

HAKOL

“THE VOICE”

The Temple Newsletter

TEMPLE B'NAI SHALOM

41 STORRS AVENUE, BRAINTREE, MA

www.tbsbraintree.com

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 2019
IYAR, SIVAN, TAMMUZ, AV 5779
SUMMER, 2019

Shabbat Services, Saturday at 9:15 AM

*Rabbi Ma'ayan Sands, Cantor Seth Grossman; President Dr. Peter Kurzberg;
Bulletin Editor Judy Karll*

TEMPLE B'NAI SHALOM

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

Sunday, June 2

11 AM



JUNE, 2019 IYAR-SIVAN 5779 *Candle lighting FOR HOLIDAYS AND SHABBAT


Mishkan (The Tabernacle) And the Lord spoke to Moses saying: "On the first day of the first month, you shall set up the mishkan of the tent of meeting. And you shall place there the ark of testimony and you shall screen the ark with the parocheth."

Shemot/Exodus 40:1 - 3

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|---|--|------------------|---|---|
| | | | | | | 27 Iyar 1 BECHUKOTAI OMER 43 |
| 2 OMER 44 TBS 60TH CELEBRATION BRUNCH | 3 OMER 45 | 1 Sivan 4 Rosh Chodesh Sivan OMER 46 | 5 OMER 47 | 6 OMER 48 | 7 OMER 49 *8:01 PM | 8 BEMIDBAR EREV FEAST OF SHAVOUT |
| 9 1ST Day of Shavout | 10 2nd Day of Shavout Magilat of Ruth Read YIZKOR | 11 | 12 TBS BOARD MEETING | 13 | 14  *8:04 PM | 15 NASSO |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 SUMMER BEGINS  *8:07 PM | 22 BEHA'ALOTECHA |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 *8:07 PM | 29 SHELACH |
| 30 | | | | | | |

JULY, 2019 SIVAN, TAMMUZ, 5779 *Holiday & Shabbat candle lighting

Ner Tamid (Eternal Flame) And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually. In the tent of meeting, without the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall set it in order, to burn from evening to morning before he Lord, it shall be a statue forever throughout their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel. *Shemot/Exodus 27:20-21*

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|------------|---------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------|---|
| | 28 SIVAN 1 | 2 | 3 ROSH CHODESH TAMUZ | 4 th of  JULY | 2 TAMUZ 5 *8:06 PM | 6 KORACH |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 *8:03 PM | 13 CHUKAT |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 *7:59 PM | 20 BALAK Rabbi Sands AIMEE CAPLAN BAT MITAVAH |
| 21 TBS BOARD MEETING AT KURZBERG'S HOME | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 *7:52 PM | 27 PINECHAS |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

AUGUST, 2019 TAMUZ, AV, 5779 *Shabbat candle lighting

MITZVOT (THE 613 COMMANDMENTS) Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying: "Silence! Hear O Israel! Today you have become the people of the Lord and your G-d: Heed the Lord your G-d and observe His commandments and His laws which I enjoin upon you this day." Devarim/Deuteronomy 27:9-10

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---------------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|------------|------------------------------------|--|
| | | | | 29 Tamuz 1 | 1 AV 2 Rosh Chodesh *7:45 PM | 3 MATOT- MASSEI |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 *7:36 PM | 10 DEVARIM Shabbat Chazon Erev Tisha B'Av FAST begins 7:53 PM |
| 11 TISHA B'AV FAST ENDS 8:22 PM | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 *7:26 PM | 17 VAETCHANAN Shabbat Nachamu |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 *7:15 PM | 24 EKEV BIRKAT HACHODESH |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 *7:04 PM | 31 RE'EH ROSH CHODESH ELUL |

DONATION PAGE

DONOR NAME _____ Card to: _____

Street _____ Street _____

City _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ State _____ Zip _____

INSCRIBED BOOK PLATES: () High Holiday Mahzor \$ 20.00

ENGRAVED PLAQUES: () Tree of Life \$ 72.00

() Yahrzeit \$200.00

() Memorial Plaque \$200.00

Wording for High Holiday Mahzor Book Plate:

In Memory of _____ By _____

In Honor of _____ By _____

Other _____

Wording for Tree of Life Leaf:

In Honor of _____ By _____

Other _____

Wording for Yahrzeit Plaques:

Name of Deceased _____

Hebrew Name _____ Ben (son of) _____

Bat (daughter of) _____

Date of Death _____ Time of day _____

Memorial Plaque (non-Jewish)

