Federations of North America are responding to the crisis in Eastern Europe, and representatives from Russia, Eastern Europe, and Germany. This seasoned veteran of the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Germany. This seasoned veteran of the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Germany.

Responding to the Crisis in Ukraine

Representing the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), will be Alexandra Shklar, a senior director of Strategic Partnerships based in New York. She recently traveled to JDC refugee camps in Europe and will share firsthand experiences from her travels and talk about JDC’s work around the conflict in Ukraine.

“This past year, the pandemic continued to challenge us in so many ways,” says Dara Kaufman, Federation’s executive director, “but our community exhibited its compassion and resilience in so many ways. The commitment people have shown to supporting one another here at home and stepping up to provide vital lifesaving support for the people of Ukraine inspires me on a daily basis."

The Mount is at 2 Plunkett Street in Lenox. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for further details about this event, including COVID-19 protocols that may be in place.

It’s Summertime in the Berkshires

While not written about the Berkshires, John Greenleaf Whittier’s line about green calm and blue quietness certainly captures something of the spirit of summer in these hills — as does this Stephanie Blumenthal photograph "Tulip Leaf on Blue Background." The Sheffield artist has a different image in the “Art of the Hills” exhibition of local artists’ work currently at Berkshire Museum. For more on Blumenthal’s work and the show, please see page 14.

Knosh & Knowledge Returns!

Join us for "The Jewish World of Alexander Hamilton," with Professor Andrew Porwancher on June 24

The Mount is at 2 Plunkett Street in Lenox. Please visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org for further details about this event, including COVID-19 protocols that may be in place.

Inside

The Joy Inherent in Fulfilling Mitzvot — 2
Your Federation Presents — 4-7, 12-13
Local News — 8-9
Afghan Evacuee Resettlement — 15-16
Berkshire Jewish Voices — 17-19
Culture & Arts — 20-24

ANNUAL MEETING, continued on page 5

Major Donors Celebration

Co-Chairs Robert Bildner and Elissa Spungen Bildner

PITTSFIELD – On Sunday, July 24, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires celebrates its Major Donors with a festive musical brunch at the Country Club of Pittsfield.

This will be our first in person Major Donors Celebration in two years, a chance for supporters of the Berkshires’ Jewish community to catch up with one another while connecting to Federation.

Our event co-chairs are Robert Bildner and Elissa Spungen Bildner, longtime Berkshire homeowners who will share their story of how awakening to Federation’s importance to all parts of this Jewish community led them to become ever more active as donors and leaders who are helping this organization fulfill its vital mission.

Speaking at the event will be Frederic L. Bloch, senior vice president and chief growth officer of ADL. His role involves raising awareness of ADL, improving the experience of all its constituents, and driving revenue to meet the demands of the communities that the organization serves. He’ll provide a national perspective about the work of ADL.

While not written about the Berkshires, John Greenleaf Whittier’s line about green calm and blue quietness certainly captures something of the spirit of summer in these hills — as does this Stephanie Blumenthal photograph "Tulip Leaf on Blue Background." The Sheffield artist has a different image in the “Art of the Hills” exhibition of local artists’ work currently at Berkshire Museum. For more on Blumenthal’s work and the show, please see page 14.

Knosh & Knowledge programs take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road in Great Barrington. For more on this free program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishever.org.

Proof of vaccination and masking are required at indoor Federation events.

In his book, Andrew Porwancher debunks a string of myths about the origins of this founding father to arrive at a startling conclusion: Hamilton, in all likelihood, was born and raised Jewish. For more than two centuries, his youth in the Caribbean has remained shrouded in mystery. Hamilton himself wanted it that way, and most biographers have simply assumed he had a Christian boyhood.

With a detective’s persistence and a historian’s rigor, Porwancher upends that way, and most biographers have simply assumed he had a Christian boyhood. His role involves raising awareness of ADL, improving the experience of all its constituents, and driving revenue to meet the demands of the communities that the organization serves. He’ll provide a national perspective about the work of ADL.

While not written about the Berkshires, John Greenleaf Whittier’s line about green calm and blue quietness certainly captures something of the spirit of summer in these hills — as does this Stephanie Blumenthal photograph “Tulip Leaf on Blue Background.” The Sheffield artist has a different image in the “Art of the Hills” exhibition of local artists’ work currently at Berkshire Museum. For more on Blumenthal’s work and the show, please see page 14.

Knosh & Knowledge programs take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road in Great Barrington. For more on this free program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishever.org.

Proof of vaccination and masking are required at indoor Federation events.

In his book, Andrew Porwancher debunks a string of myths about the origins of this founding father to arrive at a startling conclusion: Hamilton, in all likelihood, was born and raised Jewish. For more than two centuries, his youth in the Caribbean has remained shrouded in mystery. Hamilton himself wanted it that way, and most biographers have simply assumed he had a Christian boyhood.

With a detective’s persistence and a historian’s rigor, Porwancher upends that assumption and revolutionizes our understanding of an American icon.

A native of Princeton, New Jersey, Andrew Porwancher earned degrees from Brown and Northwestern before completing his Ph.D. in history at Cambridge. Currently, he serves as the Wick Cary Associate Professor at the University of Oklahoma and the Ernest May Fellow at Harvard University’s Belfer Center.

In 2017, Porwancher won the Longmire Prize for innovative teaching. He is now at work on his fourth book, Theodore Roosevelt and the Jews (Princeton).
Many years after graduating and going their separate ways, a group of one-time students met at a reunion and were joined by their former professor, who led them in a lively discussion. “After all these years,” the professor began, “what would you say was the most exciting in your life?” One said it was his wedding day; another recalled the birth of a child; a third said it was the day he received the job of his dreams; another related a trip of a lifetime.

And on and on. After each memorable moment shared, the professor interjected with the same comment: “Well, and the day after?” In response to the students’ questioning reaction, the professor explained: “No doubt these were all important, exciting events and significant milestones in your lives – but what’s that thing about when it all ends? Does the joy and thrill that you experience continue to build momentum through the days and years that follow? Or does the memory fade the day after?”

We recently celebrated the holiday of Shavuot, which is our “annual reunion,” reliving the magnificent moment when we all as one stood at Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah. When thundering through the silence, G-d proclaimed His “agenda” for a world filled with peaceful co-existence, unity, justice, kindness, sanctity, and respect. In the glorious moment, He transformed us into a holy nation with an awesome responsibility. And just so that the memory of that exalted, uplifting moment does not fade, every year, we renew our 3,334-year-old commitment and realign with our time-tested legacy to the dedication of life of Torah, mitzvot, and positive action that we joyfully accepted at Sinai.

The porsha from Numbers in our present Torah readings started with a rundown of numbers giving us the count of the Children of Israel according to their tribes. In our technological age, when computers can calculate sum totals with the press of a button and even a census can be conducted through the internet, the students’ questioning reaction, the professor explained: “No doubt these were all important, exciting events and significant milestones in your lives – but what’s that thing about when it all ends? Does the joy and thrill that you experience continue to build momentum through the days and years that follow? Or does the memory fade the day after?”

We recently celebrated the holiday of Shavuot, which is our “annual reunion,” reliving the magnificent moment when we all as one stood at Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah. When thundering through the silence, G-d proclaimed His “agenda” for a world filled with peaceful co-existence, unity, justice, kindness, sanctity, and respect. In the glorious moment, He transformed us into a holy nation with an awesome responsibility. And just so that the memory of that exalted, uplifting moment does not fade, every year, we renew our 3,334-year-old commitment and realign with our time-tested legacy to the dedication of life of Torah, mitzvot, and positive action that we joyfully accepted at Sinai.

The porsha from Numbers in our present Torah readings started with a rundown of numbers giving us the count of the Children of Israel according to their tribes. In our technological age, when computers can calculate sum totals with the press of a button and even a census can be conducted through the internet, the students’ questioning reaction, the professor explained: “No doubt these were all important, exciting events and significant milestones in your lives – but what’s that thing about when it all ends? Does the joy and thrill that you experience continue to build momentum through the days and years that follow? Or does the memory fade the day after?”

We recently celebrated the holiday of Shavuot, which is our “annual reunion,” reliving the magnificent moment when we all as one stood at Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah. When thundering through the silence, G-d proclaimed His “agenda” for a world filled with peaceful co-existence, unity, justice, kindness, sanctity, and respect. In the glorious moment, He transformed us into a holy nation with an awesome responsibility. And just so that the memory of that exalted, uplifting moment does not fade, every year, we renew our 3,334-year-old commitment and realign with our time-tested legacy to the dedication of life of Torah, mitzvot, and positive action that we joyfully accepted at Sinai.

The porsha from Numbers in our present Torah readings started with a rundown of numbers giving us the count of the Children of Israel according to their tribes. In our technological age, when computers can calculate sum totals with the press of a button and even a census can be conducted through the internet, the students’ questioning reaction, the professor explained: “No doubt these were all important, exciting events and significant milestones in your lives – but what’s that thing about when it all ends? Does the joy and thrill that you experience continue to build momentum through the days and years that follow? Or does the memory fade the day after?”

We recently celebrated the holiday of Shavuot, which is our “annual reunion,” reliving the magnificent moment when we all as one stood at Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah. When thundering through the silence, G-d proclaimed His “agenda” for a world filled with peaceful co-existence, unity, justice, kindness, sanctity, and respect. In the glorious moment, He transformed us into a holy nation with an awesome responsibility. And just so that the memory of that exalted, uplifting moment does not fade, every year, we renew our 3,334-year-old commitment and realign with our time-tested legacy to the dedication of life of Torah, mitzvot, and positive action that we joyfully accepted at Sinai.
All Back in-Person This Summer: Delicious and Nutritious Meals, Companionship, and Programs

To the Federation and the Jewish Community:

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires is providing a service for seniors in the Berkshires that is appreciated by them, and perhaps little noted elsewhere. Cindy Bell-Deane, gourmet kosher chef, is cooking up delicious and nutritious meals for us every week. At a time of COVID-19’s unwelcome isolation, Cindy’s great lunches are a welcome lift to our lives!

Many of the lunches are home-cooked old-time favorites, such as roast chicken, meatloaf, or fresh fish. Others are new creations, such as the black bean enchilada casserole with yellow rice and Mexican corn that we recently enjoyed. Last summer, we had some extraordinary salad platters, including a Greek salad platter that was filled with an array of food discoveries. Each meal comes with a dessert, usually fruit, sometimes home baked goodies such as chocolate chip cookies and brownies!

Once upon a time, not so very long ago, we enjoyed Cindy’s great lunches at Knesset Israel, in the company of some extraordinarily knowledgeable and community conscious seniors. Those gatherings were the highlight of my social life each week. Twice each week the lunches were topped off by an enlightening conversation with the volunteers. I am satisfied with simply saying: thank you for bringing us together.

In my case, right to my apartment door in Lenox. Some seniors must have a warm meal delivered to them by a small team of volunteers. One upon a time the volunteers came by to offer us a hot meal, as well as an opportunity to connect. Many seniors must have a warm conversation with the volunteers. I am satisfied with simply saying: thank you for delivering my lunch. However, I can sense how happy the volunteers are to be performing this service, and the smile behind their face mask.

The good news, just in, is that the Connecting With Community programs are returning on Thursdays at Knesset Israel, beginning on June 16. The programs start at 10:45 a.m., with sit-in lunch following at noon. Plus: Knosh and returning on Thursdays at Knesset Israel, beginning on June 16. The programs performing this service, and the smile behind their face mask.

With appreciation,
Henry Kranz
Lenox

Your Exemplary Kind-Heartedness and Compassion Feeds Those Less Fortunate in Israel

Dear Jewish Community:

Thank you so much for the very generous grant toward the operation of Meir Panim’s Jerusalem Restaurant-Style Soup Kitchen. Your support this year as in the past, enables Meir Panim to maintain food and social services to Jerusalem’s neediest citizens. The generous grant will make an enormous impact on our services by providing over 600,000 of the 2,250 life-saving meals served monthly at the Jerusalem Restaurant-Style Soup Kitchen. From this location, we also provide thousands of meals on wheels to Jerusalem’s homebound, disabled, and elderly citizens, including Holocaust survivors.

