



Na'amat Canada Ottawa



OTTAWA JEWISH DIRECTORY COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

SPRING/SUMMER EDITION

Your local resource for 2023—5783,
with quick and easy access to
everything Jewish and more

IN THIS EDITION:

PASSOVER TRADITIONS, OLD AND NEW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW —

A HANDY REFERENCE SECTION

THE IRREPRESSIBLE MINA COHN

THE DIEFENBUNKER UNMASKED

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT —

NAOMI LIPSKY-CRACOWER

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2023

JANUARY

6 4:17 pm
13 4:26 pm
20 4:35 pm
27 4:44 pm

FEBRUARY

3 4:55 pm
10 5:05 pm
17 5:15 pm
24 5:25 pm

MARCH

3 5:34 pm
10 5:44 pm
17 6:53 pm
24 7:02 pm
31 7:11 pm

APRIL

7 7:20 pm
14 7:29 pm
21 7:38 pm
28 7:47 pm

MAY

5 7:56 pm
12 8:05 pm
19 8:13 pm
26 8:20 pm

JUNE

2 8:27 pm
9 8:32 pm
16 8:35 pm
23 8:37 pm
30 8:37 pm

JULY

7 8:35 pm
14 8:31 pm
21 8:25 pm
28 8:18 pm

AUGUST

4 8:09 pm
11 7:59 pm
18 7:48 pm
25 7:36 pm

SEPTEMBER

1 7:23 pm
8 7:10 pm
15 6:56 pm
22 6:43 pm
29 6:29 pm

OCTOBER

6 6:16 pm
13 6:03 pm
20 5:51 pm
27 5:40 pm

NOVEMBER

3 5:30 pm
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17 4:13 pm
24 4:07 pm

DECEMBER

1 4:04 pm
8 4:02 pm
15 4:02 pm
22 4:05 pm
29 4:10 pm

2024

JANUARY

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19 4:33 pm
26 4:43 pm

FEBRUARY

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MARCH

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APRIL

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MAY

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JUNE

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JULY

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AUGUST

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SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

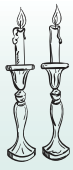
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NOVEMBER

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29 4:04 pm

DECEMBER

6 4:02 pm
13 4:02 pm
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Council President's Message

Spring/Summer 2023

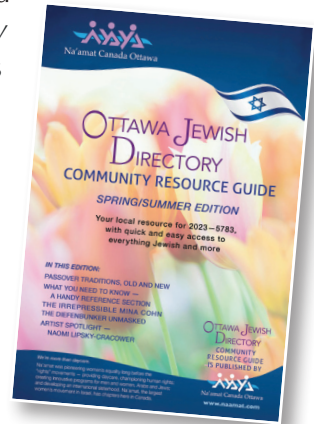
Welcome to Na'amat Canada Ottawa's second edition of the *Ottawa Jewish Directory Community Resource Guide*. This edition includes a Passover feature with holiday recipes, an updated reference section, the calendar of Jewish holidays, Shabbat candle-lighting times, articles profiling local individuals and topics of interest, and a business section featuring our dedicated advertisers.

All proceeds of this new *Resource Guide* will support the important work of Na'amat in Canada and in Israel. Please refer to the detailed graphic "More than Daycare" on page 3, which outlines the many services Na'amat provides for children, women, and families in Israel.

We are dedicating this Passover edition to women's rights everywhere, especially in Israel, where right now their rights are in danger. Na'amat is working very hard to ensure that women's rights are maintained and continue to improve. By buying an ad or placing a personal greeting in our *Resource Guide*, you are helping the human rights movement in Israel.

Thank you to our generous supporters, advertisers, and volunteers who continue to make the *Ottawa Jewish Directory Community Resource Guide* a valuable source of information for the Ottawa Jewish community.

Marilyn Schwartz
Council President
Na'amat Canada Ottawa



Na'amat Canada Ottawa

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

The next edition of the *Resource Guide* will focus on Rosh Hashanah. We would like your participation! Please send us a family story and photos, or a family anecdote about an exotic place where you celebrated the Jewish New Year. Was it here at home or in Israel, perhaps? On the top of a mountain? Did you celebrate it in a different way? We will publish the first few submissions we receive and post all of them on our Facebook page, if we can.

Email your submission to ojdresourceguide@naamat.com by May 15, 2023.



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Ottawa Jewish Directory Community Resource Guide

Spring/Summer 2023 Edition

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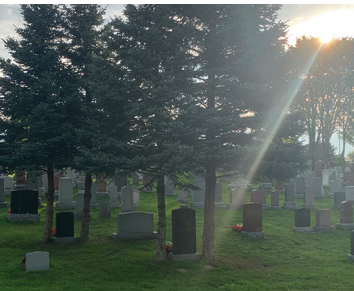
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HOLIDAY FEATURE: PASSOVER

Compiled by Mary Rubin

I have an elegant Passover plate my mother-in-law gave me as a gift. But every Passover, I prefer to use a Passover plate my daughter Daniela decorated as part of a project for her bat mitzvah. Each time I use it, I'm reminded of how proud I am of her creativity and achievements. With that in mind, I thought it would be interesting to hear about other people's Passover treasures and traditions, and so I asked several

prominent Jewish women currently living, or having lived, in Ottawa about their own Passover celebrations. Passover, as we all know, is a holiday in which we ask questions, and we learn, and we pass our learning on to our children and grandchildren. But it's also a holiday to honour traditions from our childhoods or those traditions of our own. I asked these women a little about those traditions and they did not disappoint!

THE PARTICIPANTS



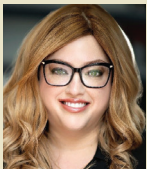
Sheila Osterer (SO) is the Executive Director of AJA 50+ for active Jewish adults — a non-profit, volunteer-driven organization for the Ottawa Jewish community. Sheila keeps busy as a mother to four boys and four daughters-in-law, and as a grandmother of two grandsons and one granddaughter.



Zahava Farber (ZF) is a retired Ottawa Jewish Community School teacher. She is a strong supporter of Ottawa's Jewish community and has lived here almost all of her life. She loves celebrating Jewish holidays with family and friends.



Toby Herscovitch (TH) is a long-time Na'amat member, originally joining in Ottawa and helping lead the organization here. During her career, she worked in public relations and editing in Ottawa and Montreal. Toby and her husband moved to Toronto a few years ago to impose on, oops, *be close to family* — including their awesome twin granddaughters, now four. Toby remains active in Na'amat Canada.



Aviva Rotenberg (AR) Aviva wears many hats but is known best in the community as the founder of Ottawa Kosher Foodies. In her spare time, she is the Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.



Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton (ER) has been the spiritual leader of Or Haneshamah, Ottawa's Reconstructionist community, since 2013, when she became Or Haneshamah's first permanent rabbi, Ottawa's first female rabbi with her own congregation, and the city's first openly gay rabbi. She has revitalized the Or Haneshamah congregation and strengthened the relationship between the Reconstructionist congregation and the rest of the Ottawa Jewish community.

THE DIALOGUE

What part of the Passover story generates the most discussion at your seder table?

SO: It is by far the four sons' parable. Because we have four sons, there was always a discussion of who fit which description!

ZF: We always discuss the plagues and in the past few years we spoke about the pandemic in relation to the plagues. There is some intricate math done by the scholars in relation to the plagues and we always try to figure out the logic of it all.

TH: We talk about the meaning of freedom and gratitude for what we have (*dayenu*). We go over the plagues and sometimes compare them to more recent "plagues" that have afflicted our people.

AR: I am not sure that one part generates more discussion than others. My husband generally leads our seder and really encourages lots of discussion and dialogue throughout. We use an assortment of *haggadot* with different translations and explanations to spark conversation.

