constitution had to be rewritten to accommodate a host of scenarios, including membership rights and dues structure for divorce and remarriage. Several women now belong to our Society, making it more welcoming and inclusive to everyone.

Mendy was also quick to understand the importance of "The Ivansk Project". Before World War II the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society was still intimately linked to Ivansk. At that time almost all the members were new immigrants who retained close ties to those struggling in the shtetl. The membership tried to assist them by sending money at Pesach and other times in the year. But the shtetl and its people were completely destroyed during WWII.

In the 1950s the Society's published two jubilee books which contained editorials lamenting those who perished in the Holocaust. The membership also began to assist survivors find their way to and become established in Canada and Israel. This continued until the end of the century.

Over the past 50 years we have lost many of our "original" Ivanskers and as a consequence, our ties to and our memories of the shtetl have faded and ultimately were destined to be lost forever. Mendy realized that The Ivansk Project would prevent this from happening, and he did all that he could to "bring Ivansk back to Ivanskers".

All the members of The Ivansk Project extend condolences to Mendy's wife Susan, his daughters Andrea and Toba, his brother Jerry, his son-in-law Andrew and other members of his family.

Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society Seventh Annual Banquet, January 2, 1938

Introduction by **Gary Lipton, Toronto, Canada**

When a parent dies one of the hardest and yet most rewarding tasks is to sort through everything that he or she collected and decide what to keep and what to discard. Old, faded, black and white photographs depict times long ago when our parents were young and vibrant. There are items of material value which must be divided among family members. Sifting through personal effects is time consuming, emotionally difficult, and reveals much about the individual and their times.

Occasionally there are things that are easy to overlook, meaningful to the individual who set them aside, but seemingly of no value to surviving relatives. And so on a Sunday morning this past August, a few months after the passing of my uncle Artie Lipton (see: e-Newsletter No 44, 2010), his daughter Carole (Lipton) Kerbel asked if I would come down to her father's home and go through some of his belongings. I accepted gladly. My cousin Carol and I share strong ties to family and family history.

My Uncle Artie amassed mountains of photo albums, match books and yarmulkes from hundreds of bar mitzvahs and weddings, books in English and Yiddish, Hebrew prayer books, tallessim, tefillin, and numerous other mementos. Included were files from the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society, where Uncle Artie served as President for many years. There were a lot of photographs of executive members, minutes of meetings, membership application forms, receipt books, and cards of appreciation acknowledging donations made by the Society.

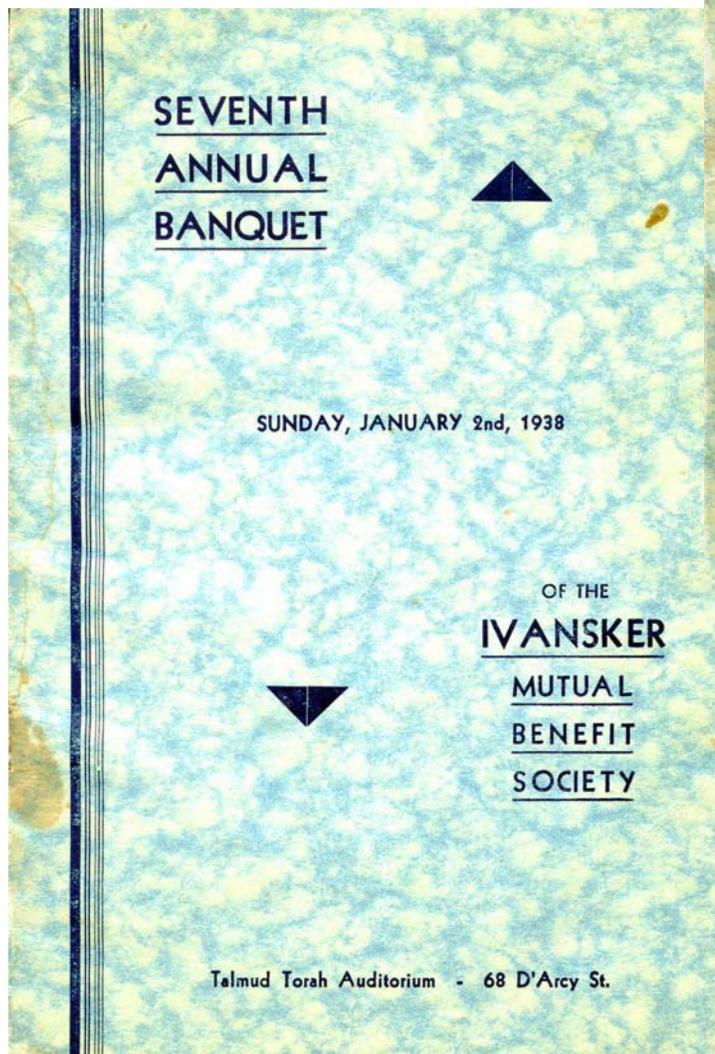
A pamphlet of the Seventh Annual Jubilee Banquet was among the items in the collection. The celebration was held on January 2, 1938 at *Eitz Chaim*, the "D'Arcy Street" Talmud Torah. The booklet is small, measuring 15 x 22 cm, has a blue-textured cover and 12 pages of glossy paper. Compared to the celebratory brochure published in 1961, marking the 30th anniversary of the Society (see: e-Newsletter No 37, 2009), the 1938 booklet is "modest". No doubt this reflects the social position of its members and the limitations imposed by the depression of the 1930s.

Take a look at the picture of the executive and you will see men who are no more than 25 years removed from the shtetl. Many Ivansker descendants will recognize their father, grandfather, uncle, or cousins in the photo. These were proud men who still held strong ties to Ivansk. In the 1930s the situation in Poland was becoming increasingly difficult for Jews, but Ivansk was still a vibrant community. And some members of the Society went back and forth across the ocean to visit their families. No one could have imagined that in less than two years Germany would invade Poland and Jewish life in Poland and in Ivansk would be extinguished.