Our Jerusalem branch continues to see the impact of COVID-19, despite the high vaccination rates and declining unemployment rate. Unfortunately, the pandemic has devastated people’s livelihoods, with the poverty rate doubling since March 2020. We expect it will take years for our community to recover. During the pandemic when Meir Panim’s Jerusalem Restaurant-Style Soup Kitchen was shuttered, 545 packaged meals were prepared in-house daily to be available for meals on wheels and takeout. Two hundred meals on wheels were delivered to not only the elderly, disabled and homebound individuals, but also those who are newly unemployed or on furlough. The coronavirus pandemic has had a deleterious effect on the middle class, and many have now fallen into poverty due to the lack of income this past year.

Our mission remains to serve as many people in need for as long as it takes. We are currently serving around 450 meals each day, more than twice the amount before the pandemic. We have also continued to expand our meals-on-wheels operations to accommodate those who are unable or afraid to visit the branch in person.

In addition to providing hot meals to those who need them most, our restaurant and meals-on-wheels volunteers form close relationships with our clients, inquiring into their welfare and overall state of health, and also referring them to additional services as needed. For many, the friendly faces of our volunteers are their only social interaction of the day.

Many thanks again to the leadership of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. Your community’s kind-heartedness and compassion for those less fortunate in Israel is exemplary.

With your help, those Israeli citizens who are struggling to survive will be fed and cared for and have the opportunity to break the cycle of poverty. Please know how much we appreciate your partnership with us over the years.

With deep gratitude,
Rena Ben-Erara
Director of Special Projects/American Friends of Meir Panim
www.meirpanim.org/partners

Published nine times a year by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

Dara Kaufman: Publisher and Managing Editor
Anonymous: Honorary Publisher
Linda J.L. Becker: Honorary Publisher
Albert Stern: Editor
RB Design Co.: Graphic Design and Layout
Jenny Greenfeld: Advertising Sales Representative and Assistant Editor

Editorial opinions expressed in the Berkshire Jewish Voice are those of the newspaper and not those of any individual. Signed editorialists do not represent the view of the newspaper, but rather express the writer’s view.

The Berkshire Jewish Voice reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. It does not guarantee the kashrut of any merchandise or service advertised.

To have the BJV mailed to your home, please send a minimum donation of $18. Please send your check to: The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, 101 North Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Next issue publication date: July 17, 2022 – September 6, 2022

Phone: (413) 442-4360, ext. 11 Fax (413) 443-6070

The Pesach Seder this year at Meir Panim in Jerusalem

Thank you volunteers Ellen Rosenblatt and the BJV delivery team, Michael Albert and Roman Rozenblum.
The Federation has adjusted the event format this year to include schmoozing and breakfast hors d’oeuvres outside on the covered porch followed by a theater-style indoor programs. There will be no assigned seating. Proof of vaccination is required and the most up-to-date masking protocol will be shared closer to the event.

Our Co-Chairs – Rob Bildner and Elisa Spungen Bildner

Sometimes the bottom line is an apt place to start a story.

Says Elisa Spungen Bildner: “The bottom line is that those of us who spend time in the Berkshires and who care about what happens to this particular Jewish community in Western Massachusetts have to devote our time and our money to make it the best it can be. And by the way, it’s a great community. I’m only sorry I only walked around the edges of it for as long as I did over the decades that we’ve had homes in this area.”

Elisa and husband Rob are two of those remarkably accomplished and dedicated people that the Berkshires and its Jewish community are fortunate to attract. Both are graduates of Yale University and remain active as leaders in alumni affairs. Both received degrees from Ivy League law schools, and Elisa has worked as a journalist and journalism professor and has taught law. Rob earned a masters’ degree in Jewish Studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary and is an accomplished photographer who studied at the Santa Fe Photographic Workshop. Together, the couple worked as food industry entrepreneurs and in 2020 co-authored the award-winning The Berkshires Farm Table Cookbook (featuring Rob’s photos) with chef Brian Alberg.

Elisa says that researching and writing the cookbook, which pays tribute to the Berkshires’ family-run farms and farm table chefs, “solidified our attachment to the community.” And it was only natural (inevitable?) that the Bildners would focus eventually their attention on the local Jewish Federation, given their record of involvement and leadership in high-profile national Jewish philanthropies. Together, Elisa and Rob established the Foundation for Jewish Camp in 1998, of giving and participation can be fostered among younger Jews. “It’s important to offer as many possibilities to people in younger age groups in the community. We really have a huge opportunity to focus on bringing into our midst younger people and giving them opportunities to enjoy and love and learn about being Jewish – and to make the difference they want to make in the world. There are many programs that can be modeled to fit the Berkshires – but they cost money and that’s another reason we need donors to support them.”

It starts, she adds, by showing up. “If there’s one message that I want to convey to our Major Donors and others is to tell everyone not to wait until you decide to retire in the community. Perhaps you’re a second homeowner, or spend only a short time of the year here, or, like we had been, living in the community but not really noticing what was going on with the Federation. I urge everyone to take notice and to really invest oneself into making this a super Jewish community.

“This community is a small community. It needs every hand on deck. Jump on board and support the Federation and benefit from the Federation activities, events, and educational opportunities now rather than later.”

About Our Guest Speaker

Frederic L. Bloch joined ADL in 2016 after four years at The New Jewish Home, a New York based eldercare provider, where he was senior vice president. Prior to that, Mr. Bloch had a distinguished three-decade career on Wall Street, including a long stint as head of the fixed income division at Citigroup.

Frederic L. Bloch joined ADL in 2016 after four years at The New Jewish Home, a New York based eldercare provider, where he was senior vice president. Prior to that, Mr. Bloch had a distinguished three-decade career on Wall Street, including a long stint as head of the fixed income division at Citigroup.

Mr. Bloch has an extensive background in corporate governance and has been a national authority (the JDL and its A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE anti-bias training) on the issue of antisemitism and how to combat it. This is an issue that we personally have been more and more engaged with through our political involvements nationally. The expressions of antisemitism both on the right and the left and globally have been a great concern to us.

As for their hope for how this Jewish community will evolve, Elisa says that she wants there to be “greater portals for younger people in the community to pull them into a Jewish orbit – not only kids and teens, but people in their 20s and 30s. Honeycomb and the World, she says, provide models of how a culture of giving and participation can be fostered among younger Jews. “It’s important to offer as many possibilities to people in younger age groups in the community. We really have a huge opportunity to focus on bringing into our midst younger people and giving them opportunities to enjoy and love and learn about being Jewish – and to make the difference they want to make in the world. There are many programs that can be modeled to fit the Berkshires – but they cost money and that’s another reason we need donors to support them.”

It starts, she adds, by showing up. “If there’s one message that I want to convey to our Major Donors and others is to tell everyone not to wait until you decide to retire in the community. Perhaps you’re a second homeowner, or spend only a short time of the year here, or, like we had been, living in the community but not really noticing what was going on with the Federation. I urge everyone to take notice and to really invest oneself into making this a super Jewish community.

“This community is a small community. It needs every hand on deck. Jump on board and support the Federation and benefit from the Federation activities, events, and educational opportunities now rather than later.”

About Paul Green & The Two Worlds Trio

Paul Green and his Jewish Jazz fusion band, Two Worlds, released its second CD, A Bissel Rhythm, in 2019. A virtuoso clarinetist equally adept at classical, jazz, and klezmer, Green went beyond arranging existing tunes, as he did in his first album, Music Coming Together. Presently, he is composer as well as arranger as he continues to explore, in his own compositions, the relationships between jazz and klezmer music. The trio features local musicians who are members of Two Worlds.
ANNUAL MEETING, continued from page 1

About Our Speakers

Roman Polonsky
Educated in the Former Soviet Union (FSU), Roman Polonsky emigrated to Israel in 1990. He headed the news operations at Vremya, the Israeli Russian-language weekly, worked as a political commentator for the Russian daily Vesti, and later as a political analyst for Israel’s leading radio station, Kol Israel – the Voice of Israel. He also served as a host of a political show on Channel 9 (Israeli Russian language TV). Polonsky was a longtime media advisor and spokesman for Natan Sharansky during his political career, and translated Sharansky’s two books - The Case for Democracy and Defending Identity – into Russian.

In 2009, Polonsky joined JAFI and served as a senior advisor to then-Agency chairman Sharansky. He was the head of The Agency’s Unit for Russian-Speaking Jewry (RSJ) for many years before assuming his current position. In his current role, Roman is responsible for overseeing Aliyah from Eastern Europe and the FSU, as well as camps and other informal Jewish education programs.

Sunday schools, Hebrew studies, young leadership programs, and enrollment in Masa Israel Journey and Taglit-Birthright.

Alex Shklar
Alexandra (Alexi) Shklar’s determination to advocate on behalf of world Jewry is born of her own life experiences. She spent her early childhood in Russia and made aliya to Israel at the age of eight.

Today, she serves as JDC’s Senior Director of Global Strategic Partnerships and is managing the Second Century Campaign, which will ensure JDC’s ability to respond to global needs in the future.

Shklar joined JDC in 2009 and was responsible for engaging JDC’s partners in its humanitarian work and community building activities around the world.

She traveled frequently to the field and experienced JDC’s life-changing efforts firsthand. In the course of one of her trips, she discovered that her own family members in Ukraine and Siberia had been and still are receiving life-sustaining assistance from JDC.

Prior to joining JDC, Shklar served as the Israel Program Director at the Jewish Community Federation of Louisville, Kentucky, where she was responsible for managing the community’s partnership with the Western Galilee, and facilitating Israel-focused cultural and social programs.

Shklar is also a Wexner Field Fellow and the winner of the North American Fencing Cup in 2001 and a member of the gold-medal NCAA team in 2004.
So much has been written about Alexander Hamilton. What convinced you that there was something about his possible Jewishness that needed to be explored?

It’s long been known that Hamilton had a mother named Rachel Levine and that Rachel enrolled him in a Jewish school on Nevis, the Caribbean island where she grew up. And I thought that these facts, which had been looked over by Hamilton scholars, would, for anyone else, be taken as creating a strong presumption of that person’s Jewish identity. And so I was deeply skeptical about the inheritance assumption that Hamilton was a cradle-to-grave Christian and got a grant to go down to the Caribbean to begin testing my hypothesis. And this took me on a seven-year journey in archives on both sides of the Atlantic, culminating in the publication of this book.

So for a man of his time, what would Jewish identity represent? I know there’s the cultural aspect, but as a man of his time, what would Jewish identity mean? I thought that these facts, which had been overlooked, would create a strong presumption of his Jewish identity and therefore a strong presumption of that person’s Jewish identity. And so I was deeply skeptical about the inheritance assumption that Hamilton was a cradle-to-grave Christian and got a grant to go down to the Caribbean to begin testing my hypothesis. And this took me on a seven-year journey in archives on both sides of the Atlantic, culminating in the publication of this book.

This is the central question and one that eludes us, as historians, to this day. What convinced you that there was something about his possible Jewishness that needed to be explored?

You’re correct. But there’s no evidence in the historical record that would corroborate that theory. In your book, you write that it’s not just a biography of Hamilton. It’s also a portrait of Jewish life in the colonies and the early years of the United States of America. What led you to write a book about Hamilton and the Jews?

What convinced you that there was something about his possible Jewishness that needed to be explored?

It’s the central question and one that eludes us, as historians, to this day. What would Jewish identity mean? I thought that these facts, which had been overlooked, would create a strong presumption of his Jewish identity and therefore a strong presumption of that person’s Jewish identity. And so I was deeply skeptical about the inheritance assumption that Hamilton was a cradle-to-grave Christian and got a grant to go down to the Caribbean to begin testing my hypothesis. And this took me on a seven-year journey in archives on both sides of the Atlantic, culminating in the publication of this book.

So for a man of his time, what would Jewish identity represent? I know there’s the cultural aspect, but as a man of his time, what would Jewish identity mean? I thought that these facts, which had been overlooked, would create a strong presumption of his Jewish identity and therefore a strong presumption of that person’s Jewish identity. And so I was deeply skeptical about the inheritance assumption that Hamilton was a cradle-to-grave Christian and got a grant to go down to the Caribbean to begin testing my hypothesis. And this took me on a seven-year journey in archives on both sides of the Atlantic, culminating in the publication of this book.

The book is titled “New World Promises vs. Old World Prejudices.” What led you to choose this title?

The book is titled “New World Promises vs. Old World Prejudices.” What led you to choose this title?

