



AMERICAN VETERANS OF ISRAEL

VOLUNTEERS IN ISRAEL'S WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

UNITED STATES & CANADIAN VOLUNTEERS

136 East 39th St., New York, N.Y. 10016

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FOCUS FOR 2001

First and foremost, I hope that everyone enjoyed a Happy and Joyful Pesach in the warm surroundings of family and friends.

This year we follow our course with emphasis on the following objectives:

1. Validate and correct our membership records to have accurate contact data as well as a valid history of members' service and AVI association (Aliya Bet, Machal, recruiting and service, etc).

2. Accelerate the collection of documents and photographs for the AVI archives as well as the cataloguing of the material. Find the financial support to accomplish this in the shortest possible time.

3. Continue our activities in terms of reunions, special events, speaking engagements, newsletter publication and good & welfare.

4. Build up the AVI treasury to cover our activities and projects in coming years, with our ranks thinning as they are.

Since the earliest years, AVI members had hoped for a place of remembrance where our legacy could be perpetuated for future generations growing up in America and Canada. The opportunity may still come our way, if we remain active and involved. Though our ranks are thinning, we need to see each new day as an opportunity to help comrades, correct inaccuracies spread by uninformed and misguided observers, and to perpetuate our legacy for future generations. I am asking that more of our members and friends participate and get

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REPORTS FROM THE REGIONS

ISRAEL (WORLD) MACHAL

Smoky Simon announces Machal's Yom HaZicharon Service for Wednesday 25 April 2001. The service will be held at the Machal Memorial at Sha'ar Hagai beginning at 10:55 hours. The service will honour the memory of the 119 comrades who fell during the War of Independence. Unfortunately many fellow-Machalniks in Israel and abroad have passed away since the last Memorial Service. Rabbi David Rosen will again conduct the ceremonies. For further information write to Smoky Simon, El Al Building, 32 Ben Yehuda St., Tel Aviv. The telephone is 972-3-621-2724 and FAX 972-3-620-2621.

NORTHEAST

The Boston group met with Sam Klausner, then AVI President, and his wife on December 17 at a brunch hosted by Al and Lisa Glassman at their home. Also attending were Murray and Ethel Band, Arthur and Evie Bernstein, Avram and Esther Kalisky, Arnold and Fran Schutzberg. Discussion revolved about a number of AVI issues and, especially, an effort to encourage member to donate their memorabilia to the AVI Archives at the University of Florida.

The New York group has met to discuss forthcoming AVI events in the area. New York Board members are invited to attend Yom Ha'Atzmaut celebrations at the Consulate General of Israel in New York.

The annual ceremony at West Point honoring the memory of Col. David 'Mickey' Marcus is scheduled for May 13.

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DAVID HANOVICE REMEMBERS THE NOGA/YUCATAN

These are memories of the delivery of the Yucatan, renamed Noga – K – 26 in service during the 1948/49 Israeli War of Independence. In June 1948 I graduated from the School of Technology of the University of Houston as an Automotive and Diesel Technician after serving in the US Army during WW II overseas from Feb. 1943 to Jan. 1946.

As I was about to graduate from my studies, I planned to travel to Israel to participate in the Israeli war of independence that began just prior to my graduation. My application for a passport to travel to the war stricken area in the Middle East was denied by the State Department, I was determined to go to Israel anyhow. I obtained a US Coast Guard seaman's card to enable me to work my way on a merchant steam ship going to the Mediterranean if need be. I communicated with the Israeli student organization managed by Teddy Kollek under the auspices of the Supply Mission of the Jewish Agency in New York. My application was referred to Nat Cohen, an agent of the maritime section for action at that time, and very soon after that, I was directed to join the "MV. Yucatan", which was berthed at the Todd's Shipyard in New Orleans, Louisiana. I reported on board on the 1st of July 1948.