The 1938 booklet also tells a story about life in Toronto just before the war. Note the ads: companies selling ice (electric refrigerators were just catching on), coal and wooden crates. The banquet at the D'Arcy Street Auditorium must have been a gala affair much anticipated and enjoyed by the members, whose names are listed. The inside cover has a dedication from the President, Jacob Lipovich (who happens to be Carole's and my grandfather). He proudly invites other Toronto Jews, not only Ivanskers, to join the Society. Many heeded his words which is why the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society is still an active society to this day.

Enjoy reading through the pages of this banquet booklet. And if you have a story or memory to share, please send it in and we will be glad to publish it in a future newsletter.

The Front (Yiddish) and the Back (English) Covers of the Seventh Anniversary Booklet



THE IVANSKER MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY & ITS MEMBERSHIP

(Inside Cover Page; Translated by Miriam Beckerman, Toronto)

The Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society has been in existence for only seven years time but it has already managed to become an integral part of Toronto where it has established itself as a prominent organization.

Thanks to our accomplishments and activities we have attracted more than 100 members who have created a friendly atmosphere, a feeling of brotherhood and an interest to one another.

These members can congratulate themselves for succeeding in attracting to themselves the close people of the old home, who meet together to participate in an organization which looks after their needs and interests.

We want to take this opportunity to appeal to all those who are our *landsleit*, or who stand close to us, to join our ranks.

Come and become members in one of the most progressive societies in the city, a society that is interested in everyone's welfare.

Our meetings take place every second Sunday, at the Farband House, 24 Cecil Street.

Fill out an application through one of our members, and thereby help to develop a large and strong society in the city.

I want to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all brothers who helped make this event a success.



Yankel Lipovich, President.



בעאמטע און עקזעקוטיוו פארן יאר 1937-38

זיצענדיג פון רעכטס צו לינקס : ל. גאלדהאר, טראסטן; י. קופער, קאסירער; מ. מייערס, פינ. סעקרעטאר; א. ליפאויטש, עקס ווייס פֿירער.
 י. ליפאויטש, פרעזידענט; י. קעסטן, ווייס פרעזידענט; ג. בראון, פֿראמ. סעקרעטאר; י. א. ווילנער, עקס טראסטן.
 שטעהענדיג פון רעכטס צו לינקס : מ. גאלדהאר, י. סילווערבערג, ג. קאהן, י. פלאדערוואסער, א. שומאן, מ. ל. פאויטש, י. צערעשנע,
 א. ווילנער, מ. קופער, עקזעקוטיוו.

Officers and Executives, 1937-1938

Seated, right to left:

- L. Goldhar, Trustee**
- Y. (S). Cooper, Treasurer**
- M. Meyers, Financial Secretary**
- A. Lipovitch, Executive Vice President**
- Y. Lipovich, President**
- Y. Kesten, Vice President**
- G. Brown, Recording Secretary**
- S.A. Wilner, Executive Trustee**

Standing, right to left:

- M. Goldhar**
- Y. Silverberg**
- G. Cohen**
- S. Floderwasser**
- A. Shuman**
- M. Lipovitch**
- M. Ceresne**

AN APPRECIATION

We are taking this opportunity of extending our sincere thanks and appreciation to the advertisers and contributors to this Organization and sincerely hope and trust that each and every one of the members of this Organization will wholeheartedly patronize these advertisers. We also wish to publicly acknowledge our most sincere thanks and appreciation to the Officers, Executive Committee and all other members who have so greatly assisted our Organization during the past year in this very worthy cause and many times as we well know at great personal sacrifice.

THE COMMITTEE.

Officers of the Ivansker M. B. Society

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| J. WILNER,
Hon. President | S. FLODER,
2nd Trustee |
| J. LIPOVICH,
President | S. KAPLANSKY,
Sick Committee |
| H. KESTEN,
Vice-President | M. LIPOVITCH,
Inner Guard |
| M. MEYERS
Financial Secretary | <i>Executive</i> |
| S. COOPER
Treasurer | A. LIPOVITCH |
| S. BROWN,
Recording Secretary | M. GOLDHAR |
| L. GOLDHAR,
1st Trustee | J. SILVERBERG |
| | A. SHUMAN |
| | G. COHEN |
| | M. COOPER |
| | A. WILNER |

Program Committee

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| M. GOLDHAR, Manager. | S. KAPLANSKY, Secretary. |
| L. GOLDHAR, Treasurer. | |

**Greetings from the Members
of the
Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society**

Y. Rosenberg	S. Gleitman	Max Borenstein
H. Rosen	S. Greenspan	A. Brown
Dr. N. Rosen	M. Gold	Y. Brown
Y. Rotman	M. Goodman	G. Brown
M. Smith	H. Grossman	S. Borenstein
S. Spring	K. Hoffman	M. Borenstein
H. Spring	P. Kessel	G. Cohen
M. Shmuckler	Y. Kesten	M. Cooper
M. Silverberg	S. Kaplansky	B. Cooper
A. Shuman	Y. Kruger	S. Cooper
E. Shuman	M. Lipovitch	Y. Ceresne
Y. Silverberg	Y. Lipovich	H. Ceresne
Y.A. Teichman	Y. Lipovitch	M.B. Cohen
H. Teichman	M. Lipovitch	Y. Drower
P. Teichman	A. Lipovitch	D. Eisen
L. Tator	M. Lipton	B. Isser
B. Tepperman	Y. Langer	Y. Evans
Y. Tepperman	L. Langer	S. Floderwasser
N. Tepperman	Dr. Markson	A. Finklestein
B. Tepperman	A. Mandleboim	Y. Freedman
S. Tepperman	M. Myers	H. Floder
A. Tepperman	A. Myers	L. Freedman
P. Wasser	S. Myers	L. Grossman
S. Wexler	H. Nachtigal	B. Goldhar
A. Wilner	Dr. Parker	Y. Goldhar
S.A. Wilner	Y. Praverman	S. Goldhar
B. Wilner	M. Frimmer	M. Goldhar
Y. Wilner	Y.D. Frimmer	L. Goldhar
	Y. Richman	H. Goldhar

