



## NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLDWIDE CONGREGATION CHARLAP/YAHYA

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### ON ALVARO DIONIS (DINIZ, DINIS, DINITZ)

Alvaro Dionis, a leader of the Jewish community in 17th century northern Germany, is discussed in *The Book of Destiny: Toledot Charlap* (p.410). His original name was Shmuel Ibn Yahya and another alias was Alberto de Nyes (de Nis). He is well documented in Jewish historical literature. All of these sources agree that he was not only a communal and religious leader, but a major political and economic force in Hamburg, Glueckstadt, Schleswig-Holstein, Lubeck, and Danzig. His influence extended to the Danish crown and through much of Poland. He dominated the salt trade and was Mint Master of several locations including Altona and Glueckstadt. With all of this, he was a dedicated Jew, even maintaining a communal synagogue in his house. Continuing research has led to further conclusions about Alvaro Dionis.

Yosef Ibn Yahya the Martyr (86D, *Ancilla To Toledot Charlap*, p.13) escaped from inquisitorial Portugal to Italy. His three sons took divergent paths. Meir stayed in Italy, settling in Oulina where he lived an intellectual life as a poet. Shlomo left for the island of Rhodes which had a large number of Jewish refugees who had been welcomed by the Ottoman rulers. David ben Yosef, became Chief Rabbi of Naples and was an ardent fighter for Jewish rights throughout the Mediterranean world. He married a heroic woman named Dinah. Their story, as well as Yosef's, is told in detail in *The Book of Destiny* and will not be repeated here. What is important for this discussion is the connection to Alvaro Dionis. Susan C. Sherman (*Avotaynu*, Summer 1990, p.17) opined, "As Dinitz' Jewish name was Samuel Ibn Jachia [sic] and succeeding generations of his family gave the name Dina to girls, it is possible that he was a descendant of Dina Ibn Jachia, wife of David, son of Joseph, who fled Spain to Italy."

A more complex analysis is offered by Joseph Ben Brith (*Alvaro Dinis, His Wife Beatriz Henriques and Her Son Ruben Henriques*, [www.heymanfamily.com](http://www.heymanfamily.com)). "It is fair to assume that his [Shmuel Ibn Yahya alias Alvaro] grandfather David Marco, alias Tome de Nis, a Marrano in Portugal, was the son of one of the brothers David or Selomo [Shlomo], who saved their lives at the end of 1493 after a difficult escape of four months to Pisa, together with their aged father Joseph [Yosef] Ibn David Jachia, a brother himself of the next to last Chief Rabbi of Lisbon named Selomo Ibn David-Ende [86C, *Ancilla To Toledot Charlap*, p. 12] who had died in 1490." Ben Brith continues by stating that one possibility of Alvaro's ancestry is that mentioned by Sherman. He then comes to a conclusion which is not clearly analyzed, "If Sherman is correct, then Dina had to abandon her kidnaped little son in Portugal, a fate that, alas, befell thousands of children beginning in 1493. . . This hypothesis of the abandoned son is possible if the son was born in Lisbon before about 1490, but there is no record anywhere of his birth. This should not be unusual because both the Jewish and the official Portuguese sources remained silent on the forcible abduction of children from their parents. . . Judging from chronological considerations he cannot have been born later than 1490 and not in Italy

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## ALVARO DIONIS (cont.)

either." Ben Brith explains that Alvaro's father was known as Felipe de Nis, alias Salomon Marco. Felipe was born in Porto, Portugal and later lived on the Isle of Sao Tome, where many thousands of forcibly baptized children were sent to remove them from the influence of their Jewish parents. About 1570, Felipe de Nis appeared in Antwerp where he practiced Judaism in secret. Yet, he made no efforts to disguise his work for the Marrano community. His children Alvaro and Ana were born in Antwerp and in 1578 he moved to Cologne. Five years later he settled in Venice and openly proclaimed his Judaism. Brought before the Inquisition, he and his wife Abigail agreed to practice Christianity, but it is apparent that they remained inward Jews. Ben Brith offers the possibility that when Shlomo ben Yosef Ibn Yahya fled to Rhodes, he did so without his wife and son. To survive in Italy, the wife converted and her son David Marco, alias Tome de Nis was raised as a Christian. But then Ben Brith offers still another possibility; Tome de Nis, or David Marco, was the son of another Shlomo Ibn Yahya, Shlomo ben David, that David being the last Chief Rabbi of Lisbon. He goes on to say that Shlomo is most likely the Shlomo Ibn Yahya who after 1540 settled in the more tolerant town of Ancona, Italy. However, my research shows a greater probability that Shlomo of Ancona was the son of Gedaliah Ibn Yahya. Ben Brith concludes with, "What is obvious is the relationship of Samuel Jachia alias Alvaro de Nis with the clan of Jachia. Until now it is vague who the parents were who handed their little son to the church during the years of forced conversions of all Portuguese Jews and why their son was subsequently named David Jachia then David Marco." He then proceeds to give a genealogy of Alvaro going back to ca 1100. We have correlated this list with our own genealogy and present herewith what we consider an accurate history.

Chiya (Hiyya) al-Daudi; b. Ca 1080-1090; d. 1154; advisor to King of Portugal, military leader, scholar; first in family to be known as Charlap.