Name of Deceased _____

Date of Birth _____ Date of Death _____

Rabbi Greenberg Scholarship: Donation amount \$ _____

Hebrew School: Donation amount \$ _____

Kiddush: Donation \$75 – basic Kiddush

Check payable to: Temple B'nai Shalom Mail to: 41 Storrs Ave, Braintree, MA 02184 ATTN: MARYLOU



Message from Rabbi Ma'ayan Sands

Numbers play an important role in Jewish ritual practices and are believed by some to be a means for understanding the divine. Do you remember the Passover song: *א-הוה מי יודע*-Who knows (the meaning of the number) one? One is God; two are the tablets; three are the patriarchs, four are the matriarchs, five are the books of the Torah, all the way through the number 13, which are the attributes of God. You may also be familiar with Gematria, a numerological system by which Hebrew letters correspond to numbers; א has the numerical value of 1; ב has the value of 2 and so forth. Gematria is a system, developed by practitioners of Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism). It became a tool for interpreting biblical texts. It is also present in the everyday lives of some of us. For example, when I give tzedakah, I frequently give a multiple of the number 18. Why? Because the Hebrew word for “life”, *חַי-חַי*, contains two letters: ח chet, (whose numerical value is 8) and י yud, (whose value is 10); adding up to 18! Numbers are apparent in our everyday speech more than we may be aware. On the occasion of a birthday or an anniversary, for example, we may hear the customary Yiddish blessing “May you live to 120” (I can’t write the Yiddish) or in Hebrew- *עד מאה ועשרים* (ad mayah v’esrim) until 120! The most often cited source for this is Genesis 6:3: "And the LORD said: 'My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for that he also is flesh. Therefore, shall his days be a hundred and twenty years.'" Also, tradition tells us that Moshe lived to be 120 years old.

Did you know that In Hebrew the days of the week are called by an ordinal number? Sunday is yom Rishone, the first day; Monday, yom sheini, the second day; Wednesday, the third day and so forth. As you know the day following the 6th day (of creation) has no numerical name. It is simply called “Shabbat.” These days many of us are participating in the traditional Jewish countdown of 49 days, seven weeks, from Passover (the time of our liberation) to Shavuot (the time of receiving Torah. **We call it counting the Omer**, the offering of newly grown barley brought to the Temple in Biblical times. We count each evening, reminding ourselves that time will pass, Shavuot will arrive, but if we are not prepared to receive Torah and let it guide our lives, the observance will be insignificant for us. Several years ago, on the day before Shavuot I got a text: “Are you ready to receive Torah?” It went to a large group of people. There was no signature. While pondering the message, it occurred to me that in the Jewish world, time is marked and often blessed. The kiddush on Shabbat and holidays, contrary to popular belief, is not a blessing over wine but a celebration and honoring of time. Each month we mark, bless and celebrate the passage of time which has brought us into a new month. Our calendar includes designated times to prepare ourselves for upcoming holy days. The high holy days are another example. We cannot affect teshuva (repentance) and transform into better versions of ourselves, just because the calendar says it is the day to do that. The month before Rosh Hashana, Elul, is set aside for us to introspect, to ask each other for forgiveness and prepare in many other ways to affect desired change. When we follow the Jewish calendar, time does not pass without meaning and intentionality. It has been 60 years since the inception of our beloved congregation. What an extraordinary accomplishment. I know it has always been a group effort; that in itself is a blessing. You are half-way to 120. Mazal tov and may it be so!

We will see each other briefly in July when we come together to celebrate Aimee Caplan’s becoming a Bat Mitzvah. Otherwise, I look forward to seeing and being with you all for the High Holy Days. I wish you all a relaxing, peaceful and refreshing summer; a few more days of weather like yesterday would be wonderful. With the upcoming 5780 High holidays (not too soon; don’t worry) we will complete our first year as “we”; me as your rabbi and you as my congregation! I look forward to beginning my second year as part of the TBS family.



*Message from the Temple
President, Peter Kurzberg*

Shalom

From your President...

Shalom,

I hope everyone is well as we have almost completed another year. On Sunday, April 28 we held our congregational meeting in which officers and directors were elected for the 2019-2020 year. Thanks to the Men's Club for a wonderful breakfast. Dan Rabatsky served up a special dish of home fries that were a big hit at the breakfast. You can find the listing of new board members in this bulletin. We also had a discussion on the handicap accessible bathroom being proposed along with questions and answers. To date we have raised \$2,426. Please consider making a donation for this cause. The board will move forward with the bathroom once we reach the \$10,000 mark. Following the congregational meeting, Rabbi Sands held a question and answer session that was very well received by all in attendance.

