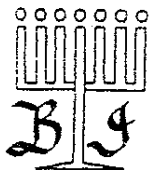
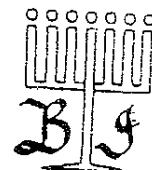


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C O N G R E G A T I O N

Beth Israel



141 HILTON AVENUE HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK 11550 Tel: 516-489-1818

RABBI MICHAEL EISENSTEIN



January

2018

טבת תשע"ח
שבט תשע"ח

Tevet
Shevat 5778

15 SHEVAT

31

TU B'SHEVAT
JEWISH ARBOR DAY

B'NEINU (BETWEEN US)

One of the more challenging issues of being a “Modern” Jew is the ability to live in two sometimes very different calendars – at the same time. As of this writing, there is still only one Jewish State and it is not New York, Florida or Arizona... It is Israel.

The rest of us – here in the United States – live in a mainly secular, if not Christian, country. I think all of us are young enough to remember the days of the “Blue” or “Sunday” laws. You still can’t shop at the Bergen County (NJ) Mall on Sundays!

One change – though not necessarily one for the better – that has worked its way into “modern” Jewish observance is the yearly recognition of the death of a loved one. *Yahrtzeit*.

It is impossible to say how many Jews recognize the anniversary of the death of a loved one by the Hebrew calendar versus the secular/Gregorian calendar. Many times it is observed on the Hebrew calendar for a few years and then, for one reason or another, the person no longer remembers the Hebrew date and changes to a secular date observance.

One of the ways I keep one foot in each calendar is to look up at the night sky. Depending on the phase of the moon I can tell where in the Hebrew month we are. The Hebrew calendar is lunar-based. A new moon? A new month, aka *Rosh Chodesh*. A full moon? Middle of the month, usually the 15th (of the Hebrew month). Passover seder? Full moon. Beginning of Sukkot? Full moon. *Tu B'Shvat*? Full moon.

Speaking of *Tu B'Shvat*, literally the 15th of Shvat, we will be doing something a little different this year. Instead of the seder following the Shabbat service, we will have a **Tu B'Shvat Program on Sunday, January 28th.**

We will have a speaker from the Jewish National Fund. The topic has not yet been finalized, nor has the exact time, but please **SAVE THE DATE**. And plan to bring in your **JNF Blue Box** if you still have one! I know I’ve still got a metal one (I think they switched to cardboard a few years ago).

Appropriate refreshments will be served. For further information as it becomes available, watch your emails or check with me as we get closer to the date.

JNF is more than just planting trees!

Getting back to the multiple calendars for a moment... According to the Gregorian calendar, Saturday, January 27, 2018 is known as *International Holocaust Remembrance Day*. According to the Hebrew calendar, that date coincides with *15 Shevat*. The Jewish People observe Holocaust remembrance on *Yom HaShoah* which falls on *27 Nisan* (this year: April 12, 2018).

Many communities – including ours – have even moved actual Holocaust programming to the Sunday closest to *Yom HaShoah*.

Yes, it is not easy having one’s feet firmly planted in two calendars. But it is worth it!



As part of our participation with the Friedberg AJCC and their *Partners in Caring Program*, a new **Bereavement Support Group** will begin in January. Locations in Bellmore and West Hempstead. Contact me for more information as programs begin the first week of January.



— Rabbi Michael
516.547.3581 •

RABBI.MICHAEL@ME.COM

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, January 28: JNF/Tu B'Shvat
Time TBA

SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, January 16, 2018:
Ritual Committee Meeting

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

GAIL BRODER KATZ in memory of Caroline Rothman and Buddy Schoenfeld.

MURIEL LEVINE my heartfelt condolences on the passing of your brother, Dr Jed Howard to Mrs. Lynn Severe, Green Valley, AZ

HENRIETTA LEVIT in memory of Abraham Levit

PHYLLIS KATZ in memory of Buddy Schoenfeld

GERALD N. DAFFNER, yizkor

LORRAINE AND AL ALBERT, TO THE Kiddush Fund in memory of our dear friend, Buddy Schoenfeld.

ROBIN AND RICHARD KRAUSS, to Claire in memory of Buddy and to Lenny Goldberg in memory of his mother, Ruth.

RENEE WEIL in memory of my precious husband, Rabbi Harvey Weil.

MARILYN LEVINE in memory of Robert Young

ROBIN AND RICHARD KRAUSS, sincere condolence to Claire at the passing of Buddy Schoenfeld.