The Yucatan was under some repairs of its Hamilton main engines, Buda generators and other machinery in preparation for the expected ocean crossing. Naturally all this was supposed to be hush-hush, and nobody knew anything about our destination. The M.V. Yucatan, an ex-US Navy PC. 1265, a Submarine Chaser with service during

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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

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(Elected Officers)

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David Hanovice
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WW II was purchased by an undercover, underground Jewish organization and scheduled for delivery to the Israeli Navy, which was at that time in its infancy. The Captain, Benny Berg was in charge. There was a mixed crew of some American merchant seamen and some returning Israeli students, American and Canadian volunteers. The MV Yucatan was registered under a Panamanian flag, as a merchant ship, with Captain, Mates and Chief Engineer licensed as the law and insurance required. In all there were seventeen ship officers and crew members. These included Captain Ben Berg; Mates; Louis Malik and Jonathan Leff; Seamen deckhands; Danny Landau, Jacob Teichman (now Nachlieli) and Jack Fox, Merchant Marine Radioman Lopez, Steward and cook Steward Manuel, Mess- boy Steward's helper Nathan Mossaief (now Massi), Chief Engineer; Dan Bailey, 1st Engineer Ben Hagai Steuerman, Oiler day workers; Abraham Mandelberg and David Hanovice.

After reporting on board, barely learning our way around and getting acquainted with the machinery, we attempted to leave the dock for testing the Navigation, Radar equipment and compasses on board. With a new Deck crew at the helm, new Engineers and Engine crew, it became a trial and error exercise that turned into a fiasco.

There were too many bells for maneuverings in a tight space. With only one of two-air compressors in working condition., we were soon adrift, having used up all of the reserve compressed starting air pressure to fulfill the unending maneuvering bells. We drifted in the Mississippi River a few hundred feet, until a US Navy ship came to our assistance.

On the 4th of July, although not all of the repairs to the vessel were completed, or missing machinery replaced, we were on our way to Vera Cruz Mexico, a destination due to Washington's unexpected changes in political attitudes towards activities of Israeli underground organizations.. We took on supplies and diesel fuel to enable our vessel to reach the port of Marseille, France.

While underway to Vera Cruz, I had a chance to make use of my training at the

School of Technology of the University of Houston. One of the generators that were under repairs at Todd Shipyard in New Orleans was not in working order. I asked the Chief Engineer why we were not using the other generator to service the generator that was on line all along. The Chief Engineer said that it would be repaired as soon as we arrive in port. I asked permission to check out that non-functioning generator. And found the source of the problem. From parts discarded by the shipyard, that I found on board, I was able to rebuild the governor of the Bush unit fuel injection pump, start the generator and put it on line, and service and repair the 2nd generator properly before we came to port.

We arrived in the port of Vera Cruz Mexico on July 6th 1948. Two additional crewmembers joined our ship from one of the other undercover clandestine ship in Mexico at that time. These were Deck Officer, US Coast Guard licensed Mate, Bernie Marks an ex US Navy veteran of World War II, and Sidney Weinhaus an ex-US Navy veteran of world war II, who served as 2nd Electrician

While in Vera-Cruz our fuel tanks were topped off and we received some spare parts for the machinery and ship's provisions and supplies. Also several hundred 50-gallon-diesel fuel drums were stored in every available empty storage compartment on board and on the main deck with double layers of drums throughout the main deck area. All drums were properly lashed to prevent any losses overboard at rough seas; there were also catwalks and lifelines installed to enable the ship's crew to get around safely on deck. All of this took about 5 days to accomplish.

On or about July 12th 1948 as the Yucatan was ready to leave port, two of the merchant seamen acting as watch engineers, got drunk and quit their job. As we were leaving port the Chief Engineer Dan Bailey appointed me and the other oiler as acting watch engineers. I became Acting 2nd Assistant Engineer, the "Oil-King". One of my duties beside standing watches of 4 hours twice a day, was transferring diesel fuel oil from the 50-gallon drums stored all over the ship. I used hoses and low air pressure to push the diesel oil by the use of a jury rig to

one of the ship's storage tanks.

As we were sailing in the Gulf of Mexico eastward, just before passing the Island of Cuba, one of the main engines broke down and the Chief Engineer requested that we go to a shipyard in Havana for repairs. All arrangements were made by radio. We arrived there on the weekend, but the shipyard started work on the repairs immediately.

