

SPRING 2011



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

President's Corner

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Spring 2011 AVILC Newsletter and thanks to Newsletter Chair, Elizabeth Appley, for putting it together, as well as significant contributions from Si Spiegelman and others.

We have had an eventful year highlighted by the transfer of the Machal Archives from the University of Florida to the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) in New York City. This move and the digital conversion of materials over time will make the archives far more accessible to scholars and the interested public. Congratulations to Ralph Lowenstein for serving as the guiding light for this historic move, with the able support of Si Spiegelman and Paul Kaye.

January 2011 was highlighted by an evening of learning and socializing with the opening of the Machal exhibit at AJHS: Heroes from Abroad: The Mahal-Aliya Bet Legacy. Prominently displayed on the first floor, this exhibit has been very well received and is an excellent educational tool. After welcoming remarks from Ido Aharoni, Acting Israeli Consul General in New York, we were treated to an exceptional seminar moderated by Deborah Dash Moore (Professor of History and Director of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan). Panelists featured personal perspectives from our own Ralph Lowenstein and Sam Klausner, with Professor Derek Penslar of the University of Toronto, an outstanding scholar of Jewish military history (and this is one group to whom that is not an oxymoron). The reviews are in:

"...wonderful spending time with all

AJHS Heroes from Abroad: Machal/Aliyah Bet Legacy Exhibition Opening

Article from *Jerusalem Post*, Jan. 29, 2011

OVERDUE RESPECT

By: Efrem Sigel

Recognition in their own countries has been a long time in coming for the nearly 1,500 Americans and Canadians who volunteered in Israel's Independence War in 1948; but thanks largely to the efforts of one man, Ralph Lowenstein, the story of their contributions and sacrifices is about to get exposed to a much larger audience.

Lowenstein was a featured speaker at the official opening on January 19 of an exhibit called "Heroes from Abroad:

The Mahal-Aliya Bet Legacy." The exhibit, at the American Jewish Historical Society in New York City, tells the story – in text, photos and artifacts – of the men and women from the US and Canada who fought in the 1947-49 War of Independence and who served on Aliya Bet ships that brought refugees to Palestine from DP camps in Europe between 1946 and 1948.

Lowenstein volunteered in Israel in the summer of 1948 after his freshman year at Columbia University, serving as a half-track driver for the 79th armored battalion of the Seventh Brigade in the

Galilee. Starting in 1982, he began collecting memoirs, letters, photos, documents and artifacts from many of the Mahal and Aliya Bet volunteers (Mahal is a Hebrew acronym for mitnadvei hutz la'aretz, "volunteers from abroad").

That archive had been stored at the

University of Florida-Gainesville, where Lowenstein is dean emeritus of the College of Journalism and Communications. It will now have a permanent home at AJHS. For at least the

next year, the Mahal exhibit will occupy a prominent ground-floor space at AJHS, after which it may travel to other locations around the country, says Jonathan Karp, acting executive director of AJHS.

Lowenstein will be honored at a dinner on May 4 as the recipient of the AJHS' Emma Lazarus Statute of Liberty award.

Besides Lowenstein, other speakers at the January 19 ceremony were Samuel Klausner, an ex-Mahalnik who is professor emeritus of sociology, University of Pennsylvania, and Derek Penslar, Samuel Zachs professor of Jewish His-



Ralph Lowenstein explaining a part of the display at the AJHS Opening Reception in New York City. (Jerusalem Post, Photo by: Courtesy.)

continued on page 2

continued on page 2

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Highlights from this Issue:

- President's Corner.....Page 1
- AJHS Exhibit OpeningPage 1
- Obituaries and RemembrancesPage 4
- Book Review: Loud and ClearPage 13
- AVILC Events.....Page 14
- World Machal Memorial Service.....Page 15
- Marcus Memorial Service at
Ammunition Hill.....Page 16
- Machal Exhibits Around the World ...Page 18
- News You Should UsePage 19

President's Corner continued from page 1

of the AVI members and family who came, and seeing AVI honored for all you did....high praise...truly enjoyed the day” DP “..A wonderful evening. The display was terrific. The event was exciting and interesting. The panel discussion was enlightening and everyone was rapt. The crowd was amazing. I was sorry to see it end!.. ...very impressed with the priority that AJHS is obviously placing on the achievements of the AVI and its members.” I’ll add my own: “The event was first rate in every respect and very favorably reflected all the hard work that was a key ingredient. A truly memorable evening...”

Other highlights of the past year include an exceptional Mickey Marcus memorial event at West Point ably organized by Si Spiegelman and Rafi Marom. We were honored to have Ambassador Gabriela Shalev, Israel’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Mr. Evan Kingsley, Executive Director, American Jewish Historical Society as featured speakers. Ambassador Shalev’s moving personal reminiscences were indeed inspirational. And kudos to Donna Parker for a wonderful Purim party enjoyed by a number of Machalniks and families.

As we go to press, we are commemorating another Mickey Marcus Memorial at West Point, and the AJHS Emma Lazarus Dinner Honoring Machal and Ralph Lowenstein for his lifelong commitment to Israel, with emcee duties anchored by the distinguished Dan Rather. All this and more will be reported in our next Newsletter, slated for Fall 2011.

We look forward to an exciting year to come and I welcome your suggestions for the growth of the organization. With good wishes to all and with a special expression of gratitude to our Machalniks,

*Jeff Margolis
President*

Efrem Sigel article continued from page 1

tory, University of Toronto. The moderator was Deborah Dash Moore, professor of history and director of the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, University of Michigan. Ido Aharoni, acting Israeli consul-general in New York, welcomed attendees and said the Mahalniks had a special place in the hearts of Israelis of his generation, whose parents fought for the creation of the state. About 20 Mahal and Aliya Bet volunteers attended the opening. The contribution of the Mahal volunteers has long been recognized in Israel, where former prime ministers David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir and others praised their role, especially in manning the Israeli air force and navy and in organizing the Air Transport Command that ferried planes and arms from Czechoslovakia to Israel. But their activities have been little known or celebrated in the US and Canada.

Americans returning from the fighting in Israel in 1948 and 1949 often did not speak about their activities for fear of being prosecuted for serving in a foreign army. It even took a presidential pardon in December 2008 from outgoing president George W. Bush to erase the stigma of a jail sentence for Charles Winters, who served 18 months in prison for selling three surplus B-17 bombers to Israel. Winters, a Christian, was the only American actually jailed for such activities.

Fewer than 20 percent of the volunteers are still living. Lowenstein estimates. In all, 29 Americans and 12 Canadians died helping to create the State of Israel.



*AJHS Exhibit Opening Reception:
“Duke” Labaczewski, Si Spiegelman,
Naomi Kantey and Art Bernstein*

Machal: Clandestine, Improvised, Disobedient but Battle Worthy

Excerpted Remarks from the Panel Discussion at the AJHS Exhibit Opening in NYC

By Samuel Z. Klausner

During the night of November 29, 1947, Jewish Palestinians were intent on the vote broadcast from the United Nations General Assembly at Lake Success, New York. Hearing authorization to create a Jewish and an Arab state in Palestine, Jews pitched themselves into dance and song in front of the Mughrabi Theatre in Tel Aviv. In Jerusalem, David Ben Gurion, then the chief executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, brooded over his military options. He fully expected an uprising by Palestinian Arabs and invasions by regular Arab armies. He sought counsel from American and British field grade officers. He believed the Haganah could repel a Palestinian Arab attack but would be no match for the regular armies of the surrounding states.

He directed the initiation of three projects: The Haganah, as a guerilla force, must be converted into a modern army. The Jewish Agency executive was ordered to organize the national conscription of men and women to that army. Business people from Palestine and the Jewish Diaspora were called upon to purchase arms. And, finally, military volunteers were to be recruited from the Diaspora. Machal was the result of this last project. Recruits were enlisted in Europe, especially France and Great Britain, South Africa, Latin America and the United States, among other countries.

In the United States, an agency called Land and Labor was established and staffed by both Americans and Palestinian emissaries. None had worked in military recruitment but they knew something about assisting Americans who would make *aliyah* mostly for agricultural service in collective settlements. They improvised ways of seeking and then processing volunteers. They distanced their activities from American Zionist political and fund-raising organizations though the wall between them was porous.

They operated clandestinely because their work was in violation of the United Nation's embargo on sending war materiel and fighting personnel to the Middle East. The Palestinian emissaries, practiced in eluding British intelligence, but strangers to America, were especially cautious about advertising their mission. Consequently, large numbers of potential recruits never learned of Land and Labor.

Of a pool of 500,000 American Jews who returned from World War II with military experience, only some 2,000 recruits for the Jewish military and for the ships of *Aliya Bet* were found. That was 0.4% of the veteran pool. Recruits included men and women, Jews and Gentiles. With less fear of government, it is not unreasonable to assume that perhaps 10,000-20,000 volunteers might have been recruited and, perhaps with their military training, reduced the 6,000 casualties the Israelis suffered in the War of Independence.

Land and Labor did not account for all of the American volunteers. Some went directly to Palestine on their own initiative. Others made their way to the Paris offices of the Haganah. Typically though, volunteers were placed on ships to France where the Paris office took over and dispatched them to a camp in southern France and then on to ships carrying Displaced Persons. Transport too was improvised since the Paris office and the camp were designed to move Holocaust survivors to Palestine. In spite of confused arrangements along the way the volunteers accepted the discomforts in a good spirit.

Volunteers with maritime or a naval background served aboard the less than seaworthy ships of *Aliyah Bet*. Nine ships were boarded by British marines and the volunteers interned along with the passengers. Relations were sometimes tense between the Jewish Pales-

tinians and Americans. Verbal abuse and even physical fights could erupt. Some confrontations might have been forestalled had shipboard discipline been unambiguous, though some of the Americans were pugnacious salts.

They arrived in Palestine (or, after May 15, 1948, Israel), and hastily assigned to military units. At the outset, assignments matched the military specialties which they had practiced in the American and Canadian armed forces. Later, the Israeli command discovered it would be more efficient for them to serve in English speaking units. They served in infantry, artillery and the armored units and in some that hardly existed before their arrival such as signals and parachute corps and, most important of all, an Air Force.

Invasion by seven Arab regular forces followed within days of the declaration of statehood. The troops of each state fought in a different front. No central command was established. The Egyptian Air Force took to the skies with Spitfire attacks on Tel Aviv almost immediately after the British lowered their flag and Ben Gurion declared the State of Israel. They remained unopposed until the English speaking 101st Fighter Squadron was formed. These pilots defied the Egyptians and took and held command of the skies.