באגריסונג פון די מעמבערס

פון דער

אייוואנסקער מיוטשעל בענעפיט סאסייטי

י. ראזענבערג	ש. גלייטמאן	מעקס באָרענשטיין
ה. ראזען	ס. גרינשפאן	א. בראון
ד. נ. ראזען	מ. גאלד	י. בראון
י. ראטמאן	מ. גורמאן	ג. בראון
מ. סמיט	ה. גראַסמאן	ש. באָרענשטיין
ס. ספרינג	ק. האַפמאן	מ. באָרענשטיין
ה. ספרינג	פ. קעסעל	ג. קאהן
מ. שמוקלער	י. קעסטין	מ. קופער
מ. סילווערבערג	ש. קאַפלאַנסקי	ג. קופער
א. שומאן	י. קרוגער	ס. קופער
ע. שומאן	מ. ליפאוויץ	י. צירעשנע
י. סילווערבערג	י. ליפאוויץ	ה. צירעשנע
י. א. טייכמאן	י. ליפאוויץ	מ. ב. קאהן
ה. טייכמאן	מ. ליפאוויץ	י. דראווער
פ. טייכמאן	א. ליפאוויץ	ד. איזען
פ. טייכמאן	מ. ליפאוויץ	ג. איסר
פ. טייכמאן	י. לאַנגער	י. עווענס
ג. טעפערמאן	פ. לאַנגער	ש. פלאַדערוואַסער
י. טעפערמאן	ד. מאַרקסאן	א. פינקעלשטיין
ג. טעפערמאן	א. מאַנדעלבוים	י. פרידמאן
ב. טעפערמאן	מ. מייערס	ה. פלאַדער
ש. טעפערמאן	א. מייערס	פ. פרידמאן
א. טעפערמאן	ש. מייערס	פ. גראַסמאן
פ. וואַסער	ה. נאַכטיגאַל	ג. גאלדהאַר
ש. וועקסלער	ד. פאַרקער	י. גאלדהאַר
א. ווילנער	י. פראַווערמאַן	ש. גאלדהאַר
ש. א. ווילנער	מ. פרימער	מ. גאלדהאַר
ג. ווילנער	י. ד. פרימער	פ. גאלדהאַר
י. ווילנער	י. ריטשמאַן	ה. גאלדהאַר

In the original booklet the names of the Society's members were given in Yiddish.

In the English version we arranged the names in the same column and in the same order as in the Yiddish listing.

We apologize for any mistakes in translating names from Yiddish to English.

Please alert us to these errors, and we will correct them in the on-line version of the e-newsletter.

We welcome our Society to the 7th year anniversary and hope that we all together will celebrate our 10th jubilee with a larger membership.

This is the wish from the brothers and sisters.

A. Finkelstein and Family
250 Robert Street

Itzik Freedman and Family
79 Centre Avenue

L. Goldhar and Family
28 Kensington Avenue

S. Floderwasser and Family
588 Markham Street

Melech Borenstein
74 Elm Street

M. Shmuckler and Family
114 Brunswick Avenue

Lazer Freedman and Family
283 Grace Street

Y. Smith and Family
259 Augusta Avenue

M. B. Cohen and Family
901 Dundas Street West

Moishe Lipovitch and Wife
101 Robert Street

Arieh Mandleboim and Family
53 Huron Street

S.A. Wilner and Family
335 Shaw Street

Y. Silverberg and Family
474 Markham Street

Gavriel Brown and Family
217 Baldwin Avenue

Motel Lipovitch and Family
223 Huron Street

Y. Richman and Family
863 Dundas Street West

H. Goldhar and Family
1047 Kingston Road

Yechiel Kesten and Family
641 Manning Avenue

A. Shuman and Family
13 Kensington Avenue

S. Gleitman
20 Michael Street

A. Lipovitch and Family
343½ Markham Street

M. Goldhar and Family
4 Kensington Avenue

Yitzhak Drower and Family
257 Brunswick Avenue

Lage our greet we
מיר באגריסען אונזער סאָסייטי צו דער 7-טער יערלאַבע פּייערונג און האַפען
אַז מיר אַלע צוזאַמען וועלען פּייערן אונזער 10 יאַריגען יובילעאום מיט
אַ פּאַרנעסערטער מיטגלידערשאַפט.

דאָס איז דער וואונש פון

ברודער און שוועסטער

א. פינקעלשטיין און פאמיליע
250 ראָבערט סטריט

איציק פרידמאן און פאמיליע
79 סענטער עוועניו

ל. גאלדהאר און פאמיליע
28 קענינגטאָן עוועניו

ש. פלאדערוואסער און פאמיליע
588 מאַרקהאַם סטריט

מלך בארענשטיין
74 עלם סטריט

מ. שמוקלער און פאמיליע
114 בראַנזוויק עוועניו

לייזער פרידמאן און פאמיליע
283 גרייס סטריט

י. סמיט און פאמיליע
259 אוגוסטא עוועניו

מ. ב. קאהן און פאמיליע
901 דאָנדעס סטריט וועסט

מושה ליפאוויץ און פרוי
101 ראָבערט סטריט

ארי' מאַנדעלבוים און פאמיליע
53 יוראן סטריט

ש. א. ווילנער און פאמיליע
335 שאַה סטריט

י. סילווערבערג און פאמיליע
474 מאַרקהאַם סטריט

גבריאל בראון און פאמיליע
217 בעלוואָרם עוועניו

מאָטיל ליפאוויץ און פאמיליע
223 יוראן סטריט

י. ריטשמאן און פאמיליע
863 דאָנדעס סטריט וועסט

ה. גאלדהאר און פאמיליע
1047 קינגסטאָן ראָד

יחיאל קעסטין און פאמיליע
641 מענינג עוועניו

א. שומאן און פאמיליע
13 קענינגטאָן עוועניו

ש. גלייטמאן
20 ביקאָל סטריט

א. ליפאוויץ און פאמיליע
343½ מאַרקהאַם סטריט

מ. גאלדהאר און פאמיליע
4 קענינגטאָן עוועניו

יצחק דראַהער און פאמיליע
257 בראַנזוויק עוועניו

English names are in the same column and in the same order as in the Yiddish listing.