In the port of Havana, while in the shipyard, our ship's crew had time off, and we all had a good time for 3 to 4 days. It seemed like a seaman's paradise. We sailed out of Havana eastward towards Gibraltar. The Atlantic was mostly calm, and as we approached Spain, one of our reduction gears lube oil coolers sprang an internal leak and the seawater contaminated the supply of lube oil to that reduction gear. We did not have a lube oil purifier in working order, so the main engine had to be secured to avoid damage to the reduction gear.

We needed about 300 gallons of marine type lube oil to replenish the reduction gearbox system. The closest port where we could get that quantity and type of lube oil was Lisbon, Portugal. We sailed northward to Lisbon Portugal and arrived there on the weekend again. The supply agent could not get the lube oil supply right away; we were at anchor in the port area for several days.

Members of the ship's crew who were not on duty could go ashore. We saw a bullfight at the municipal arena with all the glitter you see in the movies.

On or about August 8th 1948 we set sail for the Straits of Gibraltar and passed through it at full speed of 18 knots. Following the coast of Spain, northward, we came upon "The Lion's Gulf" and for the rest of the voyage to Marseille France we were in the midst of a terrible storm and making little headway. The ship was rolling over 40 degrees to each side, everybody on board was sick as a dog.

On or about August 18th we finally arrived in the port of Marseille, France, during a reprieve in the fighting in Israel. Due to League of Nations policing of the temporary stop of hostilities in and around Israel and the Arab countries. We were not able to sail to Haifa immediately. While waiting in Marseille, all of the American Merchant Seamen, including

Captain Ben Berg, C/E Dan Bailey, 1st Assistant Engineer Ben Hagai Steuerman and Bernie Marks transferred to another ship. The other volunteers continued with the Yucatan to Haifa. We went to dry docking for inspection were they repaired the storm damages and overhauled both main engines before sailing to Haifa, Israel. In Marseille, Ben Halpern joined the Ship as Chief Engineer and also managed it as ship's agent. He knew his way around and spoke French fluently. I was appointed to work with the shipyard technicians, supervise and assist in the overhaul of the main engines and other engine room repairs, supplying them with needed spare parts from the ship's inventory. Volunteers from among Jewish DP's and others from DP camps around Marseille who were awaiting transportation to Israel at that time performed some of the work of the ship's maintenance.

On or about September 20th when the ship was given the OK to sail, a Captain of the Israeli merchant fleet and some other officers and crew were sent from Israel to complement the crew in delivery of the Yucatan to Haifa. The new crew included Captain Johnny Turtle, Chief Mate Norbert, Bosun Walter Michaelis, Steward - cook Janosh and Israeli Merchant Marine Engineer, Gideon. Remaining of original Yucatan volunteers were Mate Louis Malik, Mate Jonathan Leff, Seamen Danny Landau, Jacob Teichman (Nachlieli), Jack Fox and Steward's assistant mess boy Nathan Mosaief (Massi). Also Chief Engineer Ben Halpern, 14 Acting 1st assistant Engineer David Hanovice, Acting 2nd Assistant Engineer Abraham Mandelberg and Chief Electrician Sidney Weinhaus.

Volunteer crew from the DP camp in Marseille included Mate Abraham Pezaro, Deck hand Charlie Bortz (The Paratrooper) and a Deck hand. Serving in the Engine Department were Engine day worker Martin Gross, Oiler day worker David Katz and Oiler day worker Bernard Kassin.

On or about Sept. 22nd 1948 we sailed from the port of Marseille France. On our way to Haifa Israel as we entered international waters there was a flag raising ceremony on board, the Israeli flag was raised for the first time and the ship was renamed MV Noga. I was given the honor of raising the flag. During the

voyage to Haifa we encountered a severe storm in the eastern Mediterranean. The ship's Steward- cook Janosh became sea sick and could not feed the crew. One of the Mates, Abraham Pezaro, took charge of the galley for about 5 days and did a very good job. We arrived in the port of Haifa on Sept. 29th 1948.

