

WINTER 2010



AMERICAN VETERANS OF ISRAEL LEGACY CORPORATION

PRESERVING THE LEGACY OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN
VOLUNTEERS IN ISRAEL'S WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

136 East 39th Street, New York, NY 10016

TRANSFER OF MACHAL AND ALIYAH BET ARCHIVES TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE:

On March 5, 2009, at the initiative of the Deputy Consul General, Benjamin Krasna, a meeting took place at the Israeli consulate in New York attended by Deputy Consul Benjamin Krasna, American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) Executive Director Evan Kingsley, AJHS Trustee Joshua Landes, and AVI representatives, Paul Kaye, and Si Spiegelman. At the meeting, Evan Kingsley indicated the AJHS wished to create a collection documenting American Jewry's contribution to the creation of the State of Israel. In this connection Evan expressed his interest to acquire the holdings of the Machal and Aliyah Bet archives as this would facilitate the American Jewish Historical Society to realize its above-stated objective. If accepted, the archives would be transferred from Gainesville to the AJHS facility on West 16th Street in New York City.

A number of phone conversations between Ralph Lowenstein and Evan Kingsley followed that led to a visit to Gainesville by Evan Kingsley and an AJHS trustee to get a first-hand look and a briefing concerning Ralph's work on behalf of the Aliyah Bet and Machal archives at the University of Florida. The result was an agreement in principle to transfer the holdings, provided we obtained consent from the three parties involved, i.e., University of Florida, the AJHS Board of Trustees and AVI. Ralph and Evan then worked together on a proposed transfer plan and timeline, projecting a completion of the project by August 2010.

In June, the Board of Trustees of the American Jewish Historical Society unanimously voted to accept our archives as part of its own, and offered to launch a major fund-raising drive to support the project. Subsequently, we received a letter from Dean Judith Russell of the University of Florida dated August 24, 2009, consenting to the transfer.

From the outset, it was understood that Ralph Lowenstein would assume leadership. Other AVI ex-officio board members participated in the discussions that followed, including Art Bernstein, Paul Kaye, Sam Klausner, Joe Warner, Si Spiegelman and AVILC President Jeffrey Margolis. On October 5, 2009, the AVI committee voted unanimously to proceed with the project. The formal agreements governing the decision are the AJHS Good-Faith Statement dated September 14, 2009 and a Deed of Gift.

THE PROJECT:

1. The on-site work in Gainesville started on November 17. A professional archivist/librarian is working with Ralph Lowenstein in collaboration with the AJHS Director of Library Archives to catalog and prepare the material. This will be followed with the physical transfer of the collection to the AJHS stack in New York City next year.

2. The project budget amounts to \$160,000 of which \$134,000 still needs to be raised in a joint AVI/AJHS fund drive. A significant portion of this

budget is allocated to archival enhancements; among them a detailed catalog record maintained on-line as well as photographs and selected documents available in digital format on-line. The materials will be preserved in the AJHS climate controlled facility and available for viewing in the Reading Room and on the web via a special Finding Aid. The AJHS will host conferences addressing the role of American volunteers in Israel's War of Independence as the archival material becomes available at the Center.

3. Our timeline projects completion by August 2010. Our plan is to hold a reception and conference to mark the arrival of the archives at AJHS.

We ask our members and all of our supporters for maximum effort to help raise the funds needed to complete this project. The American Jewish Historical Society is the premiere Jewish archive. Transferring the Aliyah Bet and Machal holdings to its care will ensure the continuity of a viable, state of the art archive and preserve our legacy for future generations.

AVI Archives Committee:

Art Bernstein
Paul Kaye
Sam Klausner
Ralph Lowenstein
Jeffrey Margolis
Si Spiegelman
Joseph Warner

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www.sas.upenn.edu/~sklausne/aviweb.htm
American Veterans of Israel

www.israelvets.com
Aliyah Bet & Machal Virtual Museum

www.machal.org.il
World Machal (Israel)

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A PERSONAL ESSAY:
WHY THE
EXPERIENCES OF NORTH
AMERICAN
VOLUNTEERS ARE
LARGELY UNKNOWN

by Ralph Lowenstein
Director, Aliyah Bet and Machal
Archives University of Florida

Over the years, veterans of Aliyah Bet and Machal have had one common refrain: “No one in America knows about us. Israel pretends we never existed.”

There is some truth and much misunderstanding about both statements.

We were and are largely unknown in the United States and Canada. Out of a population of more than five million Jews, we numbered only about 1,000 men and women. It is safe to say that very few North American Jews know about the volunteers. During my own lifetime, no American Jew or Christian who discovered that I had volunteered for Israel in 1948 had ever met another American Jew who did the same. The odds against their knowing someone like me were about 4,000 to 1. Immediately after the 1948 war, the publicity about our experience was nil. All American volunteers had violated the terms of their passports, and perhaps other laws then extant, risking at best fines and jail time, and at worst loss of their

citizenship. Canadian laws, if applied strictly, could also punish volunteers from that country severely.

We did not want publicity.

For the most part, the American and Canadian volunteers did not bear names that attracted publicity. Two exceptions were “Buzz” Beurling, Canada’s top ace in World War II, and Mickey Marcus, a West Point graduate with a brilliant World War II record. Marcus had also been an important public servant in New York City. Both died very early in the war, Beurling in a plane crash in Italy, and Marcus in the attempt to open the road to surrounded Jerusalem. Except for three other unusual individuals -- Ben Dunkelman of Toronto, Paul Shulman of Stanford, Connecticut, and Al Schwimmer of Bridgeport, Connecticut -- the volunteers were not appointed to high ranking jobs in the Israeli military, partly because of their lack of facility in Hebrew. Dunkelman, an outstanding field commander for the Royal Canadian Army in World War II, recruited the 300 men from Canada, then became brigadier of the 7th Brigade. Shulman, an Annapolis graduate, was the first commander of the Israeli Navy. Schwimmer purchased the large transports and recruited the air crews that would provide the air bridge from Czechoslovakia to Israel; he became second-in-command of the Israeli Air Force and later founded and served as CEO for many years of Israel Aircraft Industries, the largest employer in Israel, with more than 20,000 employees.

Most of the volunteers had World War II experience, and could contribute badly-needed military skills to Israel. The clandestine recruitment process sought young men and women between the ages of 20 and 26 - old enough to have had military experience; not old enough to have the weighty responsibilities of spouses and children. Our parents were not among the movers and shakers in
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American Jewish Historical Society

Founded in 1892

November 19, 2009

To members of the AVI Board,

The American Jewish Historical Society is thrilled to become the recipient of the Aliyah Bet and Machal Archives now at the University of Florida. I want you to know how meaningful this is to all of us on staff and to the Board.

AJHS is a 117-year-old organization with extraordinary collections documenting the Jewish presence in America, and American Jewish contributions beyond our shores. Through personal papers and the records of American Jewish organizations, we try to reflect as complete a history as we can, making those materials available to scholars, historians, students, filmmakers, genealogists – anyone with an interest in the legacy of American Jews.

But our collections, as they are now constituted, do not adequately reflect American Jewish engagement in the establishment of the State of Israel. The acquisition of the Aliyah Bet and Machal Archives that you have assembled represents a giant step in filling that gap. The surveys of individual volunteers, the photographs, the organizational records and more together represent a substantial body of materials that will likely be consulted often once we make them easily accessible.

We do what we do quite well. We do it best when we're working with material of great significance and originality. That can surely be said of the Aliyah Bet and Machal Archives. We look forward to doing them justice when housed here at the American Jewish Historical Society.

Sincerely,

**Evan Kingsley
Executive Director**

American Jewish life. With only one or two exceptions, we were first generation Jews on at least one side of our family. Our fathers had not yet "made it." In my research, I found only four volunteers from Ivy League schools. The Jewish representation in the student body at Columbia University was significant in 1948, perhaps as high as 20 to 30 percent. Yet I was the only undergraduate at Columbia to volunteer.