Yaish Ibn Yahya; b. Ca 1110-1120; scholar, politician, military leader; secret military leader of Moslems before serving King of Portugal as a Jew.

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Yahya Ibn Yaish (Yahya el Negro); b. ca 1150; d. 1222; scholar, politician, advisor to King of Portugal; vast land holdings.

Yehuda Ibn Yahya; title of Sar (prince); fl. late 12th cent.; d. ca 1229; Chief Rabbi of Portugal; royal treasurer.

Yosef Ibn Yahya ha-Zaken; b. 1210; d. ca 1270; resident of Lisbon; attained great wealth, built magnificent Lisbon synagogue.

Shlomo Ibn Yahya ha-Zaken; b. ca 1250; d. ca 1300; philosopher, religious scholar, royal military advisor.

Gedaliah Ibn Yahya; b. ca 1295; d. ca 1385; physician; royal advisor; left Lisbon for Castile, administered Jewish communities; final residence Toledo.

David Ibn Yahya Negro; b. ca 1330; d. Oct. 1385, Toledo, Spain; lost most of Portuguese estates after leaving Lisbon; appointed Almoxarife and Chief Rabbi of Castile; known as Rav shel Sepharad.

Shlomo Ibn Yahya; b. ca 1360, Toledo; d. 1430; resident of Toledo and Portugal; royal agent.

David Ibn Yahya; b. ca 1400, Lisbon; d. ca 1460; scholar, royal agent.

Here we depart from Ben Brith's tree. We have documented in the two books on the history of the family (see p.10) that this David had four sons, Yehuda, Gedaliah, Shlomo, and Yosef. It is Yosef who continues this line.

Yosef Ibn Yahya the Martyr; b. 1425, Portugal; d. 1498, Ferrara, Italy; confidant of Don Isaac Abravanel and advisor to King Alfonso V, fled to Italy when King Joao imposed forced conversion; scholar, teacher, communal leader.

David Ibn Yahya; b. 1465, Lisbon; d. 1542, Imola, Italy (cem. Safed, Israel); m. Dinah \_\_\_\_; fled to Italy; rabbi, scholar, writer, communal leader. Note that David had two brothers, Meir and Shlomo. Either David or Shlomo could have been the father of:

David Ibn Yahya (alias David Marco, Tome de Nis); b. ca 1498, Porto/Nisa, Portugal; d. ca 1570; royal physician.

Salomon Marco (alias Felipe de Nis); b. ca 1530, Porto, Portugal; d. ca 1599; m. Abigail de Palacios, 2nd m. Beatriz de Solis; fled Portugal and lived in Antwerp, Cologne, Venice, and Hamburg; businessman, merchant, communal leader, secret Jew.

Shmuel Ibn Yahya (alias Alvaro Dionis, Alvaro de Nis); b. ca 1565, Antwerp; d. ca 1650, Amsterdam; m. Beatriz-Abigail Henriques de Milao; openly Jewish communal and religious leader, wealthy businessman, Mint Master; lived in Antwerp, Cologne, Venice, Salonika, Hamburg, Glueckstadt, Amsterdam.

Some say that descendants of Alvaro lived in Suwalk Guberniya in the 18th century. We will continue to investigate that claim. We, of course, know that Suwalk was a center of our line of Charlaps that descends from the Ibn Yahyas.

## RETREAT AT AUSCHWITZ

by Adinah Rosen (18389,Pl.397)

*Adinah Sherman Rosen was raised in the Kansas City area in the midwest United States. She is the great-granddaughter of Yospe Lewin Cohen (7368,Pl.252), who came to the USA from Ciechanowiec, Poland. Adinah made aliyah and lives in Safed, Israel with her husband Riphael (18391) and her three children.*

For the second year in a row I attended the Zen Peacemaker Circle retreat in Auschwitz. This time Riphael joined me. The retreat is run by Bernie Glassman, a Jewish Zen Roshi, who recognized the potential power of healing that could take place in that arena of horror where hell on earth was played out in its gruesome way just 60 years ago. There were some 50 people from many different countries - Poland, Germany, Israel, Holland, the USA, Sierra Leone, Italy, and other European countries. Jews, Christians, Buddhists, and those without a particular spiritual leaning attended.

Before leaving Israel, Riphael noted that his mother's *yahrtzeit* was to be on the Thursday during our retreat. Riphael always honors that day. I doubted that we would find ten Jewish men in the group to make a *minyan*. We were also concerned because Riphael probably would not be able to make a *siyum* on the *Gemora* he was learning - another family custom for *yahrtzeits*. But we said, "*HaShem* is great. He can make a *minyan* even in Birkenau." With that in mind, we brought cakes from Israel and bought a bottle of *slivovitz* in Cracow so we could recognize that day with our companions. That Wednesday evening at Auschwitz, I spoke to the group about the Jewish tradition of celebrating the *yahrtzeit*; then we passed out the cakes, poured the *slivovitz* and made *l'chaims* as Reb Ohad played his guitar. Our spirits were raised as the ceremony became one of honoring all mothers. Riphael was pleased to honor his mother in this sweet, albeit short, way.