Upon arrival there was a big welcome. Many Israeli Government and Navy Officials came on board as soon as we docked to welcome and thank each of the crewmembers. After immigration and custom inspections we were able to go ashore. The following day was payoff for the delivery crew. The MV Noga was turned over officially on Sept. 31st 1948 to the Israeli Navy becoming K 26. Navy officers and crewmembers of various ratings started coming on board to establish Naval routine and security for the newly commissioned K 26. At the same time shipyard crews and Naval ordinance experts came on board to outfit the K 26 with communication and other equipment, anti-aircraft guns and a Naval cannon at the bow, depth charge racks at the stern deck, upgraded the original Radar and checked the possibility of reactivating the sonar equipment. A complete inventory of equipment, spare parts, materials, and provisions was duly taken. The shore gangs worked around the clock. The resumption of warfare was imminent and the K 26 was expected to take an active part.

While this was going on, we had a daily parade of potential replacement engine department crew. Many came, but very few wanted to stay. All kinds of reasons were given. The ship was too small and crowded, the engine room had too much machinery controls and alarms and was too complicated as well as other unmentionable reasons. Meanwhile the Chief Engineer Ben Halpern was due to return to the USA but could not leave till there was a relief Chief Engineer. He recommended that I take over his position so that he could return home.

At that time, being that I was not a licensed Marine Engineer and had only about 3 months of maritime and marine engineering experience, I didn't feel competent enough to fill that position and responsibility, although I was able to operate and repair the ship's machinery and handle the engine crew. The K 26

outfitting was completed in less than 10 days, we were ordered out for patrol duties. Chief Engineer Ben Halpern agreed to stay for several weeks and I was pressured by Paul Schulman, Chief of staff of the Israeli navy at that time, and his second in command Moca Limon, to stay and join the Israeli Navy on the K 26 as a replacement for Ben Halpern when he departs

All of our newly arrived volunteers who eventually remained to serve in the Israeli Navy were sworn in at the Bat-Galim Naval Base and returned to the K 26. Soon enough the K 26 participated in all of the Naval engagements that took place at that time and era of the 1948/49 war of independence. We had a crew of about 70 officers and crewmembers; many were Machalnicks who had served in WW II in the Allied Armed Forces and Navies.

I will not attempt to name all of the new crew, but a partial list is as follows:
 Captain Jocky Epstein, C/Mate Abraham Pezzaro (Machal - Dutch), Mate Yekotiel Pick (Netz), Mate Yochanan Cohen, Radar Technician Gerald Cohen (Machal - USA), Ship's Medic Arthur Braver (Machal - USA), Gunnery Off. Charlie Mandelstem (Machal - South Africa), Supply Officer Mircha, Bosun Arthur Cohen, (Machal - USA), C/Engineer Ben Halpern (Machal - USA), 1st Assistant Engineer David Hanovice (Machal - USA), Assistant Engineer Bernard Rose (Machal - Britain), Assistant Engineer Moshe Spector, Assistant Engineer Gad Avni, Junior Engineer Martin Gross (Day work) (Machal - USA), C/Electrician Sidney Weinhaus (Machal - USA), 2nd Electrician Moshe Schaumburg Oiler Bernie Kassin (Day work) (Machal - USA) and other crew members of various ratings and duties.

As the hostilities of war resumed, the K 26 participated in all Naval engagements and we were also attached to the Shayetet 13. On Oct. 22nd 1948 the Yochai Boat was to be lowered from our deck for action to sink the Egyptian Flagship the "Emir Farouk". I was called up from the Engine room to operate the deck crane to lower Yochai with his boat over the side to the water, so that he could get on to his mission. Ben Halpern and Captain Jocky Epstein left a few

weeks later. Chief Mate Abraham Pezzaro was appointed Captain of the K 26, and I was promoted to Chief Engineer of the K 26. On Oct. 10th I became a member of the Israeli Armed Forces, with a commission as Hovel in the Israeli Navy.