Only three published novels were written by volunteers about their experience; none was a best-seller. The three or four non-fiction books over the years about this general subject concentrated on the effort to rescue Holocaust survivors or acquire arms for Israel, not on the critical role of the volunteers, including some Christians. One exception to this was "I Am My Brother's Keeper," by Jeffrey and Craig Weiss, but this book also did not have wide currency.

In short, we were never "forgotten," because we were never known in the first place.

This is not to say that we did not provide significant services for the war effort. In two areas, the North American volunteers contributed far out of proportion to their numbers. Those two areas were Aliyah Bet and the Air Force. The young men in Aliyah Bet crewed the big ships that brought almost half of all the Holocaust survivors from Displaced Persons camps throughout Western Europe to other more livable refugee camps in or near Jewish Palestine. Exodus 1947, captained by a Palestinian Jew, but crewed mostly by young Americans, provided publicity that many contend was the tipping point for the United Nations vote in favor of partition. About half the North Americans who volunteered for the Israeli armed forces served in the Air Force. Without them, there would have been no Air Force, since only a few Israelis knew how to fly combat planes, and none could fly the large multi-motor aircraft in the Air

Transport Command.

The ground war in 1948 Israel gets most of the space in history books, and deservedly so. However, the small arms and ammunition to win that ground war were flown into the country from Czechoslovakia, the only country in the world that would sell war materiel in bulk to Israel. The transport planes (and most of the pilots) that formed that land bridge from Czechoslovakia to Israel were American in origin. Without the Air Transport Command and World War II veteran pilots, there might not be an Israel today. Most of the fighter aircraft were also flown by Americans and Canadians, and they eliminated Arab planes as a factor in the ground war. In addition, they also cleared the skies of Arab bombers, putting an end to the daily bombing of Tel Aviv and Haifa, which had caused such heavy civilian casualties.

American veterans of Aliyah Bet and Machal have criticized Israel for not giving more public credit to these North American contributions. But I think that in making such criticism, we fail to take the larger perspective. We fail to see ourselves as Israelis see us.

First, Palestinian Jews suffered the brunt of Arab attacks, beginning in November 1947, well before Machal volunteers were anything but a trickle. Some 4,000 Jewish soldiers and 2,000 civilians were killed between November 1947 and March 1949, a staggering one percent of the population.

Second, Israel did not want to give us publicity that might have affected our lives in America and Canada adversely. Following the war, almost a dozen Americans involved in arms transfer and/or service in the Israeli armed forces were tried, fined (in one case imprisoned) and lost their civil rights for life.

Third, Israel treated us not as arriving saviors, but as arriving immigrants, just like immigrants streaming into the country from the Displaced

Persons camps of Europe and the internment camps in Cyprus. We were given citizenship documents, along with our enlistment papers. Not counting several hundred thousand Holocaust survivors, we were 1,000 of some 3,500 volunteers from 37 different countries. I think Israelis expected most of us to stay, and were disappointed when we did not. Only about 200 North Americans (16 percent) remained in Israel immediately after the war, although others immigrated to Israel in their later years.

Fourth, Israel was involved in nation building. It had to form a cohesive citizenry out of a disparate mass. It needed local, not foreign, heroes as models to inspire Israeli youth.

And fifth, the war did not end for Israel in March 1949. The country has been harassed every day of its first six decades by a succession of enemies determined to undo the victory of 1948 -- Fedayeen, the PLO, Hezballah, Hamas, every one of the 22 Arab nations, most of the 1.2 billion Muslims in the world, a politicized United Nations, suicide bombers, European nations that have forgotten their sordid history of anti-Semitism and fratricide, academic and economic boycotts, threats of nuclear bomb attacks and you-name-it. Since the armistice that was signed in March 1949, Israel has been engaged in five additional wars for survival of the Jewish state. Israel does not have the luxury of breaking out the flag on Independence Day, watching the parades and looking back at the brave foreign volunteers who helped them to victory in just one of their many wars.

I believe if there had been American immigrants to Israel who achieved high positions of military and political leadership in post-1948 Israel, there would have been much greater publicity directed at our role during the war. However, that did not happen. We came, we helped and, for the most part, we left.

Israel cannot be blamed for giving

too little publicity to this handful of volunteers. But American and Canadian Jewry can be. While five million North American Jews were cheering for Israel, sending the important cash that Israel needed and dancing the hora at bar mitzvahs and weddings, 1,000 of their sons and daughters were putting their citizenship and lives on the line so there could be a Jewish nation where all of our brethren, now and in the future, could find refuge, if necessary.

In risking their citizenship, as well as their lives, the American, Canadian, British and South African volunteers were unique. In rescuing Holocaust survivors in such large numbers, in air-lifting rifles, machineguns and ammunition to weapons-starved Israel, in providing the greatest numbers of pilots for bombers and fighter planes that played an important role in stopping Egyptian armed columns a few miles from Tel Aviv, the North Americans were unique. But American Jewish historians and museum directors, who should know better, have ignored the role that American Jews and Christians played in volunteering for combat at a time when Israel was desperate for help from every quarter. The American Veterans of Israel tried for years to convince every major American Jewish museum to devote just one permanent museum case to this role – to no avail. In taking the initiative this year to merge our archives into its own, the American Jewish Historical Society has broken the ring of silence. We are grateful to their board and their leadership for doing so.

Yitzchak Rabin said of us, “They came to us when we most needed them, during those difficult, uncertain days of our War of Independence in 1948.” An Israeli army colonel once said to me, about the role of American and Canadian volunteers: “We knew we were not alone.”

The two museums and this web site that we surviving veterans have

built with our own funds, the help of a few caring foundations, and now this initiative of the American Jewish Historical Society are efforts to fill in this shocking gap in North American Jewish knowledge. We are proud of what we did in the 1948 war, and we believe our fellow North American Jews would be, also – if only they knew.

Ralph Lowenstein is Dean Emeritus of the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida in Gainesville. A native of Danville, Virginia, he volunteered for the Israeli Army at the age of 18, while a summer exchange student in Europe at the end of his freshman year at Columbia University. He lived in a Displaced Persons camp in Marseilles under an assumed name, then saw combat with the 79th Armored Battalion 10 days after being smuggled into Israel. He later served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. Lowenstein holds two degrees from Columbia and the Ph.D. from the University of Missouri. An award-winning reporter, he was visiting professor and head of journalistic studies at Tel Aviv University from 1967 to 1968. He is author or co-author of six books, including “Bring my Sons from Far,” (World, 1966), a novel about Israel’s War of Independence.

Ralph welcomes e-mail responses to this essay or any other portion of israelvets.com. He will try to respond to all comments, and can be reached at: israelvets-director@jou.ufl.edu

CALL FOR ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

The newly initiated project to transfer the Aliyah Bet and Machal archives to the American Jewish Historical Society calls to mind the fact that the archive is made up of hundreds of photographs and documents donated by AVI members over the years. Now with the passing of many members we fear that some of the material, not in our archive, may already be lost.

There is still time now to send material for inclusion in the archives. The items of interest include photographs, log books, newspaper accounts, letters, diaries, discharge papers, etc. relating to Israel’s War of Independence that are in your possession.

If you want copies of photos returned, please so note when you mail them. This is a reminder to our veterans as well as to the widows and children of comrades who have passed on to act now. Please respond to this call. If you have questions please e-mail them to Dr. Ralph Lowenstein at rlowenstein@jou.ufl.edu or call (352) 392-6525.

Please mail all material you want included in the archives to:

**Dr. Ralph Lowenstein
Aliyah Bet & Machal Archives
University of Florida
P.O. Box 118400
Gainesville, FL 32611-8400**

Thank you!