EB: This varies from year to year, depending upon the kinds of issues that are current. For example, we often spend time on the Ten Plagues, expressing the types of contemporary "plagues" still challenging us, like racism or homophobia. We also delight in having children act out the biblical story, with props and costumes. It not only helps them feel important to the seder but brings the story alive for everyone.

There are many recipes for *charoset*. Which one is your favourite?

SO: *Charoset* has to be nut-free because of allergies, so the makeshift recipe contains lots of apples, raisins, dates, prunes (a Passover must!), and either sweet white wine or grape juice. It has to be combined in a processor, not just cut into chunks.

ZF: We eat very basic *charoset*: grated apples, chopped walnuts, sweet red wine, and lots of cinnamon; all mashed together in the food processor and very yummy.

TH: My husband makes his traditional Egyptian-Sephardic version of *charoset* — a

mix of dates, apricots, prunes, and raisins, topped with chopped walnuts. He makes a large batch so that we can give a jar to each of our sons and family. (Sometimes we find leftovers in their fridge months later — and it's still good!) I also have fond memories of my mom's *charoset* — chopped apples, with walnuts and a little red wine.

AR: I love the *charoset* that my parents always made for our seder. Really traditional and simple: grated apples, grated walnuts, sweet red wine, and a sweetener — which they added to almost everything. They always made a huge tub and we ate it on matzo the whole holiday.

EB: We have experimented over the years with a variety of *charoset* recipes from different corners of the Jewish world, but I do have a special place in my heart for my family's old-fashioned Ashkenazi *charoset*: apples, walnuts, cinnamon, and sweet concord grape wine.

What is your favourite Passover dish and what is your "signature" dish?

SO: My signature dish for all family get-togethers is always pareve scalloped potatoes. It is a little challenging at Passover because the base contains flour, but trial and error with a combination of cake meal and potato starch has proven very successful.

ZF: My personal favourite is always matzo ball soup. My family enjoys some annual favourites like pineapple meatballs, shredded brisket blintzes, and rocky road brownies, but I try to switch things up every year, so I don't think I have a specific signature dish.

TH: Everyone likes my matzo ball soup and Passover rolls. (I like to make our matzo balls a little heavier; i.e., with fewer eggs.) I sometimes make a potato kugel that's popular too. And I like my late mother-in-law's dish, a tasty, spiced-mincemeat lasagna, with matzo layers replacing the pasta! I always recall my dad's powerful *chrayn* (horseradish) — one bite could knock out any virus! (It was also the only way I could eat a little gefilte fish, which is definitely not a staple in our home.)

AR: This is going to sound boring, but my favourite Passover dish is *Shmura matzo* [Editor's note: This is the sacred matzo very similar to the matzo eaten by the fleeing Israelites] — the more burned the better! — with salted butter. They are two foods I don't really have at any other time of the year and they are just magical together. My signature dish is probably my chocolate espresso torte with raspberry sauce. I make it every year and it brings the house down.

EB: It wouldn't be Passover without our "family famous" meatballs with the astonishingly fabulous sauce made of ketchup and ginger ale — the classic sweet-and-sour meatballs from *Second Helpings, Please!*

Often, our Passover seder plate has a story behind it. Tell us the story of your seder plate.

SO: We have two seder plates — one belonging to each of our mothers. In my case, the plate was used by my grandmother for huge family seders decades ago and carries with it a lot of nostalgia.

ZF: My parents went to Israel to celebrate their 50th anniversary in 2000. They returned with a beautiful seder plate for me and I have enjoyed using it ever since.

TH: As in many homes, we have a traditional seder plate that my parents bought in Israel and gave to my husband and I as a gift after we got married. It always brings back warm memories of my first trip to Israel with my family, when I was 12 years old.

AR: For years, we used a very large silver seder plate that was a wedding gift. It had little doors that opened on the side with three shelves for matzo. It was beautiful, but it took up half the table. More recently, we purchased a modern, multi-coloured seder plate by a designer we love and have been using that one.

EB: The Passover plate was a gift from my kids' other mom's aunt — beautiful, delicate blue glass, with little bowls for each item. We so loved this plate that we bought a matzo plate to match and we still carefully store them both in their original packaging between seders.

There are many Passover tunes that evoke memories of our youth. What is your favourite Passover melody?

SO: As a child, *Chad Gadya* was always a favourite. As an adult, my mother-in-law's rendition of that song was always meaningful. We have a recording of my late father-in-law doing the Passover kiddish and that holds a special place in our hearts for us each year.

ZF: When I was a child, my family would sing many rounds of *L'shana Haba B'Yerushalaim* and my father and uncle would bang on the table enthusiastically. I always think of them at that point in the seder, with a smile. My cousin always sang solo for the family rendition of *Hallel*, so I always am reminded of him. When they were very small, my children always acted out the verses of *Who Knows One*, with actions for each number... it was cute and always very entertaining.

TH: At our Passover table, we sing *Dayeynu* and *Halleluyah* with enthusiasm. We also have a tradition of singing *Chad Gadya* at the end of the seder, whereby each guest replaces the name of an animal or symbol with a sound. It leads to a good deal of laughter and is a good way to end any holiday feast!

AR: At my elementary/junior high school in Calgary, there was always a model seder that was hosted by the older grades. My favourite teacher, Mr. Avraham Alima, taught us a tune to *Ki Lo Na'eh*. I really liked the tune and brought it to our seder at home, and my father loved it. Every year, he would ask me to sing it and he would sing along. I still love it and it always makes me think of my dad.

EB: My *zayde*, Binyumen Raby z"l, had a beautiful voice and solemnly led the family seders for my children in a white *kittel* [religious robe], chanting the text with a beautiful *Nusach* [traditional musical chant]. There were also wonderful tunes that we sang to specific passages and, of course, to the songs at the end of the seder. The stand-out melody is a haunting, rhythmically free setting of *Ki Lo Na'eh*, *Ki Lo Ya'eh*, which I still hear in my head in my *zayde's* very specific Polish pronunciation. The music of my childhood seders lives in my soul.

ASHKENAZIC VERSUS SEPHARDIC PASSOVER TRADITIONS

We all know that *chametz* [leavened foods made with wheat, barley, rye, oats and spelt] is forbidden during Passover. That is why we clean out the pantry, our stoves, and our cupboards. We must get rid of all our leavened and flour-filled foods and we spend hours cleaning to make sure not even a bread crumb is left anywhere. This is true for both Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews. However, for centuries Ashkenazis were not allowed

to consume *kitniyot* — legumes, rice, and corn — because their similarity to chametz could confuse people. In recent years, Reform and Conservative Ashkenazic Rabbis have allowed for many of these products to be consumed, but the long-standing tradition still keeps many Jews from doing so. On the other hand, Sephardic Jews have always been allowed to eat these products on Passover and continue to enjoy them.

OUR RECIPES

Traditional Ashkenazic Charoset

I do love all the miracles and the meaning of this holiday. *Charoset* is probably the most symbolic recipe for Passover and the suffering of our people. The word *charoset* comes from the Hebrew word *cheres*, meaning “clay,” although it goes by many different names around the world.

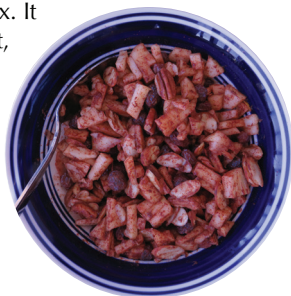
My mother-in-law made her *charoset* with walnuts for many years and then, when my nephew was diagnosed with allergies, with almonds. My mother-in-law’s cooking style was always “a pinch of this and a pinch of that.” I learned how to make many of her recipes, but unfortunately most of her extraordinary baking has been lost.