Throughout my service as C/Engineer on the K 26, my engine department was always on ready to sail status and in top mechanical condition. The engine crew and myself performed most of the maintenance and repair work, at times of emergency breakdowns at sea, or alongside the dock with or without assistance of the Naval machine and repair shop at the Navy piers within the Haifa port area. Even after the hostilities ended we were out on patrol missions most of the time, except for occasional port calls to fuel up, get provisions and crew changes. After a while, the engine department on the K 26 became a training center for engine personnel of all ratings. Engineers, Engine Cadets and oilers were sent for various periods of time or voyages. As soon as I was getting them to the point that I could benefit from their training, they were reassigned to other ships or bases and new ones came instead. It was hard work I put into those young men. Also I had to be on the lookout that with the continuous crew turnover, that there was no damage done to machinery, no one got hurt and that we were in operating condition ready to sail when called upon at any time.

In the K 26 engine room there were 2 Marine type Hamilton main engines of 1700 HP each, 10 cylinder 2 cycle double acting supercharged diesels, air started direct reversible engines, with an hydraulic clutch and Westinghouse reduction gear for each. With twin propellers. There were also a complement of 2 Buda generators and other auxiliaries to accommodate the ship's operations requirements and crew's comfort.

After a year of service on the Yucatan K 26, on July 21st 1949, I got my discharge and returned to the United States to continue my studies. Although the K 26 was in good operating condition at that time, it came to a stand still and never sailed again on its own power due to lack of competent engineering officers remaining on board. Eventually the K 26

became a hotel service and electric power supply mother ship for the small boat fleet at the Naval southern section of the breakwater within the port area of Haifa. Years later when the steel hull of the K 26 deteriorated it was used for torpedo target practice and was sunk. It ended at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea, near the Israeli coastline.

The K 26 was a fine ship. As a former crewmember who delivered and operated her for 1 full year during a very difficult time for the State of Israel and the building up of the Israeli Navy, I hated to see her end up the way it did. My service on the Yucatan and in the Israeli Navy on the K 26 motivated me to choose ship repairs and Marine Engineering as my profession for the rest of my productive years of employment. Over 14 years in various ship repair shops. Then sailing as a US Coast Guard licensed Marine Engineer in all ratings from 3rd Assistant to Chief Engineer on various types and sizes of Bulk, Cargo, Tankers, and Container Ships for 22 years, till retirement at age 65 eleven years ago. From Dec. 14th 1949 to July 18 1950 I worked for the Government of Israel Defense Division of Supplies Marine Department in New York under the direction of Ben Halpern in the refitting of the SS Violetta. She was a surplus WW II Canadian Corvette 5000 H.P twin screw at the Todd shipyard in New Orleans. I participated as a crewmember in her delivery to Haifa to become Israeli Navy K 28.

Again I was called upon by Ben Halpern in June 16th 1951 to Aug. 30 1954 to assist in the conversion and delivery of the PC 1188 MV Snonit (a sister ship to the Yucatan) to Haifa to become Israeli Navy K 22 that became part of Shayetet 13 operation. After the delivery of the K 22 I remained in Haifa almost a year to train Navy crews in the operation and maintenance of the newly converted engine room of that ship, with twin marine type main propulsion Daimler Benz 20 cylinder V type 4 cycle diesel engines 2500 H.P. each. It gives me great satisfaction and pride to have actively participated in the Israeli War of Independence and have a share in the creation of the State of Israel and a homeland for the Jewish people.

During my period of service on the K 26

I met my future wife, Rose and we were married 3 years later. We have 5 children and at present 7 grandchildren. I write this for my children and grandchildren.

**Reports from the Regions
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The speaker will be Pinkus Alon, New York General Consul.

New York's Israel Day parade will be held on Sunday, May 20th. Two cars will be available for those unable to march. Two AVI Banner carriers and two flag bearers will be assigned..

For information on New York events contact AVI Vice President, David Kaplan

AVI members in Southern New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware are invited to a reception in honor of Israel's fifty-third Independence Day at the University of Pennsylvania Museum on Wednesday April 25 at 7 P.M. For reasons of security it is necessary to confirm your intent to attend to the consulate (215-546-5556).

Chief Engineer of the Uluu, Ephraim Tsouk, will be visiting First engineer Eugene Alexander in Hummelstown, PA on April 29. Joining them will be shipmates Bosun Irving Weingarten and Mate Arthur Bernstein. For details call Gene at 717-566-1654.