We then went to see the Marion exhibit. Marion was 17 when, as a Polish activist, he was seized and incarcerated at Auschwitz. It was then a concentration camp for political prisoners, not necessarily Jews. Marion was the 432nd prisoner to enter and that was the number tattooed into his skin. He lived in that hell for five years. After his liberation he became a theatre set designer. About 13 years ago he suffered a stroke and was partially paralyzed. To rehabilitate his hand, he drew. What came out were the images of hell on earth that he had stored inside all those years. These pictures are now exhibited in the basement of a nearby monastery. Last year, while looking at this awesome exhibit, I was continually drawn to the number appearing in so many of the pictures - Marion's number. Suddenly, a kabbalistic interpretation occurred to me. 400 is the letter *tof*, the last letter of the *alef-bet* and is the aspect of *HaShem*'s stamp of Himself in the creation, the final seal. 32 is *lamed* and *bet*, which makes the word heart. Marion, this sweet, humble, humorous man who holds no hate in his heart is a gift to us all to have hope; the heart of humanity can survive this hell on earth. Last year I shared the numerical interpretation with Marion and wanted to put it in art form but it didn't happen. During this year's retreat, there was an opportunity for those who wanted to express their experiences in art. I worked on it but was unable to finish and decided to take the incomplete work to Marion. He told me he remembered what I had told him the year before and asked me to repeat it. He then said he had three stories to share.

While doing forced labor in the camp, Marion was approached by a despondent and broken Jew. "Here is my shovel. Take it and strike me across my head. I cannot go on living like this." Marion refused the request. Some years later, a daughter of this Jew who was a journalist in France came to Poland. She sought out Marion to thank him and to write the story.

The second story involved Barrack 11 at Auschwitz. That was the barrack where special heinous torture was inflicted on the inmates before they were to be murdered. On the way to Barrack 11, a Jew walked with Marion. At one point, he stopped, took his arm and stared directly into his eyes. He told Marion with assurance, "You will live." The words gave Marion hope though the very next day the prophetic Jew was gassed to death.

Third story: One day an accident caused the soup of a Jewish man to spill. The man sat staring into his empty bowl. This was not a minor event. That meager bit of watery fluid could mean the difference between life and death. The daily caloric ration was barely 180 calories, about 10% of a normal sustaining diet. Without hesitation, Marion walked over and poured half of his soup into the unfortunate Jew's bowl. It turned out that the Jew was fluent in German and was put to work as a translator and documentation clerk. As such, he had access to the camp archives. Upon learning that Marion was assigned to Barrack 11, he worked fast. He discovered there was a prisoner with the same name and approximate age as Marion who had died recently. He managed to switch identities and somehow Marion was removed from Barrack 11. The translator then told Marion to avoid staying in one camp more than a month. The Germans were very thorough but they required time to catch any errors or cover-ups. So Marion began to do things that would get him transferred to harsher duty. For example, he managed to find a forbidden cigarette butt and smoked it in view of a guard. It meant punishment but it also meant survival.

After he related the stories, one of the group members asked, "How was your spirituality affected by being an Auschwitz inmate?" Marion answered, "A person must have a connection to the Divine, to G-d - something beyond himself. On the other

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## AUSCHWITZ RETREAT (cont.)

hand, a person must have an inner life, not simply be part of the external material world. This might carry him through the darkest moments." For is it not said that one must look within for G-d?

Those participants who so desired joined with others in Buddhist, Christian, and Jewish sessions. Meanwhile, Riphael had never managed to find ten male Jews for a *minyan*. Then as we were praying near the childrens' barrack at Birkenau, with wondrous chanting from different traditions filling the air, Jacob, my companion from Holland excitedly pointed out the door. He ran up to Riphael, "The Israeli police are outside! A whole group of Israeli police!" Riphael jumped up and called out to them, "Today is my mother's *yahrtzeit*." Before he finished, they asked, "Do you want us to form a *minyan* so you can say *kaddish*?" The police arranged for the ceremony in the barrack and after that stayed on so Riphael could *daven mincha* and say *kedusha* with a *minyan*. In the thick fog we couldn't see the sun and were unclear as to which direction to face. One policeman had a compass and directed us to face Yerushalayim. The police had no *siddurim* and did not appear to be "religious", yet they all knew the proper responses during *kaddish* and *kedusha*. They were so excited to have helped with this *mitzvah* that they asked to take pictures with Riphael standing in front of the barrack. To experience *HaShem's* loving hand so personally and intensely in Birkenau was one of the most awesome moments of my life.

About 20 minutes later, as we were walking back towards the entrance, we saw a wondrous site. An Israeli flag was waving in the breeze. And those same Israeli police, were dancing in a circle near this "entrance to hell"; dancing and singing, "*kol haolam kulo, gesher ztar meod . . . all this world is a very narrow bridge and the essential point is not to be afraid at all.*" What prisoner inside that infamous camp 60 years ago could have such a wild dream. Which of them could imagine that their children, grandchildren and relatives would be policemen in the State of Israel, singing inside that very camp a Hasidic *nigun*, from Rabbi Nachman of Breslov - "the essential thing is not to be afraid at all."