Ingredients

2 apples peeled and diced, drizzled with lemon juice
½ cup of chopped walnuts, pecans, or almonds
¼ cup raisins soaked in sweet wine from the night before
1 tsp lemon zest (optional)
1 tsp cinnamon

Instructions

Combine all the ingredients. Mix with care so as not to break the structure of the apples if you want to give a little crunchiness to the mix. It must result in a sweet, brown mixture that represents the mortar used by the Hebrew slaves to build the Egyptian pyramids.



Traditional Sephardic Moroccan Charoset

I “borrowed” this recipe from friends and, with their input, made my own.

Ingredients

6 dates, pitted
6 prunes, pitted (you may use just a dozen prunes or a dozen dates)
¼ cup raisins
¼ cup sweet wine
1 tsp cinnamon
½ cup almonds ground or almond flour
sugar to taste (brown or white)

Instructions

I use almond flour instead of ground almonds and yes, you can consume almond flour raw. (The almonds used to form almond flour are not usually raw. In fact, most products we find in the stores use heat-pasteurized almonds at 165 F° or 73 C°. When in doubt, research your brands.)

Let raisins soak in sweet wine overnight.

Mix dates, prunes, soaked raisins, and cinnamon in a food processor or until you get a paste. If too thick, add a few additional teaspoons of sweet wine. Taste the paste and, if you prefer, add some sugar to sweeten the paste. I usually add one teaspoon of brown sugar; however, it is often sweet enough with the natural sugar from the dry fruit.

Once the flavour and thickness is right for you, form balls with the help of a teaspoon. The balls will be sticky so wet your hands slightly. Once formed, roll the balls over the ground almonds.



continued from page 11

The balls are usually a bit larger than a grape or an olive.

No level of thickness is incorrect. If not pasty enough to make a ball with your hands, drop a teaspoon of the mix on the almond flour, roll it lightly in the flour, and then form a ball. It is delicious any way you do it!

Our friend David loves to add his trademark apricots to his Egyptian recipe to add a little tang, as well as a few drops of rosewater, when available [you can find it in various Ottawa stores and online].

PASSOVER TRIVIA

1. To date, where was the world's largest matzo ball made?
2. Which city hosts the largest Passover seder every year?
3. How many glasses of wine do we traditionally drink at the seder?
4. Which of the four cups of wine symbolizes Kiddush?
5. What does Kiddush mean?
6. What does "seder" mean in Hebrew?
7. In what river was Moses found as a baby?

Answers to Passover Trivia questions can be found on page 72.



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LITTLE-KNOWN PASSOVER FACTS

1. *Yerushah* ("inheritance" or "heritage" in Hebrew) is a new Passover haggadah based on interviews, artwork, and narrative, and created by Julia White, a 2021-2022 Meyer-Gottesman Kol Koleinu Teen Feminist Fellowship awardee.
2. G-d rewarded Shifra and Puah's acts of bravery with houses. The two women were the midwives who defied Pharaoh and saved the Israelite baby boys, including Moses, from slaughter by the Egyptians.
3. Although Moses is important in the story of the Exodus, he is only mentioned once in the *Haggadah*.
4. Passover is the most ancient of our Jewish holidays. It is also, perhaps, the most interesting one, with a strong connection to the number four:
 - We explain the meaning of the holiday to four sons (the wise, the wicked, the simple, and the one who does not know how to ask).
 - There are four questions the youngest must ask.
 - There are four glasses of wine we must serve and drink.
 - There are four names to the holiday (*Zman Cherutaynu* — the Time of Our Freedom; *Chag Ha'Matzot* — The Festival of Unleavened Bread; *Chag Ha'Aviv* — the Festival of Spring; and *Chjag Ha'Pesach* — the Festival of Passover).
 - The Torah commands us to tell the story of the Exodus four times.

Many theories explain what appears to be this coincidence of four. I challenge you to investigate and learn more about it!



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Happy Passover



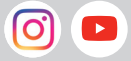
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Steering the Ship: Mina Cohn and CHES

By Mary Rubin

In 2017, a friend invited me to attend an event presented by CHES, the Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship, in cooperation with the National Arts Centre (NAC). Remembering John Hirsch honoured the 70th anniversary of the venerated theatre director's arrival to Canada as one of 1,123 Holocaust orphans. The NAC had been recently renovated and the elegant room for the event was where the late Peter Herrndorf, NAC CEO at the time, and many other invitees spoke eloquently about the life, body of work, and cultural legacy of John Hirsch; an excerpt of a play about Hirsch was then performed. Hirsch's parents had died during the Holocaust, and thus orphaned, John arrived in Canada as a teen via the War Orphans Project of the Canadian Jewish Congress. I was so inspired by this event that I went home that evening and started researching about the War Orphans Project — something I'd never before heard of.


In November of 2019, my husband and I attended another event organized by CHES, with the sponsorship of Doris and Steven Ramphos. It was the Ottawa premiere screening of *Life Will Smile* and took place at the Infinity Convention Centre. We were not sure what the event was all about when we entered a huge room packed with people. There was not one seat empty! We found out later that



Photo: Peter Waiser Photography

The Irrepressible Mina Cohn, Founder and Chair of CHES

more than 500 people had registered! In attendance, we saw the Honourable Irwin Cotler, Ambassador of Greece to Canada Dimitris Azemopoulos, the movie producer Steven Priovolos, and Doris and Steven Ramphos themselves. This documentary, we found out, was about the story of how the Jewish community on the island of Zakynthos, Greece, survived, thanks to the brave and heroic responses of the mayor of the island, its bishop, and its 35,000 inhabitants. After the film, Doris and Steven — as well as



many prominent Ottawa residents — spoke, including Irwin Cotler, Steven Priovolos, and Dimitrios Azemopoulos.

These are just two of the programs that have been provided to the public for free since the inception of CHES, an organization spearheaded by its founder and Chair, Mina Cohn.

Mina, with her attractive white bob, illuminates any room with her smile and her passion. Her short stature has not stopped her from breaking glass ceilings time after time. Jim Watson, at one CHES event, joked about the fact that Mina does not take no for an answer, ever — even from a departing mayor who was counting the days to the end of his mandate.

Former Ottawa resident Toby Herscovitch met Mina many years ago when both women were volunteers for one of Ottawa's Holocaust committees. When Mina started CHES, Toby became a volunteer. "Even then, I recall Mina had big ambitions to create a strong and impactful centre of Holocaust education," recalls Toby. "I admire her vision and determination, and sheer hard work. I remember thinking, 'If anyone can do it, it's Mina.' She also has a knack for bringing the right talent to help. Today, CHES and scholarship is so vibrant, and indeed it is still growing, and I believe Mina deserves much of the credit."

"I am so inspired by her strength of mind and her purpose," says Zoltan Fried, Treasurer of CHES.

Mina's strength and vision have contributed to so many interesting events hosted by CHES. In November of 2021,

my husband and I attended one via Zoom on the occasion of the commemoration of the Kristalnacht. All in the Telling had actor Saul Rubinek tell us about the documentary he made about his parents' survival during the Holocaust (*So Many Miracles*) and his play *All in the Telling* about how he and his wife dealt with letting his daughter know about the Holocaust (as well as one of her best friends, whose great-grandfather had been in the SS).

And then, in October of last year, I was invited to the launch of *For the Child: The Kindertransport* at the Ottawa City Hall. CHES hosted the exhibit in cooperation with the Embassy of Austria and the British High Commissioner under the auspices of then Mayor Jim Watson. The photographic exhibit told the story of the organized rescue transport of Jewish children to Great Britain. The Kindertransport rescue enabled more than 10,000 children who were considered Jewish, according to the Nuremberg race laws, to depart for Great Britain from Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia between the end of November 1938 and September 1, 1939.