SOUTHEAST

Consul General of Israel in Miami, Miki Arbel, has invited AVI members to a reception in honor of the fifty-third anniversary of the State of Israel on April 25 at 8 P.M. The reception will take place at the Aventura Turnberry Jewish Center-Beth Jacob. For information call William Gelberg 407-278-7392.



**LOUIS MALIK
REMEMBERED BY
HIS FAMILY**

Louis Malik was born June 19, 1921 into an orthodox family, the third of eleven children of Rose and Harry Malik, Cleveland, Ohio. He died December 9, 1970.

Louis was not the prototype of a nice Jewish boy. He did not complete his Bar Mitzvah and quit school at 16 years of age. Having suffered a leg injury in a motorcycle accident he was rejected by the military during World War II but was accepted by the Merchant Marine. He graduated Merchant Marine School, King's Point at Fort Trumbel, New London Conn. In 1945-1946 a representative of the Haganah on the East Coast recruited him. Subsequently he graduated seamanship school in Haifa. Shortly after that the FBI inquiring about Louis visited the family in Cleveland. Bernie Marks told us that Louis had joined the underwater demolition team in Palestine. He was part of a group responsible for blowing up the Egyptian ship King Farouk.

Later he reported to the members of the family that he had served on the Yucatan, the Mala, the Theodore Herzl, the Exodus, Hashlosa, Masada and the Geula. He spoke of some of his comrades between 1945 and 1952. These included Bernie Marks (Yucatan), Al Elis (Yucatan), who helped Israel develop the Drone plane. Lenny Cohen of Imperial Valley, CA, Paul Kaye, Moishe Katznelson, Israel, David Havorice (Yucatan), Abe Marvin Rosenberg and E. Tsouk.

Louis married Bebe Kaufman in 1948 or 1949. They lived three years in Israel. Bebe had come from Yugoslavia and had been Miss. Belgrade of 1945. She had been a partisan in the forests. Her father was a doctor and had been a political prisoner. Louis had met her sun bathing aboard deck on one of the ships that sailed from Cyprus to Palestine. Her sister and mother had survived and immigrated to Israel. Louis and Bebe had no children.

In 1952, they returned to the States because of Bebe's ill health. At age 35 Louis entered dental school at Ohio State University. Though he had not graduated high school. An entrance test proved him qualified. After seven years, at age 42, he passed the Ohio and California State Dental Licensure examinations. He opened his dental office in Antioch, Ca.

Louis died from some an allergic reaction to a substance in his office at age 49. Three years later, Bebe died from breast cancer. They left no children.

He told the family many times:" My life was not lived in vain. I am responsible for helping to save thousands of Jewish immigrants reach Israel under the guns of the British."

Over 100 nieces and nephews are proud of Louis's heroic deeds in helping our people. Even though Louis did not adhere closely to Judaism, his Jewish neshama shone through his valor in serving Eretz Israel.

Those that served with Louis said that he was tough, smart and unafraid.

His surviving sisters have gathered this information to memorialize him: Betty Malik Gressel , Chicago IL, Dorothy Malik Rubin, Anaheim, CA, Miriam Malik Fox, Palo Alto, CA, Sylvia Malik Kugelman, Cleveland, OH, Joan Malik Hoffman, New York, New York and Jean Malik Rubinstein, New York, New York.

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OBITUARIES

HYMAN GOLDSTEIN AIR FORCE VETERAN

The ranks of former Israel Air Force (IAF) pilots of the War of Independence era were further diminished on June 1st, 2000, when Hy 'Chaim' Goldstein passed away in Florida.

Although his previous flying experience was as a civilian licensed private pilot, Hy's record as an IAF pilot in 1948 was quite remarkable. His unique story is almost inseparable from that of Ralph Moster, with whom he worked closely during most of the war.