Our Rav, HaRav Elazar Mordechai Keinig told me last year before leaving on the trip to Poland, "All those who died there are *tzadikim*." I became aware that Auschwitz/Birkenau (indeed, all Poland) is the biggest *kevrai tzaddikim* (burial place of the righteous) of the People of Israel in the world. For Jews, especially Hasidim, such a burial place is considered a power point on the planet. People are to go there to pray. Auschwitz is the primal place to experience the deepest heartbreak, to remember how human beings can be the worst of animals in the Kingdom, with the ugliest distorted hearts. Yet, in the same place, one can experience the most profound healing, the sweet taste of personal and collective redemption, in the merit of all those who died there.

## TO SERVE IN THE ARMY

by Jeffrey Woolf (13791, PI.291)

*Jeffrey Woolf was born in Boston, Massachusetts and made aliyah in 1993. He is a Professor at Bar-Ilan University and has published widely in the areas of medieval Jewish history and history of Halacha. He received a B.A. from Boston University summa cum laude and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard. He received semicha as valedictorian from Rabbi Isaac Elchanon Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University. He has held many intellectual, religious, and communal positions in addition to serving as operations officer of the Civil Guard in the Old City of Jerusalem. Jeffrey lives with his wife and five children in the Gush Etzion city of Efrat.*

My Ariel (13797) was inducted into the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) this August and had his swearing in at a base somewhere in the south. I wrote the following when he was drafted:

I thought I'd share a part of Israeli life that you're not usually exposed to. You see, this morning my wife Toby (13793) and I took our 20 year old son Ariel (13797) on the fabled drive to BaKuM. BaKuM stands for *Basis Klitah u'Miyyun* (Base for Absorption and Classification). It's the point at which all new draftees enter the army for their compulsory service. Most Israelis go into the army at 18 or 19. Ariel has been studying in a *Hesder Yeshiva* in Petach Tikvah for the past two years and thus is only going in now. He will go on to be an army spotter (*tatzpitan*) after he finishes his four months of basic training at a base near Eilat.

Getting a child ready for the army is a very mixed bag, in reality and emotionally. In terms of the required errands, it feels like sending a kid to summer camp. You make up a list that includes liquid soap, sun screen, deodorant, waterproof watch, etc. and you run around trying to fill it. But the list isn't that long. The army pretty much provides everything, including khaki *tzitzit*. This is a Jewish army! But it's not summer camp. This is serious business. While we knew this day would come, while we're filled with pride that it's come, we're also scared to death and very emotional. Here's our 6'3" baby ending his childhood. No matter what happens (and please G-d nothing will happen and G-d will send him home safe and sound), we know that the person who returns will be older and far more mature than I was at that age.

Ariel is insistent upon being in a unit of both religious and secular soldiers. He believes passionately in the unity of the Jewish people and in the need of every Jew to be here. Through his conduct, he wants to give the lie to the idea that the Torah is some arcane artifact. How can Toby and I not be proud? So if you see a tall, very lanky kid with a very young face in a fresh pressed uniform on the bus to or from Eilat in the next four months, that may be my little boy, one of the latest additions to Israel's Defense Forces.

## UPDATE ON KUROPATWA

Zevulon Ser (2155,Pl.6) was the first to use his surname. He was the son of Abraham Charlap (2153,Pl.) born ca 1740 in Nowogrod. Zevulon was an innkeeper and dairyman in Ciechanowiec where he sired eight children. His daughter Gittel (3019) married a relative named Chuna Kur (3017). Chuna, born in 1772 in Wies Laszkowo, was the son of Yosef Kuropatwa (3014,Pl.145) and Basha bat Kalman (3015). At the time the names Kur and Kuropatwa were used interchangeably. Kuropatwa means partridge in Polish and one of the meanings of Kur is a cock. This renewed union of the Kur (Kuropatwa) and the Ser (Charlap) families gave rise to an enormous number of descendants who spread through the nearby towns.

About a year ago, we received a letter from Ari Itzkowitz of Modiin, Israel. He informed me that he is descended from the Kuropatwa family of Bielsk and that he was apprised that the family had connections to the Charlaps. Some joint investigation revealed the following: a certain Yechiel Kuropatwa who was born in Grodno Guberniya in the mid 19th century had at least three children who left eastern Europe for America. One of them, Velvel, did not like life in the USA and returned to Poland. His brother Abraham, born on May 15, 1873 in Bielsk, changed his name to Karp around 1890. He married Chana Joseph and came to the United States in 1908. His son Solomon (Zalman) is the maternal grandfather of Ari Itzkowitz. A third child of Yechiel Kuropatwa was Faiga who married a man named Lassow and settled in Hartford, Connecticut. Her grandson, Bernard Vinick of Longmeadow, Massachusetts, asserted that there was a connection between the Kuropatwas and Charlaps. It is interesting to note that Bernard's first cousin once removed, Ted Vinick (135,Pl.111) married Raquel (134), a Ser girl from Argentina. Ted and Raquel have been strong supporters of our family research. We are researching this branch with Ari Itzkowitz in an effort to define their connection to our tree. The following is Ari's personal perspective on his spiritual journey.