An Air Transport Command was created and took off in what was dubbed *Operation Balak*. Its mix of converted civilian planes flew to a base in Czechoslovakia and returned with armaments or disassembled German Messerschmitt in their fuselage. While the planes were being loaded and inspected some crew members would go to Prague for recreation. Some would drink, become involved with women and, on one occasion, even slipped a woman aboard the plane and into Israel. The Czechs and Israelis begged them to keep a low profile since U.S. intelligence agencies had them under surveillance. Ultimately, the

United States demanded that Czechoslovakia close its airport to the Israelis under the terms of the UN Embargo. The new Czech communist government complied.

The service of Norman Schutzman offers an example of Machal infantry service. Norman had seen fighting in the South Pacific before he became commander of the English speaking Brigade 7. The brigade operated in the north taking villages around Meron and Safed. While it cannot be claimed that the members of Machal serving in the ground forces were decisive, they certainly held their own amidst some 90,000 Israeli fighters. With a lull in this fighting, the Brigade was assigned to fixed positions along the Syrian border. Eleven men took part in a revolt against the command, some went AWOL and some flung hand grenades around in the buildings, perhaps, out of ennui.

The disciplinary breakdown in both the case of Brigade 7 and Operation Balak were facilitated by lack of clear authority. In the process of changing a guerilla force into a modern army, the lines of authority were less than clearly established. In Israeli cooperative culture the tradition was to achieve consensus, not command authority. In addition, authority over foreign volunteers was, in the end, not seriously enforced. Every once in a while the Israeli command would become stringent and hold Court Martials. Some volunteers were sent home. Notably, there were no disciplinary problems when the volunteer were serving professionally in battle.

Machal may be compared with their foreign fighter rivals, the Arab Liberation Army, in what may be termed the War before the War, from the end of November 1947 to May 14, 1948. The Arab Liberation Army, formed of volunteers under the Arab League, was caught in conflicts of interest among the member states. Major responsibility for their formation was assigned to Syria. Jordan and Egypt tried to exploit these volunteers in what was a "land grab," policy which seemed to take precedence over Palestinian Arab sovereignty as a war aim. Arab states, as a means of control over the Arab Liberation Army, were known to deny requests for materiel. Machal may also be compared with volunteers to Republican Spain. Members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, on the whole, lacked military training and pit-

ted against German, Italian and Spanish Nationalist regulars, were slaughtered.

The principal advantage of Machal fighters over groups such as the Arab Liberation Army and the Lincoln Brigade was that some 80% were veterans of the Second World War and had first class military training. This made them almost unique in the history of foreign fighters and, in the future of Israel, a phenomenon not likely to be repeated.

The Israeli command deemed the volunteers to have made a significant contribution to the Israeli victory. Their contribution in the air war was decisive. Despite the clandestine recruitment, the organizational improvisations and the lack of discipline when off duty, the volunteers were determined fighters providing honest and courageous service.

AJHS Heroes from Abroad: Exhibition Opening Attendees

Machal attendees at the AJHS Exhibit reception and panel discussion in January 2011 and their affiliations, included:

Prosper Anselm (7th Brigade); Art Bernstein (*A.B. Haim Arlosoroff*); Harry Bieber (Navy Commandos); Alan Checic (Palmach); Bernard Ellman (*A.B. Pan York*); Dr. Max Goldberg (1st Brigade and Medical Corps); Hilde Goldberg (Army Medical Corps); George Goldman (*A.B. Geula*); Lucie Greenhut (Air Force); Herbert Hanft (Army Res. & Develop.); Roberta Hodes (Air Force Radar Operations); Ira Feinberg (Palmach); Naomi Kantey (Army Medical Corps); Paul Kaye (*A.B. Hatikvah* and Shayetet 13); Sam Klausner (Air Transport Corps (ATC)); Duke Labaczewski (*A.B. Hatikvah* and Army); Ralph Lowenstein (7th Brigade, 79th Battalion); Henry Mandel (*A.B. and Army Res. & Devel.*); Nat Nadler (*A.B. Exodus* 1947); Lee Reinhart (Haganah and Palmach); Robin Rotenberg (*A.B. Mala*); Norman Schutzman (7th Brigade, 72nd Battalion); Martin Silver (*A.B. Mala*); and Simon Spiegelman (1st Brigade, 13th Battalion); Moses Stambler (*A.B. Jewish State and Navy*); and Charles Weiss (*A.B. Hatikvah and Pans*).

Obituary

**DAVID PANAR 1918-2009
(MACHAL - CANADA)**

Longtime Mechanical Engineering Professor, David Panar, passed away July 9, 2009. David was responsible for the reconstruction of the "*Black Spit*"--the first fighter aircraft produced in Israel.

As a young man he enrolled in an Engineering program at the University of Alberta, but completed his degree at the University of Michigan. His knowledge of aircraft engines made him an excellent candidate for the British Air Commission. He participated in several training courses and developed skills in airplane manufacture and repair.

His Machal story began in May 1948 when an Egyptian *Spitfire* was shot down, landing wheels-up on a beach just north of Tel Aviv. Other than a separated right wing, broken propeller, damaged radiators, and bent crankshaft, the aircraft was in flyable condition--at least it seemed so to David and the fledgling Israeli Air Force!

The immediate concern was to repair that *Spit* and then to maintain it in serviceable condition. With few spare parts, the repair project was soon abandoned. Instead, the Israeli Air Force, under the guidance of David Panar, assembled the *Black Spit*. This aircraft was airborne on its first take-off and flown to an operational base near Hadera.

David Panar returned to Canada and continued his studies in Industrial Engineering. He accepted a teaching position at the University of Alberta where he remained for over a quarter of a century.

He is remembered as a teacher, story-teller, entrepreneur, and beloved family man. He was always busy, but never missed a lecture. Once, he flitted about the province in a small plane, but misjudged the height of a wire fence on a take-off. He made a perfect "wheels-up" landing. The next morning, he staggered in to his class with two black eyes, facial cuts, and a broken nose!!

David is fondly remembered for his efforts in 1948 with the Israeli Air Force and his use of his engineering talents.

He is survived by his wife, Bea Goldberg, their daughter, grandchildren, and even four great grandchildren.

Obituaries & Remembrances



**AVI LIVNEY (LIFSHITZ):
EXODUS 1947
PURSER/PHARMACIST,
KIBBUTZNIK**

*By Si Spiegelman
Source: Machal Website
(www.machal.org.il)*

Avi Livney was born in New York City in 1927. During World War II he served in the Hospital Corps of the United States Navy from 1945-46 and served in the Mossad Aliyah Bet from January 1947.

He joined the *President Warfield* (*Exodus* '47) in Baltimore in January as the ship's purser-pharmacist. Two weeks later, in a ceremony on the ship's deck, the entire crew was sworn into the Haganah by Yaakov Dori (Destrovsky). The crew of forty was primarily Jewish American volunteers in their early twenties who had served in the Army, Navy, or Merchant Marines during World War II. (The person who ultimately became captain was only 23 years old.)

The *President Warfield* had been an overnight ferry that sailed the Chesapeake between Baltimore, Maryland and Norfolk, Virginia, carrying up to 300 passengers at a time. (It was destined to carry 4,500 refugees on its historic trip as the *Exodus*.) During World War II it was sent to Europe and used in the transport of Allied troops across the English Channel. At war's end, it was escorted back to the U.S. and sold to be broken up for scrap when it was acquired by Aliyah Bet.

It took several months of work to make the *Warfield* seaworthy, including a near-sinking in a storm the first time out across the Atlantic. The voyage led

to Ponta Delgada in the Azores, to Marseilles, La Spezia (Italy), Port de Bouc (France), where final preparations and fueling were made, and finally to Sete. Avi described the arrival of the passengers and the difficult journey that followed on the *Exodus*:

The morning our passengers were to arrive was our last opportunity to shower and put on clean clothes. It was like preparing for Shabbat. The truck convoys began arriving and as the first refugees got off the trucks, we thought that they would be strangers, but they weren't. They were family. They came bundled up in several layers of clothing plus a back pack – all their worldly goods. Their trek had led them from concentration camps to displaced persons camps to us. When all 4,500 were on board, we moved out to sea and headed east. The needs of the community had to be taken care of 24-hours a day. Three infants were born, and the mother of one died and was buried at sea. British warships followed us each day in numbers which increased to six destroyers and a light cruiser. On our last night, the British ships came in one at a time, rammed us, threw tear gas bombs and stun grenades, and succeeded in getting a large part of club-swinging marines on board. Three people were killed, including our second mate, Bill Bernstein. Over a hundred were injured. By daybreak, we surrendered and were towed into Haifa. What had been the refugees' crime? That they were trying to go home? The pier (which has since been named the Pier of Tears) was where the *Exodus* passengers were forced onto three British "prison" ships. The ships ultimately moved out to sea, surrounded by warships, and sailed back to Port de Bouc in France and unsuccessfully tried

to get the passengers to disembark. The result was that all of the people were taken back to Germany.

Avi continued to Venice and the *Pan Crescent* which was in dry dock. He remained with the ship and once repairs were completed, sailed down the Adriatic and on to Constanza. The *Pan York* arrived from France a month later and both ships sailed together to Burgas in Bulgaria and began loading refugees. Each ship took approximately 7,500 people from Romania, Bulgaria, and Transylvania. They sailed south, cleared Turkish waters, and were caught by a flotilla of British warships and convoyed straight to Cyprus, arriving on New Year's Day, 1948.

The *Pans* arrived in Israel after the State was declared. Avi joined an American group from Hashomer Hatzair at Kibbutz Ein Hashofet. In January 1949 they settled at Sasa, relieving an army group. He lived on Kibbutz Sasa and engaged in farming. Avi returned to the U.S. for a number of years but came back to live in Israel on Kibbutz Barkai until his death on May 5, 2010. He is survived by his wife, Batsheva, and four children.

About his life at Kibbutz Sasa, Avi wrote as follows:

In referring to our beginnings at Sasa, we might also say that when we received our first tractor, we had a celebration, and when we received our first cow we had a celebration; and when the first baby was born we had a celebration because it was everybody's baby; and when the first person died, we all cried because we had lost a member of our family. I have truly had a most fortunate life. I've always been grateful to those who gave us an opportunity to serve in the Aliyah Bet. We could have done no less. I am also grateful to those who gave us Sasa and a lifetime of comradeship.

Obituaries & Remembrances

Exodus Revisited: A Larchmont Sailor's Tale 63 Years On

By Mark Schulman

The recent passing of the captain of the *Exodus*, the legendary ship that attempted to bring Holocaust survivors from war-torn Europe to British-mandated Palestine in the 1940's, marks the end of an era and a tribute to the founding of the State of Israel.