In May, Professor Porwancher spoke to the BJV about his book on one of the most influential and enigmatic Founding Fathers of the United States. Our conversation was edited for length and clarity.

Andrew Porwancher

So for a man of his time, what would Jewish identity represent? I know there’s the cultural aspect, but as a man of his time, what would Jewish identity mean? I thought that these facts, which had been overlooked, would create a strong presumption of his Jewish identity and therefore a strong presumption of that person’s Jewish identity. And so I was deeply skeptical about the inheritance assumption that Hamilton was a cradle-to-grave Christian and got a grant to go down to the Caribbean to begin testing my hypothesis. And this took me on a seven-year journey in archives on both sides of the Atlantic, culminating in the publication of this book.

This is the central question and one that eludes us, as historians, to this day. What would Jewish identity mean? I thought that these facts, which had been overlooked, would create a strong presumption of his Jewish identity and therefore a strong presumption of that person’s Jewish identity. And so I was deeply skeptical about the inheritance assumption that Hamilton was a cradle-to-grave Christian and got a grant to go down to the Caribbean to begin testing my hypothesis. And this took me on a seven-year journey in archives on both sides of the Atlantic, culminating in the publication of this book.

The book is titled “New World Promises vs. Old World Prejudices.” What led you to choose this title?

In May, Professor Porwancher spoke to the BJV about his book on one of the most influential and enigmatic Founding Fathers of the United States. Our conversation was edited for length and clarity.

Andrew Porwancher

This is the central question and one that eludes us, as historians, to this day. What would Jewish identity mean? I thought that these facts, which had been overlooked, would create a strong presumption of his Jewish identity and therefore a strong presumption of that person’s Jewish identity. And so I was deeply skeptical about the inheritance assumption that Hamilton was a cradle-to-grave Christian and got a grant to go down to the Caribbean to begin testing my hypothesis. And this took me on a seven-year journey in archives on both sides of the Atlantic, culminating in the publication of this book.

The book is titled “New World Promises vs. Old World Prejudices.” What led you to choose this title?

In May, Professor Porwancher spoke to the BJV about his book on one of the most influential and enigmatic Founding Fathers of the United States. Our conversation was edited for length and clarity.

Andrew Porwancher

This is the central question and one that eludes us, as historians, to this day. What would Jewish identity mean? I thought that these facts, which had been overlooked, would create a strong presumption of his Jewish identity and therefore a strong presumption of that person’s Jewish identity. And so I was deeply skeptical about the inheritance assumption that Hamilton was a cradle-to-grave Christian and got a grant to go down to the Caribbean to begin testing my hypothesis. And this took me on a seven-year journey in archives on both sides of the Atlantic, culminating in the publication of this book.
Your Federation Presents

CATA: Nurturing Inclusion Through the Arts

A talk by Margaret Keller, executive director of Community Access to the Arts

PITTSFIELD — On Thursday, July 7, at 10:45 a.m., join the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires for a talk led by Margaret Keller, executive director of Community Access to the Arts (CATA), a non-profit that nurtures and celebrates the creativity of people with disabilities.

This free program will be presented in person as part of the Federation’s Connecting with Community Series presented at Knesset Israel (16 Colt Road in Pittsfield) and will be followed by a kosher hot lunch. Lunch is a $3 suggested donation for adults over 60 years of age or $7 for all others. Reservations are required for lunch and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. See page 10 for the lunch menu.

Proof of vaccination and masking are required at indoor Federation events.

Throughout the year, CATA provides vibrant arts programs to more than 800 people across our community — children, teens, and adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities, elders with Alzheimer’s and dementia, and people with acquired or traumatic brain injuries. CATA artists explore new talents and share their unique points of view through a rich array of arts workshops — in painting, dance, theater, singing, drumming, juggling, yoga, creative writing, and more.

Public events, including CATA’s annual performance, art exhibits, and poetry readings, bring our whole community into the act and shine a light on the ability within disability. In this discussion, Margaret Keller will explore how the arts can foster inclusion and give us access to stories and perspectives we might not otherwise see.

Margaret Keller has been CATA’s executive director since 2014. She previously served as a foundations relationship manager at Bard College at Simon’s Rock, as a grants writer, and as the associate producer of the Chicago Humanities Festival. She received her MA and Ph.D. (ABD) in English from the University of Chicago, a certificate in non-profit management from Harvard Business School, and a BA from the University of Virginia.

For more on this program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Filmed in the Berkshires: A Conversation with Diane Pearlman

PITTSFIELD — On Thursday, July 21, at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Diane Pearlman, the executive director of the Berkshire Film and Media Arts Collaborative (www.berkshirefilm.org) and film producer. She’ll share her perspective on “Filmed in the Berkshires.”

This free program will be presented in person as part of the Federation’s Connecting with Community Series presented at Knesset Israel (16 Colt Road in Pittsfield) and will be followed by a kosher hot lunch. Lunch is a $3 suggested donation for adults over 60 years of age or $7 for all others. Reservations are required for lunch and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. See page 10 for the lunch menu.

The Berkshires Film and Media Collaborative (BFMC) creates educational, workforce and production opportunities in the film and media industry as an economic initiative for the western Massachusetts region. Executive director of BFMC, Diane Pearlman, will discuss the Berkshires as a destination for film and media production and highlight films produced in the area. She will also discuss the building of a new international film and education center that’s in the planning stages now.

Diane Pearlman is also an independent entertainment producer with 30 years of experience in media creation and production. Her specialty is digital film production, animation, and feature film visual effects. Among many other projects, she produced the award-winning short film, A Tree A Rock A Cloud, based on the short story by Carson McCullers, written and directed by Karen Allen, as well as the short film, You Have A Voice for the Massachusetts Women’s Political Caucus/Berkshire Section about young women, leadership and civic engagement. She is currently partnering with Great Barrington Public Theater to direct/produce a series of original short films about nature by local Berkshire playwrights.

For more on this program and other Federation events, visit our calendar of events at jewishberkshires.org.

Live your best life at Kimball Farms

Enjoy life and let us take care of the rest

• 100% Maintenance free retirement living
• Enjoy the beauty, arts, and culture of the Berkshires
• Reignite your passions
• Progressive levels of care as needed

Call 413-637-7000 to experience Kimball Farms.

CURIOUS ABOUT BUYING OR SELLING YOUR HOME? CALL OR EMAIL CARRIE TODAY!

CARRIE LOBOVITS WRIGHT
CARRIE@THEBERKSHIRE.COM
431 NORTH STREET PITTSFIELD, MA 413.212.1865
THEBERKSHIRE.COM

Live your best life at Kimball Farms

Enjoy life and let us take care of the rest

• 100% Maintenance free retirement living
• Enjoy the beauty, arts, and culture of the Berkshires
• Reignite your passions
• Progressive levels of care as needed

Call 413-637-7000 to experience Kimball Farms.

CURIOUS ABOUT BUYING OR SELLING YOUR HOME? CALL OR EMAIL CARRIE TODAY!

CARRIE LOBOVITS WRIGHT
CARRIE@THEBERKSHIRE.COM
431 NORTH STREET PITTSFIELD, MA 413.212.1865
THEBERKSHIRE.COM
All are welcome. RSVP at ciberkshires.com/calendar-services. soul. let poetry and melody begin to replenish heart and breathe in the “extra soul” that Shabbat brings, and July 15 at 7 p.m., will be in-person and lives-up,” writes synagogue president Natalie Matus. “Beative labyrinth, and sanctuary under the willow tree.”

New Book Club

India’s Summer –

Friday Night Lights: KI Offers More Ways to Welcome Shabbat

PITTSFIELD – Event dates: June 17 and 24, July 8 and 15, 2022.

This summer Knesset Israel will continue to offer a few different approaches to Kabbalat Shabbat. With music, food, and outdoor services (weather permitting), there are more ways than ever to come together and enjoy the best time of the week.

Shirei Shabbat with Community Dinner: Friday, June 24, at 5:45 p.m.

Join the Knesset Israel Band for an upbeat musical service including many contemporary melodies. Register in advance for the community dinner following the service: knessetsisrael.org/rsvp. Dinner is $25 for adults, free for those under 18.

Musical Minyan: Friday, July 8, at 5:45 p.m.

A small acoustic ensemble provides the backdrop for the Kabbalat Shabbat服务 at the KI community’s Musical Minyan. At times meditative, at times spirited, this service embraces the beloved traditional, modern, and global melodies to welcome the Sabbath Bride.

Traditional Kabbalat Shabbat: Friday, June 17 and July 15, at 5:45 p.m.

A variety of lay shlihei tzibbur — sometimes one, sometimes two — lead the congregation in the traditional Kabbalat Shabbat service.

Congregation Beth Israel’s Summer – Kabbalat Shabbat and a New Book Club

NORTH ADAMS – “Our beautiful backyard, meditative labyrinth, and sanctuary under the willow tree become the sites of many Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires programs as the weather warms up,” writes synagogue president Natalie Matus. “It’s inspired by sweeping views of the foothills of Mount Greylock and the gorgeous New England weather.”

She adds that this Reform congregation is expanding its popular programs for young families.

Kabbalat Shabbat Services on Friday, June 17 and July 15 at 7 p.m., will be in-person and livestreamed via Zoom. Light candles and welcome Shabbat with prayer and song. Let go of the week, breathe in the “extra soul” that Shabbat brings, and let poetry and melody begin to replenish heart and soul. RSVP at ciberkshires.com/calendar-services.

All are welcome.

Congregation Beth Israel is at 53 Lois Street, North Adams

Friday Lights: Shabbat at Hevreh – Services and Creative Beit Midrash

GREAT BARRINGTON – In-person services resume at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, located at 270 State Road, with a virtual option for those wishing to join the services online.

Shabbat at Hevreh

Kabbalat Shabbat Services take place Fridays at 6 p.m. All are invited to join Hevreh’s Kabbalat Shabbat Services. Led by Rabbi Jordan Gordon and Rabbi Neil Hirsch, the lively Reform service is welcoming and musical. Services often feature congregant reflections and guest musicians. Services are being held through the summer in a beautiful outdoor worship space under a tent.

For more information or to RSVP, visit hevreh.org/events.

Shabbat Morning Experience takes place Saturdays at 10 a.m. Join Hevreh for a contemplative and engaging Shabbat morning experience. On weeks when the congregation is not celebrating with a b’nai mitzvah student, the Shabbat morning experience may include Torah study and/or a full Shabbat morning service. Recharge and say “Shabbat Shalom”? Throughout the summer, get in Hevreh’s outdoor worship space under a tent.

For more information or to RSVP, visit hevreh.org.

Creative Beit Midrash

On Saturdays at 8:30 a.m., release your spiritual and intellectual imagination in Hevreh’s Creative Beit Midrash. Explore Jewish topics through your medium of choice – visual art, music, dance/movement, or the written word. Sessions are for sharing and processing individuals’ creative products through nurturant, not critique.

Email info@hevreh.org to get the Zoom link.

Hevreh’s Great Ideas Series: Topflight Scholars to Share Thoughts on Leadership and Jewish life

GREAT BARRINGTON – Great leadership requires the greatest gifts to Jewish learning was his profound book, The Way of Man, According to the Teachings of Hasidism. In just six chapters, and through the lens of Hasidic tales, Buber helps us focus on some of the most important questions we ask ourselves.”

The class will include a brief overview of early Hasidism and how the movement came into being.

Rabbi Eric Gurvis

Rabbi Eric Gurvis was ordained at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. He has served congregations in the US and is currently rabbi of Sha’arei Shalom in Ashland, MA. He has long been deeply involved in youth activities and Jewish camps, interfaith and social justice work, as well as Israel programming and education. He is a past president of the Massachusetts Board of Rabbis, a past chairman of the Newton Interfaith Clergy Council, and has served on the board of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston. He is also a member of the faculty for the Hebrew College Open Circle Jewish Learning program, which provides adult learning opportunities in communities throughout the Greater Boston area.

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire is located at 270 State Road in Great Barrington. For more information and the dates of upcoming classes, visit hevreh.org.

The Way of Being a Human: A Close Reading with Martin Buber

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Wednesday, July 13 at 11:45 a.m., Rabbi Eric Gurvis begins a series of in-person classes titled The Way of Being a Human: A Close Reading with Martin Buber.