For the Child: The Kindertransport was breathtaking, emotional, and educational; the organization of the event, flawless. We heard stories from children and grandchildren of the Kindertransport survivors. We heard from dignitaries from the UK and Austria. And of course, we heard from Mina Cohn, the driving force behind CHES.

Before I started attending these events, I thought I had a good general

knowledge of the Holocaust and of the countries that helped Jews and those that refused us. Of course, no one needs to know all the details of every single individual who survived and/or how. However, I realized there were many instances where I did not know enough. CHES has been at the helm of instructing Jews and non-Jews alike on the many aspects of the Holocaust — basic aspects and those less known. As its website says: “CHES offers year-round programming to help combat antisemitism, prejudice, and racism, and promote respect for diversity and human rights.”

CHES thus works at many levels and with a variety of tools at its disposal:

- CHES provides outreach to schools with annual teacher workshops and continual resources for educators to teach the Holocaust to their students.
- CHES provides excellent Zoom and in-person programming for survivors and descendants of survivors (the programs I described previously are just a few examples).
- CHES publishes a newsletter reporting all the activities of the organization.
- CHES maintains a website with archived and current programming content, plus a virtual museum.
- CHES maintains a Facebook page.
- CHES is involved in many projects, as for example, the IWALK tour (and an iWalk app) for the National Holocaust Monument — the

memorial for Holocaust survivors and descendants.

“We strive to create better tools and strategies for educators across the province so they can teach and explore the lessons of the Holocaust,” you will hear Mina say.

She also says that much work remains to be done to eliminate racism and antisemitism, and the realization of an inclusive society for all. “CHES has experienced remarkable growth, reaching out to thousands of people within the Ottawa area and beyond since its establishment. CHES was born out of an imperative need in our city, to provide Holocaust education to the members of our community.... The Holocaust provides us with the most effective subject for examining moral issues ... the more and better Holocaust education is the best response to the rise of antisemitism.”

Mina humbly implies all the work and strength of CHES lies with the team of volunteers and the community that supports its work.

Our Ottawa Jewish community is extremely lucky to have such a dynamic woman in our midst. I wish each city in the world could have a centre for Holocaust education, with a Mina Cohn steering their course.

To learn more about CHES, please visit <https://chesatottawa.ca>.

Mary Rubin is a retired senior information and business analyst who likes to write about interesting people and what makes them tick.



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for all of their hard work in support
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Marian Lederman

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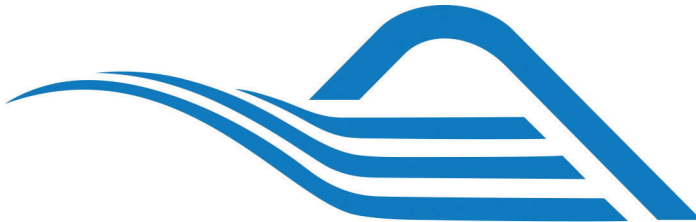


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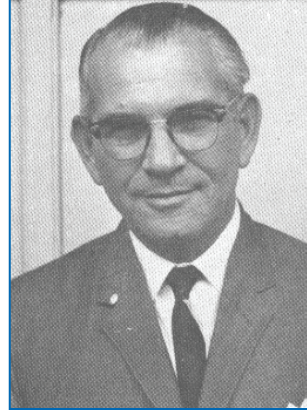
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Naomi Lipsky-Cracower

By Marian Lederman

When I was asked to interview a local artist of my choice, my cousin Naomi Lipsky-Cracower immediately sprung to mind. She is one of the most talented women I know. Although an Ottawa resident, Naomi is travelling the world these days, busier than ever, and it is quite difficult to pin her down for a tête-à-tête. This “conversation” was therefore done through emails.

ML: When did you first start making art?

NC: When I was a young child, my mom would bribe me to go to the dentist by promising to buy me a “paint by number” set, which included the paints and brushes.

Unfortunately, I needed much dental work, but on the plus side, I used the leftover paints to create my own paintings.

I loved art class at Baron Byng High School in Montreal and would come home and sit on the front stairs with my friend Dorothy, who was an amazing artist, and we would draw our own comic books. We were the art editors for our yearbook.

ML: Did you pursue a career in art after high school?

NC: Yes, I did. After graduation, I attended

a commercial art studio by day and Sir George Williams University (now Concordia) at night. The next year I entered the newly created Bachelor of Fine Arts department and I majored in painting and printmaking. Upon graduating, the university allowed me to enter their just-developed Master of Arts in Art Education program, which was available only to experienced artists and art educators. I was their guinea pig! How fortunate for me to be surrounded for the calendar year with amazing instructors, artists, and art educators!

ML: When did you start exhibiting your work?

NC: I had my second One Person Art Show near the end of the master’s program. My Dad, a cabinet maker, built and stretched all my canvasses and helped me by providing the tools for my wood sculptures and large life-sized wooden cut-outs of him that I painted in complementary colours. The style of the 2-D art that I did for those years was hard-edge painting and silk screen painting.

ML: Did you continue to make art after graduating?

NC: Upon graduation, I taught art for a year in a Catholic middle school. After the year, I left for southern France where my husband was studying for his Doctorate in International Law, and I had a French Government grant to do printmaking at an art school. It turned out that the school was not equipped, and I waited until we moved to Ottawa, where I taught various art, design, and printmaking classes at the University of Ottawa, Algonquin College, and Ashbury College. When my children were at Hillel



Remembering

Jerusalem at Night

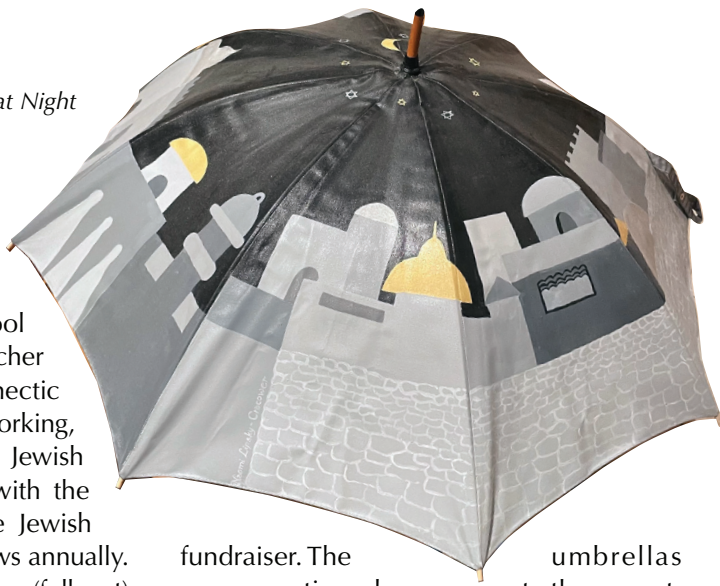
Academy, I was approached by the Rabbi to teach "Hebrew art." I spent over two decades teaching there in the preschool and as a permanent supply teacher often teaching art. During the hectic years of raising children and working, the art I did was generally for Jewish community fundraisers. Along with the late Avril Bright we started the Jewish Artists Guild, which held art shows annually. As a diversion, I did tole painting (folk art) on small wooden furniture and chairs.

ML: What gave you the most challenge as an artist?

NC: The biggest challenge was the precision needed for the style of painting I did. It required a steady hand and a lot of patience.

ML: Friends of mine living in Ottawa at the time told me about an exhibition at the old Jewish Community Centre on Chapel Street. They were amazed at the beauty of your works when they saw your Jerusalem-themed pictures. How did you get inspired? What drove you to create them?