Ralph and Hy were appointed C/O and deputy-commander respectively of the Negev Squadron soon after its move from Nir-Am to Dorot in July 1948. Dorot became isolated from the rest of the country when the Egyptian army swept into the Negev, and was now one of several such Israeli-held pockets that were accessible only by air. A dirt strip hacked out of the desert served as runway for their small fleet of light planes, and for the transport airplanes that flew in supplies almost nightly.

When they took command, the squadron had only a few restored ex-RAF Austers which were augmented in September by some new 90 horsepower Piper Cubs. Ralph and Hy soon proved themselves to be bold and imaginative leaders of the 'follow-me' type, and were much respected by the young Israeli pilots under their command. Their's was an all-purpose communications squadron, whose duties included support of Palmach units operating in the area and local reconnaissance flights. To minimize the risks of being attacked by Egyptian Air Force fighters, who controlled the skies of Israel during the day, the squadron's airplanes flew mainly at night. Daily before dawn, the planes would be rolled by hand into inclined dug-outs and covered with camouflage netting; there to remain hidden from enemy eyes until nightfall.

On the eve of Operation Yoav (a.k.a. Ten Plagues), the squadron then consisted of five Piper Cubs, one Auster, five young Israeli pilots as well as Ralph and Hy. One of the Israeli pilots doubled as base intelligence officer and another handled administrative matters.

Some 24 hours before the start of Operation Yoav, two other pilots and I spent a night shuttling back and forth between Sde Dov and Dorot in three Rapides delivering the bombs the Negev Squadron required for the campaign. Hy and Ralph worked right



"L-R Bill Wadman, Hy Goldstein, 1948"

through that night under black-out conditions, as one with the pilots under their command, participating in all the goings on. They were the flying controllers for our repeated landings and take-offs, they supervised the lighting and dousing of the goose-neck flare path, helped unload our cargoes and did whatever else had to be done.

Ralph and Hy used those bombs throughout Operation Yoav in a unique tactic they themselves had devised, which contributed much toward the campaign's objective of driving the Egyptians out of the Negev. Working closely with an army liaison officer, they would fly as many missions as each night allowed. The door panels of their Piper Cubs had been removed, and in the rear seats was a 'bomb-chucker' holding a box of 'our' bombs on his lap. Because of the special skills required, only Ralph and Hy flew those missions while the younger pilots doubled as their 'bomb-chuckers' and flew the squadron's more usual missions.

Their targets were enemy-held entrenched positions that the army wanted to knock out. After identifying a targeted position, no easy task from altitudes of 1500 or 2000 feet even on moonlit nights, they would throttle back and glide silently down until just a few meters over it. Then the 'chucker' would toss out as many bombs as he could while the pilot opened full throttle to climb away for the next attack. Not having heard the attacker's silent approach, and with the exploding bombs drowning out the engine noise of the rapidly departing airplane, the Egyptian soldiers never knew what hit them and almost always abandoned their position in a panicky

retreat.

On one occasion during the campaign they were asked to drop experimental bombs whose fuses had to be manually ignited just before being tossed out of the plane. Being avid cigar smokers and worried about the dangers of lighting a match in flight, Hy and Ralph chose to ignite the fuses from their burning cigars rather than with a match. Nevertheless, the experiment showed that this bomb-type was too dangerous to plane and occupants to justify further development.

Several days into the campaign, when the Egyptian army was no longer in their vicinity, they began flying also in daylight. The risk of being attack by Egyptian airplanes prompted them to ask for fighter cover, but 101 Squadron was too short of fighter aircraft to be able to comply. To defend themselves against enemy fighters, Ralph and Hy tried flying with Sten guns on their laps but soon realized that the chances of striking their own propellers or other parts of their planes were very great. The gun also got in the way of the joy stick. So they abandoned the idea and flew close to the ground instead.

By the end of Operation Yoav Be'ersheba had been captured, and the Egyptian army was out of the Negev except for the Faluja pocket and the Gaza strip. The Negev Squadron was now redundant, and was soon disbanded. In the ensuing shuffle of pilots and airplanes, Hy was appointed C/O of the Galil Squadron, which was now based at Ramat David, while Ralph was made acting C/O of Sde Dov's No.1 Squadron.