מיר, די אוואנצקער ליידיס אקוילערי	די אוואנצקער מיוטשעל בענעפיט סאייטי אקציע
באגרייסן די "איוואנצקער מיוטשעל" בענעפיט סאייטי צו דער היינטיגער אומטערנעמנע, און ווינשן זיי ערפאלג אין דער ארבייט	באגרייסן הערעלאך אלע מעמבערס פון דער סאייטי צום 7-טן יעראבאן פייערונג.
מרת. ב. גאלדהאר, פארזיצערין	יהואל קעסטן, טישערמאן מעקס מייערס, סעקרעטאר י. קופער, טרעזשורער.

זייס נעגריס צו אונזער 7 יארטיקן פייערונג מיר האבן א סך ארוואכן צו זיין צופירן פון אונזערע אסמיוויטעטן.

**אויב אייער לעבן איז אייך מייער פארזיכערט עס
טראכט וועגן דעם איצט!
די בעסטע קאמפאניעס
פאר אלע סארטן אינשורענס
לייב, אמאמאבילן, פייער
ס'קאסט ניט טייערער ווען איר טוט דאס דורך
ברודער מ. מייערס
וואו איר קריגט אייך
נומע און ברודערליכע באהאנדלונג.**

וואוינונג: 486 קאלעדזש סט. 2886 קינגסדרייל	אפיס: 455 ספעריינע עוו. 6566 קינגסדרייל
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זייס נעגריס, ברודער פון דער
איוואנצקער מ. ב. סאייטי
צו דער היינטיגער פייערונג
און ווינשן אייך דערפאלג סאר
ווייטערדיגע ארבייט.
יעקב וויילנער
און סאייטי
נעוועזענער פרעזידענט,
יעצט אין מאנטריעאל.

א הארציגע באגרייסונג צו דער
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ברודער, לאמיר האפען אז די קומענדיגע
7 יאר וועלען זיין בעסערע פאר
אונז אלעמען.
שמואל קאפלמאסקי
און סאייטי.

מינע בעסטע וואונשען צו אונזער סאייטי צום 7-טן יעראבאן יום טוב.	אונזערע הארציגע ברכות צום היינטיגען יום טוב מיט נייע כוחות
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י. ליפאוויץ, פרעזידענט און סאייטי.	יודעל און ראבעל ווילנער ערן פרעזידענט איוואנצקער מ. ב. סאייטי.

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ברודער יוסף ראזענבערג פארקויפט טיילן די בעסטע פרובירט און איר וועט זיך איבערזיין 120 קרייס סט. 5558	מאנדעליס קרימער באקוימט אין טארמאנט, אלס די בעסטע טייליגע פארקויפטן מיר רעליווערען. 29 בארווין סט. 3734
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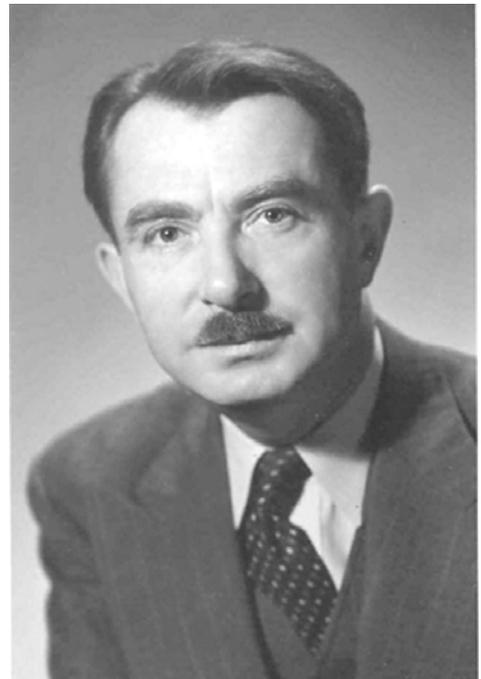
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Memories of Lagov

by **J. B. Salsberg**

Introduction: Remembering Joseph B. Salsberg (1902 – 1998)
by **Ettie Taichman, New York City, USA**

Introduction: Joe Salsberg was a friend of my father, Morris J. Granite, and when I lived in Toronto, he often dropped over to the house or had dinner with us. He was an imposing man with enormous vitality, and it was like a shot of adrenalin to have him around. He always had wonderful stories to tell. Both my father and Joe would regale us with stories about biblical figures that they were able to conjure up as life-sized men and women with human flaws and frailties. I remember one story in particular about how the tax collector came to the house and his mother shouted down, "Give him a few dollars!" Unlike many imposing public personalities who are wrapped up in their own concerns, Joe was interested in us, always asking about our friends, our plans. When my husband, Lazer and I left on our honeymoon from Toronto's airport, Joe accompanied us there and waved his immaculate white handkerchief to bid us goodbye.



Joe was an impressive looking man with a ruddy complexion, a shock of red hair, wild, unruly eyebrows and a full-bodied moustache that twisted upward into a smile. He had a courtly manner and twinkling blue eyes. I knew his wife, Dora Wilenski, as well. She was a beautiful, intelligent woman, a social worker, who founded the Toronto Jewish Family and Child Service. In fact, it was through Joe that I got my first job as a counselor at that agency. They were an extraordinary couple and together they helped to establish institutions that provide valuable services to the people of Toronto to this day.

Joe joined the Communist Party in 1926 at the age of 24. He had worked in sweatshops for \$3.00 a week and appreciated the importance of organizing labor for improved wages and conditions. Like many young Jews, he was concerned with anti-Semitism, which was endemic in Canadian society, and with fascism which was rising throughout Europe at the time. Between the two Great Wars the Communist Party seemed to represent hope for social and economic justice for working people everywhere.

While he was a Communist for many years, Joe Salsberg was above all a Jew and a humanist. His dedication to politics, to the labor movement and to Zionism stemmed from his commitment to improving the lives of others. He was first elected as an alderman to the city of Toronto and then later as a Member of the Provincial Parliament of Ontario where he was greatly respected by his colleagues and his constituents. It was also my impression that he was adored by the larger

Jewish community regardless of his party affiliations. He represented largely Jewish working class neighborhoods in downtown Toronto and is remembered for his work on social issues, including a law that was passed in 1944 banning racial discrimination.