I never met the weather-beaten skipper, Yitzhak "Ike" Ahronovitch, but heard stories about him from my father, who was one of Ike's sailors on the ship made famous by the late American writer Leon Uris in his 1958 bestseller book of the same name and the 1960 Hollywood film version starring Paul Newman.

"As one of the crew members, I was saddened to hear about Ike," said Sam Schulman, 81, a long-time Larchmont resident. "We were a bunch of kids back then – I was 18 and Ike was 23 – but we grew up fast trying to get refugees out of Europe and bring them to Palestine."

"What I remember most about Ike," he reminisced, "was his ability to grasp a situation quickly and make a decision with no regrets."

The Exodus: Ike Goes It Alone

In particular, Mr. Schulman clearly remembers July 11, 1947, the day when the *Exodus* was sitting in France's southern port of Sète with its 4,515 passengers (including 655 children) ready to get clearance from the French to embark on the last leg of their long journey. When a local pilot failed to come aboard and help steer the ramshackle ship through the port's narrow passage ways (as a result of British pressure to detain the boat), Ike decided to go it alone and improvised a series of tricky maneuvers to get out to the Mediterranean Sea.



Sam Schulman, on left, was aboard the *Exodus*, skippered by Yitzhak "Ike" Ahronovitch.

"That was a tough call and very risky," Mr. Schulman said. "I don't want to think about what would have happened if we crashed against a sea-wall with all our passengers."

The passengers had already seen their fair share of hardships; they were all Jewish refugees who had survived the Holocaust. Schulman himself had survived the war in hiding in France.

"They came bundled up in several layers of clothing plus a backpack, all their worldly goods," remembered **Avi Livney**, 83, a fellow crewmate of Mr. Schulman from New York who later moved to Israel and settled on a kibbutz, a collective agricultural community. "Their trek had led them from concentration camps to displaced persons camps, to us."

But it wasn't smooth sailing after safely leaving France and making it to sea. Waiting for the *Exodus* was a British cruiser and a convoy of destroyers, which trailed the ship for several days before stopping it 20 nautical miles from the shores of what is today Israel.

"On our last night, the British ships came in one at a time, rammed us, threw tear gas bombs and stun grenades, and succeeded in getting a large party of club-swinging marines on board," added **Mr. Livney**. "Three people were killed, including our second mate Bill

Bernstein. Over a hundred were injured. By daybreak, we surrendered and were towed into Haifa."

From the end of World War II until the establishment of the State of Israel, "illegal" immigration, known by its code name the Aliya Bet, was the main way of getting around the strictly enforced policy of allowing only several hundred Jewish refugees a month into British-controlled Palestine. From 1946-1948 more than 60 Aliya Bet ships were organized, but only a few managed to penetrate the British blockade and bring their passengers ashore. Most were stopped and sent to detention camps in Cyprus — all except the passengers on the *Exodus*, who were forced onto prison ships in Haifa and sent back to Europe.



Many of the crew members of the *Exodus* disembarked in Palestine with the aid of the Haganah (the pre-nascent Israeli Defense Forces), including Captain Ike. Others, like Mr. Schulman, were asked to go undercover and stay with the refugees and help with logistics and coordination.

"We were under the impression that we were heading to Cyprus like all the other ships that had not managed to get through the blockade," Mr. Schulman said. "We were shocked to learn that we were being taken back to Europe."

The prison ships returned the refugees to France and then consequently to Germany, amid much controversy. The plight of the *Exodus*, followed by the international media, became a symbol

Obituaries & Remembrances

of the struggle for open Jewish emigration to Palestine. After several months in detention camps, many of them did eventually find their way to Israel.

As for Sam Schulman, he got off in France and stayed in Europe to continue helping refugees get to Palestine. Several months later he reconnected with **Mr. Livney** and others on another mission.

The Pan Ships: Less Fame, More Refugees

"The Exodus might have been the most famous of all the ships, but what many people don't know is that the Pan ships brought the largest number of refugees from Europe at one time," Mr. Schulman noted.

The *Pan Crescent* (also known by its Hebrew name, *Atzmaut*) and *Pan York* (*Kibbutz Galuyot*), nicknamed the "Pans," left from the port of Burgas, Bulgaria, on December 27, 1947, with over 15,000 immigrants. Several days later they were also stopped by British warships, after passing through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles in Turkey into the Aegean Sea toward the Mediterranean. The boats were forced to anchor at Famagusta, today on the Turkish side of Cyprus, and passengers placed in detention camps.

Mr. Schulman and **Mr. Livney** were two of the more than 50,000 interned by the British authorities in Cyprus. Some were detained for only several months and entered Palestine on the limited monthly quota, while others were there as long as two years and admitted only after independence.

The Haganah got Mr. Schulman out on the Jewish passenger liner the *Kedmah* under the alias of one of the immigrants approved by the monthly British quota. The next morning he disembarked in Haifa and headed south to the Negev Desert to build a kibbutz with friends he knew from his youth movement days in France, and to fight in Israel's War of Independence.

Several years later, Mr. Schulman emigrated to New York, ultimately set-

ling with his family in Larchmont in 1976.

"I'm proud about the role that I played back then," said Mr. Schulman about his contribution to help Jewish immigrants get to Israel. "Those were important days of my life."

Mark Schulman, Sam Schulman's son, grew up in Larchmont and is currently a journalist in Israel. This article first appeared in the Jerusalem Post on December 27, 2009.



Saul Yellin (First on left)- Cyprus internment

SAUL YELLIN: SS HATIKVAH/TRADEWINDS

Saul Yellin was born in Baltimore, Maryland on June 18, 1924, and died in Phoenix, Arizona on October 7, 2010.

After serving for four years in the U.S. Navy, Saul was asked to "volunteer" on the illegal ship, *SS Hatikvah*, which ran the British blockade to bring 1,500 Holocaust survivors to Palestine in 1947. He described it as the most meaningful experience of his life, because, as he put it, "I will never forget the thrill when one Jew was able to reach out and help another Jew, as they boarded our ship...they kissed our hands and said that we were sent by the Moshiach." The passengers and crew were interned in Cyprus by the British authorities to await their turn to enter

Palestine under the quota system.

Saul was one of the American volunteers who was asked by the Haganah to carry explosives taped on their backs when they blew up the British ship, *Empire Lifeguard*, after their passengers had left the ship in Haifa harbor. Saul and his brother Sid, who was Captain of the *Hatikvah*, were arrested with two other crew members and imprisoned at Acre prison. Then they were deported, with strict orders never to set foot again on British soil.

Saul's burial was at Beit Shemesh, in the Jerusalem environs, right near the Burma Road and Machal Memorial. Saul's lifelong love of Israel made him an active supporter of many Jewish and Zionist causes. Saul, and his wife, Harriet (Honey) wrote a book about his experiences, *Hatikvah, Song of Hope*, and delivered many lectures and presentations. On two separate occasions, survivors came up to him and told him that they had been passengers on *Hatikvah*.

By Sharon (Yellin) Winer, daughter.

Obituaries & Remembrances



**DAVID BAUM:
SS HAGANAH CREW/ISRAEL
NAVY**

David Baum was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1924 and was a member of the Zionist youth organization, Hashomer Hatzair. He was a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and received a commission as an ensign in the U.S. Naval Reserve. During World War II he sailed as third and second assistant engineer on Liberty Ships carrying ammunition to the various theatres of operations.

After the war he joined the crew of the *Norsyd*, which later became the *SS Haganah*. Except for the captain and the chief and first assistant engineers, the crew was made up entirely of U.S. volunteers, many from Habonim and Hashomer Hatzair. All the remaining officers were experienced Merchant Mariners. The ship sailed from New York to Marseilles in 1946 where preparations began for accommodating the passengers including installation of the wooden shelves which served as bunks for the *olim* (immigrants). The *Norsyd* made two sailings in defiance of the British blockade of Palestine in the summer of 1946. The first carried 1,000 *olim* who were interned. The second trip brought a larger number of the Holocaust survivors to Palestine. The *olim* arrived by rail, and lined up alongside the ship. While the capacity of the ship was calculated to be around 1,000 passengers, the total number of *olim* that boarded was 2,678. The ship was dangerously overloaded and unstable. Despite the enormous risks that those

in charge were willing to take, all survived.

They arrived in Haifa on July 29, 1946, after about a week at sea, having encountered water in the fuel, as well as loss of power. Since the *Wedgwood* and *Beria* had arrived during the preceding weeks, the detention camp at Atlit was full. The passengers were divided up onto several Aliyah Bet ships which had previously been captured by the British and were tied up to the Haifa breakwater. David returned to Marseilles for the Mossad L'Aliyah Bet to check out some potential Aliyah Bet ships and then went to Miami to set up another base for preparing Aliyah Bet ships.

When the Israeli Navy was organized in March 1948 he enlisted and served till June 1950 when he joined Kibbutz Sasa. He married Rezzie (Ruth) in 1951 and returned to the U.S. in August 1952, and lived in the Philadelphia area where he worked as an engineer. Davey and Rezzie returned to Israel in 1983 and lived in Tel Aviv.

David Baum passed away on December, 14, 2010 and is buried at Kibbutz Sasa. He is survived by his wife, Ruth, son, Yonatan, and grandson, Ariel. David wrote about his war time experiences: "For me the most important and meaningful accomplishment was doing something for the survivors and the Yishuv. All the tons of arms which I had helped to deliver to the former Soviet Union, and to the U.S. Army in Europe and to the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor may not have saved one Jewish life. But the Aliyah Bet operation was a positive act. I transported our people to Eretz Yisrael (a.k.a. Palestine), strengthening both. Personally, it gave me an opportunity to meet many *doers*, including most of the 230 American Aliyah Bet volunteers".

By Si Spiegelman
Source: Machal website
(www.machal.org.il)

Editor's Note: Long time AVI Newsletter Editor extraordinaire, Sam Klausner, writes of Davey Baum: "Dave and Ruth lived in Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania in the 1970's and subsequently made aliyah in fulfillment of their Zionist vision. They purchased an apartment a block from the beach in Tel Aviv and over the years welcomed many American Machal to their home. They became a bridge between the American and Israeli groups. Dave was an endless source of information about our Israeli colleagues. A review of the AVI Newsletters over the years will show how many obituaries bear Dave's signature. His death leaves a void, perhaps, a distancing between those Machal communities that chose to live in Israel and those who remained stateside."

The current Newsletter Editor adds her personal note: "Davey Baum will be greatly missed. He was an important liaison for many years between AVI and Israel, keeping people informed and connected across distant miles. He was respected and admired. Davey was a friend of both of my parents for over 70 years. He and my late father (George Samuel (Applebaum) Appley) were together in Hashomer Hatzair, in the Merchant Marine Academy, the Merchant Marines, Aliyah Bet and later at Kibbutz Sasa, with my mother, Marlene (Leah) Bondy Appley."