Writes Rabbi Gurvis: “One of Martin Buber’s greatest gifts to Jewish learning was his profound book, The Way of Man, According to the Teachings of Hasidism. In just six chapters, and through the lens of Hasidic tales, Buber helps us focus on some of the most important questions we ask ourselves.”

The class will include a brief overview of early Hasidism and how the movement came into being.

Maud Mandel

On Sunday, June 26, at 10:30 a.m., the featured speaker will be Dr. Maud Mandel, president of Williams College and a noted professor of History and Judaic Studies.

On Friday, July 1 at 6 p.m., Hevreh hosts Dr. Andrew Behfeld, president of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

These in-person lectures are free and open to the community. Hevreh of Southern Berkshire is located at 270 State Road in Great Barrington.
Music Appreciation and Tanglewood with Temple Anshe Amunim

Celebrate the rich opportunities to enjoy music in the Berkshires this summer with Temple Anshe Amunim.

Leonard Bernstein’s Opening Prayer

Join Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch on Wednesday, July 6, at 11:45 a.m., for an interactive lecture which will serve as a complement to the Tanglewood concert on July 8 featuring a piece by Leonard Bernstein, Opening Prayer. Its text is the Priestly Blessing that is part of the liturgy of traditional morning services. Please note that the registration for this event does not include a ticket to the July 8 concert. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/TAAJuly8lecture.

Tanglewood Havdalah with TAA

LENOX – Please join Temple Anshe Amunim on Saturday, July 16 at 7 p.m. on the lawn at Tanglewood for a brief Havdalah service followed by a BSO concert at 8 p.m. Look for the blue and white balloons!

A ticket to the concert may be purchased at the gate or in advance online.

HRC Showcase Theater Presents: How We Survived

NEW LEBANON – Join Temple Anshe Amunim on Saturday, June 18, at 7:30 p.m. for a staged reading of How We Survived, by Pauline David-Sax, directed by TAA member Barbara Waldinger.

The play explores how we understand and remember our lives.

The location of the performance is at The Theater Barn, 654 Columbia Pike, New Lebanon, NY. Suggested donation is $20. Reserve tickets here: www.tbarn.org.

Shabbat Indoors and Outdoors with Temple Anshe Amunim

PITTSFIELD – This summer, Temple Anshe Amunim offers different opportunities to celebrate Shabbat.

Kabbalat Shabbat

Join Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch at 5:30 p.m. every Saturday at Temple Anshe Amunim office at 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield. The Temple is located at 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield.

Torah Study

At 9:30 a.m. every Saturday, Rabbi Hirsch leads a Torah study session. All are welcome to join in person or via zoom. Please reach out to the Temple office for the link to the livestream.

TAA Shabbat Hikes

On Saturday, June 25, join TAA for a Shabbat hike at Olivia’s Overlook, a Berkshire Natural Resources Council preserve overlooking the Stockbridge Bowl. Participants will meet at the Temple at 10:45 a.m. Open to all levels. Pre-registration is required. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/JuneTAAShabbatHikes.

On Saturday, July 9, the hike will be at Kennedy Park in Lenox. To register, go to: tinyurl.com/JulyTAAShabbatHikes.

Temple Anshe Amunim is a Reform Jewish Congregation that promotes engaging and wide-spread participation in services, education, and cultural and social action programs. The Temple, located at 26 Broad Street, Pittsfield is an accessible building. For more information, contact the Temple Anshe Amunim office at (413) 442-5910, email templeoffice@ansheamunim.org or visit www.ansheamunim.org.

BERKSHIRE JEWISH CONGREGATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

Berkshire Minyan

Lay-led egalitarian minyan held at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA (413) 229-3618, berkshireminyan.org

Berkshire Hills Hadassah

P.O. Box 187, Pittsfield, MA (413) 443-4386, berkshirehillshadassah@gmail.com

B’nai B’rith Lodge, No. 326

Chabad of the Berkshires

450 South St., Pittsfield, MA (413) 499-9899, jewishberkshires.com

Congregation Ahavath Sholom

Reconstructionist

North St., Great Barrington, MA (413) 528-4197, ahavathsholom.com

Congregation Beth Israel

Reform

53 Lois St., North Adams, MA (413) 663-5830, cbiberkshires.com

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

Reform

270 State Rd., Great Barrington, MA (413) 528-6378, hevreh.org

Israel Philatelist Society

c/o Dr. Ed Helitzer, (413) 447-7622

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires

196 South St., Pittsfield, MA (413) 442-4360, jewishberkshires.org

Jewish War Veterans

Commander Robert Waldheim

(413) 822-4546, sel14@aol.com

Knesset Israel

Conservative

16 Colt Rd., Pittsfield, MA (413) 445-4872, knessetisrael.org

Temple Anshe Amunim

Reform

26 Broad St., Pittsfield, MA (413) 442-5910, ansheamunim.org

Noble’s Farm Stand and Flower Shop

For All Your Floral Needs

Kathy Noble, Certified Florist

300 East New Lebanon Rd

Pittsfield, MA 01201

(413) 447-2819

twisterrain@verizon.net

noble@noblefarmstand.com

Barbara K. Greenfield

New Home! Second Home? Retirement Home? Let me show you...

The Berkshires

Barbara K. Greenfield

AAR-ORC/LEAGUE, BROKER

Broker Associate • MA & VT

(413) 447-5956

Barbara@Greenfield.net

Roberts & Associates Realty, Inc.

www.greenfield.net
Connecting with Community
Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

Meals-on-Wheels & Meals to Go – Advance Reservation Required

Kosher lunch will be prepared on Mondays and Thursdays. Tuesday lunches resume in the autumn. Meals to go will be ready by noon for pickup at the Knesset Israel kitchen door, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield. All meals-on-wheels will be delivered by Federation volunteers in the early afternoon.

Please call (413) 442-2200 no later than 9 a.m. to reserve your meal for pickup and to arrange delivery if standing instructions are not in place. All are welcome to reserve meals for pick-up, although delivery may be limited in certain circumstances.

The menus listed below are planned, but may be modified depending on availability of ingredients. When making a reservation, please inform us if a person in your party has a food allergy. Adults 60 and over: $3 suggested donation. Adults under 60: $7 per person.

Volunteers are Vital! Volunteer drivers who can deliver meals-on-wheels are always appreciated. Please call Molly Meador at (413) 442-4360, ext. 14. The Federation’s kosher hot lunch program is offered in collaboration with Elder Services of Berkshire County.

What’s for Lunch?

Gluten-Free Main Entrée ** and Dairy-Free Main Entrée #

**Monday, 11** — Turkey piccata **#, salad, rice pilaf, broccoli, rye bread, and peaches.
**Monday, 18** — Roasted chicken **#, mixed greens with pecans and cranberries, rice pilaf, mixed vegetables, Challah, and apricots.
**Thursday, 21** — Fresh fish **#, borscht and potato, coleslaw, potato chips, zucchini medley, oat bread, and mixed berry shortcake.
**Monday, 25** — Summer unstuffed pepper casserole **#, brown rice, salad, baby carrots, multigrain bread, and tropical fruit salad.

**Thursday, 7** — Tuna salad and cottage cheese platters **#, three bean salad, Challah, and cookies.
**Monday, 11** — Turkey piccata **#, salad, rice pilaf, broccoli, rye bread, and peaches.
**Thursday, 14** — Chef’s salad platter **#, whole wheat bread, and parve chocolate chip cookies.
**Monday, 18** — Roasted chicken **#, mixed greens with pecans and cranberries, rice pilaf, mixed vegetables, Challah, and apricots.
**Thursday, 21** — Fresh fish **#, borscht and potato, coleslaw, potato chips, zucchini medley, oat bread, and mixed berry shortcake.
**Monday, 25** — Summer unstuffed pepper casserole **#, brown rice, salad, baby carrots, multigrain bread, and tropical fruit salad.

Please NOTE: The Elder Services Senior Nutrition Program, under which the Federation operates its kosher lunch program, raised the suggested donation to $3 a meal. The suggested donation is completely voluntary. Seniors who cannot pay a voluntary donation will continue to receive a meal, no questions asked. We appreciate your understanding.
We know why you are here. And we’re here for the same reasons.

More than a destination. It’s a way of life. From one season to the next, we understand. It’s a set of experiences, qualities and values that fulfill. We believe your financial advisors should embody these same attributes. It’s why we’re here. We’re here with you. And for you.

October Mountain Financial Advisors
Portfolio Management • Financial Planning • Trust & Banking Services
103 West Park Street
Lee, MA 01238
(413) 243-4331
www.octobermountainfa.com

EISNER DAY CAMP
LOCATED IN GREAT BARRINGTON, MA

Campers 5 years old to rising 2nd graders
All campers must be “up to date” with Covid-19 vaccinations

Week-long sessions:
June 27 - August 12, 2022
Optional pick-up & drop-off service
Financial assistance available upon request

413.528.1652 | eisnercamp.org | eisnerdaycamp@urj.org

Open Houses
June 12 & 26 1-3pm

A REFORM JEWISH SUMMER CAMP

Wingate Residences
At Melbourne Place
Independent Living | Assisted Living | Memory Care

Builders of the Good Life.
At Wingate, we build more than simply beautiful residences. We build communities that meet the evolving needs of older adults, so you can live to the absolute fullest with compassion and dignity.

Learn more at wingatehealthcare.com | 413-499-1992
Volunteers Are Vital!

Federaion’s Dignity Drive delivered much needed products to the community

By Molly Meador / Coordinator of Volunteers and PJ Library

This is just a small portion of the donations we have received from our generous community members. As we know, menstrual and incontinence poverty is real, and these donations go a long way to helping those in need. Reflecting the Jewish values of Compassion (Rachamim) and Helping Others (Lo Ta’amod) and Charitable Giving (Tzedakah), these donations will be delivered to organizations across the Berkshires.

Thank you to all who contributed!
WHEN OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS US, WE ARE THERE

HELP US BE THERE! MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY!

Your gift to the Jewish Federation’s 2022 Campaign will help bring dignity and care to the vulnerable and elderly, build and strengthen the Jewish identity of our children and young adults, support vital community programs, and create meaningful Jewish life across the Berkshires and beyond.

JEJWISH LIFE FOR YOUNG FAMILIES
You help young families in the Berkshires embrace Jewish values and traditions while building a supportive community with Jewish peers through family programming, PJ Library, and volunteer opportunities.

RESOURCES TO FIGHT ANTI-SEMITISM
You help young people stand up against hate through anti-bias education in our public schools. You also combat anti-Semitism and the BDS movement through community programming, national advocacy, and security resources.

DIGNITY & COMPASSION
You provide older adults and homebound individuals with nutritious meals and stimulating programming served up with a side of companionship and compassion through our Connecting with Community program and Kosher Meals on Wheels.

JEWISH EDUCATION & VALUES
You nurture a strong Jewish future by providing a high-quality, meaningful and affordable Jewish education for hundreds of children through critical grants to all of our local Jewish religious schools.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS & ADVOCACY
You help provide a proactive voice in our community, public schools, media, and government, addressing anti-Semitism, social justice, Israel, and other issues important to our community.

A STRONG JEWISH IDENTITY
You help young people across the Berkshires and at UMASS Hillel build strong Jewish identities and become future leaders through scholarships for Jewish camp and Israel experiences, as well as leadership development and holiday meals on campus.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT & EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE
You help individuals facing unexpected challenges and life transitions receive the support they need through the Federation’s social worker. You also provide a safety net of emergency assistance due to COVID-19.

FOOD SECURITY, HEALTHCARE, & WINTER RELIEF
Winters are long and cold in the Ukraine, but you help the most vulnerable prepare with warm clothes, blankets, and heaters. You also bring food cards, home health aides, and medicine to those who need it most.

A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME
You help tens of thousands of new immigrants, who are fleeing anti-Semitism in Europe and fighting in the Ukraine, build better lives for themselves and their families in Israel through job training and support services that ease their transition.

CARING IN TIMES OF CRISIS
When crisis hits, in the Berkshires or around the world, you help mobilize local resources to respond with immediate relief and longer-term recovery. From support through COVID-19 to whatever the future holds, you help deliver an SOS response.

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY
You strengthen, sustain, and connect our community through hundreds of educational programs, holiday celebrations, and the Berkshire Jewish Voice, which bring people together and engage them in meaningful Jewish life.