*I made aliyah from Queens, New York. My story is simple. I never felt at home in New York. The people and the lifestyle were strange. There was a nominal Orthodox community but it seemed that the practice was more for show than from deep conviction. I was not sure as to what I was searching for. However, I had always had a very strong belief in G-d and an awareness of His hand in my life and in the world. During high school I came to a decision that I would like to spend a year studying in a yeshiva in Israel. I hoped to strengthen my awareness of myself as a Jew in awe of G-d. This was contrary to my parents' wishes. They felt it would be a wasted year. Most Modern Orthodox students assume that a year of study in Israel is a guaranteed part of their education. For me, it was different. I came to a conscious decision to go and had to fight for it for two years.*

*My year in Israel was not an easy time. I had always been in all the honor classes and had been a top academic performer but I always had difficulty with Jewish studies. Still, I applied myself and studied 12 hours a day, but usually I didn't follow the suggested curriculum. I was more interested in philosophy and commentary than in Talmud study. At some point during this period, I came to the realization that Israel was my home and it was the place I had always yearned for. I returned to the United States only to complete my university degree. At the university, I was extremely active in both Jewish affairs and in two different youth movements - Bnei Akiva and the National Council of Synagogue Youth (NCSY). While studying for my degree, I took time out for two trips to Israel. When I was away from Eretz Yisrael I felt gray and torn in two. Two weeks after completing my university work I was on a plane to Israel. Just before I left, my neighbor, a rabbi who was prominent in Mizrahi tried to dissuade me from going. He said, "I understand you're going on a trip. Where?" I told him I was making aliyah and hoped to be accepted in a master's degree program in an Israeli university. He responded, "You can't expect to just pick up and move to Israel and expect G-d to provide." I still cannot believe he said that. What was a Mizrahi rabbi trying to accomplish by discouraging aliyah? Anyway, I shrugged it off and the next morning, before my flight, I received an acceptance letter from Tel Aviv University.*

*I have now been in Israel for 12 years and have never regretted coming home. There was a difficult period just before and after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. Rabin and the extreme leftist Shulamit Aloni had been building a hate campaign against American olim. Most of us who made aliyah from America are religious and that is anathema to the Left. They claimed that we were at the root of the "right wing fanaticism" in Israel. Just because I was an American, I became a danger symbol in some people's eyes. After all, perhaps I would go berserk like Baruch Goldstein and begin to shoot people. After Rabin was killed, religious people were publicly scorned and I was spat at more than once on the street.*

*Still, I have built a life in Israel. I probably lead a career not much different than if I had stayed in New York. I am an investment analyst. I have spent a year in the army as a tank driver in the Armored Corps. I have lived on a yishuv, a kibbutz, in Tel Aviv and in Jerusalem. Now I have settled in Modiin. I struggle to make a living, but somehow I circulate among many of the powerful people in Israel - though usually as a service provider. I perceive that everything I do counts - has meaning. I have helped bring many millions of dollars of investment into the country and provide people with jobs. I have a family and, very important to me, I am a religious Jew both in the house and at work.*

We are pleased that Ari's Kuropatwa line will soon be included on our family tree.

## BIRTHS

**Omri Barak**(18739,Pl.25) was born in Israel on Dec. 16, 2003. He is the 1st child of Arnon (18738) and Or (10036) and the 1st grandchild for Or's parents Moshe (9919) and Bella (10027) Spitalny. Moshe's mother was Chaya Harlap (9906), granddaughter of the great Ephraim Zvi Charlap (3228).

**Joshua Colby (Chaim Kalman) Blaier** (18784,Pl.242) was born in Freehold, New Jersey on Aug. 23. He is the 2nd child of Ronald (5757) and Rena (16938) and the 9th grandchild for Robert (5749) and Rosa (5746) Blaier. Rosa's mother was Chaya Lew Beckerman (4646) who left Ciechanowiec for Cuba before World War II.

**Susan Landon Essig** (18652,Pl.164), a 2nd daughter, was born on May 7 to Brad (18650) and Sarah (1077) Essig of Fairfield, Connecticut. Susan is the 2nd grandchild of Sarah's parents, Daniel (1050) and Katherine (1061) Kristol and the 4th great-grandchild of Pearl Kristol (1044) of West Palm Beach, Florida. Pearl's late husband, Abraham (1039) was the son of Morris Kristol (683) and Chaya Gittel Kur (677).

**Lauren Elizabeth Gunter** (18656,Pl.252) was born on July 26, the 1st child for Jeremy (18493) and Ashley (7412) of Leawood, Kansas. Lauren is also the 1st grandchild for Craig (7400) and Carol (7394) Wilson of Overland Park, Kansas. Great-grandparents are the late Morris (7386) and Ethel (7381) Firestone. Ethel's mother, Yospe Lewin Cohen (7368), came to the USA from Ciechanowiec, Poland.

**Margaret Helen Lauer** (18751,Pl.369) was born on Oct. 14, the 1st child for Richard (17468) and Rebecca (17467) of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Margaret is also the 1st grandchild of Doris (17466) and the late Stanley (17464) Fellerman and is the 5th generation descended from Yisrael Lew (8143,Pl.360) and Faiga Jarmusz (8147) of Ciechanowiec, Poland.