Obituaries & Remembrances



**MARVIN LIBOW:
B-COMPANY, 72nd INFANTRY
BATTALION, 7th BRIGADE**

Marvin Libow was born in Los Angeles, California on July 24, 1928, and passed away on June 30, 2010. His father died after an auto accident when he was only one year old. He grew up the youngest of four brothers without a father. His mother moved with the children to New York City so she could get the help of her family. She went to work in the garment center to support herself and her sons.

Marvin grew up in Boro Park, Brooklyn, where he attended the local public schools, Stuyvesant High School, and City College. He became a member of the campus Hillel where he attended a rally agitating for the independence of Palestine sponsored by the Jewish Agency. The agency was covertly recruiting fighters for the emerging Jewish State. He and his friends began collecting arms, including machine guns, in -- of all clichéd things -- violin cases.

The campus recruiter, who was a member of the Jewish Brigade, gave an impassioned speech about Land and Labor for Palestine, the Haganah recruiting office in New York City. Marvin found the address (Breslin Hotel) and volunteered. He got a passport and made his way to Palestine in August 1948. From Le Havre, France, he reached St. Jerome, a displaced persons camp near Marseille, France. He survived a difficult voyage on the *Pan York*. He and the other Americans were told to speak only Yiddish so the United Nations monitors would think they were refugees. Upon arrival, he found himself immediately in the army. (He had been rejected as 4-F by the American army, but if you could breathe, you were in the Israeli Army).

Marvin served in the 7th Brigade-72nd Battalion, an English speaking unit made up mostly of U.S, Canadian, English and South African Machalniks. The Brigade command-

er was Canadian-born Ben Dunkelman and Marvin's company commander was Norman Schutzman from the U.S. After three days of training, his unit went into action with a raid on the town of Meron near the Lebanese border. On the way to Meron they got lost. It was pitch black, but the Arabs knew something was afoot and kept firing in the air which gave away their positions. Still they arrived on the wrong side of Meron. That was Marvin's initiation into battle.

In tandem with other units, the 72nd Battalion went on to liberate the upper Galilee during "Operation Hiram" with battles at Meron, Jish, Sasa, Malkiyah and other sites. "B" company engaged in the fire fighting on the Tamra Hill that went down in history as the only bayonet charge of the war. Marvin liked to tell his war buddies the story of the Machalnik who dryly commented to the other soldiers in Yiddish while under sniper fire: "Men ken du geharget veren." English translation: "You can get killed around here."

Marvin served as a volunteer in Machal because he felt deeply that there was a need for a Jewish homeland. After a year fighting for the new Jewish State, Marvin returned to the U.S. He said "I came home a different guy than when I left."

He soon met and married Helen Casius. They had a loving marriage that lasted almost 58 years. They were blessed with three children, Robin, Nancy and Michael and seven grandchildren, Mariel, Rayna, Jordan, Miles, Sophie, Isabel and Miriam (Mimi). Mariel and Rayna are both in Israel now. Mariel is working for Physicians for Human Rights and Rayna is a volunteer in the Israeli army. It looks like the apples didn't fall far from the tree.

Marvin worked in the New York garment center after his return from Israel. Later he became an Industrial Arts teacher in the New York City School System. He always strongly supported Israel and many Israeli charities and organizations. He was a terrific handyman who did roofing, flooring, papering, electrical work, plumbing, etc. He enjoyed reading, travel, theater, playing chess, astronomy and doing crossword puzzles. He had a wonderful sense of humor and enjoyed making everyone laugh with his jokes. Marvin was an unselfish, dedicated man who wanted to help medical science by donating his brain for research to help other Parkinson's disease sufferers. He surely did!

By Helen Libow

ARNOLD SAMUEL SCHUTZBERG: MACHAL - PALMACH 1927- 2010

Arnold Samuel Schutzberg was an American volunteer for Machal in Israel's War of Independence, helped start a kibbutz and enjoyed a successful career involving aircraft, remote intelligence gathering and anti-ballistic missiles. He devoted his later years to researching Cambridge, Massachusetts' Jewish immigrant history. Arnold Schutzberg died on March 25, 2010 at the age of 82.

Mr. Schutzberg was the second child of Russian immigrant parents, Blanche Sternberg and Harry Schutzberg, who met and married in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Arnold was born at home. In his own words, "I was born in my mother's bed on the second floor of our three decker five room (three bedrooms, kitchen and living room) apartment on Columbia Street in Cambridge. I was told that the famous Dr. Chalfen was in attendance on July 30, 1927 when I became the second Schutzberg child but first male child. I bear the name Shmuel in honor of my paternal grandmother's father. I was also named Arnold or Aba but don't know if there was any familial basis for this choice."

In 1935, the family moved to Fayette Street in mid-Cambridge. Mr. Schutzberg completed his elementary education at the Wellington School and then moved to the Longfellow School and an afterschool Hebrew school. In 1945 he graduated from Cambridge High and Latin, where he played on the school chess team.

After serving in WWII, Mr. Schutzberg went to the Middle East to serve as a soldier in the Palmach, joining others supporting the creation of the State of Israel. He was a founding member of Kibbutz Gesher Haziv, established in 1948. He began engineering studies at Northeastern University in Boston and later completed them at UMASS Amherst (class of 1953). He was awarded two Masters degrees from the University of Michigan in 1957 and 1958. Dur-

Obituaries & Remembrances

ing this time, Mr. Schutzberg also did some coursework at Notre Dame.

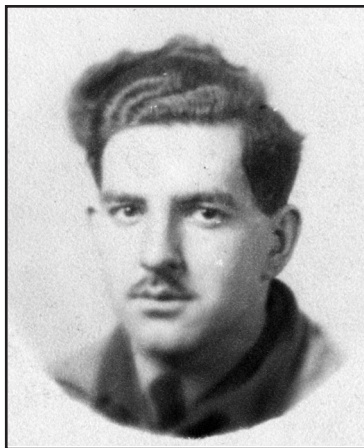
Mr. Schutzberg began his professional career working on the development of the B-52 bomber, the KC-135 aircraft and the Chinook helicopter while working at Boeing Vertol and Bendix Corporation. He spent most of his career at AVCO Everett Research Laboratory (now part of Textron) involved in remote intelligence gathering and the Star Wars anti-ballistic missile programs.

In June 1957, Arnold married Frances Poger Leve, whom he had known as a member of the Zionist youth group Habonim ("The Builders") since their teens. The young couple started a family in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania and later moved to Winchester, Massachusetts to be closer to both sets of the children's grandparents.

In Winchester, the Schutzbergs were founding members of a Jewish community, which later evolved into the current synagogue. In the early 1980s, Mr. Schutzberg began renovating his Cambridge family home to "move back to the city" in retirement.

Upon retirement, he joined the Harvard Institute for Learning in Retirement (HILR), where he actively pursued interests in political science, and Jewish and Middle Eastern history. He performed his historic research with Frances at his side and contributed a chapter on the history of Jewish immigration to Cambridge for a Cambridge Historical Society book. The couple hosted regular visits from their grandchildren Rose, Arthur, Hugo, Victoire and Scarlett.

Mr. Schutzberg was laid to rest next to his wife of 50 years on March 28, 2010 in the Ashkenaz cemetery of Temple Beth Shalom in Everett, Massachusetts. He is survived by a brother, Bernard Schutzberg, of Nevada and New Jersey and a sister, Mildred Schutzberg Katz, of Jerusalem, Israel. He is also survived by two children, Adena of Somerville and Daniel of Cambridge, four grandchildren, nieces and nephews.



Ben Ocopnick

BENJAMIN (BEN) OCOPNICK: SERVED IN ALIYAH BET, IDF, IAF AND ISRAELI NAVY

Benjamin S. Ocopnick, the legendary "man of all seasons," whose variety of duties in both the Canadian and Israeli armed forces exceeded that of all other volunteers, died in Toronto on Feb. 15, 2011, at the age of 86. His death followed a long illness.

Ben served in both the Royal Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. He volunteered for Aliyah Bet, was imprisoned in Cyprus, and later sent back to Canada by Israeli forces to recruit volunteers. He returned to Israel with the first contingent of Canadians and served in the Israeli Army, Navy and Air Force. He was credited with shooting down an Egyptian airplane bombing Tel Aviv.

He was born in Montreal on Oct. 29, 1924, and raised in Toronto, where he was a member of Habonim Zionist Youth. After his discharge from the Canadian armed forces, he sailed as a deckhand on the *Ulua*/*Haim Arlosoroff*, which left Baltimore in October, 1946. The small vessel was built in 1912, had served as a revenue cutter during the Prohibition era, and an anti-submarine vessel during World War II. In Aliyah Bet, she was staffed with a crew of 20 Americans, two Canadians and two Palestinian Jews (members of Palyam). More Palyam members would join the crew in Europe.

The vessel was refitted in Marseilles and sailed in January 1947 from Stockholm with 660 Holocaust survivors aboard. The ship picked up an additional 724 passengers in Italy and headed for Palestinian waters. As they approached land on February 27, five Royal Navy craft closed in and sent boarding parties onto the *Ulua* deck. Hand to hand combat ensued, with some of the



Ben Ocopnick as a gunner in the Israeli navy

British marines being flung into the sea and 30 of the *Ulua*'s passengers being injured. The *Ulua*, now renamed *Haim Arlosoroff*, scraped ground near Haifa. The immigrants were transferred to British vessels and deported to Cyprus. Three months later, the immigrants with Ocopnick and other crew members among them, were released and sailed to Haifa.

Ben arrived in Palestine for the second time in April 1948 and served with the 5th Brigade (Givati). He then served on the Egyptian front and later transferred to the Navy, manning heavy-caliber guns. He subsequently served in the Israeli Air Force as an assistant flight controller.

After his return to Canada, Ben spent four decades working on behalf of Jewish causes. He retired as Executive Director of the United Israel Appeal – Ontario Division. Surviving are his wife, Sheila, children and their spouses, Susan, Elliott, Sherry, Melissa and Wayne, and three grandchildren.

About the contribution of Machal to the war effort, Ben commented: "Without us, the casualties would have been much heavier, and without our expertise we could have had a much smaller Israel." About how serving affected his own life, he said, "I will never forget the experience until the day I die. It gave my life so much more meaning."

By Ralph Lowenstein

Obituaries & Remembrances



Mickey and brother Jack Olfman

**MITCHELL (MICKEY) OLDFMAN:
B-COMPANY, 72ND BATTALION,
7TH BRIGADE, (MEDIC)**

Mitchell (Mickey) Olfman was born in 1926 and raised in Kamsack, Saskatchewan as the youngest of eight children. His parents immigrated to Canada in the late 1800's soon after his father narrowly escaped from the Russian Army where he was serving in the Cavalry. In 1947, while pursuing a Bachelor of Science Degree at the University of British Columbia, Mickey was willingly recruited to join the Machal. Inspired by his six older brothers who had all served in the Canadian Armed Forces during WWII, he wanted to be a part of the formation of a Jewish Homeland.