A CLOSE & CARING RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL
You help connect the Berkshire Jewish Community with Israel and you also help provide programs for at-risk students, shelter for abused women, and support services for disabled youth.

Donate or pledge online at jewishberkshires.org Thank you for making a difference!
Visual Evidence

Photographer Stephanie Blumenthal works in different styles – creating still life assemblages, reimagining natural forms, capturing the sculptural interplay of light and objects in interior spaces – but, she says, “the thread for me is that I’ve always been fascinated by taking things or elements out of their normal contextual setting and putting them in an unexpected environment.”

About the series of photographs in which the winter scene below right appears, she says: “If you walk through a forest and you see vines, you probably don’t even see how beautifully graceful they are and how sculptural they are. But if you take them out and put them behind a neutral background, you can see them a lot more clearly. And while I hate to beautify these things that are killing the trees, they strike me with their gestures and how beautiful they are.

Blumenthal, who worked for years as a graphic designer of book covers, raised her family in Sheffield, has been a member of Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, and has lived in the Berkshires permanently for 34 years. Her husband, Bennie Friedman, worked as a prolific commercial photographer and is well known for his album covers for major music acts. Her elder son, Nick Friedman, is a co-founder of Theory Wellness, the first cannabis dispensary in Great Barrington. Younger son Theo is a chef and proprietor of Theory Kitchen, known for its pop-up dinners fusing food and art.

Blumenthal is one of the 50 Berkshire-based visual artists whose work appears in “Art of the Hills: Visual Evidence,” on view at Berkshire Museum through September 11. The still life “Touch One,” reproduced top right, will be on view. Check it out at the exhibit and also find out more on what our local artists are up to. The museum is at 39 South Street in Pittsfield – visit the website at www.berkshireregionmuseum.org.

For more of Blumenthal’s work, visit her website: sblumenthalphotography.com.

OBITUARIES

Eleanor Nager Wollins, 96, wife, mother, sister, aunt

LENNOX – Eleanor Nager Wollins, 96, previously of Lexington and Newton, passed away on Sunday, May 1 at Mount Carmel Care Center, with her daughter by her side.

Eleanor was born on March 28, 1926, to Etta and Louis Nager in Malden, MA. She was preceded in death by her parents; sisters Goldie (Abe), Beatrice (Henry), and Mildred (Mike) husband Hen; son, Scott. She is survived by her daughter Jill, as well as by her nieces and nephew.

On May 4, Eleanor was buried next to her husband and son in Sharon, MA. Please consider a donation to the Alzheimer’s Association or a charity of your choice.

Annette S. Feldblum, 79, bred and showed championship Maltese

DESSERT HOT SPRINGS, CA – Annette S. Feldblum, 79, died Thursday, May 5 in the presence of family.

Born February 6, 1943, in Winsted, CT, and raised in Sandisfield, MA, the daughter of Morris and Rose (Blayier) Levine. She attended Searles High School in Great Barrington and then lived in North Dartmouth, Charlton, and Desert Hot Springs, CA for the last 20 years.

Annette bred and showed championship Maltese for over 25 years. She also enjoyed vacationing at her cottage at the Bay of Fundy, New Brunswick. She volunteered at Jewish Family Services in CA.

She leaves three daughters: Lisa R. Stochaj and her husband James of Dudley, Erica L. Feldblum of Webster, and Wendy S. Feldblum of Pike Road, AL; grandchildren, Benjamin J. Stochaj and his fiancée Katherine K. Powell of Somers, CT, and Alaina M. Stochaj of Nashville, TN; great-grandson, Easton James Stochaj; 4 pieces including Loure Wadman whom she considered a 4th daughter; and her former husband, Stephen Feldblum of Naples, FL. She was preceded in death by a brother, William S. Levine, and a sister, Dolores Brill.

A graveside service was held on Monday, May 9 in Sandisfield Town Cemetery, Route 57, Sandisfield. Rabbi Neil Hirsch officiated. Donations in her name may be made to Maltese Rescue California, c/o Tami Karlsson, 20821 Broken Bit Drive, Covina, CA 91724.

Dr. Larry Smith touched the lives of thousands of students

PLANTATION, FL.– Dr. Larry A. Smith passed away in his home on Tuesday, February 8, after a courageous battle with Parkinson’s Disease.

Larry was born in Montreal and was the son of the late Philip and Faye Smith (Tessler) and son-in-law of the late Lois and Mollie Bassior (Spiers). As a professor of operations and decision sciences for 42 years, he touched the lives of thousands of students. He was a lifelong member of IBM – the International Brotherhood of Magicians – and shared magic tricks and jokes generously with his family, his friends, his students, and anyone interested in watching and listening. Members of his family were excited when offered membership in his self-created “Presidigatographer Club.” As an active person, he loved running, playing tennis and golf, and black diamond skiing.

He is held in the hearts of so many; beloved husband of 54 years to Jewel (Bassior) Smith; loving father to Heather Martin (Chris Prince) and Wendy Smith (Michael Posner); adoring Zade to Ryan and Asher Martin, Yael, Jonah, and Ari Smith Posner; devoted brother to Ernie (Perry) and Marv z”l (Trudel); and loving uncle to nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

A private family-only graveside funeral was held on Friday, February 11. The family held a broader memorial service on Wednesday, February 23. Donations in Larry’s memory can be made to The Michael J. Fox Parkinson’s Foundation at https://bit.ly/3lrrayasmith.
“One of the Lucky Ones”

In early May, the father of the Hevreh/TAA family spoke with the BJN about his family’s experience fleeing Afghanistan during the chaotic withdrawal, describing their experiences of the evacuation and their ongoing resettlement in the Berkshires. Their conversation was edited for length and clarity.

I used to live in the north, one of the provinces of Afghanistan, which is very beautiful. I used to work with the United Nations there initially from 2002 to 2012. After that, I got a job with American companies. Last year, in May 2021, they announced all Americans would withdraw from Afghanistan on May 31 - our contract was finished. So that was just like pulling the rug out, actually. It was very tough for us because there was no job and we were thinking what would we do after Americans leave Afghanistan. And after two months, Americans just left. The Taliban came and captured Herat.

My job with the American company was going into the city purchasing whatever was needed for international people, like food and personal items. So everybody knew me - the shopkeepers, everybody. So when Taliban captured Herat, it was very tough for us. After a few days, we suddenly heard that the Americans were flying out, there was no gateway. I saw four people, Taliban with guns, in front of our house. They said, “I received a bomb attack at one of the gates at the airport. I filled out the form and wrote that I used to work with an American company. They said yes. He gave me an address - I must immediately get myself and my family to a gate at the airport. We got to the airport a half-hour before the bomb attack...”

They don’t have any complicity. I didn’t say anything because if you argue with these people, they just shoot you. I decided to go to Kabul, the capital, to watch the news every day, every day Americans evacuated people, but every day they lost people working with them. I talked to my brother, who worked in the same organization, and I said that this is not the time to live with this. So the next day I asked my family if we could go. Actually, I didn’t have money. What do you say in English? The children used to have a small piggy bank. Yeah, I just broke one and removed the money, whatever, and got the bus fare to Kabul and went to my father-in-law’s house there. There were rumors [about evacuation] and people were going to the airport. Getting inside the airport was very difficult and there were maybe 100,000 people lying down on the road close to the airport. So four or five days after we arrived in Kabul, I found out about an evacuation form that the US had set up online for people who wanted to go to the airport. I filled out the form and wrote that I used to work with an American company. This is my experience. I am in danger. My life is in danger.

On the same day on which the explosion occurred in Afghanistan, a bomb attack at one of the gates of the airport [in August 26, 2021 that killed 13 US servicepeople and approximately 170 Afghan civilians], I received a call and a person asked who I was and if I used to work with Americans. I said yes. He gave me an address - I must immediately get myself and my family to a gate at the airport. We got to the airport a half-hour before the bomb attack. They said, “Well, if you come, we won’t leave you like this, we will come back. For more investigation. We want a call from you.” The Taliban were there for a half-hour or so.
thinking – what does any of this mean? Another thing that really leapt out at me in terms of their transition into school is so much information comes at you. As a refugee resettling, you’ve got information coming from all the different pathways. Educators love sending home communication. And some of it is essential, and some of it is not. But for them, it all felt essential.”

Honig reports that the local schools “have done a good job of trying to provide opportunities that allow the kids to kind of shine despite the language barriers. So a really good example is their daughter’s in high school, and she’s a very good artist. So she was invited to join the mural club as a way to kind of begin socializing. And with the arts, you can kind of transcend those language barriers.”

Another way Honig has transcended barriers is by connecting her own children with the Afghan youngsters. “The kids are amazing. They’re active. They love to play. Within five minutes of meeting them, you know that one loves soccer and the girl is a beautiful artist. The littlest one loves trucks. One of the first things we did, during winter when they arrived, we went sledding – it was the best thing ever. They and my kids have found really creative ways to break down language barriers. They do crafts together. Play is universal.”

Even with all the successes accruing, the resettlement of these Afghan immigrants to our region remains an ongoing challenge. Joel Karlino of TAA is a retired social worker who practiced in New York City and has retired to his native Pittsfield – his experience with immigrant communities made him a good fit for the health component for the Hevreh/TAA team. He says that the magnitude of the resettlement project each family is in the midst really hit him early, when he was shuttling the father back and forth from Tyringham, where the family was temporarily sheltered, to Pittsfield in order to buy a cell phone. He saw how different these Afghan families were to the legal and even undocumented immigrants he worked with in the past. He says these Afghan families are humanitarian refugees who left their country abruptly and were moved around the world, not knowing or often choosing where they might end up. Their lives turned on a dime: a space or resources became available to them, but the thing that really moved him was the way “the family really came with nothing, almost literally nothing. Everything we’ve coordinated is to give them a new starting point.”

“Within some families, there are individuals who are having difficulty coping,” says Jan Kabel, “who may have post-traumatic stress over the fact that not only did they leave Afghanistan with very little notice, but have left family behind, and they have been trying to help them out as best they can and trying to do their best for them, but are very distressed over what their remaining family members are facing in Afghanistan in terms of food shortage, medicine shortage, and now facing the obvious brutality of the Taliban. It’s not unusual for me to be in our family’s house and they’re in communication with their family. And they’re telling me, oh, they just took girls out of school. My cousins have just been taken out of school. The girls are no longer allowed to be in school. So what’s going on? There is immediate impact on them. And that adds a whole other layer of stress to the situation.”

Rebecca Honig adds: “One of the first things the father said to me on our first ride from the airport is, ‘We are the lucky ones. We got out. We’re not worried about ourselves. We’re worried about our family in Afghanistan.’ The to-do list for someone resettling in this country is just incredible, right? But I think they really needed to know that they could do something for their family back home. I think it made it harder until we had some things in place to help out with that. I noticed there was a greater capacity to begin resettling once they were able to send a little bit of money home.”

At the lively Eid celebration in May at Hevreh, the almost familial warmth shared by the Afghan evacuees and our local volunteers was palpable. It was also apparent in the way the different families interacted that they were building bonds among themselves. The women sat together at one table – generally less advanced as English speakers, they have developed a WhatsApp network through which they share their experiences and seek solutions from one another. Brenda Landes says that KI’s family is friendly with another family that lives within walking distance – all the families for now are stuck having to negotiate Berkshire County’s daunting distances without cars or reliable public transportation, so proximity is welcome. “The men who arrived earliest have started to secure jobs – others await working papers and job training. The families are also making connections at Pittsfield’s Al Khalil Islamic Center, and some have visited the Afghan market in the Albany area for familiar foods and products. Not only that, a new halal meat market and snack shop called Sol’s Mediterranean has opened in Pittsfield. As Jan Kabel points out, ‘the way they live their lives, the food they buy, what they cook, how they raise their children is very much in the Afghan style right now.’