**Max Benjamin Lind** (18624,Pl.187) was born on March 22 in Brighton, Sussex, U.K. He is the 1st child of Jonathan (12246) and Sarah Peek (18520) and the 1st grandchild of Frederick (12243) and Eleanor Platt (12241) Lind of London. Eleanor's great-grandparents were Rabbi Menachem Mendel Don Yechiya (11666) and Sarah Rebecca Schneerson (11673).

**Haley Alexandra (Chava Eliana Shayna) Menton** (18625,Pl.102) was born on Aug. 1 in Scottsdale, Arizona. She is the 2nd child of Marc (70) and Pamela (15639) of Cave Creek, Arizona and the 4th grandchild for Arthur (58) and Nancy (189) Menton of Centerport, New York. Haley is named for Marc's grandfather Alexander (Elia) Menton (39).

**Ella Navon** (18654,Pl.40) was born on May 19 in Israel. She

is the 1st child of Eran (18653) and Tamar (11215) and the 1st grandchild of Nurit Grechter (9901). Nurit's father is Amnon Charlap (3314) of Rehovoth, great-grandfather of 16.

**Imri Pessach** (18737,Pl.40) is another of the 16 great-grandchildren of Amnon Charlap. Imri was born on Sept. 26 in Israel, the 2nd child of Guy (11026) and Orit (14418) and 7th grandchild of Ehud (11023) and Yael Charlap (9900) Pessach.

**Ryan Plotkin** (18785,Pl.242) was born in February, the 3rd child of Craig (11474) and Shari (5759). Ryan's grandfather, the late Michael Beckerman (5747) was the son of Chaya Lew (4646) [see birth of Joshua Blaier above].

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## MARRIAGES

**George Aviv Chityat** (12576,Pl.192) was married to **Adi Kisos** (18586) on Aug. 26 at the Royal Garden, Petach Tikvah, Israel in a big, beautiful outdoor wedding. There was a marvelous henna in Rishon Le Zion two nights earlier. Adi, who was born on Sept. 11, 1981 in Eilat is the daughter of Micha and Yafa Kisos of Rishon Le Zion. George is the son of Ezra (12573) and Trudy Donchin (12571) Chityat. Ezra was born in Basra, Iraq and Trudy is a Don Yechiya (Yahya), Donchin being a variation of that honored name.

**Michael Ginsberg** (220,Pl.105) and **Pamela Belott** (18749) were married on March 10 in Florida. Michael is the son of Lambert Ginsberg (208) of Schenectady, New York and the grandson of the late Norma Family Ginsberg (197) who was born in Ciechanowiec, the daughter of Shepsel Family (Familja) (195) and Etká Ser (190).

**Oren Harlap**(10021,Pl.407) was wed to **Adi Kol** (18743) in Israel on June 24. Oren is the son of Ram (9914) and Yafa (10011) of Rehovoth and is descended from Ephraim Zvi Charlap (3228).

**Shiran Harlap** (10020,Pl.407), Oren's sister, was married on March 30 in Israel to **Doron Kazas** (18744). [see previous item].

**Adam Justin Kristol** (1075,Pl.164) and **Kathryn Eve Goldsamt** (18647) were married in New York, NY on January 24. Adam is the oldest of four sons of Howard G. (1049) and Rochelle H. (1060) Kristol of Wilmington, Delaware, a grandson of the late Abraham L. Kristol (1039) and Pearl C. Kristol (1044), and a great-grandson of Morris David Kristol (683) and Chaya Gittel Kur (677), who arrived in the United States from Poland in 1904.

**Todd B. Kristol** (1120,Pl.164), Adam's brother, wed **Sharon Berdon** (18655) in Manhattan on Oct. 3. [see previous item].

## A TRIBUTE TO LEON SHARLIP

*Leon Sharlip (9488, Pl. 78) died in September of this year. (See Obituaries) Leon was a historian and writer who had contributed several articles to B'rayshit over the years. In our previous issue we printed his "Shabbos, My Day of Rest." "It Was Such a Joy To Know You" appeared in our Dec. 1997 issue and a year earlier, "Gallagher" was published in our Nov. 1996 issue. Some of these articles formed a part of Leon's booklet entitled "Sharlip Family Vignettes." Leon's wife, Regina Katz Sharlip (9495) has also appeared in these pages. Leon had submitted her "Memoirs of Galicia" which we published in the Spring of 1996. Leon was President of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, Founder and President of the Verreeville Historical Society, member of several historical societies including Friends of Independence [Hall] Historic Park, Editor of the literary journal The Marquee de Lafayette, and author of many booklets and articles. Booklets include Ury House, Verreeville, and Fox Chase Tour, A Senior Hagaddah, a Purimschpiel, Jewish Patriots of the American Revolution, and several explanations of Jewish festivals, holidays, and traditions, such as a Tu B'Shvat Program, and an Explanation of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. What more fitting tribute than to publish a few more of Leon's pieces? These follow:*

### BETWEEN DARKNESS AND LIGHT

I do not think I will go to my last slumber unwillingly.

Wrenching, it is to see my beloved country ravaged  
by trash, graffiti, bottles, plastics, cans . . .  
An Eden, polluted by the debris of "progress"  
and by vicious urban vandals.

When did we lose our civic pride? Our decency?