In April 1948 Mickey traveled from Vancouver to New York and from there, he took a ship to Marseilles, France where he joined recruits from around the world as well as several hundred displaced persons. After a week's training, 150 recruits and displaced persons boarded an Italian fishing boat headed for Palestine under the cover of darkness in a clandestine operation because the British were still occupying the country. Within days of his arrival, Israel declared itself a nation and the second phase of the War of Independence began.

With only a few weeks of training, Mickey and his fellow recruits were inducted into the Haganah and thrown into the fray. Mickey was assigned to the 72nd Battalion of the 7th Brigade as a medic. His duties were varied and included traversing minefields on his donkey to rescue wounded soldiers

from the front lines.

Mickey's older brother, Jack Olfman, who was serving in the Israeli army during the same period, liked to tell this story. He was intent on visiting Mickey who was stationed about 15 miles east of Safed. Jack found his brother about 100 yards from the Syrian guns that were pointed at Israel and at Mickey's post. In order to reach him, Jack had to climb up a steep hill which did not have a path beyond its first 40 feet of elevation at which point it was just a tangle of weeds and hidden land mines. When Jack got to the top of the hill, (where the Syrian guns pointed toward Israel were visible) he saw Mickey riding on his donkey, transporting water. The only other person stationed there was a young American soldier reading a comic book with a rifle across his knee. Mickey and his young companion were Israel's first line of defense against a Syrian assault on Safed. This anecdote captures the combination of youth and bravery that epitomized the Machal. During his year in Israel, he was stationed at several camps throughout the Galil where he helped to secure land that was later occupied by the Kibbutzim.

In 1949 Mickey was asked to return home to Canada because his father was ill. He enrolled in the University of Manitoba where he resumed his studies. He joined Electroline, Inc. (a manufacturer of equipment for the cable TV and telephone industries.) Within a few years he became President and CEO. A lifelong athlete, he took up running in his 40's – completing two marathons.

Mickey died on February 26, 2008, at the age of 82. A beloved husband, father and grandfather, he is survived by his wife Bess Olfman, a former public relations consultant who resides in Montreal, his daughter Lisa Olfman, co-founder and President of Portfolio Entertainment, and his daughter Sharna Olfman, a clinical psychologist and author/editor of the *Childhood In America* book series. Lisa resides in Toronto with her husband David Wolfe, Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto, and their children, Michael 26 and Rachel 17. Sharna resides in Pitts-

burgh with her husband Daniel Burston, Chair of the Department of Psychology at Duquesne University and their children, Adam 17 and Gavriela 14.

About his service in Israel, Mickey commented: "I had the personal satisfaction of having contributed to one of the greatest achievements of the Jewish people."

*By Bess Olfman and
Sharna Olfman Burston*

**HARRY ISAAC DINKIN:
69 (HAMMER) SQUADRON
B-17 RADIO
OPERATOR/GUNNER**

Harry Isaac Dinkin, a radio operator/gunner on one of Israel's three B-17 bombers, died February 12, 2011. Born in August 4, 1917, in Toronto, he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force, serving from 1941 to 1945. He volunteered for the fledgling Israeli Air Force in 1948, and was assigned to the 69 (Hammer) Squadron, serving until 1950. The flight of three B-17s bombed Cairo on its maiden trip from Czechoslovakia to Israel, and during the war compiled some 200 bombing missions.

Harry was a lifelong bachelor. Upon his return from Israel, he followed a career with the Canadian federal government, retiring in 1981 as a Customs officer. He is remembered by his extended family and friends for his strong moral code, independent spirit and dedication to many charitable causes. He was a dedicated volunteer, assisting heart patients at Toronto General Hospital and was an inspiration to all who knew him. Before his death at age 94, his message to family and friends was not to mourn his death, but to celebrate the rich life he lived.

Harry said he had a "greater sense of personal and ethnic pride" as a result of his service with the Israel Air Force and always had a feeling "of propriety" in relation to Israel. He added that he had a more purposeful attitude toward life because of his association with Israel and considered his military service there his "destiny fulfilled."

Obituaries & Remembrances



Jack Gold and valiant Machal compatriots. The armored car crew in the 79th Armored Battalion: top to bottom, Jack Gold, Frank Perlman, and Solly Ossin.

Photo courtesy Frank Perlman family

JACK ISADORE GOLD ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCE 79TH BATTALION

Jack Isadore Gold, 91, passed away Monday, January 3, 2011. He was born and grew up in Montreal, Canada, a son to the late Hyman and Fannie (Feldman) Gold. Exhibiting bravery and idealism at a young age, he was drafted and served in the Royal Canadian Army, where he received officer's training. In 1947 he volunteered to join Machal in the fight for Israel's War of Independence. When he left Montreal, he did not tell his parents where he was going, not wanting to worry them. Once in Israel, he sent postcards to the family telling them that he was "taking care of some business," and hoped to be back soon.

Zaydie Jack, as he was affectionately known by his family, fought in the IDF Armored Corp Division. He was a member of the 79th Battalion, 7th Brigade. He wrote postcards home to Canada, mentioning the places he saw across Israel, including Latrun, Metulla and Hadera.

Jack returned to Canada after 1948 and was diligent and dedicated to his work. He started a successful shoe business in Ottawa. He always had a smile and a pleasant word. Jack was an avid sportsman and enjoyed spending quality time with his family.

The Gold family made a dedication at The American Jewish Historical Society in his honor, and in honor of the other heroic Machalniks who selflessly volunteered to fight for Israel in her time of great need. Unfortunately, Zaydie Jack passed away on January 3, 2011, a few short weeks prior to the dedication

ceremony, held in conjunction with the opening of the Machal exhibit in New York City. His son, Jonathan wrote of his father, "May the memory of Jack Gold be a blessing and an inspiration to all of us. He proved that the efforts of a few can have a dramatic effect. Zaydie Jack will be dearly missed."

Jack will be remembered as a loving father, grandfather, brother, and a favorite uncle to many nieces and nephews. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Sylvia Myers Gold, his three children and their spouses, Franceen Pernikoff and her husband Dr. Barry Pernikoff, Dr. Jonathan Gold and wife Paula Gold, and Wendy Basch and her husband Sheldon Basch, as well as 12 beloved grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Ralph Lowenstein, who served in a halftrack company of the 79th Armored Battalion of the 7th Brigade, gave this remembrance of Jack and his two armored car comrades:

"The three-man crew of Jack's armored car really represented the international flavor of the two armored car companies in the 79th. Jack, 29, from Canada, Frank Perlman, 28, from Pittsburgh, and Solly Ossin, 26, from South Africa had a collective age that set a record for the 79th, where almost all personnel ranged in age from 18 to 26.

The three men shared a vehicle peculiar to the Israeli army. The armored car was built in Israel on the chassis and lower body of either a World War II American M3 scout car or American ¾-ton weapons carrier. The upper armor and turret were fabricated from steel plate in Israel, making the vehicle too heavy for the frame upon which it was mounted. To say the least, it was an unsafe vehicle, top-heavy and extremely hazardous to its crew on the rare occasions when it was driven off-road. The turret itself was not motor driven, and could only be rotated by the gunner using brute strength while shoving his feet on the floor of the vehicle. The rotary turret mounted a German-model heavy machinegun or German light machinegun called a 'Spandau,' both manufactured in Czechoslovakia at the Skoda arms works. The fixed machinegun port above the right front passenger seat of the armored car mounted a Spandau.

Thus, it took all three men to operate the vehicle at maximum efficiency, and they probably had interchangeable jobs. In the days before air conditioning, the inside of the armored car was as hot and humid as a steam bath in the summer, and the noise of two machineguns firing at the same time had to bring on early deafness for all three men.

The armored cars were the closest thing we had to tanks. The one Sherman and two Cromwell tanks, and a dozen tiny light French tanks (virtually useless) were Israel's entire inventory of tanks of any kind. All were all assigned to the 82nd Armored Battalion, facing the Egyptians in the Negev. Even so, all of us in the motorized infantry units of the 79th were happy to have Jack, Frank, Solly and their cohorts leading us into battle in the armored cars, spraying the Arab troops and villages with machinegun fire before the infantry troops dismounted from their vehicles and charged into the fray.

Jack returned to Canada. Frank eventually made his home in New Jersey. Shortly after returning to the U.S., he and Walter (Tex) Cohen, another armored car crewman in the 79th, decided they would become song writers. They wrote a tune in 1950 with the longest word in the history of lyrics, "The Lake Song – Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg." It's a Native American word meaning "You fish on your side, I'll fish on my side and no one fishes in the middle." They got Ethel Merman to record it, and thought their riches were assured. Alas, it was not issued as a single or in an album. Strangely enough, in 2005, long after Frank was dead (but when Tex was still alive), a memorial album called "Ethel Merman – the World is Your Balloon" was issued by Decca Broadway, and that song is included, as a duet between Merman and Ray Bolger. Frank and Tex taught me the song when I was a junior at Columbia, and I can still sing it. Frank's daughter, Julia, is a Ph.D. living in England, and stays in touch. Tex never married, and died a few years ago in Austin, Texas.

Solly Ossin stayed in Israel, and was one of the founders of Moshav Habonim in 1949. He was still living in Israel 20 years later, when he decided to return to South Africa. As far as I know, he is the only one of the three still alive."

BOOK REVIEW

Loud and Clear by Iftach Spector

Machal veterans of the Israel Air Force will recall colleagues lodging complaints against “higher ups” and may even have witnessed a threat not to fly if their complaints went unheeded. Iftach Spector was a decorated and high ranking Air Force officer who, along with 27 fellow officers, refused to bomb a target if they believed civilians were endangered. These fliers, including Spector were expelled from the service and roundly criticized in the wider community.

The phrase “loud and clear” is recognized as a response in air radio communication affirming an order was understood and would be executed. This book is about military commands carried out and those not carried out. Iftach Spector was a child of Kibbutz Giv’at Brenner who joined the Israel Air force in 1960 and was trained as a fighter pilot. He served in the 1967 and 1973 wars. Flying the American F-4 Phantom and the French Mirage III he is credited with 12 “kills.” Serving as a career officer he rose through the ranks to Brigadier General. Loud and Clear is an autobiography with a particular and personal perspective on history.

Spector’s autobiography is his defense against charges of treason. He presents himself as daring and depicts himself and his comrades as strong silent types who were rational problem solvers.