MICKEY MARCUS MEMORIAL

AVI and AVILS commemorated and paid tribute to Colonel David “Mickey” Marcus at the 43rd annual Mickey Marcus Memorial event on May 17, 2009, at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. This event celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Jewish Chapel at West Point, while honoring the memory of Col. Marcus, one of 40 U.S. and Canadian volunteers who gave their lives in Israel’s War of Independence.

AVILC Director, Rafi Marom, who led the planning for the event, called the service to order. The Jewish War Veterans of the Rockland/Orange District Color Guard posted the colors. The event was marked by musical renditions of the National Anthems of America and Israel from the Shapiro Family and a musical medley by the SAR High School Choir. U.S. Military Academy Cadets and SAR Students led the Memorial Candle Lighting. This was followed by a reading of *Ashrei Ha-Gafrur (Blessed is the Match)* a poem by Hannah Senesh (1921-1944), a Haganah fighter and World War II Parachutist who was killed in action.

AVI Past President, Joe Warner, offered a welcome, and greetings were received from the State of Israel delivered by Asaf Shariv, Consul General of the State of Israel in New York. David Band, grand-nephew of Col. Marcus, spoke to the assembled guests. The keynote speaker was Rabbi Major Carlos Huerta, Chaplain of the Jewish Chapel at West Point, addressing *The Legacy of Mickey Marcus*.

AVI Veterans, Naomi Kantey and Arthur Bernstein called the roll of recently departed AVI veterans, followed by the recitation of Kaddish and a benediction.

The service continued at the graveside of Col. Marcus and Emma Marcus. Elliott and David Shapiro sang *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav (Jerusalem of Gold)*. A wreath was laid. The traditional ceremonial rifle salute and playing of Taps were performed by the United States Military Academy Rifle Detail, Bugler and Honor Guard.



Gloria Pelzig and Naomi Kantey at West Point Ceremony

All those of valor shall pass armed among your brethren and shall help them [Joshua 1:14]

AVI JOINS 2009 SALUTE TO ISRAEL PARADE

By Jeff Margolis

The sun shone brightly on members of AVI and AVI Legacy along with family and friends as we proudly marched in the May 2009 Israel Day Parade along the streets of New York City decorated with Israel flags and banners. This parade is always a great show of support for Israel, and is the largest single pro-Israel gathering in the world. This year, the parade also celebrated Tel Aviv’s 100th birthday.



Scenes from the 2009 Salute to Israel Parade in New York City.

AVI held an honored position as the third marching group among hundreds of groups, tens of thousands of participants, and one million spectators. AVI is one of only a handful of organizations that has participated in every Israel Day Parade since the first one was held in 1964. It is a joyful display as community leaders, dignitaries from America and Israel, celebrities, floats, street performers and marching bands parade down Fifth Avenue.

Ira Feinberg and his crew got the whole event down on video and we all look forward to seeing the fruits of their labor. To those of you who missed this year’s event, we look forward to having you with us on May 23, 2010 for this year’s Salute to Israel Parade. The five hour parade begins at Noon (rain or shine) stepping off at 57th Street and Fifth Avenue and continuing north to 79th street. More information is available at www.salutetoisrael.com/parade.



AVI members enjoying the 2009 Purim Party in NYC.

Shalom. Am Y’Israel Chai!

IN THREE WARS by Cyril J. Kaplan *A Report by Naomi Kantey*

Cyril Kaplan, AVI member, has written a riveting personal account of his experiences and observations as a volunteer surgeon in three wars: World War II, Israel's War of Independence, and the Yom Kippur War. The book is *In Three Wars: A Personal and Orthopaedic Perspective*.

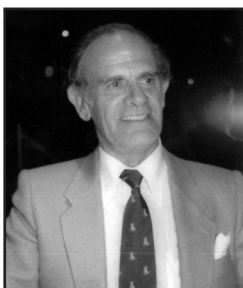
Cyril was born in South Africa and trained in orthopedic surgery in South Africa and England. South Africa had no conscription during World War II so Cyril volunteered and served with the South African Medical Corps. He was sent to Egypt where his life-long dedication to saving lives and limbs from the destruction of war began.

When the newly reborn State of Israel was attacked by five Arab armies, Cyril volunteered as a South African member of Machal to apply his orthopedic skills along with a dedicated group of medical personnel from abroad who joined Shayrut R'fui, the Israeli Military Medical Corps.

Keeping in touch with friends and colleagues in Israel, he returned to Israel in 1971 during the War of Attrition to help overworked Israeli physicians. During the Yom Kippur War in 1973, he returned to Israel again to assist in healing the wounded.

Cyril is married to Dr. Sylvia Kisner, whom he met when she delivered laboratory serum from South Africa to the hospital in Haifa where he was working during the War of Independence. In 1989, they moved from South Africa to the United States and Cyril joined the orthopedic staff at Montefiore Hospital in New York.

In Three Wars combines medical observation, historical background and personal anecdotal material, both serious and humorous. It has been published in hard cover and paperback editions. It can be ordered from your local bookstore or call (888) 795-4274 ext. 7867 or on-line at www.xlibris.com or www.amazon.com.



Cyril Kaplan, Author

A TRIBUTE TO COL. "MIGDAL" TEPERSON

Smoky Simon, Chairman, World Machal

Machalniks can be deeply proud of "Migdal" Teperson's distinguished service in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). At the age of 83, Migdal's career in the IDF spans a period of 61 years, and in recognition of his remarkable contribution to the IDF, he was recently presented with a certificate of a **"Special Lifetime Achievement Award"** by the Officer Commanding Ground Forces in the IDF.

Migdal started his long career as one of the 840 South African Machalniks who volunteered to fight in Israel's War of Independence in 1948-49. His service began in the Alexandroni Brigade in May 1948, but in August '48, he "deserted" from his unit in order to join the 9th Battalion Jeep Company of the Hanegev Brigade, known as "The Beasts of the Negev". This battalion was involved in expelling the Egyptians from the Negev, the capture of Beersheba, the liberation of Sedom, and finally driving the Egyptians back into the Sinai Desert.

Following his discharge from the Army in August 1949, Migdal joined the 7th Armoured Brigade in 1950 as a reservist. He was commissioned with the rank of First Lieutenant in 1954 and served in the 79th Battalion of the 7th Brigade, known as the "the Fist and Spear Brigade".

Then came the Sinai Campaign in October 1956, the 6-Day War in 1967, the War of Attrition, and the Yom Kippur War in October 1973, when Migdal served together with his two sons, Gadi and Saffi, where all three members of the family fought in the Sinai and Egypt.

In 1974, Migdal established an Auxiliary Police Organization (Mishmar Ezrachi) in Kfar Shmaryahu with the rank of Major in the Police Force, and where he became known as the "Sheriff of Kfar Shmaryahu".

In 1982 in the Lebanon War, Migdal served in his Armoured

Brigade as second-in-command with responsibility for logistics. His unit was responsible for all "movement control" in and out of Beirut. He continued his yearly reserve duty whilst serving in Lebanon, on the Golan Heights, and along the Jordanian border. Migdal was promoted to the rank of Lt. Col. in 1987, and he received promotion to the rank of full Colonel in 1997. His reserve duty continued during the first and second intifadas.

To sum-up, Migdal has served in the IDF from 1948 to 2009, a period of 61 years. He established two memorial sites to commemorate and honor the 167 soldiers who served in his brigade and who were killed in action.

Migdal and his wife Shoshana have three children, Gadi, Saffi, and Idit. He has written two books about his life in Africa and in Israel – "The Volunteer", and "In the Eyes of the Beholder". Migdal is a member of the World Machal committee, and he also serves on the committee which is currently developing the World Machal website.

On behalf of my Machal comrades and me, we salute Migdal for his remarkable career of unstinting military service and loyalty to the State of Israel, to his gallantry, and to his "esprit de corps".