But of course the trajectory that their children’s lives are going to take will change everything going forward. Seeing the young ones – a cheerful and rambunctious group – playing together and knowing that, thanks to this community and Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts, they will have a chance to grow up in safety and as Americans was the happiest sight of all.
Traveling with Jewish Taste
Ms. Muffett Asks: Curds and Why?
By Carol Goodman Kaufman • Special to the BJV

When the subject of cottage cheese comes up (admittedly, it doesn’t all that often), I think of my Aunt Ruth Katz who always seemed to be enjoying it (think a plate of the white curds for lunch). Because it can be lower in calories than other types of cheese, the stuff was a manda-
tory part of the “dietler’s plate” for much of the mid- to late-1900s, only to be supplanted in
popularity by yogurt by the end of the century. So, what exactly is cottage cheese? Known by Little Miss Muffett as curds and whey, it’s made by draining acidic-laced milk curds from their whey and mixing with cream to produce its familiar creamy texture. Unlike other cheeses, it is neither pressed nor aged. In fact, if you let it “age” in the fridge too long, it will grow a truly unappreciated green and fuzzy mold. Both Middle Eastern and Greek tradition have given us similar stories of the origin of cheese. According to 3rd century BCE Mesopotamian legend, a desert-traveler discovered it accidentally when he stopped on his journey to quench his thirst with a drink of milk. But when he opened his saddlebags made of sheep’s stomach (the original canteen), what he found was curdled cheese. In a remark-
ably similar story from Homer’s Odyssey, the cyclops Polyphemus opened the lambskin bags he carried to find what we would identify today as feta cheese. The beauty of cottage cheese is that it can be prepared quickly and enjoyed immediately. No need for sheep saddlebags or desert wanderings. No tempera-
ture-controlled refrigeration. No rind. No growing mold. In fact, for centuries farmers throughout the Old World made fresh cheeses (probably in their own
cottages) with naturally soured cow’s milk. So, when in the mid-19th century immigrants came to America, they brought with them their knowledge of fresh cheese making. Thus cottage cheese became part of our culinary vocabulary. Today, you can purchase cottage cheese in plain and flavored varieties. Cottage cheese is a huge part of our Israeli cousins’ diet, so much so that it was the subject of the Great Cottage Cheese Boycott. Like so many protests this one began with a governmental decision made in 2008. Because one partic-
ular dairy cooperative, Tnuva, controlled more than 70% of the market, Israeli law considered it to be a monopoly. Therefore, the Antitrust Authority had the power to regulate prices to prevent price gouging. However, working on the theory that deregulation would foster competition and thereby reduce prices, the then-finance minister, Arraham Hirschson, decided that the government should stop regu-
changing the price of cottage cheese. Unfortunately, just the oppo-
site happened: Prices increased almost 50%. Hence, the boycott. Organizers urged people to stop buying cottage cheese. Within a short time, 100,000 users had signed a petition on Facebook. As the boycott gained momentum, it sparked a public debate on the high cost of living in Israel and led ultimately to a drop in price. Back to the present. My thoughts about cottage cheese became an obsession with Passover this year. Huh? What does cottage cheese have to do with our major spring Festival of Liberation? Well, in search of kosher-for-Passover cottage cheese, I schlepped to seven different supermarkets in Massachusetts. I found not a single container. Not one. While I’ve long been fascinated by the process of cheese making, I know that the serious stuff is not a simpleton’s game. Research for a piece on cheesemaking once brought me to a professional fromager’s office. His shelves were filled with tomes on chemistry, microbi-
ology, and food science, certainly not in my wheelhouse. But, luckily for us amateurs, some cheeses are super simple to prepare in our own kitchens. In fact, several years ago, to the initial delight but ultimate boredom of my family, I went on a goat cheese and labneh spree. That’s when it finally dawned on me: the only difference between goat cheese and cottage cheese is which animal’s milk I’d be using. So, I decided to make my own. Why hadn’t I thought of this earlier and saved myself a lot of time and
gasoline? The 2022 Great Cottage Cheese Experiment was a success. Because I didn’t add cream, the result had a consistency more like feta than the supermarket variety of cottage cheese in the plastic tub, but it was wonderfully flavorful. Even my daughter-in-law Shira, who doesn’t like cottage cheese, loved it. Best of all, there are no preservatives involved in the homemade version. Then again, I had no worries about spoilage as the fam gobbled up the batch in two days. Even the little ones ate it. DIY Cottage Cheese
Here is a very, very easy recipe for homemade cottage cheese:
Pour 1 gallon of whole milk into a pot and bring to 190 degrees. Take the pot off the burner and pour in 3/4 cup of either lemon juice or white vinegar. Stir. Let the pot sit for 30 minutes. Line a colander with two layers of cheesecloth or a clean towel and set into a large bowl. Pour the contents of the pot into the colander. Squeeze out the whey. Mix in a few tablespoons of cream if you like (I didn’t). Stir in some salt to taste, chives or even crushed pineapple if you like yours sweet. That’s it, except to enjoy. *Don’t throw your whey away! Add it to smoothies and shakes to provide more vitamins, minerals, and proteins. Use it as cooking liquid for potatoes, rice, grits, pasta, and grains. Substitute whey in any baking recipe that calls for water or even milk, such as for bread, pancakes, waffles, or muffins.

Keren Weiner, Genealogist
Tracing your roots in the United States and abroad

“A Toast… To Our Ancestors”
kweiner2@gmail.com | 413-499-9980 | www.kerenweinergenealogy.com

Carol Goodman Kaufman is a psychologist and author with a passion for travel and food. She is currently at work on a food history/cookbook tracing the paths that some of our favorite foods have taken from their origins to appear on dinner plates and in cultural rites and artifacts around the world. She invites readers to read her blog at carolgoodmankaufman.com and to follow her on Twitter @goodmankaufman.
An American Tune

By Albert Stern

Since I was a very young child, I have felt deeply connected to the story of America. I was adopted as an infant into a Jewish family whose worldview was shaped by religious identity, the crucible of Eastern Europe, proud Zionism, and immigration to the United States and Israel. My way of looking at the world was molded by a proud and often chauvinistic Judaism, but not so much my way of looking at myself. As an adoptee, I knew I had an additional story, a separate story, one that was hidden from me. That story, I felt quite certain, had a long historical connection to America. This was never merely a hunch on my part—it was my absolute conviction.

Given the paucity of information to which adoptees of my sealed records era had access, we necessarily used fantasy to create stories for ourselves to complete our personal identities. As a child, the stories that captured my imagination were of the early European settlement of the New World and the lives of the Native Americans it displaced. I knew all about the migrations from Asia into the Western Hemisphere, and all about the cultures of the different tribes. If asked why I had all this interest in Native Americans, I would answer: “Because I am an Indian!” It was a strange thing for a Ashkenazi Jewish child growing up in Miami Beach circa 1970 to insist on, even for a misfit like myself.

When I was not long out of college, I noticed a copy of David Freeman Hawke’s Everyday Life in Early America in a secondhand bookstore and felt like I owned it. It’s a short, accessible, yet rich history of how people in the British colonies lived in the 1600s. Over the years, it was among the very few books that accounted for, or at least concerned me, on my every move. I re-read it countless times and took a certain comfort in seeing it, like a talisman, on my bookshelf. Its subject matter more than interested me—I was convinced the book was telling me things I was supposed to know about my story.

Alas, that book didn’t make it on my most recent moves, after it was separated from my soon-to-be ex-wife. The only volumes I took with me to my current digs were the Tanakh, a sparse bachelor digs were the Tanakh, a free gift from the Reform movement. I was convinced the book was telling me things I was supposed to know about my story.

I started watching and was quickly let down by the documentary American Masters, which is set in Maui and depicts the lives of working-class Hawaiians struggling to survive while overcoming racism in a lifetime of personal achievement. I don’t know how you might feel about extra-sensory consciousness or a universe with deep meaningful underpinnings or the notion that spiritual progress is the central issue of existence or any other of that kind of ouija-boogaloo. As for me, I’m with Charles Bukowski, the poet who felt that “the more crap you believe in, the better off you are.” I believe that Something Big is going on, something I get from my Jewish family – my bubbie lida, an uncannily gifted mystic, opened my eyes and mind to that. No matter what you might think of my fanciful childhood conviction about being connected to a long American story (plus my being an Indian), grant me this—I was totally right. And one more thing—I believe in America.

Thanks to my Bubbie, I’ve long been attuned to these weird vortices in which we sometimes find ourselves, when the universe parts the curtains to show us that Something Big is going on. Recently I found myself in a Hawaii vortex. Out of the blue, I received a text from my pal Steve Toske, the longtime Pittsfield chiropractor who retired and is living the dream in The Aloha State. Later the same afternoon, I was at the library and felt compelled to pick up and read R. Kikuo Johnson’s strangely moving graphic novel, No One Else, which is set in Maui and depicts the imperfections of the United States diminished Hawaii and its people.

It’s an impulse I call “American Tune-ism,” after the one Paul Simon song that I truly can’t abide. “American Tune” is a morose anthem of defeat and disappointment with the United States, yet one that five decades after its release still resonates with a lifetime of personal challenges. It seemed as if, because Kahanamoku was a person of color, the documentarians had to establish their bona fides by positing the ways that the imperfections of the United States diminished Hawaii and its people.

Finnerty & Sinners
Funeral Home, Inc.
426 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
(413) 528-5391
Toll Free 1-877-823-1901
Web site: www. finnertyandsinners.com

Sgt. David Levy, Sr. was the Quartermaster for the Continental Army’s German Regiment at Valley Forge

Finnerty & Sinners
Funeral Home, Inc.
426 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
(413) 528-5391
Toll Free 1-877-823-1901
Web site: www. finnertyandsinners.com

As an adoptee, I knew I had an additional story, a separate story, one that was hidden from me. That story, I felt quite certain, had a long historical connection to America.

The patriot on my father’s side was likely the lastbachischer Nachtmann, an ancestor in my family tree, my sixth-great-grandfather, David Levy Sr. According to family historian with whom I corresponded: “David Sr. was in Frederick, Maryland by 1766. [W] [e] Barbara’s family, German/Swiss Jews who had converted to Christianity, had been there for a while. I am virtually certain that David Levy Sr. was Jewish but that his wife and children were not. Some of my distant relatives have argued that David wasn’t Jewish because he appeared frequently in the records of the Evangelical (German) Reformed Church in Frederick, Maryland, but what they miss is that he only appeared in the records of his wife and the father of his children. He was never baptized, even though his wife and kids were. He was never confirmed, even though his wife and kids were. And he never sponsored a baptism [i.e., served as a child’s godfather], even though his wife and some of his kids did. So, I believe that he was Jewish and that he never converted to Christianity.”

David Levy – the potele Yid in my gene pool – joined the Colonial Army and was a sergeant. “I don’t know if David Levy’s first language was English, German, or Yiddish,” the family historian wrote, “but he was competent enough with German to serve as the quartermaster for the German Regiment during the Revolution. He was at Valley Forge.”

Other ancestors came here from England and Scotland, many of the families dispersed among the hills in the Panhandle and Appalachia Hawaiians? Nope – Hee-Haw. In the 1800s, the Irish members of the family came to this country to escape the Great Potato Famine of the last century, all these lines had made it out with the

As an adoptee, I knew I had an additional story, a separate story, one that was hidden from me. That story, I felt quite certain, had a long historical connection to America.

The patriot on my father’s side was likely the lastbachischer Nachtmann, an ancestor in my family tree, my sixth-great-grandfather, David Levy Sr. According to family historian with whom I corresponded: “David Sr. was in Frederick, Maryland by 1766. [W] [e] Barbara’s family, German/Swiss Jews who had converted to Christianity, had been there for a while. I am virtually certain that David Levy Sr. was Jewish but that his wife and children were not. Some of my distant relatives have argued that David wasn’t Jewish because he appeared frequently in the records of the Evangelical (German) Reformed Church in Frederick, Maryland, but what they miss is that he only appeared in the records of his wife and the father of his children. He was never baptized, even though his wife and kids were. He was never confirmed, even though his wife and kids were. And he never sponsored a baptism [i.e., served as a child’s godfather], even though his wife and some of his kids did. So, I believe that he was Jewish and that he never converted to Christianity.”

David Levy – the potele Yid in my gene pool – joined the Colonial Army and was a sergeant. “I don’t know if David Levy’s first language was English, German, or Yiddish,” the family historian wrote, “but he was competent enough with German to serve as the quartermaster for the German Regiment during the Revolution. He was at Valley Forge.”

Other ancestors came here from England and Scotland, many of the families dispersed among the hills in the Panhandle and Appalachia Hawaiians? Nope – Hee-Haw. In the 1800s, the Irish members of the family came to this country to escape the Great Potato Famine of the last century, all these lines had made it out with the
African American to win an individual gold medal. He Duhart Hubbard. Ever heard of him? He was the first the 100-meter freestyle and his brother, Samuel, the Games, Duke Kahanamoku won the silver medal in kind of stuck together, you know?” In the 1924 Paris man were really good friends.”