Spector was also a military innovator stymied by his self-assured superiors. In 1977, as head of Air Force Operations, he had the opportunity to meet with officers of other branches of the Air Force. He describes a “new, shining and successful Air Force, sophisticated, scientific, dynamic and interesting.” In the course of planning, he realized the potential of helicopters for flying commandos deep within enemy territory. He proposed creating a helicopter based Air Force commando unit but was blocked by turf wars with the land forces and parachute groups.

Machal veterans may be surprised to read an analysis of Israel Air Force battles and management written by one who joined only twelve years after they

laid the groundwork of the Air Force not to have any of their work recalled. It is not unusual in the Israeli literature on the War of Independence to find the role of the foreign volunteers minimized, if not completely absent. The only mention of Machal by Spector has to wait until page 339 when he was sent to a course in Los Angeles. There, at a public event, he met members of Machal. He describes them as “wearing a red cap with the words ‘The First Battler’ on it. They spoke to me of the comparison between the Messerschmitt and the Spitfire forgetting that I was then but eight years old. They were lovers of Israel and crazy about the Air Force. When we left they presented us with a silver tray (magash hakesef) and I wondered whether they knew the poem by Alterman. They were the Magash Hakesef.” The reference is to a poem by the Israeli poet, Natan Alterman, who likened the first young fighters in 1948, those who delivered the State, by their sacrifice, to an offering on a silver platter to the Jewish people.

Long before his final confrontation, he suffered doubts about the management skills of his superiors. He criticizes confusion among the commanders. During the 1973 war, air combat units were told to be ready to fly at night, an order which never came, and this prevented them from sleeping as the battle loomed. On another occasion he received an order to bomb bridges over the Suez Canal. He did not believe there were bridges and his men did not know how to bomb them anyway. This being a waste of air power he argued for its redeployment to the Golan to assist infantry retreating before Syrian attacks. His pleas were unsuccessful. He was weighed down by guilt for mission failures. Being detailed to bomb a base in Damascus he describes a flight over Lebanon winding through the mountains and clouds. When near Damascus he could not find an opening in the clouds for the attack and returned to base bitter about his failure to drop his bombs. At the end of the 1973 war, Spector wrote a report blaming the great losses in personnel in the Israel armed forces on confusion at the staff level. There were contradictory orders. Tactical aims were not clear. He mentioned the names of those he con-

sidered guilty. The report was rejected at higher command levels.

For a number of years he resisted attacking targets where he believed civilians would be harmed. In one conversation with Dan Halutz, then the Air Force chief of Staff, he expressed his concerns. Halutz, Spector reports, said he loses no sleep over it. In September, 2003, Spector and several comrades wrote a letter to him:

We, Air Force, pilots, educated in the Zionist spirit, sacrificing and contributing to the State of Israel in the front lines, oppose carrying out aggressive, illegal and unethical missions such as those we are asked to carry out in the occupied territories. Despite the fact that Israel and the Air force are a core commitment for us, we refuse to continue and harm innocent civilians...Such operations are a direct result of the extended occupation and are completely destructive of Israeli society.

The signatories declared their willingness to continue to serve in the Air Force. Before long they were all out of uniform. In some national air forces they would have been shot for insubordination. In the American system they would have been severely disciplined. The usual procedure would be to first resign from the armed forces and then release the complaint. Much of the Israeli press depicted the signers as disloyal. He was attacked for introducing his political stance into his military role. His Air Force colleagues, after an initial period of withdrawing, continued to invite him to events, though not during the tenure of General Halutz. On some occasions, he lectured before American military personnel. Some of the officers in the audience recalled his participation in the attack on the American communications vessel which resulted in the loss of 34 American sailors. Others saw him as a hero of the raid on the Iraqi Osiris nuclear reactor.

Loud and Clear is a well-written analysis of life in the Israel Air Force. Unfortunately, is not accessible to many Anglophones.

By Samuel Klausner

AVILC EVENTS

MICKEY MARCUS MEMORIAL- MAY 2010

By Sharona Benami

It was our first time at West Point. The beauty of the gray stone buildings, flowering trees, and historic importance of the place struck us as we entered the front gate. Views of the Hudson River were breathtaking, and we learned that during the Revolutionary War George Washington had called this site "the most important post in America." The Jewish Chapel there shares the same dignified strength and beauty as the other buildings but elicits a special pride.



Yehuda Bock and Sharona Benami



Jeff Margolis, Sharona Benami, Rafi Marom, Paul Kaye, and Si Spiegelman



*(l to r seated) Marcel Berkowitz, Naomi Kantey, Si Spiegelman, Shalom Schiff and Paul Kaye;
(l to r standing) Russ Poker, Norman Winer, Rabbi (Maj.) Shmuel Felzenberg, David Borowich, CDT Ryan Schubert and Jake Bennett.*

Both the chapel and gravesite ceremonies were moving and meaningful. Having volunteered in the IDF, my husband Yehuda and I felt a kinship with the soldiers and veterans present. We were happy to finally be able to attend, and happy to represent our fellow West Coast Machal volunteers.

PURIM PARTY 2010



(l to r standing) Harold Kraushar, Mervyn Senick, Moses Stambler, Prosper Anselm, Harry Bieber, George Goldman, Sam Klausner, Naomi Kantey and Bernie Ellman, (l to r seated) Si Spiegelman, Paul Kaye and Ira Feinberg.



(l to r) Si Spiegelman, Naomi Kantey, Donna Parker, Paul Kaye, Jeffrey Margolis and Rafi Marom.

WORLD MACHAL MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD AT SHA'AR HAGAI ON YOM HAZICHARON 2010

By Doreen Bliss

Over 120 people attended the World Machal memorial service which was held at the Machal Memorial at Sha'ar Hagai on Yom Hazicharon, Monday April 19, 2010.

Before the sounding of the siren to indicate the commencement of the ceremony nationwide, Machalniks were able to purchase the books by Zipporah Porath ("Letters from Jerusalem 1947-48" and her new book "David "Mickey" Marcus – A Soldier for All Humanity"), and David Shachar's books, in Hebrew and Italian "From the Holocaust to the New Dawn". In addition, the participants were notified of Ira Feinberg's new DVD "My Brother's Keeper".

Despite many of our Machalnik comrades who have passed on, Machalniks came with their children and grandchildren to pay homage to the 123 Fallen Machal. In the past year two more Fallen Machal have been added to the Names of the Fallen – Raymond "Lofty" Dodge (a non-Jew who was serving in the British Mandate Forces and deserted to serve with the Machalniks in the 9th Battalion of the Palmach Hanegev and Benjamin Stein (a Machalnik from the USA who served as a flight engineer in the Israel Air Force).

A group of 100 guests from a Zionist mission organized by the Keren Kayemet was to have joined us, but unfortunately as a result of the outcome of the volcano in Iceland, their flight from Hungary to Israel was cancelled and they were thus unable to participate in our service.

The service this year was particularly moving. Joe Woolf (South Africa) raised the flag accompanied by a 16 year old bugler. Sheila Barak (U.K.) and Mike Amir (Australia) lit the eternal flame and Ruth Stern (South Africa) and Meir Haberman (Argentina) laid the wreath. Stanley Medicks read the Names of the Fallen and their countries of origin.

Rabbi Ephraim Shach gave a most moving sermon and prayed for all the 22,682 Fallen Soldiers of Israel's Wars from 1948 to this day. The Rabbi recited a poem by Israeli poet, Uri Zvi Greenberg (Hachaim B'Zchutam Omrim", and also read Psalm 124. Zippy Porath (USA), who was M.C. along with Rafi Seroussi (Uruguay), read Psalms 124 and 144 in English. The religious aspect of the service concluded with El Rachamim and Kaddish.

David Angel of the Keren Kayemet relayed the news to the attendees which had appeared that very day in the Hebrew newspaper "Ha'Aretz" concerning the Israel Air Force's search for relatives of George "Buzz" Beurling, a non-Jew and a famous World War II fighter pilot who lost his life when his plane crashed in Rome while he was serving as a Machalnik in 101 Squadron. George's younger brother Richard had finally been traced after 62 years and was brought to Israel with his family to receive an award from the IAF on behalf of his deceased brother. (*A copy of the article is given below*)

The ceremony was concluded with the rendition of the Hatikvah by U.S. Machalnik Leon Silverman.

The participants were invited to join the Jewish War Veterans memorial service for Col. David (Mickey) Marcus which will take place at Ammunition Hill in Jerusalem on Thursday, 10th June, 2010 at 14.00 hours.

As a surprise to World Machal Chairman Smoky Simon, the members of the World Machal Committee were invited up to the Podium to congratulate Smoky on his forthcoming 90th birthday which he will celebrate on Shabbat 24th April, and to thank him for his contribution to World Machal over the years. He was given the gift of a book on this auspicious occasion and reminded to "keep pedaling" which is his own pet phrase quoted by him in his correspondence with Machalniks worldwide.

*Article appearing in the Ha'aretz English Newspaper
April 19, 2010*

AFTER 62-YEAR WAIT, ISRAEL FINALLY HONORS FAMILY OF FALLEN CANADIAN FIGHTER PILOT, GEORGE BEURLING

By Yuval Azoulay

It has been a 62 year journey for the Israel Air Force to finally bestow an honor in memory of George Beurling, the legendary World War II pilot who volunteered to fly during the War of Independence and died in a plane crash in Italy.

Yet the long-awaited ceremony, which was put on hold due to the absence of available family members, finally took place yesterday at Sde Dov Airport in Tel Aviv.

Beurling's younger brother, Richard Beurling, his wife Jean, and their two daughters - Kristen and Janice - were honored by the commander of an IAF transport squadron. During the ceremony, the Beurlings heard praise for a man whom they had never met.

Richard Beurling, a 78 year old Catholic from Canada, arrived in Israel at the invitation of the IAF and the Defense Ministry on the occasion of Memorial Day. Yet, more importantly, Beurling arrived in Israel in search of closure to the tragic saga that unfolded just days after the State's founding.

For over six decades, IDF officers who represent bereaved families did not know of any relatives left behind by the celebrated pilot whose name was uttered in every remembrance ceremony held by the transport squadron to which he belonged.

The turning point in the case occurred two years ago, when Beurling's file came across the desk of Lieutenant Colonel Danny Shneidman, the officer in charge of the IAF's Casualty and Loss Unit. Shneidman found out that the IDF had never contacted Beurling's family. "I decided to locate his family myself", he said, "So I randomly started calling families all over Canada with the last name "Beurling". I asked them if they had any connection to George Beurling, who died many years ago. "I finally got hold of a family in Toronto", he said "A man by the name of Richard answered the phone. He told me he was (George's) brother".