For years, Joe had been concerned with official anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union under Stalin. These policies were not rescinded after Stalin's death, and Joe traveled to the USSR in the '50s to confront Nikita Krushchev personally. His concerns were not heeded. Finally, in 1956, Stalin's atrocities were detailed in a secret speech by Krushchev, confirming Joe Salsberg's worst fears. On returning to Toronto, he resigned from the Communist Party.

I remember an incident at my father's 70th birthday party, when the Communists at the party shunned him, literally turning their backs on Joe. I was upset but he joked with me about it and left early so as not to disturb the celebration. Joe had been maligned as a Communist by his political opponents and then later as a turncoat by his former party colleagues. For me, it is impossible to imagine that his motivation came from anywhere other than a sincere desire to build a better world. He had devoted a lifetime of energy to what he later learned was an unworthy cause. It was shortly after he left the Communist Party that Dora lost her struggle with breast cancer. It was a heartbreaking time for Joe, and he withdrew from politics for a while. But he soon rebounded and continued as an activist for Zionist and other humanist causes for the rest of his life.

Memories of Lagov by J. B. Salsberg

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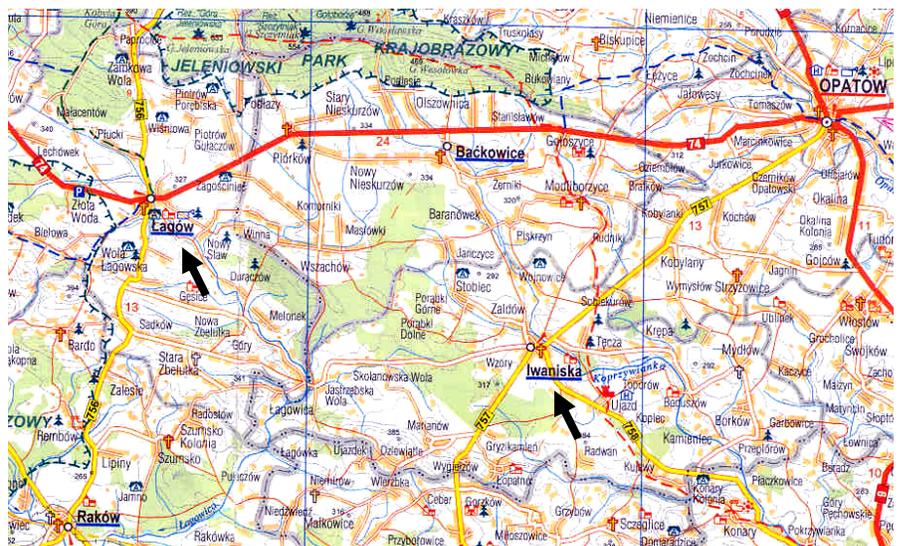
(e-News editor's comments:

Joe Salsberg (also called, J.B. or Yosselah) was born in Lagov in 1902. (Lagov and Lagiv are Yiddish names; Łagów in Polish.)

At 10 years of age he and his family immigrated to Toronto. Joe retained vivid memories of his boyhood. His essay captures the atmosphere of early 20th century Lagov.

On the eve of WWII Joe returned to Lagov for what turned out to be a painful visit. The loss of many close relatives and landsmen during the Shoah haunted him for the rest of his life.

Lagov was only a stone's throw from Ivansk. Both were small shtetls with about 2,000 Jews. Joe Salsberg's recollections of his childhood, as well as his brief return to Lagov, would probably have generated almost the same memories had he been born in Ivansk.)



Memories of Lagov

The town was neither prosperous nor renowned. The majority of the townsfolk were Jews and Yiddish was the prevailing tongue. Even non-Jews spoke or understood Yiddish. The town lived chiefly as a supply and service centre for the farming vicinity that was almost predominantly non-Jewish. Jews were horse and cattle traders, tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, bakers, grain dealers and shopkeepers.

There was, of course, a complete Jewish infrastructure to serve the 2,000 or so Jewish community. There was a rabbi, a *dayan*, *shochtim*, *melamdin* (teachers), a synagogue, a *Beth Hamidrash* and a couple of *chassidim stiblech*. Needless to say, it was a God-fearing community, completely embraced by strict Orthodox beliefs and practices and, like almost all our fellow Jews in Eastern Europe (especially those under tsarist rule), we groaned under the burdens of *Galut* and prayed for the speedy coming of the Messiah.

Education

Lagov had no yeshiva nor a community-wide Talmud Torah but there was no lack of the traditional, ultra-Orthodox type of Jewish education. To be sure, there was one small public school in town, but no Jewish boy (and only the rarest Jewish girl) went to that "*goyishe*" school. There were, instead, the required number of *chedorim* (*cheder*, singular) that provided the "traditional" Jewish education. These were privately run, one room, one teacher (*melamed*) schools that were housed in the small, cramped house of the melamed.

Each cheder catered to a given age of children. The elementary type (*dardekeh*) catered to the 4 to 6-year old boys. (No girls were included in the entire system.) The intermediary type taught *Chumash* and *Rashi*. The senior ones centred on *Mishna* and *Gemarah* (Talmud). One scholarly man taught a small group of older boys higher Talmudic studies, that included the classical commentaries as well as some *halachic* works.

One melamed, who had been to "America" (actually it was Toronto) conducted a cheder that emphasized the Prophets and that practiced "the American method" of morning and afternoon recess periods for his pupils. One man gave private lessons to girls - reading and writing Yiddish.

Secular subjects? They were left to the pupils to pick up somehow. . . . A number of young men "learned" by themselves every day in the "*Besmedrish*" while waiting, waiting, for a *shidech* or perhaps a journey to America. There were also the individual or group studies in the *Besmedrish* in the evenings.

The Sabbath

In Lagov, market day was every Thursday and the farmers from the immediate area brought their produce to town on that day and purchased their needs for the farms. But on Friday afternoon everything began to grind to a standstill. A young Jewish orphan-lad had the exclusive right to pace up and down the town square and shout, as loudly as he could: "*In bod arein!*" which means, come to the steam bath!