Duke Kahanamoku I’d just been watching.

disappointment with the documentary about Duke professional longboard surfer, and so I mentioned my about the astonishing life of Duke Kahanamoku.

be in the second sentence of a blurb I would write reality, and colonialism, as well – but neither would

“Loves Me Like a Rock.” Fifty years on, its Nixon-era application filed in 1833

parts are what the larger American story is all about

My own American story has a lot of moving parts, but I’m sure yours does, too; and anyway, moving parts are what the larger American story is all about

“Yeah, his old man really didn’t like Weissmuller. When they rode together on the train from the coast to Paris, for no reason Weissmuller knocked over a French fan riding alongside them on a bicycle as they pulled into a station in a small town. Hurt the guy pretty badly. Weissmuller just laughed. So, the old man didn’t like him. My grandfather knew Tarzan?”

“Yeah. During the Olympics, Duke and his brothers hung out with your grandfather on the ship over to France and back. The brown skinned folks

My old man and Duke stayed friends for a long time. Duke spent time in Los Angeles making movies and used to stop by the house, hang out, and stay for dinner. It was before World War II.

so I must have been eight or nine.”

Wait a minute… you knew

Duke Kahanamoku… Waterman…

ambassador of Aloha… that PBS is showing a documentary about right this very minute?

“You’re welcome! Now

In 1925, Kahanamoku, on his surfboard, rescued eight people whose boat had capsized in high surf off the California coast.

His exertions, according to witnesses, were all but superhuman and his disregard for his own safety complete.

Thirty years later, the This is Your Life television program reunited Kahanamoku with three

of the men he had saved for the first time since his remarkable act of valor. It is a remarkable scene – the men expressing their gratitude to Kahanamoku, who stands back stunned, seemingly abashed, and no doubt very flustered back to the day he saved their lives. The camera then zooms in as one of them offers his hand and says thank you to his rescuer. And Duke Kahanamoku, this amazingly heroic man, seems to be searching for the right way to respond to this person whose life he has saved. Finally, Duke Kahanamoku says what you say when someone thanks you for something. He says: “You’re welcome.”

You’re welcome? You’re welcome! Now that is America.

Duke Kahanamoku was a hero and an eminent American, and I wonder if we’ve lost our sense of how to tell a hero’s story, how to tell an American story. I know my own American story has a lot of moving parts, but I’m sure yours does, too; and anyway, moving parts are what the larger American story is all about.

Back in 2016, I attended for the first time one of those quintessential Berkshire events – the reading of the Declaration of Independence on the Fourth of July at Shakespeare & Company. I was told it was always a rousing affair, with cheering crowds and flag waving. But to lead it off that year, the organ-

izers invited a famous retired anchorman to share a few words. So this anchorman decided to use to his moment on the Fourth of July to speechify about how hypocrical the Declaration of Independence is, how the Declaration was written by elites to serve the interests of elites, how it was nasty to the Native Americans, how far short we’ve fallen in living up to its empty rhetoric, and on and on.

His words were enough to dissipate my patriotic mojo and, it seemed, that of the gathered. There was

lifeless of the customary rah-rah I was led to expect. I ran into people I know as we headed glumly to the parking lot and they all agreed that the retired newscaster ruined the occasion for everybody. “You felt almost embarrassed to cheer,” said one.

On this Fourth of July, I hope no one feels too embarrassed to cheer. As the writer Ryan Fazio put it: “What separates America in human history is not its sins, but its virtues.” If the mood hits you, you might even still be stirred to sing an American tune – but please, not “American Tune.”

Johnny Weissmuller shaking hands with Duke Kahanamoku at the 1924 Paris Olympic Games

BERKSHIRE JEWISH VOICES

Ready to move? Less stress on you and more focus on the things you love to do.

The Lodge at Geer Village, a lively community where you can enjoy the freedom and privacy of independent retirement senior living, free of concerns of home maintenance and with a complete range of care services available, when you need them.

Life at The Lodge offers:
- Engaging daily activities
- Maintenance-free, spacious residences
- 24-hour RN licensed on-campus care
- Elegant restaurant style dining
- Comprehensive wellness programming
- Adjoining YMCA

For details or to arrange a personal tour, call Deb at 860.824.2625

77 - 99 South Canaan Road | North Canaan CT 06018 | www.geercares.org | 860.824.2600
Great Barrington – Robin Gerber’s new play The Shot explores the aftermath of the turbulent marriage of former Washington Post publisher Katherine Graham and her husband, Philip, who preceded her at the helm of the capital’s newspaper of record. Phil Graham, who elevated the newspaper to national political prominence, suffered from bipolar disorder and ultimately took his own life in the family’s vacation home, leaving Katherine to find his body. Katherine took over as publisher days after his body. Katherine took over as publisher days after his body was found.

Graham was a fantastically wealthy and influential Meyer family, among the prominent Jewish families originally from the Alsace region of France. Her grandfather was the American entrepreneur, publisher, and later chairman of the Federal Reserve, who purchased the then-bankrupt Washington Post in 1933. Katherine’s non-Jewish mother, Agnes, was a philanthropist, activist, and illustrious patron of the arts, and used the paper to advance her pet causes.

Katherine Graham was from a very wealthy family that was connected to an old German Jewish family, the friede family, and the Mertz family, which owned the Washington Post.

Katherine has just accepted an award. And in doing this, she says, ‘I’m not all about philanthropy. I’m thinking more about what happened before, before I took over the paper.’ And then it becomes a memory play explaining about Phil and their life. And parts of that life were wonderful. You see her become this happy housewife having children. But then the dark side starts gradually emerging, as she describes it, a descent into a tunnel that seems to have no end.

Was Phil a true S.O.B., the wrong man for her to marry, or was she a who had this terrible problem, bipolar disorder?

He was a highflier. He was editor of the law review at Harvard and clerked for Felix Frankfurter. He was brilliant. He was good looking. He had a kind of narcissism that we’ve seen in recent years in such an unfortunate way. He craved attention. He craved getting in with important people. He was a good friend of Jack Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy. But Katherine’s own brother told me they growing up with so much power and privilege, the dark side to their lives was not a source of shame, neither was it a source of pride.

Katherine Graham was from a very wealthy family that was connected to other illustrious families – I don’t know if Steven Bingham might have called them “our German Crowd” Jews since they were from France, not Germany, but they definitely had that level of social prominence. Tell me about what being half-Jewish might have meant to her.

Katherine Graham was married Philip Meyer, who married Katherine Graham. She was set up to not think highly of herself, to not do well in life. And parts of her story is that she was very involved in mothering. We’re talking about parents who were very absent.

A new play about Washington Post publisher Katherine Graham explores how she overcame her disasters, abusive marriage

Great Barrington – Robin Gerber’s new play The Shot explores the aftermath of the turbulent marriage of former Washington Post publisher Katherine Graham and her husband, Philip, who preceded her at the helm of the capital’s newspaper of record. Phil Graham, who elevated the newspaper to national political prominence, suffered from bipolar disorder and ultimately took his own life in the family’s vacation home, leaving Katherine to find his body. Katherine took over as publisher days after his body. Katherine took over as publisher days after his body was found.

Graham was a fantastically wealthy and influential Meyer family, among the prominent Jewish families originally from the Alsace region of France. Her grandfather was the American entrepreneur, publisher, and later chairman of the Federal Reserve, who purchased the then-bankrupt Washington Post in 1933. Katherine’s non-Jewish mother, Agnes, was a philanthropist, activist, and illustrious patron of the arts, and used the paper to advance her pet causes.

Katherine Graham was from a very wealthy family that was connected to an old German Jewish family, the friede family, and the Mertz family, which owned the Washington Post.

Katherine has just accepted an award. And in doing this, she says, ‘I’m not all about philanthropy. I’m thinking more about what happened before, before I took over the paper.’ And then it becomes a memory play explaining about Phil and their life. And parts of that life were wonderful. You see her become this happy housewife having children. But then the dark side starts gradually emerging, as she describes it, a descent into a tunnel that seems to have no end.

Was Phil a true S.O.B., the wrong man for her to marry, or was she a who had this terrible problem, bipolar disorder?

He was a highflier. He was editor of the law review at Harvard and clerked for Felix Frankfurter. He was brilliant. He was good looking. He had a kind of narcissism that we’ve seen in recent years in such an unfortunate way. He craved attention. He craved getting in with important people. He was a good friend of Jack Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy. But Katherine’s own brother told me they growing up with so much power and privilege, the dark side to their lives was not a source of shame, neither was it a source of pride.

Katherine Graham was from a very wealthy family that was connected to other illustrious families – I don’t know if Steven Bingham might have called them “our German Crowd” Jews since they were from France, not Germany, but they definitely had that level of social prominence. Tell me about what being half-Jewish might have meant to her.

Katherine Graham was married Philip Meyer, who married Katherine Graham. She was set up to not think highly of herself, to not do well in life. And parts of her story is that she was very involved in mothering. We’re talking about parents who were very absent.

A new play about Washington Post publisher Katherine Graham explores how she overcame her disasters, abusive marriage

Great Barrington – Robin Gerber’s new play The Shot explores the aftermath of the turbulent marriage of former Washington Post publisher Katherine Graham and her husband, Philip, who preceded her at the helm of the capital’s newspaper of record. Phil Graham, who elevated the newspaper to national political prominence, suffered from bipolar disorder and ultimately took his own life in the family’s vacation home, leaving Katherine to find his body. Katherine took over as publisher days after his body. Katherine took over as publisher days after his body was found.

Graham was a fantastically wealthy and influential Meyer family, among the prominent Jewish families originally from the Alsace region of France. Her grandfather was the American entrepreneur, publisher, and later chairman of the Federal Reserve, who purchased the then-bankrupt Washington Post in 1933. Katherine’s non-Jewish mother, Agnes, was a philanthropist, activist, and illustrious patron of the arts, and used the paper to advance her pet causes.

Katherine Graham was from a very wealthy family that was connected to an old German Jewish family, the friede family, and the Mertz family, which owned the Washington Post.

Katherine has just accepted an award. And in doing this, she says, ‘I’m not all about philanthropy. I’m thinking more about what happened before, before I took over the paper.’ And then it becomes a memory play explaining about Phil and their life. And parts of that life were wonderful. You see her become this happy housewife having children. But then the dark side starts gradually emerging, as she describes it, a descent into a tunnel that seems to have no end.

Was Phil a true S.O.B., the wrong man for her to marry, or was she a who had this terrible problem, bipolar disorder?

He was a highflier. He was editor of the law review at Harvard and clerked for Felix Frankfurter. He was brilliant. He was good looking. He had a kind of narcissism that we’ve seen in recent years in such an unfortunate way. He craved attention. He craved getting in with important people. He was a good friend of Jack Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy. But Katherine’s own brother told me they growing up with so much power and privilege, the dark side to their lives was not a source of shame, neither was it a source of pride.
and waited with a lot of other Afghans and their families. The date they were flown down was August 20. A lot of people were being evacuated by American forces there. For five or six hours we were there, sleeping and then being flown to the airport. But then in the night, we flew from Kabul to Qatar in a big American transport airplane. The next day, on August 21, we were flown to Philadelphia International Airport and were then transported to Fort Pickett, a Virginia Army National Guard installation near Manassas, Virginia.

We heard a lot of stories from our friends who came out early from the camp. They would tell me, ‘They took away all theSIMES they were in, there was no help from volunteers or from the company that took responsibility and sponsored them. In that time, I was also very despaired and very sad – if I go somewhere, I don’t know if we will be helped or not. By the day we arrived in the camp, we went to the IRC [International Rescue Committee] office and they said, ‘You have relatives or friends or whoever in the United States. If we had their address, they would take us to that place. I have two cousins, one of them in California, one of them in Washington State. I gave them their address and, after one month, I asked the IRC to help me. We were told then that there was no place for Afghan people in those places.

Then I told them, ‘Wherever you want to take me, take me. I have no problem. I can’t little speak English.’ So that was the reason they put me in Massachusetts. I was a kid and I was a lot. I heard the story from other friends from the other states and they told me people were not helping. I told a story like that, they say yeah, in Massachusetts we get a lot of help from volunteers and from Jewish Family Services there.