I remember well the scent of the pines,  
The pungent aroma of the woods in the morning,  
The song of the crickets at noon,  
The fragrance of the honeysuckle at dusk,

The intoxicating nectar of spring.

Where have they gone?

Drowned in toxic fumes?  
Charred by acid rain?  
Killed by the "greenhouse" effect?

I view with revulsion the endless miles of trashed homes,  
Of shattered and shuttered neighborhoods,  
Corroding railroads and rusting factories,  
Of skilled productive workers thrown on job graveyards,  
Downsized by avaricious corporations' bottom lines.  
Such human potential trashed  
So that stockbrokers can skim the cream  
from the sale of junk bonds for corporate takeovers.

Our city streets becoming home to walking zombies and street people,  
Adrift in a never-never world of insanity, drugs, and booze,  
Without learning or skills and beyond caring,  
Wasting their precious lives away.

I am revolted by hordes of people shaking raging fists at rallies of ritual hate  
For the greater glory of their absolute "just cause."  
Heartless the terrorism and hostage taking  
by their self-appointed and dedicated assassins.  
Poor hemorrhaging North Ireland, Central America, Israel,

Yugoslavia

Who is next? The United States?  
Can reason ever overcome ardent venom?

(continued next page)

**WRITINGS OF LEON SHARLIP** (continued from previous page)

I do not think I will go to my last slumber unwillingly.

And yet, . . . and yet . . .

I would hug most tightly the love I've been privileged to be given.

Salute the marvelous folks who have lent a hand along the way.

Reveled in the creations of musicians, actors, and artists  
who ignited fireworks in my soul.

Revere the teachers and writers who opened doors to brave new worlds.

Gaze in awe at the marvels of nature,

Transfixed by the fantastic palette of a sun-drenched sunset.

Astounded by man's ingenious edifices.

Reciprocated the joy of helping others.

Really; do I want to say farewell to such an exciting world

where there is so much still

to see, experience, love, learn, enjoy, help, and share?

Maybe not in big gulps as in my youthful past,

but then little morsels can also be delectable.

No! I do not think I'm quite ready to go to my last slumber willingly.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PICKELATED MEMORIES**

At the Lafayette Shavuot Luncheon, the famous passage from *Ecclesiastes* conjured up some pleasant memories. *Ecclesiastes*, you will recall, states there is a time for everything; a time to be born and a time to die, a time to love and a time to hate, a time to preserve pickles and a time to eat them, a time to ready green tomatoes, and a time to *fress* on them, a time to prepare sauerkraut and a time to gorge on it. Until then I always regarded the antithetical phraseology as catchy but rather boring cliches. In a flash, I could see, feel, smell, and taste the wisdom of it all.

When Momma rolled out her enormous heavy ceramic crocks, I knew what culinary delights would soon jazz up our meals. Being the youngest in the family and the only one still at school, I knew and readily accepted my fate. I was volunteered to assist the enterprises in every possible way, from scrubbing the crocks, the special smooth rocks, and the reused barrel top boards, to lugging my wagon to the markets to haul whatever vegetables were seasonably available. This produce also had to be scrubbed. Afterwards, it was Mom's alchemy of spices, garlic, kosher salt, dill, and vinegar, which were poured over the green tomatoes, or shredded cabbage, which were then packed down under the boards and kept submerged by the rocks, that transformed them from mundane, run-of-the-mill vegetables to ambrosia of the Gods. The process only took a few days but seemed like nine months. It was less than human to expect a young kid to wait that long. What if they were not perfectly soured? Good ain't bad. After they were really ready, whenever Mom would ask me to run downstairs to the basement to bring up a dish of pickles for the family meal, miraculously, my usual defective hearing became keen, my dawdling responses geared to instant high speed. Naturally, not all the pickles that were brought upstairs were in the dish, for if you listened attentively, you could detect a swish in my tummy.

Objectively, Mom's creations were gourmet five-star specialties without equal. But Mrs. Ginsberg's weren't bad. They also had the added spice of being illicit. Mrs. Ginsberg lived across the street about half way down the block. Once, when my pals and I walked down the back driveway, a sudden aroma of garlic pickles assailed our boyish nostrils. Upon closer inspection we uncovered two barrels of pickles under her back stairs. It puzzles me even today that she never suspected the nightly raids by marauders, because the following year they were there again.

Most people use these items as an extra fillip to enhance a meal. I ate them as the main entree, especially with rye bread and butter. A pickled tomato with a slight blush of red was a "Michel" never to be forgotten.

We never asked Mom for her recipes, if indeed she had any, so her skill is lost for all times. Why do we think our parents will live forever? In my old age, *Ecclesiastes* is not so friendly. Those chemically manufactured store bought pickles or those served in restaurants now translate into a time to eat and a time for Maalox, a time to consume salt and a time to develop high blood pressure, a time to "nosh" and a time to forgo old favorites.

Ah Shakespeare. Old age, he wrote, sans the former keenness of sight, sans the sharpness of mind, sans the ability to hike, and sans the delectable taste of pickles. But thanks for the memories, all the same. They were sensational.