NC: Ever since I saw the glory of Jerusalem as a 22-year-old, I was awestruck. Around the time of that exhibit, we were planning to go to Israel as a family for our son's Bar Mitzvah. Whenever I painted for the Artists Guild, or asked by UJA, Hadassah, or the National Council of Jewish Women, I painted or drew Jerusalem. Once, Jewish artists were approached to paint large canvas umbrellas for a



fundraiser. The umbrellas were auctioned at the event. The shape of the umbrella immediately reminded me of the golden domes. I was thrilled because the buyer of my umbrella was an artist that I admired.

ML: What is your next project?

NC: Lately, my creative outlet is editing my 50,000 iPhone photos! However, all this reminiscing is giving me the itch to paint again!

To learn more about Naomi's art, you may contact her at naomilc@rogers.com.

Marian Lederman is a retired computer science professional. In her spare time, she volunteers with Na'amat Canada and is the current chair of the National Education Committee.

Winter Wonderland



Photos: Courtesy of Naomi Lipsky-Cracower



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HOLIDAYS	2023 5783 - 5784	2024 5784 - 5785	2025 5785 - 5786
Tu Bi'Shevat	February 6	January 25	February 13
Purim	March 7	March 24	March 14
Erev Pesach	April 5	April 22	April 12
Pesach 1st & 2nd	April 6-7	April 23-24	April 13-14
Pesach 7th & 8th*	April 12-13*	April 29-30*	April 19-20*
Yom Ha'Shoah	April 18	May 6	April 24
Yom Ha'Zikaron	April 25	May 13	April 30
Yom Ha'Atzmaut	April 26	May 14	May 1
Lag Ba'Omer	May 9	May 26	May 16
Shavuot*	May 26-27*	June 12-13*	June 2-3*
Fast of Tisha B'Av	July 27	August 13	August 3
Erev Rosh Hashana	Sept. 15	October 2	Sept. 22
Rosh Hashana	Sept. 16-17	October 3-4	Sept. 23-24
Erev Yom Kippur	Sept. 24	October 11	October 1
Yom Kippur*	Sept. 25*	October 12*	October 2*
Sukkot	Sept. 30	October 17	October 7
Shemini Atzeret*	October 7*	October 24*	October 14*
Simchat Torah	October 8	October 25	October 15
Hanukkah (First Candle)	December 7	December 25	December 14

*Yizkor Note: The holiday begins at sundown of the night beforehand, unless specified.



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Andrea Freedman, President and CEO	ext. 224
Rena Garshowitz, VP Operations.....	ext. 297
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Jean Myers, Pledges, Campaigns and OVH	ext. 242
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FACEBOOK WORLD: JEWISH JEWELS

Facebook is a maze of information...and misinformation! But within all that chaos can be found some interesting, useful, and altruistic groups. Here are but a few of such Facebook “communities”:



Educators Against Antisemitism

EAA fights against antisemitism, hate, and discrimination in educational settings by identifying these elements within various communities and then challenging it through education.

Jewish Ottawa helps!

This Jewish Federation of Ottawa’s Facebook group, geared to volunteers within the Ottawa Jewish community, helps connect group members with one another. It acts as a forum for volunteers wanting to offer their services and matches them to those people and organizations that need them.

Jews against Antisemitism Canada

Jews against Antisemitism Canada works toward combatting antisemitism and anti-Zionist sentiment across the country through educational programming and through the exchange of ideas and information related to antisemitism in the community.

JFS StreetSmarts

This Jewish Family Services–based outreach program is led by experienced volunteers and focuses on providing clothing, toiletries, and granola bars to Ottawa’s homeless.



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JPSN: Jewish Public Servants' Network

If you're a Jewish public servant of any Jewish affiliation, working for any department within the Government of Canada Ottawa network, this group is for you. It offers support, mentorship, and a forum for asking questions and seeking help in relation to the public service.

Norene's Kitchen!

Created by Norene Gilletz and now administered by her son, this page provides a forum for everything Gilletz: the kosher recipes, the famous cook's food memories, member's questions, cooking tips, and more. Norene's Kitchen! has been functioning since 2011 and has more than 11,000 members.

Ottawa Against Antisemitism (OAA)

OAA advocates for Jewish children in the nation's capital. It works to help children feel safe from antisemitism in their schools and elsewhere in the community.

Ottawa Jewish Give 'n Get (FREE STUFF ONLY)

Like the Buy Nothing groups in every community, the Ottawa Jewish Give 'n Get Facebook group is a place to advertise your household discards — from furniture to clothing and chachkas. Only members of the Ottawa Jewish community need apply for acceptance into this group.



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FACEBOOK WORLD: JEWISH JEWELS

Ottawa Jewish Parents

If you're a Jewish parent raising young Jewish children, or soon to be one, you'll be interested in this group. Members share information on Jewish parenting and community resources, and connect with each other.

Ottawa Kosher Foodies

Do you need information on anything kosher in Ottawa or want to know where to find a good kosher restaurant meal? If so, this is the group to join. It's also a forum for exchanging kosher recipes, finding out where to get kosher products, publicizing interesting food events, and having light-hearted discussions.

Strictly Kosher Recipes

Here, you can post any recipe made from kosher ingredients that follows the strict *kashrut* (Jewish dietary laws) observances. The topics range from vegan and the various Jewish holidays to breakfast, tea time, and British foods, to name just a few.

Tracing the Tribe — Jewish Genealogy

This is a cooperative group for everyone interested in Jewish genealogy. It provides tools and resources, and acts as a forum for members' experiences in tracing family trees.



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MUSEUM MUSINGS:



By Mary Rubin

War-related historical institutions are generally not my cup of tea, so I had never visited the Diefenbunker, Canada's Cold War Museum. But last September, when my son's future father-in-law visiting from abroad said he wanted to see this war museum, we all decided to accompany him. And I was pleasantly surprised to find out that the Diefenbunker is full of curiosities and learning opportunities.

We set out for Carp, where the bunker is located, on a bright sunny day. We knew that the bunker and fallout shelter had begun operating in 1961 until it was decommissioned in 1994, when it was given National Historic Site status. The building had remained empty until it had been turned into a museum in 1997. And now we were one of the thousands who visit the museum annually. (The museum's 2019 annual report indicated that more than 7,000 people had attended its free or paid events.)

We arrived at 11 a.m., with the September sun warming our backs, and my first thought was that it was such a pity; instead of enjoying such a beautiful sunny day outdoors, we were going to spend the better part of the afternoon

The Blast Tunnel: built to divert the force of any explosion away from the Diefenbunker

indoors and underground. Approaching the entrance, we noticed that the double doors did not resemble those of a typical Canadian museum but looked more like the doors of a delivery entrance to a supermarket or a factory: nothing inside was visible.

"Of course!" said my husband. "It was supposed to be a secret location!"

We stepped inside a small entrance hall, where two large bomb models were on display, and a large cement tunnel with a slight slope swallowed us in. Walking down this tunnel, I wondered how someone could work in such a place, much less live in it. As the website indicates: "During the 32 years the bunker was operational, it was also Canadian Forces Station (CFS) Carp, with a staff of 100-150 people in a 24-hour shift rotation. It was the site of some of Canada's most top-secret communications' establishment throughout the Cold War. At all times during its operation, the cupboards and pantries were stocked with enough fresh food and rations to feed 535 people for 30 days and the building was prepared to go into lockdown at any moment."

Before getting into the living and operational quarters on the fourth floor

of the building (at ground level), we had to pass through a “decontamination” station equipped with showers. Then, we entered the confinement and hospital overflow quarters, the hospital, the doctors’ offices, and offices for dental care and mental health. We saw the small living quarters, barely big enough for six people.