On June 2, we will be celebrating our 60th Anniversary as a temple in Braintree. Thanks to the following who have worked hard to make this event a success; Marylou Fishman, Janice Fine, Audrey Mallock, Judy Karll, Sandie Baler-Segal, Liz Bloom, Karen Kurzberg, Rick Sands.

I would like to express sincere appreciation to those individuals who served as officers and directors of the temple this past year as well as the committee chairs who have played an integral part in so many of the activities and events held. Thanks go to the following board members: Michael Caplan, Marylou Fishman, Janice Fine, Meryl Smith, Paula Goldman, Sandie Baler-Segal, Cheryl Berman, Solomon Borocov, Richard Salloway, Jo Salloway, Steve Karll, Judy Karll, Gail Lerner, Barry Rabinovitz, Audrey Mallock, Liz Bloom and Paul Rubin. Thanks also to David Flaherty for all the odds and ends he continues to do for us at the temple

and for his work with the Men's Club. Finally, our Religious School continues to thrive under the leadership of Solomon Borocov and Cantor Seth Grossman. Thank you, Solomon and Seth.

A special thank you, again, to our Sisterhood volunteers who prepare the Kiddush for us every Shabbat and for our Men's Club volunteers who prepare breakfast for our special events throughout the year. Your efforts are sincerely appreciated and critical to the success of our congregation. Thank you!

This year was another active year for our temple. We continue to be fortunate to have so many of our congregants participating in various activities; whether it be Shabbat services, social functions, helping with rummage, Hebrew school or visiting our web-site. If you have not visited our web-site recently, go to www.tbsbraintree.com. I think you will be pleasantly surprised. It has updates throughout the year. Special thanks to Gail Lerner for continuing to spearhead this project and to Evelyn Schichner for hosting our web-site.

In closing, I look forward to serving as your president for the upcoming year. I hope you will take advantage of the opportunity to become more involved with your shul. You can do so in many ways without a great deal of effort. If you have not attended any or many functions at the temple this past year, consider participating more this coming year. Consider coming to temple a few more times during the year beyond the High Holidays. **Do you have a *yahrzeit* coming up or a special occasion that you would like to acknowledge? Sponsor a Kiddush and come to temple. It can be a wonderful way to bring family together to honor the special day!** If you can spare even an hour or so in the kitchen on a Shabbat morning, we can use you. Contact Paula Goldman at paulag@beld.net for more information.

Wishing you all the very best in the summer months ahead.

Peter

Dates to Calendar

Sun June 2, 2019 TBS 60th Celebration

Mon June 10 - Yizkor

2019- 5779
JEWISH HOLIDAYS
HOLIDAY DATES

***Yizkor**

Shavuot June 9-10*
Tish'a B'Av August 11

Temple B'Nai Shalom Board
2019-2020

Pres. Dr. Peter Kurzberg pkurz@beld.net
1st VP Stephen Karll Stephen.karll@verizon.net
2nd VP Michael Caplan gardenlover5@verizon.net
Fin Sec Janice Fine jan@janfine.com
Treas. Paula Goldman paulag@beld.net
Rec Sec. Meryl Smith meryljoys@aol.com
Cor Sec Liz Bloom bobliz@beld.net
Pt Pres Marylou Fishman maryloufishman@comcast.net

One Year Directors

Sandie Baler-Segal sandiebs@verizon.net
Audrey Mallock audrabm@gmail.com
Barry Rabinovitz Barry@classichomesre.com
Josephine Salloway jsalloway@aol.com

Two Year Directors

Cheryl Berman nedcheryl@comcast.net
Gail Lerner gblerner@beld.net
Judy Karll sjkarll@yahoo.com
Richard Salloway rbsalloway@aol.com

Representatives

Sisterhood: Board Representatives
Men's Club Paul Rubin
parsbr@verizon.net
Hebrew School Solomon Borocov
Sol007@yahoo.com
Religious Committee: Michael Caplan
Gardenlovers5@verizon.net

Temple B'Nai Shalom
regrets to announce the passing of
Rabbi Ephraim Greenberg z"l

We remember the years he serviced as our
religious leader
May his memory be for a blessing

Temple B'Nai Shalom
regrets to announce the passing of
Robert DeGreco

Brother of Kathy and Barry Belt
Uncle of Kelly Belt Scibelli
May his memory be for a blessing

Temple B'Nai Shalom
Wishes to extend a Mazel Tov

To

Dr. Philip Nedelman

Being honored by Saint Francis of Assisi School
of Braintree for his commitment to community,
healing, faith and services.