On January 5, we came out from there through a process that is called through Bradley Airport. There I saw Jan Kabel, Mr. Kabel, and the others – Rebecca [Honig] and a case worker there who worked to introduce themselves for me and I introduced myself. There were three cars. So we get inside the car with Rebecca, we came to Lee if it was foggy weather. We woke up and saw there’s a lot of snow on the ground.

The family stayed in Lee and then in Tyringham, and saw there’s a lot of snow on the ground. It was a foggy weather. We woke up and saw there’s a lot of snow on the ground.

The family stayed in Lee and then in Tyringham, and saw there’s a lot of snow on the ground. It was a foggy weather. We woke up and saw there’s a lot of snow on the ground.

The family stayed in Lee and then in Tyringham, and saw there’s a lot of snow on the ground. It was a foggy weather. We woke up and saw there’s a lot of snow on the ground.

As my parents planted for me before I was born, your example you set inspire others to create their own Jewish Legacy. May your name be a Blessing, and may the example you set inspire others to create their own Jewish Legacy.

YIDSTOCK: The Festival of New Yiddish Music Returns, in Person, to the Yiddish Book Center

YIDSTOCK – The Yiddish Book Center is proud to present the 10th anniversary of YIDSTOCK, The Festival of New Yiddish Music. Thursday, July 7, to Sunday, July 10 at the Center. The Klezmerats, Eleanor Reiss and Paul Shapiro’s Ribas & Brisket Revue will all be performing, in person, at the Center, which is located on the Hampshire College campus.

This year’s festival, curated by Seth Rogovoy, celebrates some greatest hits of the first decade of YIDSTOCK, featuring return appearances by many audience favorites, as well as new faces and new and reconfigured ensembles. Workshops, talks, films, and conversations with artists round out the schedule of events. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased online at yiddishbookcenter.org/yidstock, where a full schedule of workshops and performances is available.

“We are beyond excited to be bringing YIDSTOCK back live to the stage at the Yiddish Book Center,” said Lasa Newman, director of public programs and publishing at the Center. “It’s been two years since we have been able to host our annual four-day festival in person. This year’s 10th anniversary festival promises to be one for the books!”

“We are looking forward to bringing together once again,” said Seth Rogovoy, who serves as artistic director for the festival. “We all have so much catching up to do, including audiences and performers, and we look forward to the magic and surprises that can only happen at a live event.”

Performance Highlights

Making his YIDSTOCK debut. Cantor Yaakov “Yosher” Lemmer left Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban. He left his family in Afghanistan on July 7 at 8 p.m. With an ensemble led by Frank London from the Klezmatics, Lemmer brings fresh interpretations to traditional liturgical prayers and Hasidic nignim, as well as to some obscure Yiddish songs.

Clarinetist Michael Winograd brings his band, The Honorable Millions, to YIDSTOCK for the very first time on July 8 at 2 p.m. celebrating the launch of their newest album, Early Bird Special. Packed with the energy, political and poetic that listener can come to the festival to make a cultural and personal impact. We have come to expect from the Honorable Millions. Early Bird Special delivers the schmaltz-drenched, hard-hitting klezmer that your soul craves and gets you.

Also on July 8, Eleanor Reiss returns with a new sound and a new ensemble led by her former collaborator, trumpeter Frank London of the Klezmatics, as she continues to reinvent the art of storytelling through Yiddish cabaret.

On July 9 at 8 p.m., Paul Shapiro’s Ribas & Brisket Revue returns to perform its “Music of Mrs. Maesel” program. Shapiro and company celebrate the unique era when Jewish music was merging into the American mainstream, blending jazz, Yiddish swing, R&B, klezmer, and humor.

On July 10 at 7:30 p.m., The Klezmerats will once again bring down the curtain on YIDSTOCK. Visit YiddishBookCenter.org to learn more.

The Yiddish Book Center is at 1021 West Street, Amherst, MA.

Also On View:


In 1975, the young photographer Chuck Fishman traveled to Poland to photograph what he has described “was then a dwindling remnant of a previously vibrant Jewish community from the brink of extinction.” Returning several times between 1975 and 1983, Fishman’s images provide rare glimpses into Jewish life during a period when Jews in the West had little or no access to their Polish forebears in the post-Holocaust era. Believing his photographs would become more valuable if preserved before the final days of Jews in Poland, he could not have envisioned, thirty years later, the astonishing rebirth of a people that had inhabited its lands for 1,000 years. His return to Poland in 2013 chronicles a spiritual and cultural “return to identity” that Fishman says “would have been unthinkable before.” His latest work speaks “to themes of resilience and renewal, exploring and elucidating the myriad faces and facets of recovery and re-generation.

YIDSTOCK: The Festival of New Yiddish Music

Returns, in Person, to the Yiddish Book Center

On July 9 at 8 p.m., Paul Shapiro’s Ribas & Brisket Revue returns to perform its “Music of Mrs. Maesel” program. Shapiro and company celebrate the unique era when Jewish music was merging into the American mainstream, blending jazz, Yiddish swing, R&B, klezmer, and humor.

On July 10 at 7:30 p.m., The Klezmerats will once again bring down the curtain on YIDSTOCK. Visit YiddishBookCenter.org to learn more.

The Yiddish Book Center is at 1021 West Street, Amherst, MA.

Also On View:


As my parents planted for me before I was born, you are in my life for me. For your legacy, may you be a Blessing, and may the example you set inspire others to create their own Jewish Legacy.
SAVE THE DATE

Rick Recht

Live in concert with the Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collective

Monday, August 22
7 p.m.
Knesset Israel
16 Colt Road, Pittsfield

General Admission: $20, Young adults under 30: $15
Kids 18 and under: Free, but ticket reservation is required.

Proceeds to benefit the ADL’s A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Anti-Bias Peer Training Program in Berkshire County middle and high schools.

Purchase tickets at jewishberkshires.org
Knesset Israel Presents

BERKSHIRE JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL
~ 36 YEARS ~

Mondays ~ July 11 through August 15, 2022
Matinee - 4:00pm  ~  Evening 8:00pm

VISIT: www.berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org
for complete schedule, film trailers, live talkbacks and online box office

Supported in part by Berkshire Bank Foundation, Harold Grinspoon Foundation, Jessie & Bernard Wolfson Family Foundation, MountaintOne, John Bergman Charitable Trust, Spitz-Tuchman Charitable Trust and Greylock Federal Credit Union

BARRINGTON STAGE COMPANY
AWARD-WINNING THEATRE
IN DOWNTOWN PITTSFIELD
2022 SEASON
JULIANNE BOYD
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

BOYD-QUINSON STAGE

AIN’T MISBEHAVIN’
THE FATS WALLER MUSICAL SHOW
Conceived by RICHARD MALTBY, JR. and MURRAY HORWITZ
Choreographed & Directed by JEFFREY L. PAGE
JUNE 16–JULY 9

ANNA IN THE TROPICS
By NILO CRUZ
Directed by ELENA ARAOZ
JULY 16–30

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC
Music & Lyrics by STEPHEN SONDHEIM
Book by HUGH WHEELER
Orchestrations by JONATHAN TUNICK
Musical Direction by DARREN R. COHEN
Choreographed by ROBERT LA FOSSE
Directed by JULIANNE BOYD
AUGUST 6–28

WORLD PREMIERE PLAY
ALL OF ME
By LAURA WINTERS
Directed by ASHLEY BROOKE MONROE
SEPTEMBER 21–OCTOBER 9

ST. GERMAIN STAGE

AT THE SYDELL AND LEE BLATT PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

WORLD PREMIERE PLAY
ANDY WARHOL IN IRAN
By BRENT ASKARI
Directed by SKY GREER
JUNE 2–25

WORLD PREMIERE PLAY
ABCD
By MAY FREIHERT-ALL
Directed by DANIEL E. BRANT
JULY 2–23

TARTELL FAMILY OUTDOOR STAGE

2ND ANNUAL
CELEBRATION OF BLACK VOICES
AUGUST 11–14

BARRINGTONSTAGECO.ORG | 413.236.8888
This year, the Berkshire Jewish Film Festival marks its 36th season.

Over the years, the BJFF has shown hundreds of films to thousands of people. The BJFF continues as a virtual festival this year, showing films online on Monday nights.

The six weeks of programming showcases 11 feature films—plus five shorts that will be screened on August 8. Information about tickets, season passes, and Zoom talkbacks are on the festival website: berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org.

July 11
4 p.m. Song Seurher – Documentary
Travelling throughout Ukraine, Moebye Beregovsky, a musician and scholar; recorded and studied the traditional music of Ukrainian Jewry during the most dramatic years of Soviet history. Beginning in the 1920s, he succeeded in saving the musical heritage of the centuries-old Yiddish civilization.

8 p.m. Rose – Drama
At age seventy-eight, Rose, an Orthodox Jewish woman, redeline herself as an independent woman after losing her devoted and loving husband, upsetting the balance of her family.

July 18
4 p.m. The Adventures of Saul Bellow – Documentary
The documentary traces Saul Bellow’s rise to eminence and examines his many identities: reluctant public intellectual, serial husband, father, Chicaggoan, Jew, and American. Interviews with the novelist’s family and friends shed light on Bellow’s personality and the way he turned life into art.

8 p.m. The Automat – Documentary
Once upon a nickel, before fast food, one American restaurant empire was unstoppable. Experience the untold story of the Automat in a documentary starring Mel Brooks, Elliott Gould, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Colin Powell, and other notables.

July 25
4 p.m. Ronnie’s – Documentary
Explore the life of saxophonist Ronnie Scott, from a poor Jewish kid in the East End of London to the owner of Ronnie’s, his world famous jazz club.

8 p.m. More Than I Deserve – Drama
Newly arrived in Israel, a single immigrant mother and son from Ukraine are deeply affected by their relationship with a religious neighbor in this finely textured coming-of-age drama. Nominated for seven Israeli Academy Awards, the film reflects emotional depth in its nuanced portrayal of the plight of immigrants to Israel.

August 1
4 p.m. The Last Film of Hareven – Documentary
Film director John Ford, head of the OSS Field Photographic Branch, assigned brothers Budd and Stuart Schulberg the mission of tracking down and assembling archival footage and photographs of the crimes of the Nazi regime to be used as evidence against the 24 leading Nazis scheduled to stand trial in Nuremberg. The film takes an inside look at this mission and asks questions about collective memory and the process of writing history.

8 p.m. Here We Are – Drama
Aharon has devoted his life to raising his autistic son Uri. They live together in a gentle routine away from the real world. But now, as a young adult, it’s time for Uri to live in a specialized home. While on their way there, Aharon decides to run away with his son, believing that Uri is not ready for this separation.

August 8
4 p.m. – 5 Short Films
Becoming Nakuset – As a small child, Nakuset was taken from her home in Thompson, Manitoba, and adopted into a Jewish family in Montreal. The film tells the story of how Nakuset reclaimed her Indigenous identity with help from her Bubbe and became a powerful advocate for her people.

Pops – Before his death, a Jewish father requests that when he dies, his ashes be sent to space. After his death, his grown children disagree about whether to follow their father’s wishes. Should be given a traditional Jewish burial or be sent to space?

In the Image of God – Rabbi Levi was born intersexual, and like his grandmother and great-grandmother who were also born intersexual, the female gender was imposed on him. The director states that “Levi’s story challenges not only our certainties about gender but also the way the political debate is framed: tradition versus progressivism, religion versus individual freedom, old generations versus the new ones.”

Pops

Cinema Sabaya

Festival Favorites

Pam Wax says Let It Be Morning is “nuanced, poignant, disturbing, redemptive. Essential for those of us who care about Israel to see—and to discuss. I don’t think seeing it is enough.” Pam also found the short film, The Inspection, “relevant and timely considering the ‘Maus’ banning, cancel culture, trigger warnings, parental consent issues around content, ‘practically essential for those of us who care about Israel today.’”

Jan Zimblin says The Automat “taps into many aspects of what America is to be.” Watching the film was like being in a time-tripping experience. Now all that survives of the Automat are the wonderful stories your grandfather told you, or the hazy memories of being taken to the palace-type restaurant with your parents. Maybe you are lucky enough to remember your own adventure of putting a nickel in the slot and getting a really good cup of coffee.”

Mel Brooks in The Automat