GLOSSARY	
<i>Beth Hamidrash</i>	house of learning
<i>chassidim stiblech</i>	small one room shuls
<i>cheder</i>	Jewish school
<i>dardekeh</i>	elementary school
<i>dayan</i>	rabbinical judge
<i>galut</i>	exile/alienation
<i>goyishe</i>	non-Jewish
<i>melamed</i>	teacher
<i>mikvah</i>	ritual bath
<i>shidech</i>	arranged marriage
<i>shochet</i>	ritual slaughterer of animals.

His call was promptly answered. Lagover men, often with a growing son or two in tow, with rolled-up undershirts under their arms, would hasten towards the Jewish community's steam bath where the ritual baths (the *mikvah*) were also located.

Somewhat later, Lagover elders, with beards still wet from mikvah water, would hasten to put on their (sometimes shredded) Shabbes "*capote*" (long, satin outer garment) and hasten to the synagogue.

Ah, but Saturday afternoons, during summertime, were sheer delights for the Lagover Cheder boys!

The town was totally embraced in the arms of the "Sabbath Queen." Only rarely did one see a human being in the "mark," the market square. Jews were enjoying a Sabbath nap and grandmothers were reading the Biblical portion of the week from their "*Tzene-Vereneh*" which was a Yiddish translation of the weekly portion of the Bible.

We, the young "Cheder" boys, would gather in the homes of our respective teachers, to "learn" parts of the "*Peirik*" of the week. I was mesmerized by the Rebbe's adroitness in mixing vinegar and soda in a glass of water until it reached a stormy, foamy overflow, which he then drank to the last drop and which was followed by a loud and substantial belch . . .

A Visit

But where, you may want to know, does the tsar of all the Russians come into the life of Lagover Jewish boys? Here is how. I remember it well, though I must have been about 8 years of age when it happened.

One fine summer morning, when all the kids (boys, that is) were in their respective chedorim, someone called on the rebbe (melamed) and told him something and forthwith we, much to our joy, were dismissed and told that there would be no school that day. Outside we found all the other boys in the town square who were also liberated for the day.

At home we learned that according to the tsar, our type of schools were prohibited. (There were no others in all such towns.) A friendly policeman had tipped off someone that an inspector was expected that day to ascertain where "illegal" Jewish schools existed in Lagov. Hence the holiday.

But next morning everything returned to the accustomed routine - cheder all day and, during the winter months, in the evenings as well. But a few months after the visit of the inspector a minor miracle happened in town. It turned out that the crown prince had been thrown from his horse; he was gravely ill and special prayers for his recovery were ordered, all the way from St. Petersburg (now Leningrad), for all schools and places of worship.

And, lo and behold, the tsar's police knew the location of each cheder in town. The children, led by their rebbes, were marched off to the synagogue, where the Jewish elders had already assembled. The cantor led us all in special prayer and in the singing of the special Hebrew prayer for royalty (this was printed in every prayer book) while the few policemen were standing in a saluting fashion right in the centre of the synagogue! It was a moment to remember.

Hardships

It would be wrong to idealize Jewish life in a shtetl like Lagov. It was *galut*, in every sense of that pain-conveying word.

The majority of all the tsar's subjects lived in poverty. Jews, too, were poor. The tsarist regime and sections of the Russian official church diverted the wrath of the deprived and poorly educated unto the Jewish minority, who were largely town dwellers and of another religion and culture.

Pogroms were either organized or abetted by one or another section of the tsar's establishment. Jews in the shtetlech managed to survive by turning inwardly for their spiritual, cultural and moral strength. They were Jewish fortresses of historic dimensions.

In my youth there were no pogroms in Lagov, but there was no feeling of security either. Often the manner in which the priest interpreted the Crucifixion to his parishioners had a direct result on the behaviour of the population towards the Jews.

There was also banditry and highway robbery. Occasionally frightful reports would reach us of a Jew being found maimed or killed in the countryside. One often heard the plaintive cry for an end to the *galuth*.

Yet Jewish life provided: laughter as well as tears; fear of the morrow and defiant determination to overcome; and both *Tishe B'Avs* (days of fasting and mourning) and *Simchats Torah*.

The Gubernator Arrives

When things seemed good, there was fear of the counter-reaction. That was the case when the tsar's Gubernator (governor of all Russian Poland) came on a rare, official visit to the off-the-beaten-track community of Lagov.

The Jews suggested to the Polish dignitaries that a joint reception be planned. But the Poles rejected the proposal and proceeded with preparations for an executive "Christian" welcome instead. Theirs, the "official" one, was to start at the approaching road to town.

What were the Jews to do? What would the gubernator think when he arrives and finds no Jews to receive him?

They decided to arrange their own Jewish reception for the royal visitor to take place after. A formal gate was constructed in the market square, not far from the synagogue, decorated with branches and flowers, as was the entrance to the synagogue. The entire Jewish community, in their Sabbath-best, huddled behind the little rabbi, who couldn't speak Russian, and the few elders at his side.

On a little table in front of the rabbi stood a shining metal tray on which was the traditional offering: bread, a knife, salt, a glass pitcher filled with cold water and an empty glass.

Lads rushed back and forth with reports of the happenings at the "*Goyishe*" reception at the entrance to town. Everyone became tense and worried when the report came that the governor had arrived, that he was listening to the welcoming speech and that he was tasting the bread down there, and that, heaven above, he was coming!

Finally, the gubernator stepped from his carriage, smiled, was pleased with the few words of greetings, ate some bread, drank some water and (*gevalt!*) he, he himself, asked to be led to the shul, for the religious ceremony.

No one said it, but everyone thought it; what will the affronted non-Jews, who remained behind, at the entrance to the church, what will they say? Yes, and what may they do to punish us? (*Oy, der goolis!*)

The entire Jewish population followed the gubernator into the shul, in which every lamp and candle had been lit even though it was broad daylight. The *chazan* (cantor) led in the singing of the tsar's anthem while the gubernator, his aides and soldiers stood stiffly at attention. It was a thrilling spectacle. And, heaven protect us from all evil, only after he left the synagogue did he get into his carriage and was driven towards the church, where the resentful non-Jewish community waited for the governor and his official party to begin their church service.