Temple B'Nai Shalom
Wishes to extend a Mazel Tov

On the Occasions of Rabbi Ma'ayan's
Father-in-law's 90th Birthday

Temple B'Nai Shalom
Wishes to extend a Mazel Tov

To

Katie and Sydnie Rabatsky
Dan & Robyn Rabatsky

In honor of the girls B'nei Mitzvahs

**DONATIONS
TO
TEMPLE B'NAI SHALOM**

IN MEMORY OF

In memory of
ALFRED BAUM z"l

by
Bob & Liz Bloom
Janice Fine
Paula Goldman
Peter & Karen Kurzberg

In memory of
ROBERT DELGRECO z"l

by
Irving & Wayne Adler
Bob & Liz Bloom
Janice Fine
Paula Goldman
Arthur & Susan Kaplan
Peter & Karen Kurzberg
Elaine Swalnick
Milton & Arlene Wolk

In memory of
RABBI EPHRIM GREENBERG

by
Sheldon Segal & Sandie Baler-Segal
He married them in 1986
Bob & Liz Bloom

In memory of
NANCY ROBERTS z"l
Irving & Wayne Adler
Peter & Karen Kurzberg
Sheldon Segal & Sandie Baler-Segal
Steve & Laney Silva

In memory of
JAMES SAVAS z"l
by
Peter & Karen Kurzberg

In memory of
MARILYN STILLER
by
Steve & Laney Silva

**IN HONOR OF
THE INSTALLATION OF RABBI SANDS**

Bob & Liz Bloom
Stan & Leslie Godoff
Louis & Patti Grossman
Tom Grossman
Edward & Eugenia Kaplan
Bryan & Rachel Koplow
Harold & Jamie Kotler
Peter & Karen Kurzberg
Joshua & Jamie Narva
Sara Narva
Kenneth & Linda Polivy
Barbara Ross
Sheldon Segal & Sandie Baler-Segal
Mona Strick
Mitchell & Barbara Wand

IN HONOR OF

In honor of the B'nei Mitzvah
Of their daughters
Katie & Sydnie Rabatsky
by
Dan & Robyn Rabatsky

GENERAL FUND DONATION

Robert Murray

Yahrzeit Donations

In memory of
SEYMOUR BARON z"l
by
Lynne Baron

In memory of
JONATHAN LAZARUS z"l
by
Peter & Karen Kurzberg

Kiddush Sponsors

Michael & Alba Caplan
In honor of
Aimee's birthday

Janice Fine
In memory of her father,
George Shuman z"l

Leah Guinta
In memory of her mother,
Dorothy Klingenstein z"l

Enid Lubarsky
In memory of her mother,
Vitey Lubarsky z"l

Richard Sands
In honor
Of his wife
Rabbi Ma'yan Sands'
Installation

SALE of CHAMETZ
Alyse Baker-Boncald
Peter & Karen Kurzberg
Richard & Josephine Salloway

MITZVAH DAY
Was sponsored
By
Judy Karll
In memory of
Her brother, Bruce's yahrzeit

PURIM
Was sponsored by
Steve & Judy Karll

YOM HA"ATZMAUT
THE FORE RIVER BRIDGE SHINES BLUE



If you are made aware of a Temple Member's Life Cycle situation: births; special anniversary; engagement; presented with a special award; graduation; retirement or family loss
Please contact Liz Bloom, TBS Corresponding Secretary at BobLiz@beld.ne

Yahrzeit Notices

As a Member of the Temple, you can be notified of a family member's yahrzeit & the remembrance will also be mentioned at the Shabbat Service prior to the Hebrew anniversary. Please send the following information: Name of Deceased, date of passing as well as the time if known to: Meryl Smith meryljoys@aol.com

SISTERHOOD DONOR

Honored at the Donor were 4 founding women of Temple B'Nai Shalom and Sisterhood

Wayne Adler

Florence Koffman

Nancy Littman

Nancy Resnick

A copy of Etz Chaim was purchased and will be given to the Temple with a bookplate inscription.

SPONSOR a KIDDUSH



Remember with TBS: a graduation, wedding, anniversary, birthday, Mitzvah, anniversary, Yahrzeit or something special to you and your family.