Col. Migdal Teperson and Family

2009 Memorial Service for the Fallen at the Machal Monument

by Doreen Bliss

The annual Memorial Service for the Fallen at the Machal Monument in the Yitzhak Rabin Forest at Sha'ar Hagai took place this year on Tuesday, 28th April, 2009. Regrettably, many of our regular attendees were unable to make it this year, due to ill health.

Approximately 250 Machalniks and their families attended, with Stanley Medicks, Head of U.K. and Scandinavian Machal, coming from the U.K. with his son and daughter-in-law, especially to attend this the service,

Stanley Medicks lowered the flag, accompanied by a bugler who is currently serving in the I.D.F. Joe Woolf (South Africa) read out the Names of the Fallen and the countries from which they volunteered. Joe mentioned that his research for data about the 4,400 volunteers who came from 56 countries to fight for Israel in the War of Independence, has resulted in discovering that another Machalnik,

Raymond Dodge, a Non-Jewish volunteer from the U.K., fell on 3rd June, 1948 bringing the total number of fallen to 122

George Gasman (France) and Yaakov Kleiner (Argentina) lit the eternal flame, Smoky Simon and his grandson, Ben Tik, who is currently doing a Captain's Officers Course in the Israeli Navy, laid the wreath. An honor guard of Machalniks now serving in the IDF stood attention during the ceremony. The traditional religious aspects of the service were conducted by Rabbi Ephraim Shach. Another of Smoky's grandchildren, Tom Peleg, Chief Engineer on a missiles boat in the Israel Navy, read out an English translation of the Psalms. Hatikva was led by American Machalnik, Lee Silverman.

Machalniks had the chance to catch up on news and hang out with their old comrades during the picnic which followed the service.

NEWS YOU SHOULD USE

POST YOUR PERSONAL STORY ON THE MACHAL WEBSITE

Each of our veterans has his/her story and we want to capture their narratives and memories for posterity. The opportunity is now at hand as Machal and Aliyah Bet veterans can now have their personal stories of service in the IDF during Israel's War of Independence posted on the new World Machal website: www.machal.org.il (<http://www.machal.org.il/>)

The drill is simple; write your story and don't forget to attach a photo of you (1948-49). E-mail it to Smoky Simon at doreen@sw.co.il or mail it to:

Smoky Simon
World Machal
32 Ben Yehuda Rd
Tel Aviv, Israel 63805

GET THE MACHAL BOOKLET, "Overseas Volunteers in Israel's War of Independence" online. The booklet is now out-of-print but available on the internet: www.mahal-idf-volunteers.org/about/machal.pdf. The entire booklet in color in an internet edition. Just a click away and no charge.

MACHAL ROLE IN ISRAEL AIR FORCE DVD

Amos Cohen, who heads the historical section of the Fisher Institute, a part of Israel's Air and Space Authority, recently produced a DVD on Machal's role in the Israel Air Force and in Air Transport Command during the War of Independence, 1948-49. This DVD is being sent to all the squadrons in the IAF and others to inform them and future generations of the Machal legacy in Israel's victory in the War of Independence.

The DVD is in Hebrew. It can be obtained from the Air Force Amuta Amutat Chel Ha'avir, P.O. Box 303, Herzlia 446103.



Smoky Simon, Chairman of World Machal (right) and his grandson, Tom Peleg, Israeli Navy Chief Engineer, laying a wreath.



George Gasman (French Machalnik) and Yaakov Kleiner (Argentinian Machalnik) lighting the eternal flame.

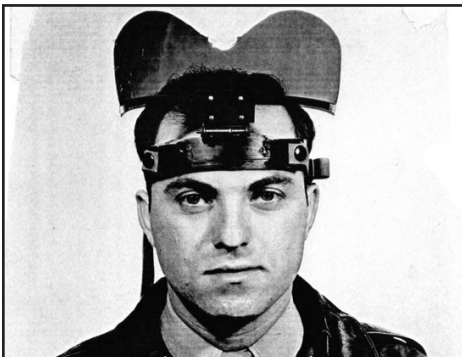
Obituaries and Remembrances

We recently learned of the passing of these AVI members. Longer stories will follow in future Newsletters.

- **Sidney Beube** of Toronto, Canada served in the Givati 5th Brigade Machal infantry during Israel's War of Independence. His synagogue, Shaarei Shomayim, recently announced his passing. As part of Sidney's commitment to his service in the Canadian Air Force, in June 2005 he donated a variety of memorabilia from the No. 219 (B'nai B'rith) Squadron, Royal Canadian Air Cadets that he had worn proudly in the 1940's.
- **Abraham Segal** (Avrum Segal) served as part of the volunteer crew on the EXODUS. His son recently confirmed that he passed away in 2005 after living many years in the northern Galilee on Kibbutz Sasa. We recognize his efforts on behalf of all Jews from the EXODUS.

LEONARD PRAGER

Leonard Prager lived a life dedicated to perpetuating interest and information about the Yiddish language. His research on Yiddish literature included work on Isaac Bashevis Singer, Sholem Asch, and Shakespeare in Yiddish. In the 1980's he was co-founding editor with David Gold of the *Jewish Language Review*. In the 1990's he was the editor of *The Mendelev Review*, a newsletter and e-journal on Yiddish literature. Originally from Philadelphia, Leonard Prager died in Haifa, Israel on December 11, 2008. According to friends, Leonard was an ardent Zionist. He rejected the denigration of the Yiddish language and its heritage. He served with Aliyah Bet on the Mala/Calanit, serving in the ship's galley. His son reports that Leonard worked fruitfully until his death and did not suffer any pain despite a long illness. (Thanks to *The Mendelev Review* for details on Leonard Prager.)



Max Kahn (1948)



MAX KAHN

By Jacqueline S. Kahn

Max Kahn served as Flight Engineer on a C-46 that flew to Mexico and then to Israel. During the War of Independence, he flew 12 missions ferrying supplies and troops in the Negev operations against the Egyptian forces. Max Kahn passed away February 11, 2009. His beloved wife, Jackie, has prepared a memoir of love and remembrance.

Max (Cohen) Kahn was born in Cleveland, Ohio August 15, 1915. He was given up at birth and put in the Jewish Orphan Home. At the age of 5, he was adopted by Jacob and Rose Cohen. His short childhood was interrupted at age 12 when his mother died.

Max always dreamed of becoming a pilot and learned to fly at age 17. In 1941, he joined the Army Air Corps. Because he was color blind, he could not get his pilot's license. Instead, he became a flight engineer, studying mechanics in Wichita Falls, Texas.

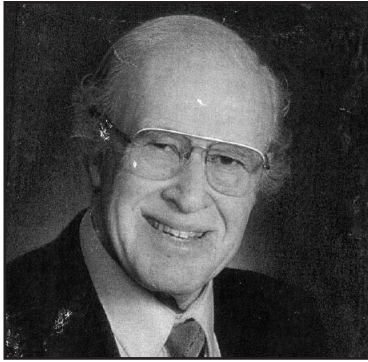
Eventually, Max was assigned to 305th bomb Group #422 Bomb Squad-

ron in Salt Lake City, Utah with Gen. Le May Group. He was put on the Queen Mary and sailed to Greenwich, England. He flew 25 missions over Germany and France from the base in Kettering, England--mostly without fighter escort. While there, Max designed a heating element for the oxygen mask systems which tended to freeze. He also designed blind-flying goggles, was awarded several medals, and was eventually discharged in 1946.

In 1947, Max was recruited by Al Schwimmer for the purpose of getting an old AC46 to Israel. It needed lots of repair and ingenuity to keep it running. Max eventually helped train other pilots and flew numerous missions. He was awarded IAF Wings, Israel Combat Medal, Fighters for Israel 1948. Max was honorably discharged from the Machal IAF June 1949. He stayed in Israel till after the Armistice. Israel awarded Max Kahn dual citizenship. "I'm proud of my service and my commitment to Israel. I would have done it over and over again."