LUIS ROBAYO, to the cantor fund

MARILYN AND BURT KUSHNER, to the cantor fund and the rabbi's discretionary fund

ROBIN CINNAMON in memory of Simon Faver

JANET AND FRED LIEBMAN in memory of Jacob Liebman

MARIANNE BAKER in memory of Leon Benedict, Tiffany Greenfield and Bill Cahn, to the Cantor Fund

SUELLEN AGULNICK, ROBIN CINNAMON, LYNN SEVAN AND ISAAC BARUCH, MURIEL LEVINE, MARSHA MANDELL—in memory of Buddy Schoenfeld.

MELISSA GOLDMAN, for the cantor fund and the Rabbi's Disc. Fund

ELEANOR AND BERNIE NIERENBERG, yahrzeits of Lillian Arak and Philip Arak, beloved mother and brother of Eleanor and for Donald Nierenberg, beloved brother of Bernie, and to Claire in memory of Buddy Schoenfeld.

HAROLD BRODER to Stan Rothman in memory of his daughter Caroline and to Claire Schoenfeld in memory of husband Buddy.

BARBARA AND ELLIS ABRAMS in memory of mother, Evelyn Hollander

HAROLD BRODER, leaf on tree in memory of Elaine Broder

MONIQUE REBOH, at the yahrzeit of Nessim Reboh

MARK AND SUSAN BASS, in memory of Buddy Schoenfeld

ELI SOBLICK, a sponsored Kiddush in honor of his birthday.

We reprint this article from the New York Times. On Sunday, April 15, the expert mentioned in the article, Dr David E. Fishman, a professor of Jewish history at the Jewish Theological Seminary, will be at our temple to tell us about this and much more that he learned from his travels to Vilnius (Vilna to us Jews).

How does a powerless people fight back against one of the mightiest war machine ever created? Be here when Dr. Fishman tells us how when he joins us in April, 2018. Invite your friends to hear him.

We glory in the story of the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto, but Dr Fishman brings us the story of how the soul and spirit of Eastern European Jewry was saved.

ARTS

A Trove of Yiddish Artifacts Rescued From the Nazis, and Oblivion

By JOSEPH BERGER OCT. 18, 2017

In one of their odder and more chilling moves, the Nazis occupying Lithuania once collected Yiddish and Hebrew books and documents, hoping to create a reference collection about a people they intended to annihilate.

Even stranger, they appointed Jewish intellectuals and poets to select the choicest pearls for study.

These workers, assigned to sift through a major Jewish library in Vilna, Vilnius in Lithuanian, ended up hiding thousands of books and papers from the Nazis, smuggling them out under their clothing, and squirreling them away in attics and underground bunkers.

In 1991, a large part of the collection was found in the basement of a Vilnius church, and were hailed as important artifacts of Jewish history.

But months ago curators at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in Manhattan, the successor to the Vilnius library, were told that another trove, totaling 170,000 pages, had been found, somehow overlooked in the same church basement.

- Five dog-eared notebooks of poetry by Chaim Grade, considered along with Isaac Bashevis Singer as one of the leading Yiddish novelists of the mid-20th century.

- Two letters by Sholem Aleichem, the storyteller whose tales of Tevye the Milkman formed the core of "Fiddler on the Roof."

- A postcard written by Marc Chagall, the Jewish modernist painter.

"These are gold," said David E. Fishman, a professor of Jewish history at the Jewish Theological Seminary, who traveled to Vilnius in July at YIVO's behest to assess the trove's importance. He came back with the sort of enthusiasm one might find in an explorer who has just discovered unknown lands.

A selection of 10 items from the newly found literary manuscripts, letters, diaries, synagogue record books, theater posters and ephemera will go on display on Oct. 24 at YIVO headquarters on West 16th Street.

In interviews, Mr. Fishman and Jonathan Brent, YIVO's executive director, discussed other findings, including, an early poem by Abraham Goldfaden, the father of the flourishing Yiddish theater in Europe and on Manhattan's Lower East Side, and 10 poems handwritten in the Vilna ghetto by Abraham Sutzkever, among the greatest Yiddish poets. In one poem, Sutzkever expresses his fear that "Death is rushing, riding on a bullet-head/To tear apart in me my brightest dream."

Mr. Brent and his staff said they were just as excited by more quotidian items like scripts of "Sherlock Holmes" and other popular entertainments that delighted prewar Jews and an astronomical guide with a set of dials to calculate when religious holidays should fall, given variations in the lengths of Jewish lunar months. A 1933 "autobiography" by a malnourished fifth grader, Bebe Epshtein, describes how her parents forced her to eat by telling her beguiling stories. When "I would open my mouth," she wrote, "they would pour in food."

Many of the items, the experts said, offer glimpses into the hardscrabble everyday lives of the Jews of Eastern Europe when the region, not Israel or the Lower East Side, was the center of the Jewish world.