Apparently the gubernator had been plainly displeased that the Jews were excluded at the Christian entrance. To make his displeasure obvious, he ordered his aide-de-camp, not to stop at the church but to be driven first to the waiting Jews.

Everyone agreed that the Lagover Jews did themselves proud on that occasion.

World War II

Only a brief few weeks before the outbreak of the Second World War, I was in Europe. I had been in Russia, where I met a number of key leaders of Soviet Jewry and discussed the problems and challenges that faced the large Jewish community there.

From the Soviet Union I traveled to Poland, the land of my birth, where a substantial number of my relatives; my maternal grandmother, as well as my paternal grandfather and many uncles, aunts and cousins still lived.

Because I had been an alderman in Toronto every young Jew in the two shtetlech (small towns) of my parents' birthplace, pleadingly insisted that I take them with me to Canada.

No explanation and no pleas were accepted by them. A few of the younger fellows of Rakov climbed into the wagon that had been hired to take me back to Lagov and refused to leave it. I must take them with me to Canada, they insisted.

It was a heart-breaking experience for me.

Visualize this tragic experience of mine. The wagon that was to take me moved forward slowly in Rakov. My paternal family and most of the Jewish townfolk followed behind me. But a couple of younger fellows had boarded that wagon and refused to leave; I must take them with me, they insisted.

We have reached the end of the town. The wagon halted for me but the boys refused to leave the wagon. Finally a few strong young men climbed on the wagon and literally threw them from the wagon.

The tragic scene broke my spirit completely. I began to cry at the pitiful sight of what took place. I was literally hoisted into the waiting wagon and we began to move forward. It was one of the most painful moments of my life.

What happened to all whom I left behind? All but two of my paternal family in Rakov perished, together with the rest of that long-existing, hard working, pious Jewish community at the bloody hands of the Nazis.

The two that survived, as we later learned, were a young man, distant relative, and the young daughter of my father's youngest brother, Velvel (Zev). Two out of an entire community...

At war's end the survivors of East European Jewry were gathered in the Jewish survivors camps in Germany and adjoining countries. The American (and Canadian) Hebrew Immigrant Associations, issued lists of the survivors that were carried daily in the Yiddish and Anglo-Jewish press and everybody -literally everybody - scanned these lists with fear and hope.

One day, not long after the end of the war, I visited my parents on Cecil Street in Toronto. As I approached our house I saw my father running and waving the Toronto daily Hebrew Journal to me. With an excitement I had never seen he shouted, "My brother Velvel's daughter survived and she is trying to reach us."

We both read the survivors list of that day. There it was: His youngest brother's daughter survived. She is in a survivors camp in Germany; is looking for an uncle, Abraham Salsberg in Toronto, she didn't have his address. We decided to send a telegram to her and, since I was about to engage in a tour of the survivors' camps, I will call on her and arrange her coming to us.

Well, about two weeks later we met in Germany; the only survivor of my father's once large family!

We finally got the Canadian government to issue a permit for her to join us in Canada.

The Last Naiman Children of Ivansk

by **Mindy Horrow, Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, USA**

During the first week in January of 2011, I traveled to Israel with my mother, Estelle (Naiman) Kalechstein Meislich, my husband Jay and son Benjamin (21 years old). Two years ago just after my father, Herbert Meislich passed away; my mother underwent open-heart surgery. Now fully recovered, we were taking this trip to meet her Uncle Lazar Naiman for the first time.

For those of you who keep up with the Ivansk Project newsletters, Lazar Naiman was featured in an account of his family in Ivansk and how he survived the Shoah, eventually finding his way to the Soviet Union and then to Israel (see: "Never Give In To Despair", Ivansk Project e-Newsletter, No. 32, 2008). Lazar is the youngest child of Leibish and Mindl Naiman, born after my grandmother Lena (Naiman) Kalechstein had left Poland for New York City. The two of them connected in the 1970's when Lazar placed advertisements in Yiddish newspapers and they corresponded, but never met. My grandmother who was more than 20 years Lazar's senior, died in 1980.

In the early 1990's after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Lazar Naiman made *Aliyah* with his daughter and granddaughter. In addition, my mother has several other Naiman first cousins living in Israel whom she had not seen in over 30 years. These include: Esther Ben Simon (daughter of Tzirl Naiman), Rose (Naiman) Weinberg and Helen (Naiman) Mandlekorn, daughters of my grandmother's older brother Moishe Naiman. Rose and Helen were both born in Ivansk and came to Israel via Toronto, Canada.



**At Rose Weinberg's Apartment
(L to R) Ben Horrow, Mindy Horrow, Rose Weinberg,
Estelle Meislich, Helen Mandlekorn, Jay Horrow**



**Pouring Over Family Photographs
Mindy Horrow, Rose Weinberg,
Estelle Meislich**

On a cool, slightly rainy Wednesday evening, the four of us walked from our rental apartment, through *Meah Sharim*, to Rose Weinberg's apartment. She and Helen were waiting for us there. Helen (90 years old) and Rose (86 years old) greeted my mother (83 years old) and my family with tears of joy. We hugged and kissed and then talked and snacked, drinking a *l'chaim* to the greater Naiman clan while we paged through endless photo albums and shared stories.

Between them, Rose and Helen have over 70 great grandchildren, with a new great grandchild of Rose, just born that day. My mother remarked at how the intervening years seemed to slip away, and she and her cousins remembered the times of their youth, visiting in Toronto and attending family weddings.

We spent a wonderful Shabbat at the home of Esther and Yehuda Ben Simon, who live in the *Pisgat Ze'ev* section of Jerusalem. Esther was born in Argentina and came to Israel in the 1960's by way of Toronto and New York. She and Yehuda, whose family comes from Morocco, have 5 children and 17 grandchildren. (For those of you who are still keeping up with the family tree Esther's mother, Tzirl was an older daughter of Leibish and Mindl Naiman.)