Max was the most honest, decent, courageous human being. He was modest and unassuming and found happiness in everything. He was a loving husband and devoted father and grandfather. Max retired from the furniture business at age 81 and is survived by his wife, Jacqueline S. Kahn; his daughter, Heather Ritzer Nenner; and 2 grandchildren, Benjamin and Olivia. Benjamin said it perfectly, "Zaidy taught me everything I needed. It is all up here in my head and I will be fine."

Obituaries and Remembrances



Dov Shugar, 2005

HAROLD BERNARD SHUGAR 1923-2009

By Ira Feinberg

*Excerpted from a longer story in the
AVI Newsletter, Winter 2006*

Few stories of a lifetime intensely involved with history are as adventure filled and poignant as that of Harold Bernard Shugar.

Harold Shugar was born in Tarboro, North Carolina on April 10, 1923, a small agricultural town, the son of an orthodox Jewish father. At its height, some 15 families comprised the Jewish community of Tarboro who prayed, celebrated, and raised their young as Jews.

In 1940 Harold entered The Citadel Military Academy. In September 1943, Harold and the entire Citadel class enlisted *en mass* into service. Harold chose the United States Navy where he served during WW II.

From the time he was commissioned, he served aboard a ship throughout the war.

Immediately after Germany surrendered, Howard was transferred to the Pacific arena stationed out of Pearl Harbor where he was promoted to Lt. Junior Grade. When the war ended, his ship took part in Operation Magic Carpet, bringing the troops home. His last assignment was in 1946, when he volunteered for the Atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll. There, he witnessed the two nuclear detonations.

Shortly thereafter he was decommissioned honorably and meritoriously from the Navy. Out of the Navy, Harold decided he wanted to be a lawyer and he was accepted and enrolled at George Washington University Law School. Here is where a major turn in his life would take place as he witnessed the impending conflict between Arabs and Jews over the Palestine question. Something in him connected with his heritage. It was a most mystical experience for which he had no reasonable explanation. He questioned himself as to "why he was a Jew" and experienced a calling instinct that something monumental was about to happen, and he had to be there when it occurred. He was drawn to go to Palestine to be there as history was surely to be altered.

Altered, hopefully in favor of his people.

Since the British were in control, the only way to gain entry into Palestine at that time in 1947, was with a student visa. Harold secured a visa and enrolled at the Hebrew University in early 1947, studying Hebrew and the Humanities. A short time after he enrolled at the University, fifty doctors and nurses on their way to Hadassah Hospital on Mt. Scopus were ambushed and killed by a Palestinian Arab militia. This was the same route Harold took to the Hebrew University. The ambush at Mt. Scopus could have been prevented if the British had truly wanted to act impartially.

Riled up by witnessing this mass murder of innocent medical professionals, Harold left his studies at the University, and joined the nascent Haganah. Harold was almost killed when a bomb exploded on Ben Yehuda Street, killing over 57 Jews.

One Friday evening on the outskirts of Jerusalem, his group constructed a campfire and held services, which Harold found very moving. From the higher elevation he observed Arabs training in their villages below Jerusalem. When the Old City was about to fall and evacuations were taking place of all residents. Shugar observed this sad and perilous movement where Jews had lived for over 2,000 years.

On the evening of the fall of the Old City, detonations began destroying the first of 57 synagogues dating from antiquity. With a shortage of manpower, the presence of the British and no heavy weaponry, the Haganah could do nothing.

On April 15, 1948, the British withdrew from the city of Jerusalem, leaving it the Jews and Arabs to fight it out among themselves. The Haganah now came out into the open. Now they were able to organize companies instead of small groups of men and attacked the Arab positions. At that time, there were three 81 mm mortars in Jerusalem, which constituted the heavy weaponry. Because of his previous knowledge of weaponry, Harold was given command of one of the mortars, supporting the attacks and responding to Arab shelling of Jerusalem.

Using archeological research reflecting back to biblical times, two decisions were made. Since the water pumping station was in the Arab sector and although the UN guaranteed it would be safeguarded, the Jews wisely did not believe them. Surely enough, the Arabs blew up the pumping station. Before this happened, the underground cisterns, dating from biblical times, were cleansed and filled with water. This saved Jerusalem. Even during the shelling, water trucks would distribute water throughout the city.

Second, the Jerusalem brigade of the Palmach, aided by the presence of Colonel Mickey Marcus, were able to bypass the Arab Forces by building a road through the hills surrounding Jerusalem into the city while a periodic truce was in place. Without heavy

weaponry, the Haganah had made three major attempts to open the existing road without success.

Somehow, the Israelis discovered that Harold had been an officer in the American Navy. He now entered another phase of his service to Israel by enlisting in the embryonic Israeli Navy.

With Jerusalem liberated, Harold made his way to Tel Aviv via the recently opened but uncompleted Burma Road. Incredibly, he witnessed a terrible tragedy on the shores of Tel Aviv, the battle challenging the arrival of the Altalena. This ship was loaded with arms for the Irgun Zvai Leumi, the revisionist sector of the Zionist movement founded by Jabotinsky.

In Tel Aviv, Shugar met with Paul Shulman, an Annapolis graduate, who was asked by Ben Gurion to acquire sailing vessels, organize and train the newest navy in the world. Harold was assigned to the *Eilat* (Northland) as a Gunnery officer on the first Israeli warship.

To his knowledge, the *Eilat* was the first Jewish ship to take offensive action since the days of King Solomon. His ship shelled the port of Tyre, bombarded the enemy in Lebanon, and then with a flotilla of three ships entered into combat off the coast of the Negev bombarding the invading Egyptian army. On one occasion an Egyptian flown spitfire off of Tel Aviv strafed him. Sailors under his command were killed and wounded. With the gunner on the 20 mm killed, Hal personally took over the firing of an anti-aircraft gun.

After all hostilities ended, Harold received a discharge from the navy and returned to the United States. He then enrolled in law school only to rediscover that this was not his calling. He then entered the construction field and was known amongst his professional peers for his excellent reputation as a chief estimator and project manager.

His wife, Sally Hope Shugar of 46 years of marriage sadly passed away in 2002. Harold was a proud grandfather of three grandchildren, and the father of two very successful sons, Dr. Joel Shugar an Ophthalmologist from Florida and Daniel Shugar, president of a large Solar Energy company in California.

Harold Shugar added the following personal statement. *Having been overseas, I know the blessings of living in the United States. I have had the privilege of being present at the birth of the State of Israel, a prophesy of the Bible fulfilled in our lifetime. I have participated in two wars, WW II and the War for Israeli Independence. I have been bombed, shelled, machine gunned and strafed. My mortar exploded on one occasion when I was not present, killing the entire gun crew. My position was destroyed by a car bomb. I have had a loving wife, two wonderful sons, who have beautiful families and three handsome grandsons. I consider myself a most fortunate person and count my blessings.*

Obituaries and Remembrances

MY FATHER AND UNCLE: HARLOW AND MILTON GEBERER

By Raanan Geberer
graanan315@aol.com

As a small boy, it was difficult for me to talk to my father, Harlow Geberer, about his past because he was modest and self-effacing. I knew he had lived in Israel from around 1949 to 1951 with my mother and had served on the Jerusalem police force, because he often showed me his police buttons. There were also both photos and paintings of Jerusalem in the “old days” in various parts of the house, even though he never remarked on them. And on the High Holy Days, he often brought along a leather-bound prayer book with a bronze plaque that he told me he’d bought in Israel. My mother didn’t say much about those days, although at times she’d sing old Hebrew songs while doing housework, like “Mayim” or “Finjan.”

When I got a little older, I found that he had also been part of a group of American volunteers who went to serve in the infant Israeli army, but that his ship had been captured by the Lebanese and he had been held in prison there until pressure from the U.S. got the group out. He always maintained that the “anti-Israel” State Department leaked information to the Lebanese that got them captured. He had returned to the states after that and gotten married, but then returned to Jerusalem, only to return to the U.S. after my mother’s asthma deteriorated. About the Israeli political scene of those days, he would only say that the Irgun were “gangsters,” and was fairly upset when Begin became the Israeli prime minister in the 1970’s.