\$75 for a basic Kiddush or embellished for an additional fee. To sponsor a Shabbat Kiddush contact either:

Janice @ 508-230-5074 jan@janfine.com OR
Marylou @ 617-921-0368
maryloufishman@comcast.com.



REMEMBER TO BRING NON-PERISHABLE
FOODS

TO TEMPLE EACH TIME YOU COME

They are distributed to the Food Pantry at

The Marge Crispin Center

SUPPORT THE TEMPLE

BUY SCRIP

As an ongoing fund raiser, The Temple sells Stop & Shop and Roche Bros. gift cards in \$25, \$50 and \$100 denominations.

Sellers include: Nancy Resnick and Janice Fine. Arrangements can be made for home delivery by contacting one of the sellers or
Marylou @ 617-921-0368

TBS

CELEBRATES

60th JUBILEE CELEBRATION

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 2ND for BRUNCH

CELEBRATE THE TEMPLE'S

MILESTONE WITH CONGREGANTS

& FRIENDS OF TBS



visit bjff.org

To see the upcoming movies in the area.

There are Films shown year-round.



CONTINUE TO BRING YOUR CANCELLED POSTAGE STAMPS AND LEAVE IN THE TEMPLE CONTAINER IN THE LOBBY – TO ASSIST THE DISABLED VETERANS' PROGRAM



**JEWISH
NATIONAL
FUND**

Your Voice in Israel

If you would like to purchase a JNF Tree thru

Hadassah, Contact Carol Savas

781-344-9377 carolsavas@yahoo.com



THE RABBI EPHRAIM GREENBERG SCHOLARSHIP

The fund was started by a contribution of \$5,000 from Daniel & Nancy Kovnat in the 1980's. The fund has been invested in an appropriate account. The interest is awarded to help defray costs for a Jewish experience such as Camp Ramah or a trip to Israel. The maximum awarded is up to \$1,000. The President of the Temple appoints a committee of three people to review the applications. The recipient must be related to a Temple member. The scholarship awardee is invited to present a report (written or verbal) at a Shabbat or Holiday. This fund is maintained by donations specifically identified for The Rabbi Greenberg Scholarship.

JUDAICA ITEMS

Check out the Judaica items on the
Hadassah Re-Sale Shop Table
At the Temple



For additional information contact
Marylou Fishman
Maryloufishman@comcast.net
617-921-0368

[DO YOU OR ANY OF YOUR FAMILY](#)

[SHOP ON](#)

[AMAZON.COM](#)

Thanks to congregants who shop on
AMAZON.COM, Temple B'nai Shalom
receives a check for a percentage of their
sales each month from Amazon.

Next time you have something to order:

Go to The Temple's Website:
www.tbsbraintree.com

Click on: **GIVING**

Click on: **SHOPPING OPPORTUNITIES**

AS SEEN IN MANHATTAN
On Madison Ave, NYC
in April



At an Andy Warhol exhibit entitle
"Warhol Women"



On the front of St James Church
on Madison Ave, NY

If you see something you'd like to share plz
send to sjkarll@yahoo.com

Dear Temple B'Nai Shalom Family,

Many of you know about our project in Poland. We have over the years continued to work with the government, people and children of Nowy Dwor. Now the schools in the entire County of Mazowiecki are participating in our tolerance essay competition. It has grown incredibly. Coupled with that, the City of Geder Israel as they have for 5 years now, continues to send about 125 kids a year to Nowy Dwor where they meet with their counterparts for 2-3 days to discuss tolerance and just get to know each other.

Of all our efforts, I consider the involvement of the young as our most important mission and accomplishment. In this angry and divisive world of ours only the children can lead us out.

We continued to look for more Matzevot with no success. In 2017 we even acquired ground-piercing radar to help but found nothing. Then, again by accident (or Bashert) as had happened initially, more Matzevot were dug up last October during utility work in a street near the cemetery. We have retrieved more than two dozen mostly intact stones as well as many small pieces. As the current wall is full, we have embarked on an expansion to secure these new stones as well as a bed for the remaining shards and pieces.

Obviously funding is an issue. We have tried crowd funding and have reached out on both our website, www.nowydworjewishmemorial.org, our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/NowyDwor> and whatever other social media resources we have.

We are trying to raise \$50,000 but have a way to go. We have been to various foundations (Taube,

Rothschild, Spielberg) over the years with no success. There are just too many worthy causes out there.

We will be in Nowy Dwor the week of June 3rd to the 8th. The new wall dedication and awards program for the essay contest winning students is scheduled for June 6th.