The museum has three more floors underground, each of them with specific functions. The third floor contains the government offices. We were very surprised at how compact and complete they were for having to operate under dire circumstances. The largest offices were those that involved communications, both internal and external: emergency radio and television operations, telex, the Federal Warning Centre, and the War Cabinet Room.

The second level houses the cafeteria, the canteen, and the entertainment room, which we thought would have been impossibly small for so many people having to live together! There are also two independent mini museums on the fourth level: a kitchen from the ‘60s and a Second World War museum, impressive in its minimalistic nature and completeness.

The Bank of Canada vault is situated on the bottom floor — huge but empty — where all the country’s gold would have been stashed in case of a nuclear attack.

The museum gave me the unsettling feeling of the need for such a place and, at the same time, a reassurance that, if required, our government would be able to function in the worst of circumstances and communicate to those who would



The Diefenbunker’s Emergency Transmitter Room, now used as a display area for electronic equipment



Photos: Mary Rubin

The CBC Emergency Broadcasting System Control Room

survive any type of attack. I left the museum happy this bunker had never been used for its intended function and even happier to get out into a sunny, warm September day.

But I was also quite transformed: I now have much more respect for the Diefenbunker — for its purpose and for the sacrifices the staff at CFS Carp made to keep it operational while they thought it was needed. I was also in awe of all the incredible complexities the building had to assume, both in its construction and in housing a functioning government in hiding.

To learn more about the Diefenbunker's visiting hours and



Photo: Mary Rubin

The War Cabinet Room and its clocks in different time zones

displays, you can visit its website at: www.diefenbunker.ca.

Mary Rubin is a retired senior information and business analyst, who — in her spare time — is learning the mamaloshen.



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Israeli Dancing is More Than the Hora

By Marian Lederman

About five years ago, three friends decided to check out the Ottawa Israeli Dance group and we've never looked back! We look forward to our weekly dancing and the enjoyment of dance for dance's sake. But even more is the joy we get from getting together with the wonderful people we've met and from the friendships we've formed.

Some of us were wary, at first, about joining the Ottawa Israeli Dance group because we either hadn't danced in years or had never taken up Israeli folk dancing. Israeli folk dances can be highly choreographed, but we worried for nothing; the dancing sessions always began with teaching. Easier dances were first, followed later by intermediate and then harder dances. And in-between the teaching, everyone danced to the folk dances taught previously in weeks or years past.

Before the pandemic, we would gather Tuesday evenings at the Ottawa Jewish

Community School gymnasium, but during the pandemic, we pivoted to dancing in the mornings outside, safely and socially distanced. Since my friends and I have been coming regularly, we've been able to dance 12 months a year, with the occasional exception, and have just recently moved indoors, still masked and socially distanced.

A big part of what makes the Ottawa Israeli Dance group so terrific is its stalwart leader, Phil Kretzmar — a South African who came to Canada many years ago to go to school in Vancouver. He then worked in Saskatoon, making Ottawa his home in 1985. Once here in the nation's capital, Phil worked in IT in various hospitals, finally staying with Elizabeth Bruyère for almost 30 years. He was involved with the Ottawa StoryTellers in their formative years and has always enjoyed folk dancing of all kinds.

Israeli folk dancing has actually been around in Ottawa before Phil came to it decades ago. In the late 1960s, a series of folk dance programs offered by the Jewish Community Centre led to the creation of a performing group, Ami Chai, in 1970. With Sylvia Rosenes at its helm, Ami Chai performed in different venues throughout eastern Canada. The Ottawa Israeli Dance group, led by Marla Blacher, Joanne Kalman, and Janice Pleet, was started for more of a recreational approach to Israeli dancing.

In its early years, the Ottawa Israeli Dance group danced in many different venues, including Agudath Israel (now Kehillat Beth Israel) and the basement gym at Hillel Academy (now the library of the Ottawa Jewish Community School). In the late 1980's, the group began dancing in the upstairs gym at Hillel on Tuesday evenings and this was its home for more than 30 years — until the pandemic blindsided us all in early 2020. Phil has been the organizer

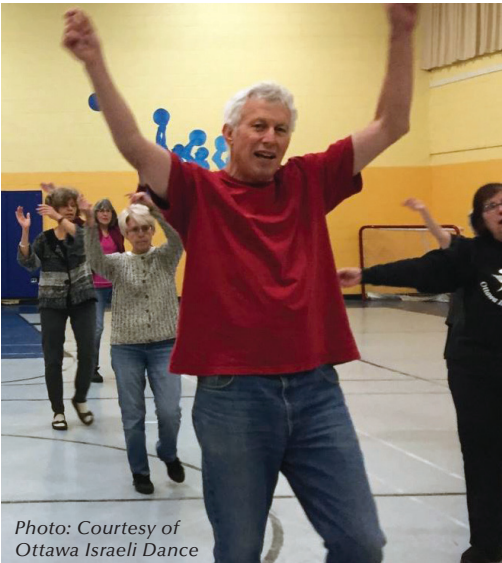


Photo: Courtesy of Ottawa Israeli Dance

Phil Kretzmar of the Ottawa Israeli Dance group, leading the way, February 2020



Dancing together with Creative Connections, January 2023

and leader of the Ottawa Israeli Dance group almost since its inception and has been ably aided by Judy Rostenne and in more recent years by Hannah Bernstein.

While the gym was home to the dance group during the school year, summertime had everyone dancing outdoors — for many years at Vincent Massey Park. The Ottawa Israeli Dance group has always been inclusive; its members included not only those of the Jewish community but also people from outside the community and from other spiritual and religious backgrounds.

Since early 2020, the Ottawa Israeli Dance group has danced outdoors, even throughout the winter, and at various locations such as parks and baseball diamonds. Meeting times have also changed from early evenings to mornings (on Tuesday) and only recently have we moved back to dancing indoors. If you would have told us that we would be dancing outside 12 months a year three years ago, we would have thought you were crazy!

My friends and I love going to our dancing sessions with the Ottawa Israeli Dance group, not just for the camaraderie and beautiful music and dances, but also because of all the health, social, physical, and mental benefits we get from Israeli dancing. It's good exercise for the body

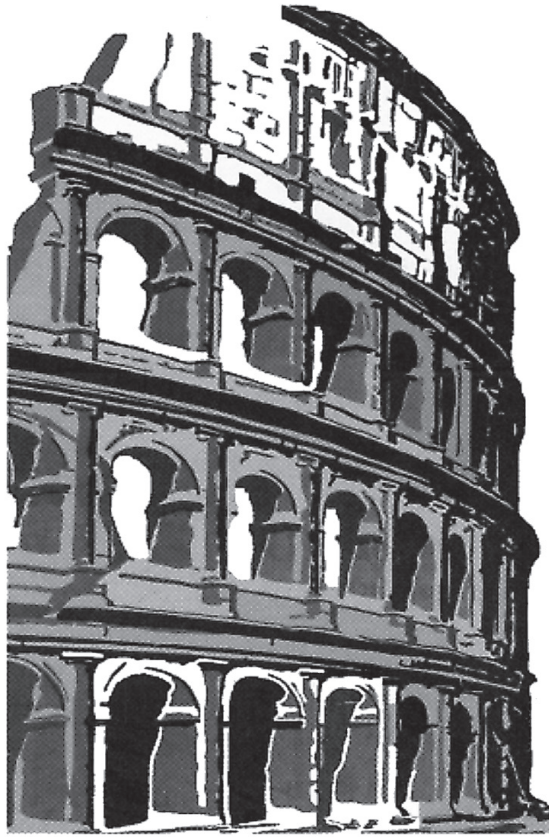
and it is a mood enhancer. It helps with coordination, memory, and stimulation (the choreography can sometimes be intricate). It is a challenge at all levels. Because of the music and the content, Israeli dancing hits us on an emotional level. And let's not forget the social benefits: dancing, interacting with people, holding hands (in non-pandemic times) are all very important. Let's face it: Israeli dancing is good for the mind *and* the soul!