I also knew that my father had a brother, Milton, or Moshe, who had also gone to Israel and been killed in the 1948 war, and that Dad carried a picture of this brother in his wallet. On an also-tragic note, this brother had a son who had apparently been very bright as a boy, but at some point developed epilepsy, stopped talking, and eventually was classified as intellectually disabled and put into a state institution. My brother and I were never allowed to see him, but every once in awhile my father would announce “I’m going to visit Harold today,” and then he’d be gone for a few hours. It would be decades before I even saw a picture of

him.

In college, while rummaging around the house, I found a suitcase full of letters from my father’s brother. The letters were from his Army service during World War II.

My father and his brother, both born in the early 1920’s, were two of three siblings, the children of immigrants in the then-solidly Jewish East Bronx (the third sibling, Beatrice, led a more or less normal life, had a family, and died sometime in the early 1990’s). Milton, who survived a sickly childhood, became a Zionist in his teens, and was active in the left-wing Hashomer Hatzair youth movement. One picture of him shows him working at the “hachsharah,” or training farm, in New Jersey, which has no doubt been turned into condos by now. According to my father, Milton dropped out of college because “he thought he knew more than the professors.” He married fairly early, around the age of 20 or so.

After serving in the U.S. Army, he and his new family started making preparations to go to Palestine, and he studied refrigeration technology. Years later, at a reading of one of my self-published novel, an elderly man came up to me, asked if I were related to Milton Geberer, then told me that he’d lived across the street from him. Milton left for Palestine sometime in 1947, but beforehand, he’d broken with Hashomer Hatzair. (My father, years later, would only say, “He broke one of their [many] rules!”) He still remained basically a Labor Zionist, however. While reading one of his letters, I was surprised to find out that he’d studied Arabic in addition to Hebrew. He certainly would have been an asset to the new state, if he had lived, in talks with the Arab nations.

My father, following in his brother’s footsteps, also became a Labor Zionist, but he and my mother were (I believe) affiliated with the Poale Zion, a more moderate, less Marxist-oriented group than Hashomer.

My father and some of his compatriots, in early 1948, sailed on a U.S. ship called the “Marine Carp,” apparently a cargo ship that also carried some passengers. (His brother had already gone to Palestine some months beforehand.) This was a ship that went through the Mediterranean – to Marseilles, Naples, Piraeus, and so on, eventually stopping at Haifa.

While in Lebanon, my father was

taken prisoner. While in prison, he found out that his brother had been killed in action in Jerusalem, in mid-May 1948. My father and several cousins who were living in Israel in those days found out that his brother had been offered a job in intelligence, but had insisted on being on the front lines. “He didn’t have to be there,” my father said, sadly.

One of these cousins told me that a sniper had been hiding in a nearby mosque. Another cousin told me that Milton had been promoted to the rank of Major in the Haganah the day before he’d been killed.

My mother once told me that their parents never got over Milton’s death. That may have been true for my father, too. Sometimes, while playing the piano, my father would play an old Russian folk song, never finish, and stare into space. It’s my belief that he used to play that song as a duo with his brother, who played violin.

My father went back to Israel in 1949, and in his later years occasionally told amusing stories about how primitive life was in Jerusalem in those days. For example, the only places that had hot running water were the YMCA and the mikveh. My mother would go to the mikveh – until they realized that she wasn’t really Orthodox and they kicked her out.

Also, when you went to the grocery store, food was so scarce that you had to buy whatever they had. You’d ask, “What do you have today?” and the storekeeper would reply something like, “Some cabbage just came in from the kibbutz.”

My parents visited Israel quite a few times after they returned to New York. However, my father never was aware that there was any organization of his fellow former volunteers until 1992 or so, when he came across a story in the Jewish Week. He applied, and was accepted by AVI as a member. He went to the group’s yearly Chanukah parties, and to events at West Point also. Just a few years ago, my wife, my brother, my brother’s wife and I attended a ceremony at the USS Intrepid where he and the other surviving New York-area volunteers were finally honored and given plaques.

My father had remained relatively healthy into his eighties, playing the piano and lifting weights every day, but eventually his health began to deteriorate. In late 2004, my father finally died after a heart attack and stroke in the aftermath of a successful back operation.

Obituaries and Remembrances

MEMORIES OF GAD HILB

by Arthur Bernstein

As a teenager, Gad Hilb left his home overlooking Haifa Bay to sail the seas beyond the far horizon. In the course of World War II, his ship was sunk by a Nazi U-Boat. He survived and sailed for the remainder of the war with the United States Merchant Marines, rising to the rank of second officer. The operations of Aliyah Bet brought us together as deck officers on the *Ulua* in Baltimore, when he was eventually promoted to captain. My name appeared on all documents as the skipper to protect his family living in Palestine under the British mandate. At times, it made for "Gilbert and Sullivan situations" as to which of us was playing what role at the moment.

The endless hours over the many weeks at sea allowed no more than a little insight into the captain's skills. He set an example of diligence to his crews. No impressive flash or verbosity, but loads of nautical know-how. In the ensuing years, I have sailed many thousands of miles on my own personal boat, enabling me to judge Captain Gad Hilb as an absolutely awesome seaman and navigator.

The possibility of personal bias does exist so let me quote from *The Palestine Patrol*, the British Navy's account of our encounter at sea. "The *Ulua* was tougher meat...Hilb handled his ship in a resolute manner...using naval procedure.... during the night *Ulua* signaled changes of course and speed as though she were the senior officer...."

In mid-April 2009, Captain Gad Hilb crossed the bar on his final outbound journey.



The Ulua in 1949



IN MEMORY OF GLORIA PELZIG...

Writing a eulogy for Gloria Pelzig was a labor of love for me. We met in Israel in 1948 and have been friends ever since. — Naomi Kantey

Gloria Pelzig, a member of the Israeli Medical Corps during the War of Independence, died on August 27, 2009.

Gloria, born Gloria Kessler in the Bronx in 1923, joined Hashomer Hatzair, a Zionist youth group, while a school girl in New York. After graduating from Evander Childs High School, she wanted to do something to help during World War II, so she enrolled in nursing school and graduated with a special degree as a nurse anesthetist.

She began her career in Chicago and, in 1948, volunteered as a Machalnik. She sailed from New York to Marseilles in July of 1948. Gloria spent three weeks working in the St. Jerome Displaced Persons camp outside Marseilles, then boarded the *Pan York* in early August —along with Ralph Lowenstein, Frank Perlman, about 25 other Machalniks and approximately 2,800 displaced persons — for the five-day voyage to Haifa.

Once Gloria arrived in Israel, she joined the 10th Military Hospital in Haifa with the equivalent rank of second lieutenant. She worked with a group of predominantly South African volunteer surgeons. As they had never heard of a nurse giving anesthesia, Gloria was first given a test to determine her skill — a test that she passed with flying colors!

These were formative experiences that provided Gloria with personal satisfaction at contributing to the war effort by alleviating some of the pain and suffering. The creation of Israel gave her a deep sense of belonging to the Jewish people. She also made many close friends during her service; these enduring friendships greatly enriched her life.

After the war, Gloria returned to the United States because of family pressure. In 1950 she married a young physician, Alfred Pelzig. Gloria and Alfred had four children during the next six years. The first few years of their marriage coincided with the Korean War and they moved often for Alfred's service as a military doctor. Sadly, Alfred died in

1960, leaving Gloria with four young children and no means of support.

Always resourceful, brave and independent, Gloria returned to school, earning a Bachelor of Science in 1962 and a graduate degree in 1971, both from New York University. She began teaching high school biology and chemistry in 1962, a profession that enabled her to financially support her children and provided her with a schedule to match theirs.