After Shabbat, on Saturday evening, Uncle Lazar came to the Ben Simon's to meet us. We recognized him immediately as an older version of the young man whose face we had seen many times in the Naiman family photo (included in the newsletter referenced above). Lazar speaks Russian, Yiddish and Hebrew. Esther, a polyglot (Hebrew, Yiddish, English, Spanish and Portuguese) helped translate.

My mother, Lazar and Esther talked and talked, trying to condense a lifetime of memories into a few hours of conversation. Tears kept overflowing as they hugged and held hands. Several of Esther's children also came to visit, including Moishe, Elisheva, Ruthi and Yuval. (Yonaton was away on business.) We took many photos and finally with great difficulty had to part when it was time for us to take our cab to the airport.



**Meeting for the First Time
Lazar Naiman and his niece,
Estelle Meislich**



**Catching Up on Family History
Esther Ben Simon, Estelle Meislich
and Lazar Naiman**

The long plane ride home allowed us to reflect on this wonderful visit. As part of our trip, we had visited Yad Vashem, which has been extensively redone since our last visit. The joyous Naiman reunion and the knowledge of how extensive our family has become, allowed us to overcome the great sadness that one encounters at the Holocaust memorial. We remember those who did not survive and those who left and escaped but have since passed away, and we rejoice in the love and companionship of the current generations of our family.

Tragic Artifacts

by **Randy Cohen**

"The Ethicist", The New York Times Magazine, January 14, 2011

[e-Newsletter editor: On Sundays the NY Times Magazine usually features, "The Ethicist", a column which considers ethical issues raised by its readers.]

Reader:

Traveling in Poland, I visited antique stores offering Jewish items — menorahs, mezuzas — that seemed more than 65 years old, suggesting that they were looted in the Holocaust. I saw things I wished to make part of my own Jewish home but found myself unable to pay for what was probably stolen property. Part of me wishes I had stolen (liberated?) some of them. Would that have been justified? RANDY MALAMUD, ATLANTA

New York Times Magazine:

It would not have. While these objects undoubtedly have a tragic history, it is less certain that they were stolen, explains Marilyn Henry, a columnist for The Jerusalem Post who has written much about such sad relics. She e-mailed me to say that "while the items may have been looted during the Nazi era, they may have been treated as legally 'abandoned' when the family was deported; they may have been sold at fire-sale prices by the original owner/family to raise funds to flee; they

may have been held with the best of intentions by neighbors in anticipation that a Jewish family would return, and the family did not return.”

Nor is it clear that the shopkeepers you encountered were culpable in acquiring these objects. As you note, the enormities that befell the owners of these objects occurred before all but the most elderly of these shopkeepers could have been involved. But even if a shopkeeper was knowingly trading in contraband, that would not justify your theft. Instead, you should report such matters to the authorities.

If an object can be traced to its rightful owner or community, you should try to return it, perhaps through an organization like the Commission for Art Recovery. You might be able to do so for objects of great financial value, but more often, Henry wrote me, “as beautiful as these objects were, many of them were mass-produced, or did not have decorative features or imprints that would make it possible to associate objects with a particular Jewish family or a Jewish institution such as a synagogue.”

In this likely case, you could purchase an object and donate it to a Jewish institution or use it in your own home, reverently and respectfully, much as you wished to do — “restoring it to the Jewish life for which it was destined,” in Henry’s words.

There can be unintended consequences if we all forswear buying Judaica so steeped in suffering and death. Agnes Peresztegi, director of the Commission for Art Recovery, Europe, said in an e-mail: “It would not serve our purposes to eliminate the market, because if silver Judaica cannot be sold due to the issues of questionable ownership, they may get melted for the silver.” She, too, agrees that to put these items to their intended use can be an honorable commemoration.

On-Line Broadcasts of Interest to Descendents of Polish Jews

Essays focusing on the history and current status of Polish Jews have recently appeared as on-line audio broadcasts.

Below is a two-part feature that can be downloaded to your computer. Please let us know if you come across additional on-line material that would be of interest to our readers.



Part 1: My Fear of Poland by Natalie Kestecher

Natalie Kestecher is an Australian journalist whose parents came from Poland. Several members of her family were murdered during WWII. Like many of us, Natalie was reluctant to visit Poland because of what happened there. But last year she summoned her courage and flew to Warsaw.

There, she met numerous Poles and Polish Jews who spoke about the past and about the development of the small, emerging Jewish community. She also visited her father’s shtetl and stood in the house where his family once lived. It was a transformative experience.

Part 2: A Conversation with Yale Reisner

Yale Reisner is the Director of the Jewish Genealogy and Family Heritage Center, a constituent of the Emmanuel Ringleblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

Natalie Kestecher spoke with Yale who described how the Center can assist individuals locate genealogical as well as other documentation about families that once lived in Poland. He also outlined the historical background and make-up of today's Polish Jews, emphasizing that we are related to them and that they want to be connected to us.

How to download Part 1 and Part 2 radio broadcasts:

Log on to: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/360/stories/2010/3037040.htm>

The following page appears:

Click here for Part 1 ~ 60 min

Click here for Part 2 ~ 20 min

The screenshot shows the ABC Radio National website interface. At the top, there is a banner for '360documentaries' and the ABC Radio National logo. Below the banner is a navigation menu with links for HOME, PAST PROGRAMS, HAVE YOUR SAY, SUBSCRIBE, ABOUT US, and CONTACT US. A search bar is located on the right side of the page. The main content area features the title 'My fear of Poland' dated 6 November 2010. There are two 'DOWNLOAD AUDIO' buttons with speaker icons. The text describes a personal journey through Poland, mentioning Natalie Kestecher's visit and her connection to Polish Jews. A photo gallery titled 'My fear of Poland' is visible, with a link to 'View the image gallery'. On the right side, there is a sidebar with a search bar, a program schedule for Saturday 2pm and Wednesday 1pm, and a section titled 'IN THIS PROGRAM' listing '14:05: My fear of Poland'.

To access this broadcast you may have to download free QuickTime multimedia software to your computer (PC or Mac). Follow instructions at:

<http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>