This is a plain and simple ask both for support and to spread the word. I am after all in sales and this is the most important sale of my life. Just click on www.nowydworjewishmemorial.org to donate or, if you prefer, send a check made out to the charity to my address below.

David Wluka, 64 Massapoag Ave, Sharon MA 02067

TISHA B'AV SERVICE

The synagogue services on Tisha B'av are most unusual. The room where the evening service is held often has its lights dimmed, and candles are lit. The prayers are spoken rather than chanted with melody. The reading of the Book of Lamentations is chanted using special musical notations that create a tone of weeping and mourning. Knowledgeable congregants often take turns reading different sections of the book. During the service there may be a discussion related to the themes of tragedy and destruction, often led by the rabbi.

The morning service the next day is also unique. The tallit (prayer shawl) and tefillin (phylacteries) are not worn, as a sign of mourning. Special prayers of mourning, called kinot, are read during this service. There is a reading from the Torah (Deuteronomy 4:25-40) whose theme is the punishment of Israel for its sins, and opportunity and hope for redemption.

In the haftarah [reading from the Prophets] of the morning (which is chanted in the same mournful melody as Eicha), Jeremiah speaks of the despair of the Israelites, describing Jerusalem as a total wasteland.

During the afternoon Mincha service, the mood of Tisha B'av becomes more hopeful. Tallit and tefillin are worn at this service. Both the Torah reading and the haftarah reading of this service are the same as on all other public fasts, describing the Thirteen Attributes of God and the promise of salvation. Special prayers of comfort (Nachemta) are also a feature of this service.

The evening service marks the official end of the fast.

LOST WORLD OF YIDDISH THEATER

In the 1920s, New York was home to 11 Yiddish theatres. Chicago boasted four Yiddish playhouses. There were three in Philadelphia and one each in St. Louis, Los Angeles, Newark, Detroit, Baltimore, Boston and Cleveland.

Yiddish theatre gave voice to the hopes, longings, talents and gifts of Yiddish-speaking Jews. Many of the great innovations in music and drama we enjoy today were made possible because of the genius of Yiddish theatre. Far from being a novelty, Yiddish theatre was a fundamental part of many of the cities Jews call home today.

First Yiddish Theatres

Yiddish performers began to put on formal shows in the early 1800s in Eastern Europe. A Yiddish theatre existed in Warsaw in the 1830s, entertaining locals with Yiddish-language dramas and performances. Another center of Yiddish performance was the Ukrainian town of Brody where a collection of Yiddish poets, singers, dramatists and *badchans* (comedians who perform at Jewish weddings) began performing concerts and simple plays in various venues. Some members of the “Broder Singers”, as the group was known, would travel as far as Germany to entertain audiences in impromptu gatherings at markets and other venues.

Avrom Goldfaden (1840-1908), one of the Broder Singers, is generally credited with being the “father of Yiddish theatre”. Born in Ukraine, Goldfaden was an immensely talented writer and musician who travelled widely and soaked up the musical culture of mid-19th century Europe, becoming proficient in popular music, classical, opera, and various theatre traditions. When he was 26, Goldfaden moved to the city of Iasi in Romania, and organized what many historians call the very first formal Yiddish theatre company. He hired people who were usually overlooked, giving jobs to *meshoyrerim* (boys who sang in synagogues) and women, and producing original new plays. His early play *Shmendrik*, about a foolish yeshiva student, became a classic.

Goldfaden also wrote many Yiddish operas and his songs, like the haunting song *Rozhinkes mit Mandlen* (Raisins and Almonds), became classics that are still listened to today. He worked in Russia until anti-Semitic edicts closed many Yiddish theatres, then worked in Warsaw, Lemberg, and New York City. He served as a delegate to the World Zionist Congress in Paris in 1900, then returned to New York City where he died in 1908. Over 100,000 people came out to pay their respects and attend his funeral.

New York’s Thriving Yiddish Theatre Scene

Jewish immigrants brought Yiddish theatre to New York, where they developed a distinct theatrical style. One



critic, observing the flamboyant style of acting, compared Yiddish theatre to Italian opera without the singing.

One critic, observing the flamboyant style of acting, compared Yiddish theatre to Italian opera without the singing.