After her retirement, she became a volunteer at the Museum of Natural History in New York City, working on the invertebrate collections and as a docent in the Butterfly House, bringing joy to hundreds of children. She also returned to nursing, working as an elementary school nurse for special needs children and as a summer camp nurse for Hashomer Hatzair.

Gloria lived an active and independent life full of cultural pursuits, international travel, volunteer work and physical activities and had a wide circle of friends of all ages who shared her interests. She often visited friends and relatives in Israel and South Africa, and welcomed them to stay with her during their trips to New York City. Gloria's apartment was filled with Israeli and South African arts and crafts that brought her much joy.

Gloria is survived by her four remarkable children, Naomi Pelzig of Upper Nyack, New York, Michal Pelzig of Narberth, Pennsylvania, and Daniel Pelzig and Ilana Pelzig Cellum of New York City; their spouses Paul, Warren and Steve; and five much-loved grandchildren who kept her young at heart. She was buried next to her late husband, Alfred, in New Montefiore Cemetery in West Babylon, New York.

Zecher tzaddik livrachá — May the memory of this giving and loving woman live on.

By Naomi Kantey and Michal Pelzig



This 1948-49 photograph of Gloria Kessler (Pelzig) serving at a military hospital in Tiberias appears in the Museum of American and Canadian Volunteers in Israel's War of Independence.

Obituaries and Remembrances



**DAVID HANOVICE,
A DEDICATED FAMILY
AND NAVY MAN**

David Hanovice, 84, passed away on Tuesday, April 28, 2009, with his family by his side. He was a beloved husband, devoted father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend.

David was born as an American citizen in Tel Aviv to the late Israel and Rebecca Pravda Hanovice. Having lived in Israel, Texas, New York, and New Jersey, he recently moved to Edwardsville, Pennsylvania with his wife in order to be closer to their children. Before the U.S. joined WWII, David volunteered in the British Air Force to support the war effort. When the U.S. entered the war, he transferred to the U.S. Army 404th Q.M. Trucking Unit, transporting troops and supplies to the battle front. He was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, Victory Ribbon, EAME Campaign Medal with one Bronze Star and five Overseas Service Bars. Four of his brothers also served in WWII during the same time.

After his discharge, David returned to Houston to continue his studies. He graduated in 1948 from the School of Technology of the University of Houston. Further studies were cut short when he volunteered for service in Israel's War of Independence. He was among the North American volunteers from abroad,

called Machal. As Yitzhak Rabin said, "They came to us when we most needed them, during those difficult, uncertain days of our War of Independence in 1948." David delivered the MV Yucatan from New Orleans to Israel and then served as Chief Engineer on the Noga/K-26. After the war, David delivered ships purchased in the U.S. to the Israeli Navy and stayed until 1954 to train Israeli Navy engineering crews.

In 2003, David received a commendation from the State of Israel for his "heroism and courage beyond the call of duty." During the last years of his life, he worked with other veterans and staff at the University of Florida at Gainesville to create a museum, which documented the efforts of the North American volunteers in Israel's War of Independence. (www.israel-vets.com/hist_navy.html)

While in Israel, David met and married the love of his life, Rose Behar, who was a Lieutenant Nurse in the Israeli Army. In 1954, David and Rose moved to New York, where they started and raised their family of five children. David became Chief Engineer, licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard, and worked in the Merchant Marines, sailing around the world for more than twenty years.

David leaves behind his wife, Rose, of 57 years, daughters, Tammy, and her husband, Dr. Robert Engel; Dena, and her husband, Sam Palermo; Karen and her husband, Jeff Hogan; son, Joel, and his fiancée Susan Weiss; brother, Itzhak; grandchildren Daniel, Caroline and Benjamin Engel; Rose and Sami Palermo; Jack, Mathew, Ryan, and Samuel Tyler Hogan; and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, ten brothers and sisters, and his son Sammy.

THE FIGHTING HANOVICES: FIVE BROTHERS WHO SERVED

By Si Spiegelman

This is the story of the five Hanovice brothers. The three older brothers, Aaron, Sam, and Harry were born in Houston, Texas and came to Mandate Palestine with their American parents. David and the youngest brother, Yitzhak, were born in Tel Aviv.

David Hanovice

After graduating from public school, David became active in Haganah activities. He served in the British Air Force supernumerary Police around Tel-Noff and as the U.S. entered the war, he transferred to the U.S. Army unit based at Tel-Litvinsky. He served with the 404th Q.M. Trucking unit that transported supplies and personnel during the battles against German forces in North Africa. David returned to the U.S. for his discharge and studies. He graduated from the School of Technology of the University of Houston that prepared him for a career in marine engine repair and maintenance. He subsequently volunteered for service in Israel's War of Independence. He was among the U.S. volunteers that brought the Yucatan (Noga K-26) to Haifa for delivery to the Israeli Navy and later served as its Chief Engineer. The Noga (Kuf-26) took part in all naval engagements during the War of Independence, including the sinking of the Egyptian flagship "Emir Farouk". Upon his return to the U.S., David was involved in refitting and delivery of two other vessels to the Israel Navy. In the U.S. he made a career in the Merchant Marine and in the marine engine industry.

Harry Hanovice

Harry joined the Northern Fence Security forces, a Police unit that patrolled the Lebanese and Syrian borders. When America entered the

Obituaries and Remembrances

Second World War he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps from Tel-viv and served in Abadan, Persia. After the war, he re-enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where he served as a career soldier until his retirement.

Sam Hanovice

Sam was active with the Haganah and trained under Orde Wingate, head of the "Night Brigades" combating the Arab terrorists in Palestine from 1936 to 1939. During WWII, his Haganah unit was attached to the British Royal Navy Commandos and trained as "seals" in underwater demolition. In May 1941, the 23 members were sent on a mission to destroy refineries and fuel storage installations in Lebanon and Syria. The area was governed by the French Vichy regime that collaborated with Nazi Germany. To this day they are MIA and their boat "Sea Lion" has not been found. In 1957 a monument was erected on Mount Herzl in their memory.

Aaron Hanovice

In 1941 Aaron joined a British Naval unit and was stationed in Haifa. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and served in Egypt during WWII returning to Tel-Aviv after his discharge. He was killed in an Arab ambush in August 1947 while driving supplies in a convoy from Tel Aviv.

Yitzhak Hanovice

The youngest brother, Yitzhak, enlisted at age 17 during the War of Independence. He served in the Palmach and later in the Tank Corps-Gedud 82. In 1954, while, serving on IDF reserve duty, Yitzhak lost the use of his legs due to polio and was confined to a wheel chair. Taking account of the shortage of wheelchairs in Israel he started a factory to produce them locally and returned to civilian life to run the business. In 1956 he trained as a swimmer and participated in the Paraplegic Olympiad in England, where he won the Gold medal for the State of Israel.

This is, no doubt, the "Beau Geste" story of a generation.



Pashkof, Klorman, Laurie (left to right)

LOUIS LAURIE

The Lou Laurie story is reprinted in part from the AVI Newsletter, Fall 2002

For the first eight years of his life, Louis Laurie thought he was a Catholic. He had a Catholic nanny and living in a small community in Quebec City. There was only a limited amount of Jewishness conveyed in his French speaking acculturated Jewish family...

For a man who would later volunteer to fight in a distinctively Jewish army, his identity would have to be augmented elsewhere. Most likely, this came through his encounter with the strong and violent anti-Semitism of the times. He would walk to school with a bag full of stones to defend himself when attacked by anti-Semites. This coupled with the effects of Jewish friendships, plus a Bar-Mitzvah, all helped developed his sense of who he was as a Jew...