You need to be fairly consistent about attending the weekly dancing sessions, especially when learning the new dances. Repetition is important and we can easily forget the steps if too much time has elapsed before our next dance session. But dancing regularly over time has allowed us to miss sessions and still remember steps once we have learned a dance. In addition, we have a wonderful list of YouTube videos we can reference, compiled by one of our members, if you need to refresh and practice any dance.

We have really enjoyed dancing and learning with the Ottawa Israeli Dance group: seeing people, exercising, being outdoors, and connecting. We think you would, too. And no experience is needed!

For more information, you can email Ottawa Israeli Dance at judy@ottawaisraelidance.ca or Phil at philkretzmar@gmail.com. You can also check out our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/OttawaisraeliDance>, where you can enjoy lots of photos and videos of dancing year-round!

Marian Lederman is a retired computer science professional. In her spare time, she volunteers with Na'amat Canada and is the current chair of the National Education Committee.



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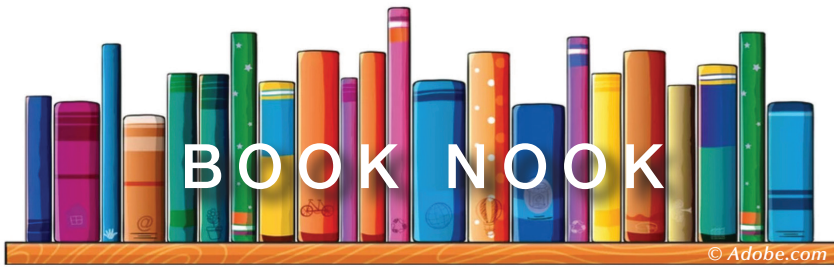
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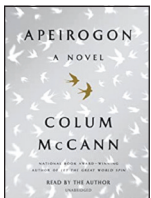
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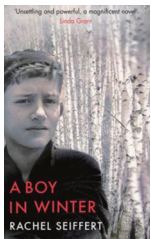


Don't know which book to buy or borrow from the library? This list of twelve books might be the place to start. They all focus on our rich history of persecution and survival, of triumph and revelation. They pack an emotional punch and are a must-read for all of us, lest we forget. Some are fiction, some are non. But all are worth the time spent “living” in the worlds their authors have created.



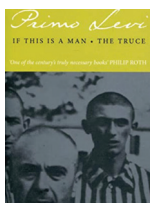
***Apeirogon* by Colum McCann (fiction)**

Written by a non-Jew, this fascinating and somewhat controversial book will remain in your thoughts long after you have read its final pages. It is about two real people, both fathers — a Palestinian and an Israeli — who lose their young children, one to a suicide bomber and one to an Israeli soldier. And it is about their delicate friendship and the sorrow that has brought them together. McCann has taken artistic licence in writing this powerful book, with these two men's blessings; it offers a tenuous hope for the future of Palestinians and Israelis, while leaving the reader changed.



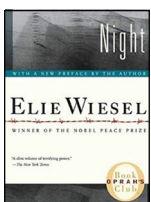
***A Boy in Winter* by Rachel Seiffert (fiction)**

Given the war in Ukraine right now, this book is a propos. Taking place in the Ukraine of 1941, after the Russians have left, it is the story of 13-year-old Yankel — a Jewish boy who manages to escape the Nazis as they search for Jews throughout the villages and farmland. Written by the granddaughter of Nazis, this is the story of survival and how easily ordinary, decent people are swept up in events they have no control over.



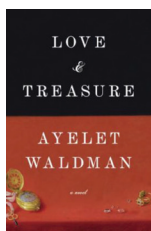
***If This is a Man* by Primo Levi (non-fiction)**

Primo Levi, a chemist and writer, has written a memoir about enduring the unendurable and surviving Auschwitz. He was one of 20 from 650 in his transport of Italian Jews who survived the camps in Auschwitz. He writes, in the German preface to the book, “I cannot tolerate – that a man be judged not for what he is, but for the group into which he happens to belong.”



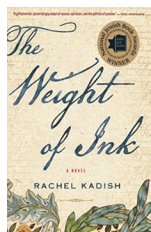
***Night* by Elie Wiesel (non-fiction)**

Night is another memoir and Elie Wiesel's masterpiece — an account of his survival in the Nazi death camps. He was a Hungarian teenager, studious and Orthodox, when rounded up by the Nazis in the early 1940s, and his remembrance of the horrors of Auschwitz tests his faith. He wrote this book so that people would never allow such barbarism to ever take place again.



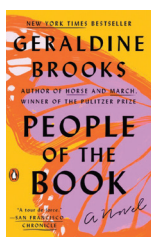
***Love & Treasure* by Ayelet Waldman (fiction)**

This historical work of fiction takes place in Salzburg in 1945, and in Budapest in 1913 and the present time. It centres around a piece of jewellery stolen from the Hungarian Gold Train that carried mountains of precious goods stolen by the Nazis to its coffers in Berlin. The peacock pendant is pilfered by a young army officer and the search for its owner by the now old and dying man's granddaughter is the focus of the story. It ponders the question of what has value in a time when the life of many held none.



***The Weight of Ink* by Rachel Kadish (fiction)**

More historical fiction, this time about an aging academic who comes across a collection of old parchments hidden within the walls of a house in London. Her sleuthing to find out about its origins takes her back to the 1600s and the scribe who penned the documents — a woman (unheard of in those times). From the Spanish Inquisition to pre- and post-plague London, from questions about G-d's existence and the meaning of life, this novel is full of fascinating characters and the restrictive lives they were forced to live. *The Weight of Ink* took the author 14 years to complete. No wonder, given the historical research that went into this brilliant book.



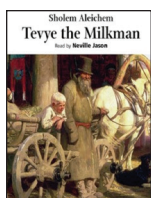
***People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks (fiction)**

Inspired by a true story, and written by a Pulitzer prize-winning author, this historical novel focuses on the very real and famed *Sarajevo Haggadah*, a beautifully illuminated Hebrew manuscript from fifteenth-century Spain. It goes back and forth in time, to Spain in the 1400s, to WWII, and then back again to 1996, when Hannah, an expert of rare books, is sent to inspect the priceless haggadah.



***Suite Française* by Irène Némirovsky (fiction)**

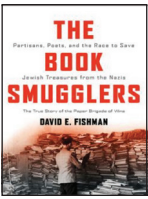
Irène Némirovsky, a French writer of Ukrainian-Jewish origin who wrote fourteen novels and countless short stories until her death in Auschwitz in 1942, wrote *Suite Française* during the occupation of France in 1940 by the Germans. It delivers a first-hand account of what it was like to live in France at the time. The book is the incomplete work of a planned five-part novel.



***Tevye the Dairyman* by Sholem Aleichem (fiction)**

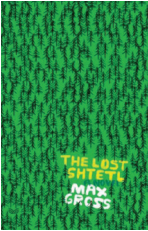
Yiddish author and playwright Sholom Aleichem could never know, when he wrote *Tevye the Dairyman*, that the book's beloved character would be the focus of a Broadway classic beloved by both Jews and Gentiles alike. Aleichem was a humourist and master of story-telling, and his charming novel set in rural Tsarist Russia provides a deeply poignant look into the difficult life of Tevye and other characters. Only available in an audio format as *Tevye the Milkman*, unless you can find the book with its original title in a second-hand book shop.