Classics from Shakespeare and cutting edge playwrights such as Ibsen and Strindberg were translated into Yiddish, and a burgeoning cadre of talented Yiddish playwrights wrote dramas and musicals for a devoted and highly enthusiastic fan base. Each week thousands of Jewish theatre-goers paid between 25 cents and a dollar to be transported in their mind’s eye by the Yiddish plays and shows that filled the Lower East Side. By 1918, there were 20 Yiddish language theatres in New York, though that number fell somewhat in the 1920s and more and more people started going to movies instead of live plays. Some of these theatres were massive. The People’s Theatre on the Bowery near Delancey contained seats for 2,500 people, and was often packed.

The non-Jewish journalist Hutchins Hapgood attended some of the Yiddish plays in New York and vividly described their wide appeal: “The Jews of all the ghetto classes – the sweatshop woman with her baby, the day laborer, the small Hester Street shopkeeper, the Russian Jewish anarchist and socialist, the ghetto Rabbi and scholar, the poet, the journalist. The poor and ignorant are in the great majority, but the learned, the intellectual, and the progressive are also represented.”

American Tastes

European playwrights sometimes found they had to alter their writing to suit the tastes of impoverished immigrants. Back home in Europe, Yiddish theatre productions were often intellectually ambitious, avant garde performances. The Warsaw Yung-teater, for instance, was an experimental Yiddish theater that pushed the bounds of modern performance. They staged a production of the Yiddish play *Boston*, by Polish Jewish playwright Bernhard Blume, which consisted of 44 short scenes staged all around the theatre that explored the infamous American Sacco and Vanzetti murder trial.



Sholem Aleichem

In New York and other immigrant destinations, viewers often wanted something simpler. The great writer and playwright Sholem Aleichem (on whose short stories the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* is based) recorded his frustration when he moved to New York and started writing for American audiences. "I send you the fifth act of *Stempenyu*," he wrote to his agent, referring to a story he was adapting for the Yiddish stage. "A Jewish heroine seldom poisons herself on account of love," the author wrote, but that was the sort of melodrama American Jews demanded, so that's what he wrote into his new play.

Many Yiddish plays dealt with the immigrant experience. The comedy *The Next Door Neighbors* by Leon Kobrin is about a couple who immigrated to America separately and now find themselves estranged. The Yiddish author Samson Raphaelson adapted his short story *Yom Kippur* for the stage in 1925. Renamed *The Jazz Singer*, it was about a religiously observant Jewish immigrant whose son and grandson rebel against Jewish tradition. (*The Jazz Singer* was made into the first "talkie", or movie with sound, in 1927.)

Audience Participation

So great was the devotion of Yiddish theatre-goers that even when non-Jewish, mainstream theatres were forced to close, Yiddish theatres seldom did. In her memoirs, the great Yiddish actress Molly Picon recalls that she met her husband Yankel Kalich on a night when Yiddish theatres refused to shut. It's an anecdote seemingly straight out of a Yiddish drama. A Philadelphia native, Ms. Picon had just arrived in Boston with the vaudeville group she was working with, when a massive influenza hit the city.



Molly Picon

"The flu closed all the English theatres," she recalls, and she found herself out of work. She had not money to get back to Philadelphia, so Ms. Picon stopped by a Yiddish theatre company that was still rehearsing. "The people who closed down the English theatres completely forgot about the Yiddish ones," Ms. Picon recalls. Yankel Kalich was an actor at the theatre and he proposed to Ms. Picon that night – and every night after that for a week, until Ms. Picon accepted.

Audiences often ate and drank while watching and commented loudly on the performance. Booing and hissing as well as wild applause was the norm. When characters faced difficult decisions, it was common for audience members to call out advice. During one performance of a Yiddish adaptation of *King Lear*, a patron ran through the theater shouting "To hell with your stingy daughter, Yankl! She has a stone, not a heart. Spit on her, Yankl, and come home with me. My *yidene* (Jewish wife) will feed you! Come Yankl, may she choke, that rotten daughter of yours."

Global Reach

In the years before World War II, Yiddish theatres flourished around the world. Sydney, Australia was home to the great Yiddish theatre *Di Yiddishe Bineh*, renamed the David Herman Theatre in the 1950s. Two stars of Yiddish theater, Lithuanian born Jacob Weislitz and Galician-born Rachel Holtzer, were conducting global tours of Yiddish theatres and found themselves in Australia at the outbreak of the war. Forced to stay in the country, they transformed Yiddish theatre in Australia, raising it to high standard and crating daring plays. In 1930, Rachel Holzer became the first woman to direct a Yiddish play in the country. She chose *Froy Advokat* ("Madam Lawyer"), a comedy by the non-Jewish French playwright Louis Verneuil about women having careers.