Louis served in WWII and when the war was over he moved to Montreal, using his newly acquired skill from the forces, but, now in civilian life, as a news photographer. Certainly things would have continued happily with the new career when he received a phone call from two friends to come to one of the Machal recruitment meetings organized by the Toronto Jewish business man, Sam Zaks. By this stage he was back in Quebec City and the meeting was a small one... How the recruiters knew that Louis

had been on the combined operations training course was never revealed, but it was clear he was seen as a useful recruit. For Louis, however important this was, there was also a spirit of adventure in the plan, strong enough to make him agree to drop the work as a news photographer and sign up to be a fighter in a still being formed army thousands of miles away. Interesting, claims Louis, Quebec City provided the highest proportion of volunteers for any Jewish community in the world. Three people went from a total of 30 families...

He then describes his experience in a DP camp where he took the identity of a Polish woman. He accompanied the DPs to Palestine, arriving shortly after the state was declared. Ben Gurion awaited them on the dock. Within a short while, he had been put on a bus and taken to the army base at Sameria, close to Netanya, and suddenly discovered he was in the army! To be precise, he was in Company B in the 72nd Battalion of the 7th brigade, often known as the Anglo-Saxons. To cap it all, they had absolutely no training. The Sergeant Major was a fellow Canadian by the name of Julie Lewis, an impressive and well-respected commander. Most of the 72nd brigade were Americans and many of them were too young to have served in WWII, and were therefore also untrained.

Four days after he arrived, Louis saw action at a hilltop village ten kilometers from Acre, called Tamra. Quite apart from the fact that it was, in a rather abrupt way, the moment the reality of the war set in, it was also the most remarkable and unconventional type of action for that time, a bayonet attack! Indeed, it was the only one in the whole of the war. The mission was being conducted to neutralize the hilltop from where Arab volunteers from the Arab Liberation Army were refusing to honor the truce and cease their sniper firing. Company B was

Obituaries and Remembrances

sent to take the hilltop. After being held down by enemy fire, they were eventually given the order to go up with fixed bayonets, both to frighten the Arabs at the top of the hill and to ensure some sort of protection if the need arose. Fourteen men went up to the hilltop the village; five of them were wounded and one killed. Despite these significant losses, it was a successful mission.

Louis Laurie had seen his first piece of action in the War of Independence. In many ways this moment represented the end of the pure adventure experience and the beginning of confrontation with real war. "There was bravado, of course because you just go, but the sense when it was something really bad was when Sidney Lazar was hit. He was standing up. I told him to keep his head down and all of a sudden he fell in front of me and I had to jump over him. I know I didn't think of it because I knew I had to go forward. And after I found out he was dead, and we buried him the next morning in a grave...It was so sad, this kid was only eighteen years old, had never seen service of any kind, was just a kid looking for something...On the way up, on the bus, he was sitting between Lenny Fine and myself and Saul Freeman. The kid was really nervous. We were all rather nervous because we had no idea of what we were going into. Nobody told us. No such thing as we are going to this point or that, just, 'we are going to take the hill.'..."

The early trauma aside, this did not lead Louis to any doubts about whether it had been a wrong course of action. There was one member of the unit who did leave, but the others remained resolved.

For some reason, a returning soldier, Harry Eisner, told Lou's parents their son was missing, and it took some quick action by the Jewish agency to contact them and reassure them he was fine.....

LOUIS LAURIE EULOGY BY JOSEPH WARNER, FORMER AVI PRESIDENT

It is with a heavy heart that I stand here today.

Lou was a wonderful, warm and caring person and we will deeply miss him. He as a great judge of people and was well respected by everyone. Business associates said they always knew they were in the presence of a gentleman when Lou was around.

I would like to quote a few sentences from a letter received by Lou the other day from a close business associate in California: "Getting to know you and spending time with you is an extreme and entertaining pleasure. You have made the fun times more fun and the rotten times easier. Cut from the same cloth, I think, we muscled on, no matter what, never ceasing to try the ideas, the opportunities to examine. You will always represent me the best a freindship has to offer - full of spunk, ever constant supporter and comrade during all our endeavors and it is impossible to express the real depth of my thankfulness."

Part of our history is now gone but Lou will live on in our hearts. He leaves a very fine family to carry on his name and his work.

What has happened to Lou shows us just how fragile life is - one day things are fine, and the next our whole world has changed.

Lou and I have been very close friends for over 60 years. We met at a very special time in the history of our people as both of us left our families and went to Israel to participate in the War of Independence in 1948. Although we served on different fronts, we found something in each other that immediately developed into a relationship that was similar to that of two very close brothers.

We also served together on the board of directors of the Jewish War Veterans of Canada - and Lou's input and suggestions were always positive and helped our cause to stay on a straight path.

I am sure that all of you, together with my wife and myself, will sorely miss this gentle soul. May his wife and children be strong and of good health for many years to come.

I would like to close by telling you that few short weeks ago, as Lou and I were concluding a telephone conversation, Lou ended by saying to me - "Joe, I love you." Well, Lou, I have always loved you and will continue to keep that feeling alive until the end of my days.

Letter to the Editor

A request from Nora Zamichow, Daughter of Machalnik Nadine Cherner

I am planning to write a book on my mother, Nadine Cherner, which will include her activities as a volunteer in Israel's War of Independence. In this connection, I am looking for people with whom she had contact during the 1947-49 period.

My mother was a transport driver for Bear Israel. Is there anyone who could tell me how I could contact him, or what happened to him? She also drove for a young officer, possibly a four-star General, named Stefan (or Zalman) Libon, from Russia. Apparently, in the evenings, he played the violin for all of the volunteers. Is he still alive? If so, he would be in Israel. My mother drove for two officers. Are there any transport drivers who recall my mother?

My mother tells a story about visiting a wounded Canadian boy in the hospital. She calls him one of Dunkel-man's boys. His leg had to be amputated below the knee. There is a young man who's written about and fits this description in "My Brother's Keeper." It might well be the same person she visited, but it is also possible there was more than one Canadian amputee in the hospital at that time. If anyone can shed light on this amputee, I would be most grateful.

Also, my mother arrived in Palestine aboard the *Kedmah*. If anyone travelled on the *Kedmah* with my mother, I should love to hear from them. I would like to know about the conditions on the ship, as well as what they felt about taking such a voyage.

My mother was later transferred to an Army unit where she did decoding work for the Air Force and was located in Ramat Gan. She met an Israeli there by the name of Ella Plascke with whom she is still in contact. Are there others who were in their unit?

Whatever information, however small, you are able to give me, would be of such help. I can be reached by e-mail on zamichow@gmail.com, or by regular mail at: 3080 Clarmeya Lane, Pasadena CA 91107. Tel: 626 1794 8877. Cell phone: 626 818 9596. Thank you so much for any assistance you can give me.

Nora Zamichow

Contributions are Welcome!

We welcome your generous contributions. With the suspension of the AVI and the transition to trustee management, the decision was made not to assess annual dues, and to continue publication of the Newsletter and a few events each year. If you are inclined, we would appreciate your contribution to offset the cost of the Newsletter and our events as an AVIL Booster. Thank you!

UPCOMING EVENTS: PLEASE JOIN US!

- **Special Purim Celebration**
Sunday, March 7, 2010 (Noon - 3 p.m.)
Festive dairy brunch with Aliyah Bet and Machal volunteers, AVILC directors and IDF veterans. Bring photos, mementos, and stories to share.
Family and friends are welcome!
\$15 per person.
Heritage Pointe, 600 Frank W. Burr Blvd. Teaneck, N.J.
Easily reached from I-95 or I-80 or by bus #167 or #182 from NYC.
Handicapped accessible. Free parking.
Please RSVP by Feb. 28, 2010 to (201) 944-1530 or donnakparker@verizon.net
- **Mickey Marcus Memorial Service**
Sunday April 25, 2010 (10 a.m. - 1 p.m.)
U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York
Hosted by Rabbi Shmuel Felzenberg, Chaplain (Major) U.S. Army
- **Salute to Israel Parade**
Sunday, May 23, 2010 (Noon - 5 p.m.)
Fifth Avenue (57th – 79th Street, New York City)