## OBITUARIES

**Seth Paul Jaben** (1565,Pl.149) died on Dec. 19, 2003 from complications of AIDS. Seth was born on Oct. 29, 1956 and was raised in the Kansas City area. He graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design and operated his own illustration and design studio in New York City. His surrealist designs have appeared in the New York Times, Newsweek, and on product packaging. His artworks were the subject of the Seth Jaben Watch Collection, launched internationally in 1989. Seth also taught at the Parsons School of Design in New York City. He was the son of the late Lawrence Jaben (1562) and is survived by his mother Diane (1560) of Kansas City, MO; brother Steve Jaben (1566) of Rancho Margarita, CA; and sister Marcia Holtz (1567) of Virginia City, VA. Diane is the daughter of the late Esther Daniels (1556), whose parents were Enoch Velvel Kur (1542) and Zelta Smolarczyk (1546) of Nur, Poland. Seth was interred at Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

**Melba Levine** (4563,pL.239) died at age 90 in Overland Park, Kansas on Sept. 24. Burial was at Sheffield Cemetery. Melba was born to the Lazarus family on Nov. 26, 1913 in Kansas City, Missouri. She married Morris Levine (4559), who preceded her in death in 1989. Morris parents were cousins, Shmuel Itche Lew (4483) and Chaya Lewin (4488) of Ciechanowicz, Poland. Melba was a member of Beth Shalom Synagogue and was active in the congregation's sisterhood. She is survived by her sons Harold (4567) of Davis, CA and Steve (4568) of Overland Park and three grandchildren. Melba was interred at Sheffield Cemetery.

**Leon (Leib) Sharlip** (9488,Pl.78) died in his Philadelphia home on Sept. 6, just shy of his 92nd birthday. He was born on Sept. 8, 1912. A native of northeast Philadelphia, he was the son of Naftali (9469) and Leah Prepstein (9475) Sharlip. Naftali arrived in the USA in 1882 from Minsk Guberniya, Belarus. Leah came from Grodno. Naftali's aunts were those Charlaps who married into the Budowla (Budovitch) family. Leon was the youngest of seven siblings. He graduated from the Philadelphia public school system where he later taught for 37 years, 25 of them in the Social Studies Department of Lincoln High School. He received a B.A. and an M.A. in History from Temple University. In 1937, Leon married Regina Katz (9495), also a school teacher. An avid traveler, Leon and his wife visited 49 US states and over 20 foreign countries in the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia. He attended summer school at Sophia University in Japan and Haile Selassie University in Ethiopia. Passionate about preserving the heritage of northeast Philadelphia, Leon founded the Verreeville Historical Society in 1990. He authored several booklets, contributed articles and lectured on topics related to the local history. Thanks to his nephew Adam Lesnick and cousin Saul Broudy (9539) many of Leon's photographs and

documents are preserved in our family archives.

**Solomon Zusman** (3260,Pl.24) died in Australia on July 29. He was born in Perth, Western Australia on Feb. 18, 1923. His father was Menachem Zusman (3252) who had made aliyah from Kiev Guberniya in the Ukraine. In Israel, Menachem met Mindel (3250), daughter of Ephraim Zvi Charlap (3228), founder of Rehovoth, and his first wife Esther Kruschen (3234). Menachem and Mindel were married and left for Australia in 1908. They settled in Perth. Solomon married Lore Lessheim (3267) in 1947. They had two children, both of whom married, Michael (3278) and Yvonne Edelman (3279). Solomon's wife, children, and three grandchildren survive him.  
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## IMMIGRATION MYSTERIES

Research at the U.S. National Archives has uncovered immigration records of several people who most certainly belong on our family tree. However, the exact connection remains unknown. Please contact us if you have information on any of the following, all arriving at the Port of New York:

Beyla Kur, a 55 year old widow, arrived on the SS Statendam on April 14, 1903, sponsored by her son B. Cure of Manhattan.

Meier Mankuta, a 19 year old tailor from Ciechanowicz, arrived on the SS Grossk from Bremen on July 31, 1914. His destination was his cousin W. Stailerberg, Springfield, MA.

Scheine Kopito, 27, and her daughter Chieschke, 3, of Bialystok, arrived on Oct. 3, 1910 aboard the SS Noordam from Rotterdam. Scheine (Shayna) had left her father Moshe Lew in Poland and was going to her husband Leib in Centerville Station, NY.

Lazer Kopito, 46, who had left his wife Basha in Sokolow, came on the SS Pres. Lincoln from Hamburg on March 7, 1912 to see his brother-in-law Hersh Radzinsky, Mt. Vernon, NY.

Chaim Pasternak of New York City awaited his family who arrived aboard the SS Vaaderland from Antwerp on Aug. 26, 1913. They had started the trip in Lomza Guberniya. The travelers included Chaim's 45 year old wife, a tailor son, 18, and three daughters: Brucha, 16, Dvora, 11, and Chana, 9.

Dvora Scharlap (Charlap), 40, had left Nesvizh with her daughter Sarah, 18, and arrived on Dec. 3, 1907 aboard the SS Vaaderland from Antwerp. Destination was Dvora's son, then living at 57 Ludlow St. on New York's Lower East Side.

Chaya Charlof, 16, came on the SS Umbria from Liverpool on April 10, 1904 to see her siblings Harriet and Henry of Newburgh, NY.

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