A Yiddish play being performed at the Moscow State Yiddish Theater

Yiddish theatre continued to flourish in Europe as well. The most prestigious was the *Moskovskii Gosudarstvennyi Evreiskii Teatr*, or Moscow State Yiddish Theater, called GOSET for short. Supported by the ruling Communist authorities, GOSET put on ambitious, lavish plays and spent summers touring in Ukraine and Belorussia. During World War II, it was evacuated to Tashkent, where the theatre continued putting on Yiddish plays, often with a patriotic, anti-Nazi message. (This renowned theatre was closed during the intense anti-Jewish sentiment of Stalin's leadership in 1949.)

In South America, Buenos Aires emerged as a major center for Yiddish theater, eventually making its mark with its own distinctive style of Yiddish language play. Yiddish director and actor Max Berliner, who settled in Argentina, recalled, "We arrived (in Argentina) in 1922, carrying the weight of the pogroms. Why continue suffering in Europe? We saved ourselves! My father told me to pursue theatre. I began with a poetry teacher, in Yiddish. Although there were no (Yiddish) schools, there were seven Yiddish theatres..." The theaters were often raided by police, who believed that criminals and underworld figures patronized them. In the 1950s, when many Jewish refugees poured in Argentina, Yiddish theatre there got a new lease on life, producing serious, literary Yiddish plays.

Declining Theaters

During the Holocaust, most of the world's Yiddish speakers were wiped out. While some Yiddish plays continued to be performed in the 1950s in Poland and the Soviet Union, the heyday of Yiddish theatre was clearly over. In the Americas, Australia, Britain and southern Africa, too, fewer and fewer Jews were growing up knowing Yiddish. Yiddish theatres began to close.

Yiddish has never entirely disappeared. It continues to be the *mamaloshen* (mother tongue) of hundreds of thousands of Jews around the world, and also lives on in the incredible literature including plays, written in Yiddish.

In 1978, when almost all of the once-thriving Yiddish theaters had closed, Yiddish author Isaac Bashevis Singer was asked why he continued to write in Yiddish, a dying language. "Yiddish may be a dying language but it is the only language I know well. Yiddish is my mother language, and a mother is never really dead."

And the hit Yiddish version of *Fiddler on the Roof* on Broadway is bringing new life to Yiddish theater that few imagined possible.

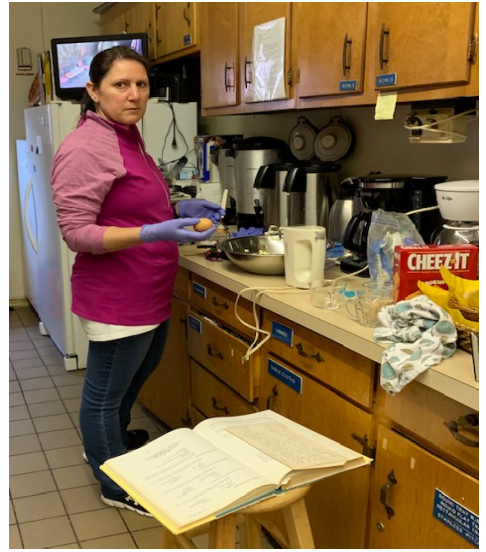
About the Author

Dr. Yvette Alt Miller



Yvette Alt Miller earned her B.A. at Harvard University. She completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Jewish Studies at Oxford University, and has a Ph.D. in International Relations from the London School of Economics. She lives with her family in Chicago, and has lectured internationally on Jewish topics. Her book [Angels at the table: a Practical Guide to Celebrating Shabbat](#) takes readers through the rituals of Shabbat and more, explaining the full beautiful spectrum of Jewish traditions with warmth and humor. It has been praised as "life-changing", a modern classic, and used in classes and discussion groups around the world.

PURIM







MITZVAH DAY



RESIDENTS AT HEBREW SENIOR LIFE w their visiting sons, expressed their gratitude to TBS for thinking of them.



Thanks to Bob Cohen donating 62 boxes of cereal and others. TBS filled 3 shopping carriages to Marge Crispin. The residents of Hebrew Senior Life were so grateful for the decorated plants and flowers that brightened up their dining and social areas.



And the students while painting and decorating their flower pots learned about the many mitzvahs and how to live a good life from instructor Solomon Borocov.

**THE BROTHERHOOD SPRNG FLING BREAKFAST AND
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**



SISTERHOOD DONOR DINNER

The "Chances"