***The Book Smugglers: Partisans, Poets, and the Race to Save Jewish Treasures from the Nazis* by David E. Fishman (non-fiction)**

In the Vilna (Wilno) ghetto in Lithuania during Nazi-occupied Poland dwelled a group of intellectuals and poets who risked their lives to save thousands of rare books and manuscripts from being stolen or destroyed by the Nazis and the Soviet Union. They were known as the Paper Brigade, but they were also forced to set the best aside for the Nazis. This book tells the story of how they diverted many of those treasures to be hidden from the Nazis with risk to their lives.



***The Lost Shtetl* by Max Gross (fiction)**

Winner of the National Jewish Book Award and the Association of Jewish Libraries' Jewish Fiction Award, this imaginative novel is about a secret Polish village no one knows about that has escaped world's notice, including Holocaust. What happens when the world intrudes? Antisemitism, prejudice, and the horrors of the Holocaust are the themes of this, at times, witty and provocative book.



***The Paris Architect* by Charles Belfoure (fiction)**

This WWII thriller, written by an architect, is set in Nazi-occupied Paris during World War II. It centres on talented architect Lucien Bernard, desperate for work, who is commissioned to design hiding places for Jewish families so that they can escape Nazi detection. And then the plot thickens and Lucien finds himself in danger when one of the hiding places is discovered.

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I Laughed So Hard, My Bladder Lost It!

Let's Learn About Leaking

By Dr. Caroline Brandon, MD, MSc

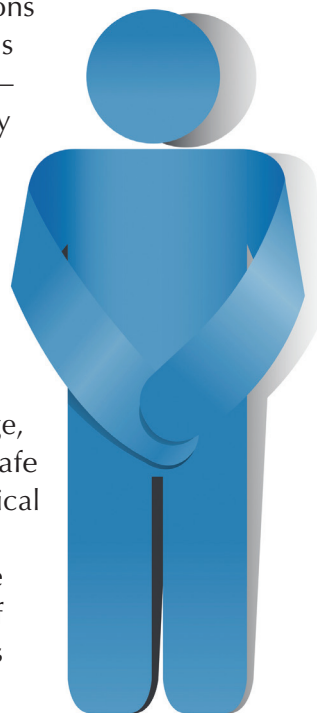
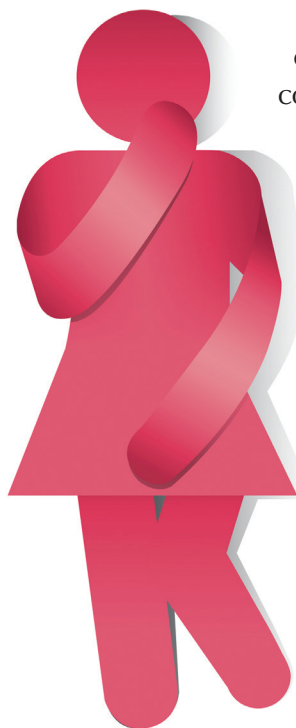
Involuntary urinary leakage — or urinary incontinence (UI) — is relatively common, affecting approximately one in five people, with women more affected than men. The chances of developing UI increases with age. While there are many potential causes, there are two main types of UI: stress urinary incontinence (SUI) and urgency urinary incontinence (UUI).

SUI is the involuntary loss of urine through coughing, laughing, sneezing, or with physical exertion. In women, it is thought to occur from a loss of support from weakened or altered pelvic floor muscles, particularly following childbirth. It is the most

common type of UI to affect women. In men, this type of leakage is generally experienced following surgery for prostate cancer.

The good news is that there are ways to improve SUI. In women, an 8% loss of body weight can decrease symptoms by up to 50% (an excellent excuse for your next health kick). Emptying the bladder completely before your exercise class is also helpful. And, you can choose from several options for treating this type of leakage — from consistently doing simple pelvic muscle exercises and using bladder support devices and other devices for combatting leakage, to undergoing safe and effective surgical procedures.

UUI is the involuntary loss of urine, when there is



an urge to urinate, often accompanied by frequent urination, in general, and frequent nighttime urination (called nocturia). UUI occurs when there is a strong desire to empty the bladder but urine escapes before reaching the toilet. For some people, the incontinence results in a few drops; for others, it's a deluge. These accidents are caused by involuntary spasms of the bladder wall muscle.

In the absence of a neurologic condition or a large prostate in men, the cause of UUI is unknown. However, small adjustments can help! Cutting fluids back by 25%, particularly caffeinated beverages, can improve symptoms. (The eight glasses of water requirement is a myth!) You can also retrain your bladder (potty-training 2.0). If nighttime is your big issue, then cutting all fluids at least two hours before bedtime can help. If sleep apnea is suspected, get evaluated for your condition, as treating the apnea helps treat your urinary frequency. Go figure! And if you're noticing lots of leg swelling, get evaluated by your doctor, while compression

stockings during the day can make a big difference for your night's sleep. If simple measures don't cut it, don't despair; there are excellent oral medications and more advanced treatments, such as Botox, that can treat your leakage (but not the wrinkles, sorry!).

It is important to be aware that while urinary leakage is relatively common, it is not "normal" and merits evaluation by your doctor. There are specialists known as urogynecologists and functional urologists who are trained to evaluate and treat these conditions. So, the next time you laugh so hard that you pee your pants, consider a trip to the doctor to discuss your options.

Dr. Caroline Brandon, born and bred in Ottawa, is a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist and fellowship-trained urogynecologist who specializes in pelvic floor disorders. She is currently in Paris, enjoying consuming large quantities of coffee and French wines, neither of which are good for her bladder.





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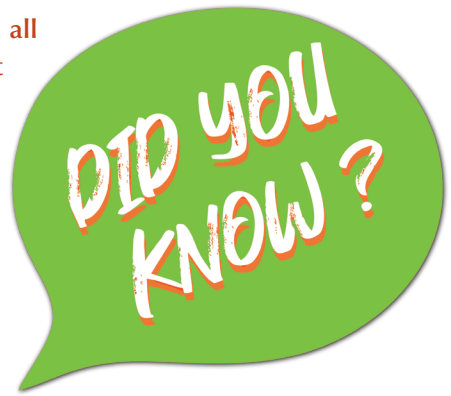
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People love trivia. You just have to look at all the available online trivia games, Trivia Quest from Netflix, the many different trivia board games you can buy, and the various nightly pub quiz evenings around town. If you're a trivia fan, you'll enjoy the following interesting factoids that you can add to your trivia collection. Who knows? One of them might just come up at the next trivia night you attend.



10 Fun Factoids for Trivia Afficionados

Did you know any of these interesting facts?

1. Israel is one of the smaller countries in Asia, with just barely an area of 22,145 square kilometres — or 8,630 square miles — in total.
2. The Dead Sea is really a salt lake. Its surface is 430.5 metres — or 1,412 feet — below sea level, making its shores the lowest land-based place on earth.
3. The distance between New York City and Jerusalem is about 9,180 kilometres (5,704 miles) — an even longer distance than between New York City and Buenos Aires (8,526.99 kilometres).
4. The Negev Desert takes up more than half of Israel's total land area, with 12,000 square kilometres — or 4,650 square feet.
5. Israel is surrounded by Arab countries. It borders with Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. Its maritime border is with Cyprus.
6. Israel is fairly self-sufficient when it comes to food production, servicing 95% of its needs. It supplements with imports of mostly grain, oilseeds, meat, coffee, cocoa, and sugar.
7. Tel Aviv is rated the third-most expensive city in the world by the Economic Intelligence Unit and the World Economic Forum. Singapore and New York are tied as the most expensive cities, with Hong Kong and Los Angeles tying for fourth place.
8. Israel has no written constitution.
9. The major function of the 120-member house of representatives in Israel, known as the Knesset, is to enact laws. It also supervises the executive branch of the Israeli government and can dissolve it at will.
10. There are approximately 200,000 female date palms in Israel — many of them young trees.

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