Once the relatives were identified, the Defense Ministry paid for the family's plane tickets to Israel and the IAF arranged for the family to tour its bases and behold

its most advanced fighter jets.

"There's no doubt that he would have been a bigger hero here than he could have been in Canada". Richard Beurling, who professes a deep affinity for Israel, said. Beurling was a living legend by dint of his heroic exploits as a fighter pilot during World War II. Yet a mysterious plane crash in Italy in 1948 took his life before he could come to the aid of the fledgling Jewish state. Though he never set foot in Israel, he enlisted in the air force of the newborn state just days after David Ben-Gurion declared its independence.

Beurling, a devout Catholic, was a fighter pilot who wanted to fly. Israel was a nascent country that was looking for fighter pilots. After he was killed, Beurling was interred in Rome. In 1950 his body was brought to Israel and he was buried in a military cemetery in Haifa.

"I have no doubt that he didn't die for something not worth dying for. His death was not in vain", his brother Richard, 78, said. "He died for a proper cause".

MARCUS MEMORIAL SERVICE AMMUNITION HILL, JERUSALEM

By Petra van der Zande

Colonel David (Mickey) Marcus said he didn't think he was the best man for the job, but agreed to go because, as it turned out, he was the only one willing to go. According to Mickey, "You gotta help your brother out in a fight!"

Marcus, *nom de guerre* "Michael Stone," was recruited initially to be military advisor to David Ben-Gurion and the underground Hagana, and eventually became the Israel Defense Forces first *Aluf* (major general). Two weeks after this appointment, on June 11, 1948 he was killed in tragic mishap. But in the short time of his service (about 200 days), and thanks to his wide-ranging military experience and personal leadership qualities, he managed to accomplish amazing feats that turned the tide of the war.

On the 50th anniversary of Mickey's death a memorial service was held near the place where he was killed – Abu Gosh, the monument at Telshe Stone. On the 62nd anniversary of his death, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Jerusalem Post 180 sponsored another memorial service, held in another historic spot – *Givat HaTachmoshet* - Ammunition Hill.

In the 1930's, under their Mandate of Palestine, the British established a police training school in Jerusalem and stored their ammunition in a nearby hill – Ammunition Hill. When the British left in 1948, the IDF seized the police school but unfortunately, had to withdraw under attack from the Arab Legion. The Jordanians fortified the western edge of the compound, which became "Tel al Maduar" – the Round Hill. It severed the link between Mount Scopus and West Jerusalem and became a symbol of a wounded city, cut in half, with a wall through its heart. For 19 long years, until the Six Day War, this hill was part of the Jordanian-Israeli border.

On June 6, 1967, after conquering the Police School, IDF troops fought a fierce and bloody battle against the Legionnaires who retreated to Ammunition Hill. The site consists of a series of bunkers and firing positions that were constructed of reinforced concrete and connected by well covered trenches. The Jordanian central command post was located in an extension of a Second Temple period burial cave, its walls 40 cms thick.

Four Israeli brigades fought against the Jordanian Legionnaires: Jerusalem

Brigade; Armored Brigade; Paratrooper Brigade and Air Force. During the four-hour battle for Ammunition Hill, 36 Israeli soldiers lost their lives.

Established in 1972, the north Jerusalem neighborhood of Ma'alot Dafna is surrounded by Ramat Eshkol, Shmuel haNavi, Sheikh Jarrah and Ammunition Hill. "Ma'alot Dafna" (Bay Laurel Heights) commemorated Israel's victory during the Six Day War in 1967.

In 1975, Ammunition Hill not only became a memorial site for those who fell in the battle for Jerusalem, but also a major museum. Built on a slope dotted with pine trees, the arched roof resembles the Nissin huts that once stood on the site. The 182 olive trees are symbolic of the 182 men who fell in the campaign for Jerusalem – life out of grief. Their sacrifice made it possible for the IDF to forge ahead and reconquer the Old City of Jerusalem. In 1987, the site was declared a national memorial site, and it is here that the annual main ceremony of Yom Yerushalayim – Jerusalem Day is traditionally held. Prior to their induction into the IDF, Israeli youngsters from the Jerusalem area assemble at Ammunition Hill before they are bussed to their bases to begin their 2 or 3-year army stints.

A stone path leads into the underground museum which consists of a winding corridor with a low ceiling. The stone walls, partially of stone and concrete, display pictures of divided Jerusalem before 1967. A large assortment of arms, stacks of rucksacks and parachutes are also on exhibit near the bunker (now auditorium) where the 2010 JWV memorial service honoring Colonel Marcus was held. Present were prominent American and local dignitaries.

The program began with the invocation by Chaplain Alan Greenspan, followed by a welcome speech from Col. Shimon Cohaner (Katcha), Chairman of Ammunition Hill. On behalf of Ambassador Cunningham of the US Embassy, Mr. Mark Sievers addressed the audience of about sixty, which included US Jewish war veterans and local Machalniks.

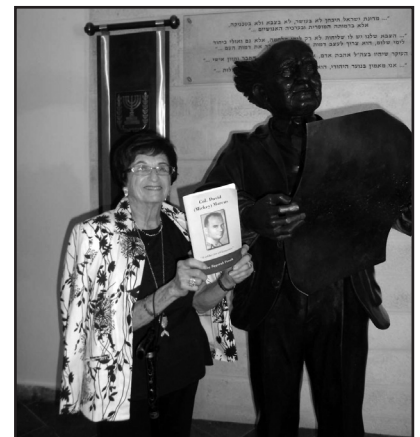
The keynote speaker was Zipporah Porath, author of a booklet titled, "Col. David (Mickey) Marcus – A Soldier for All Humanity," based on original source material, never before published. On the first anniversary of Marcus' death, David

Ben-Gurion wished to honour Mickey's memory in an English publication. Zipporah Porath interviewed those who had served with Mickey, but, regrettably, the project never saw the light of day. Now, 61 years later, she decided it was time to reveal the well-kept military secret about the role of Mickey Marcus during Israel's struggle for survival and independence.

Also part of the memorial program was the screening of clips from the beginning and end of the movie "Cast a Giant Shadow." Dan Nadel, the Commander of JWV Post 180 and master of ceremonies, noted that this typical Hollywood version of Marcus's life was a far cry from the larger than life real man he had been. Kirk Douglas, featuring in the role of Mickey Marcus, confided to Dan Nadel that Marcus' character had changed him: it brought him back to his Jewish roots and religion.

Following a musical interlude – a violin solo played by an IDF soldier - Col. Eliezer Ben-Horash lit the memorial candle. Sixteen honorees were then asked to complete a photo-puzzle portrait of Mickey Marcus, after which everyone stood at attention for the playing of taps. Cantor Max Epstein, past Commander of JWV Post 180 sang the *El Mole Rachamim* prayer, and the audience joined in with the singing of *Hatikvah*. A plaque was unveiled in honor and memory of Colonel Marcus, after which the audience was invited to view a sound and light show depicting the battle for Jerusalem.

The memorial ceremony ended with the placement of the name of Colonel Marcus on the Wall of Honor, followed by refreshments in the Social Hall and a chance for old friends and comrades to socialize.



Zipporah Porath

Machal Volunteers in Israel's War of Independence Finally Get the Honor They Deserve in Israeli Exhibit

By Jason Fenton

It's been a long time coming, but finally Machal's important contributions to the establishment of the State of Israel will become far better known to present and future generations in Israel! Let me explain: A permanent Machal exhibit is now on display as part of the new Education Center at Ammunition Hill on Rechov Machal in Jerusalem. Today, many thousands visit Ammunition Hill every year, but with the addition of the state-of-the-art Education Center, superb Machal Exhibit, and the special Wall of Honor, it will become *the* place to visit for Israelis and visitors alike.

The Center has created a dedicated section of the Wall of Honor for those plaques donated in honor or memory of Machal volunteers from the War of Independence. This Machal Wall of Honor already has a number of plaques with the names of our comrades, and *with the support of Machal members and their loved ones, we hope this section of the Wall of Honor will continue to grow.*

Ammunition Hill holds great significance in the formation of the modern Jewish State. In 1948, the Jordanians took over the site from the British army splitting Jewish Jerusalem in two. In spite of all our efforts, Ammunition Hill, like Latrun, remained under the control of the Arab Legion for the next 19 years with access to the Hadassah Hospital, the Hebrew University Campus, and our holiest site — the Kotel (the Western Wall) barred to us. When the Six Day War broke out on June 5, 1967, a heavily reinforced Jordanian company defended Ammunition Hill. Fierce hand-to-hand fighting ensued and the IDF suffered heavy losses, but by 8 a.m. on June 6, Ammunition Hill was Israel's. When on June 7 the words "*Har Habayit Beyadenu*," "The Temple Mount Is In Our Hands," were

heard, a 2000-year-old dream had come true — the reunification of Jerusalem under Jewish sovereignty.

In February 2009, I met with Col. "Katcha" Cahaner, a former member

of Honor reserved for Machalniks at Ammunition Hill. His answer was clear and to the point as only an IDF colonel could make it: Raise \$50,000!

So for the next two years I raised money: I had meetings, gave talks about Machal and Ammunition Hill, printed brochures, sent letters, and spoke to Machal families about honoring their loved ones with a plaque at Ammunition Hill. It was hard work, but it was also a labor of love. Now the Machal Exhibit, for which we all owe Ralph Lowenstein a huge vote of thanks for its creation and donation of those historic panels, and the special Machal Wall of Honor are a reality and already attracting many new visitors.

Each Machalnik went to Israel with a very personal mission: to help the new Jewish State survive the onslaught of five professionally-trained and well-equipped Arab armies bent on Israel's destruction. **Now there is an opportunity for the children and grandchildren of those Machal**

Volunteers to recognize the courage, heroism, and sacrifice that their parents and grandparents made to the establishment of the State of Israel by purchasing a plaque on the Machal Wall of Honor. Each plaque will list the soldier's name, country, rank, dates of service, and IDF unit. And now JNF has set up a computer system by the Wall of Honor which is planned to have each veteran's story with photos, so visitors can learn more about each one of them. The funds raised through the sale of the plaques support the creation and maintenance of the Education Center at Ammunition Hill and its programs.

Information on purchasing a plaque is available at the JNF Web site at www.jnf.org/ammunitionhill or e-mail me at drjason1@cox.net.