Almost as intriguing as the cache is the serpentine story of the documents' rescue and rediscovery, much of which had been known before but which has been updated with the new find.

When the Nazis occupied Lithuania from 1941 to 1944, they were determined to incinerate or grind up the country's Jewish collections, particularly those at YIVO, which from 1925 to 1940 in Vilna was the world's foremost library of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. With characteristic incongruity, though, they decided to save a third of the YIVO collection for a research center near Frankfurt that would study "the Jewish question" even if they planned to make sure the Jews would be extinct. (In Lithuania alone, 90 percent of the prewar Jewish population of 160,000 was murdered.)

They needed Yiddish speakers to analyze and select the materials, and deployed 40 ghetto residents like Sutzkever and another raffish poet, Shmerke Kaczerginski, as slave laborers. Risking death by a firing squad, this "paper brigade" rescued thousands of books and documents.

When the Germans were pushed out of Lithuania by the Soviets, survivors like Sutzkever spirited some hidden treasures to New York. (The Soviets frowned on anything evocative of ethnic or religious loyalties.) Meanwhile, a gentile librarian, Antanas Ulpis, who was assembling the remnants of the national library in a former church, St. George's, stashed stacks of Jewish materials in basement rooms to hide them from Stalin's enforcers. He is, as a result, regarded by YIVO as a kind of Oskar Schindler of document rescue.

The bulk of the basement collection — documents totaling 250,000 pages — was recovered after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Last year, the entire basement collection was transferred to the Martynas Mazvydas National Library of Lithuania, which had reopened in a grand colonnaded building, and in May officials there informed Mr. Brent, of the new trove of 170,000 documents. They had been stored in a separate church basement room and had never been evaluated because none of the assigned archivists could read Yiddish or Hebrew.

Lithuania has chosen to hold onto all the Jewish documents in the library's Judaica center as part of its national heritage. But it has allowed YIVO to digitize them for the use of the general public — and to have select items to display in Manhattan later this month.

“It’s going to take decades for scholars to analyze all of this,” said Mr. Fishman, who this month published “The Book Smugglers: Partisans, Poets and the Race to Save Jewish Treasures From the Nazis.”

Among the more mundane curiosities that were salvaged is a weathered agreement from 1857 between a yeshiva in Vilna and a union of water carriers.

What is a water carrier, a Talmud student might ask?

In Vilna at that time, water carriers were needed to deliver buckets of water to homes from available wells. The ragtag Jewish water carriers formed a guild, which promised to donate a Torah scroll and a set of Talmuds to the yeshiva if members were given a room of their own, rent-free, for worship.

The crew that rescued these records largely did not survive the war. Some 34 of the 40 people viewed by experts as having been members of the “paper brigade” died, according to Mr. Fishman, some in death camps like Treblinka or in labor camps or in more random fashion. Mr. Kaczerginski was killed in 1954 in a plane crash in the Andes. Sutzkever had an illustrious career as a poet in Israel and died at age 96 in 2010. Mr. Ulpis, who helped save the documents later found in the church basement, died in 1981.



JEWISH MEMORIAL CHAPEL OF LONG ISLAND

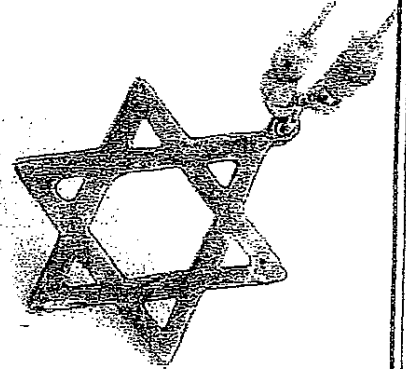
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SUPERBOWL LII (52)

SUNDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 4TH, 2017

A MEN'S CLUB PRESENTATION

PARTY BEGINS AT 6:00 PM, GAME AT 6:30 PM

JOIN THE GANG AS WE WATCH THE GAME

IN OUR OWN TV ROOM

SNACKS AND FOOD

SERVED ALL EVENING

6 TO 9:30 PM

COST FOR THE PARTY, \$25 PER PERSON

COST FOR PR BOX (ONLY 100) \$20 EACH

PRIZES TO BE AWARDED:

FIRST QUARTER, \$100

SECOND QUARTER, \$200

THIRD QUARTER, \$200

FINAL QUARTER, \$500

**BALANCE OF FUNDS RAISED TO BE DONATED TO
THE FUND FOR THE CANTOR**

CHECK TO CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL ENCLOSED:

NAME _____

PARTY RESERVATION: #PERSONS @25 _____ **\$**

NUMBER OF BOXES @20 _____ **\$**

CHAIRPERSON, MARVIN BERNSTEIN, 516 242 7175