Students learning about the role of Machal volunteers in 1948 at the Machal Exhibit at Ammunition Hill



Col. Mickey Marcus on the Wall of Honor at Ammunition Hill

of General Sharon's famous Unit 101 and now the General Manager of Ammunition Hill, and JNF Area Director, Dr. "Cookie" Segal. At that meeting, I learned about an exciting plan to build a world-class Education Center at Ammunition Hill with a special wall to honor Jewish servicemen. I explained to Katcha that it was an enormous shanda that not even the Israelis were aware of who the Machal were, let alone Machal's contributions to Israel's victory in the War of Independence. However, with that new Education Center in place, I explained, we had an incredible opportunity to inform a much larger Jewish public about Machal. I asked Katcha what it would take to have a Machal Exhibit on permanent display, as well as a special section of the Wall

THE MACHAL AND ALIYAH BET EXHIBITS AROUND THE WORLD

On January 19, 2011, the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) opened its display on Machal and Aliyah Bet in the great hall of the Center for Jewish History in New York City. The original exhibit was created in 2005 by Ralph Lowenstein and is on display at the Hillel House of the University of Florida (UF) in Gainesville.

The AJHS display, largely produced and expanded by Ralph and

two museum professionals at the University of Florida, is based on the 2005 Florida Hillel panels. The display area at the Center for Jewish History is almost three times as large as the one at the UF Hillel, and this display includes additional panels and artifacts.

A copy of the original seven panels from the UF Hillel is on permanent display at the American Jewish University in the Bel Air area of Los Angeles. It has one additional panel, concentrating on the experiences of Machalniks now living on the West Coast. Sharona Benami and other Machal West members conceived and worked on the project with the American Jewish University.

With the start of this year, copies of six of the UF Hillel panels are now

also on display at the Ammunition Hill memorial in Jerusalem. The text of that display is in both English and Hebrew, with an introductory panel by Machalnik Jason Fenton. Jason facilitated the addition of this display to other displays

already on view at Ammunition Hill.

Including still another “traveling” museum of seven panels, there are now five Aliyah Bet and Machal displays in the U.S. and Is-

rael. (Addresses for each may be found in the *News You Should Use* section of this Newsletter.)

The reaction of the viewers at each venue has been absolute astonishment at learning about the North American contribution to the creation of the State of Israel, a part of Jewish history that has remained relatively unknown. This work will go a long way in preserving the legacy of those who served and the ones who gave their lives.

A reminder: The mobile version of the panels is available for display by synagogues and community centers in the U.S. and Canada. For details contact the American Veterans of Israel Legacy Corporation.

By Ralph Lowenstein and Si Spiegelman



Naomi Kantey, Si Spiegelman, Acting Consul General Ido Aharoni, Art Bernstein and Donna Parker at AJHS reception, Jan. 2011.

Permanent Machal Exhibit at the American Jewish University in Los Angeles

By Sharona Benami

As we celebrate the new Machal Exhibit in New York, I'm reminded of the many months of preparation for the West Coast exhibit at the American Jewish University (formerly the University of Judaism). Ralph Lowenstein and Si Spiegelman were extremely helpful after I was asked by the University Director of Communications to be the Machal West contact person. Together we worked on the framing and placement of the panels that Ralph had created in Florida, and with a graphic artist we created a Machal West panel and a UJ Connection panel.

The opening ceremony was in September 2006. Ralph was the keynote speaker. The Israel Consulate sent its Deputy Consul General who noted that the Machal spirit of 1948 was revived during recent battles in Lebanon, when his office received many calls from volunteers seeking to help Israel. During the ceremony musicians played and sang nostalgic Israeli songs, and brunch was provided by the University.

Machalnik and journalist Tom Tugend later wrote in the LA Jewish Journal, “Grandfathers and grandmothers looked at the photos on the wall and saw themselves again as young strapping soldiers, sailors and pilots, far from home and close to the face of history.” UJ President Robert Wexler said that the exhibit will remind future generations of the linked destiny between Israel and American Jewry.

Recently I was told that students often marvel at the fact that the young soldiers pictured are around the same age as they, and talk about the courage needed to leave their homes and families to volunteer to fight for Israel.

The Machal Exhibit can be viewed in the second story lobby of the American Jewish University in Los Angeles.



Two American volunteers who fought in the Israeli army, Sharona Benami (in 1973) and Ralph Lowenstein (1948) look over new exhibit at the University of Judaism. Photo by Mayan Benami

NEWS YOU SHOULD USE

VIEWING THE MACHAL AND ALIYAH BET EXHIBITS

Visit the following locations:

New York City, New York

American Jewish Historical Society
15 West 16th Street

Los Angeles, California

University of Judaism
15600 Mulholland Dr.

Jerusalem, Israel

Ammunition Hill Museum
Rechov Machal

Gainesville, Florida

University of Florida at Gainesville
Hillel House

AVI MOBILE EXHIBITION

A replica of the Gainesville exhibit is available mounted on eight light-weight styrofoam panels 39" by 42" that can be readily displayed on standard easels. Their story spans the history of the clandestine immigration of Holocaust survivors to Palestine, the struggle of the Haganah before Israel was founded, followed by the battles of the ground forces, Navy and Air Force in the War of Independence. We offer the panels on loan and can have speakers available at the opening event. The exhibit has been successfully displayed at Jewish community centers throughout the country. A selection of the AVI mobile exhibition is posted on www.israelvets.com. For more information contact Art Bernstein at aaron7330-avi@yahoo.com.

MACHAL PUBLICATIONS

The booklet "*Machal: Overseas Volunteers in Israel's War of Independence*" published in 2003 by World Machal but can be accessed on Machal's website: www.machal.org.il. Click "About Machal."

Zippy Porath's booklet about Col. David (Mickey) Marcus; "*A Soldier for All Humanity*" sponsored by AVILC and AJHS, can be obtained by contacting Zippy Porath at zip@netvision.net.il or Si Spiegelman at spiegelsi@aol.com.

NEW MACHAL DVD's

My Brother's Keeper

Interviews of Machalnicks with poignant documentary footage of the War of Independence. To order, contact: Ira Feinberg- deano-clean@aol.com

Waves of Freedom

The story of the Aliyah Bet ship "Hatikvah/Tradewinds" Documentary footage with interviews of crew members. To order, contact: Paul Kaye- pkaye3@nyc.rr.com

Amos Cohen Air Force DVD

Machal's Role in the ATC and IAF
To order contact: Amutat Chel Ha'avir,
P.O.Box 303, Herzliya, Israel 446103

REACHING OUT FOR ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

All the Machal photographs and documents have been transferred from the University of Florida at Gainesville to the climate-controlled AJHS stacks in New York City. Yet we know that much archival material is still out there, stored in bureau drawers, shoe boxes, etc. Some of it is already lost and more will be as the grim reaper makes his rounds. This is the time to donate such materials for permanent storage at the AJHS archive. The items of interest include photographs (originals), log books, newspaper clippings, letters, diaries, discharge papers, etc. relating to Israel's War of Independence that are in your possession. This is another reminder to our veterans, widows and children of comrades to act NOW. Please mail your material to Dr. Ralph Lowenstein, Aliyah Bet and Machal Archives, University of Florida, P.O. Box 118400, Gainesville, FL 32611-8400 or rlowenstein@jou.ufl.edu.

YOUR PERSONAL STORY ON THE MACHAL WEBSITE

Want to capture your narrative about your service experiences in Israel's War of Independence on the Machal website?...It's easy. Write it, mail it to Smoky Simon with a photograph (1948) and after it gets posted on the Machal website www.machal.org.il your family and friends can read all about it. E-mail the story to Doreen@sw.co.il or mail it to Smoky Simon, World Machal, 32 Ben Yehuda Rd., Tel Aviv, Israel, 63805.

ALUF STONE CALLS - PLEASE PASS THE MESSAGE ALONG

Did you serve in the IDF as a lone soldier and/or as a volunteer from abroad? We would love to have you as a member. Check out:

- Linkedin Group: Aluf Stone – The IDF Lone Soldier
- Association Facebook Group: ----
<https://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=7207992307>
- Website: www.alufstone.org

Aluf Stone - The IDF Lone Soldier Association is a network of men and women who were born outside of Israel, share a love of Israel, and a tremendous pride in having voluntarily served in the Israel Defense Forces. Based on this unique shared experience, we are committed to assisting each other in any way possible. Our membership spans generations, ranging from volunteers who fought in 1948 to people serving in the IDF today. For more information please contact Marc Leibowitz at: Marc.Leibowitz@opco.com

AVILC – MACHAL CONTINUITY

The transition of AVI to the American Veterans of Israel Legacy Corporation became effective in June 2008 and allowed AVILC to assume the responsibilities of the retiring AVI Board of Directors.

Responsibilities transferred to AVILC include:

- Treasury and management of AVI members' bequests;
- Continuity of AVI Newsletter;
- Members' Records and "Information Central" (AVI Database);
- Annual Mickey Marcus Memorial Service at West Point ;
- Special Events (Purim, Hanukkah) and Machal Reunions;
- Coordination of Archives and Exhibitions;
- Liaison with World Machal, AJHS, Machal West, Aluf Stone, JWV, etc.

The AVILC Board of Directors holds monthly teleconferences and is seeking to expand membership on the Board to interested persons. For more information, please contact Jeffrey Margolis, AVILC President, at: (212) 490-0900 or jamargolis@margolislawfirm.com

YOU CAN HELP TO KEEP THE NEWSLETTER GOING!

If you would like to help keep this Newsletter going and support other AVILC activities, please send your contribution, payable to AVILC, to:

AVILC

c/o Donna Parker

1530 Palisade Ave. Apt 2E

Fort Lee, NJ 07024

Thank you!

LEGACY GIFTS TO AVILC FUTHER THE GOALS OF AVI AND PRESERVE THE MACHAL AND ALIYA BET STORY

Our members and friends are reminded that the most common planned gift is a simple bequest made through your Will. A bequest naming American Veterans of Israel Legacy Corporation (AVILC) as a beneficiary is a method of leaving a legacy gift that will further the work of the American Veterans of Israel (AVI) and continue to preserve and share the Machal and Aliyah Bet story for generations to come. To learn more, please contact AVILC President Jeffrey Margolis, Esq. at (212) 490-0900 or write to jamargolis@margolislawfirm.com, or

American Veterans of Israel Legacy Corp.

c/o Margolis

11 East 44 Street (Suite 1505)

New York, NY 10017

or

Contact Si Spiegelman, former Executive Director of American Veterans of Israel (AVI) and Member of the Board of Directors of AVILC: spiegelsi@aol.com or (646-298-8147).

UPCOMING: PLEASE JOIN US

SALUTE TO ISRAEL PARADE IN NYC

SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2011

Assembly area: Fifth Avenue between 55th and 56th Streets in New York City

Assembly time: 10:15 am; Step-off time: 11:00 am

AVI stalwarts, AVILC and the younger veterans of ALUF STONE are reminded to join the parade and express your support for Israel marching or riding up Fifth Avenue. Children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren are more than welcome.