Only a few weeks later, on December 7th, 1948 (Pearl Harbor Day), Ralph was killed in a tragic accident on the Kinneret. This proved to be a very hard blow for Hy and following the end of Operation Horev in January, after the last battles of the war had been fought, he decided that it was time to go home.

Those of us who knew him back then will always remember Hy Goldstein as an unusually brave and imaginative pilot, who almost single-handedly did so much to help win the all-important War of Independence.

Hyman Goldstein's wife predeceased him. During his last years he had retired to Florida.

Eddy Kaplansky

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OBITUARIES (continued)



"Arnold Kite, 1983"

ARNOLD KITE, PADUCA SEAMAN

Arnold Kite died in late February 2001. He had served on the Paduca ferrying DP's to Palestine on the fateful voyage in which the ship was boarded by the British Naval forces and the crew and passengers detained in Cyprus. He remained in Israel working on a kibbutz for some years after the war. He returned to live out his remaining years in Buffalo Grove, IL and is survived by his wife Gertrude..

Ben Hagai Steuerman

*Send condolences to
Gertrude Kite
833 Marseilles Circle
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089*

RABBI JOSEPH HECKELMAN, ISRAEL AIR FORCE

Our former comrade-in-arms, Rabbi Joseph Heckelman, was felled by a heart attack in Safed, Israel, on February 1st at age 75. He had undergone surgery a day earlier to repair a broken hip suffered in a fall.

In WW2 he served in the Pacific on a USN destroyer escort as an electronic technician specializing in anti-radar. In June 1948 he and his wife, Tziporah, arrived in Israel as overseas volunteers barely six months after their

marriage. They both served in the Israel Air Force until mid-1949, she in codes and cyphers and he in 505 (Radar) Squadron as one of its founding members. He was the IDF's only anti-radar specialist through the entire war.

Not long after their return to the USA, Joseph was called upon to replace his father as head of the family business, The Olympic Glove Company.

Always keenly interested in Judaism and the Jewish people, in 1961, at age 36, he enrolled in the Jewish Theological Seminary and was ultimately ordained as a rabbi. He was Rabbi of Beth El Synagogue in Waterbury, Connecticut, from 1966 to 1976. During that same period he taught courses in Jewish history at the University of Hartford.

In 1971 Rabbi Heckelman was awarded a Doctorate in Hebrew Literature by the Jewish Theological Seminary. His doctoral thesis formed the basis of his 1974 book, American Volunteers and Israel's War of Independence, which remains the most comprehensive work to date on the subject.

Upon making Aliya in 1976, Rabbi and Tziporah Heckelman settled in Safed and established a Conservative (Masorti) synagogue, the first in Western Galilee, Kehilat Shalva. Initially they encountered hostility from the Safed "establishment." But in time, and through personal, contact they achieved full acceptance and a high level of respect. Thanks to their dedicated efforts, Kehillat Shalva is the only Conservative synagogue in Israel with its own cemetery.

They were the driving force in creating Safed's Committee for Ethiopian Jewry in which Orthodox, secular and Masorti Jews work together. Rabbi Heckelman was its co-chairman since inception. New immigrants from the former USSR felt very much at home at Kehillat Shalva, which helped renew their bonds to Judaism.

Rabbi Heckelman was an active member of AVI, and of World Machal after his Aliya. He was on World Machal's committee charged with identifying all the overseas volunteers killed or missing in the War of Independence for purposes of the Memorial. His fellow committee members, Joe Woolf and this writer, recall with admiration his untiring efforts to achieve an unassailable degree of historical accuracy. Indeed, all those who ever had the privilege of working with him will remember Rabbi Heckelman as one for whom

truth was always very important.

Rabbi Joseph Heckelman is survived by his wife, Tziporah, by their son and daughter Yaqub and Sara, brothers Sol and David and by several 'outreach' youngsters they had 'adopted' as permanent house guests.

Eddy Kaplansky, Haifa

*Condolences may be sent to
Tziporah Heckelman
P.O.Box 1195, Safed 13111, Israel
Fax: + (972 4) 692 0270*

Contributions in Rabbi Heckelman's memory may be mailed to the same address, by check (or money order) payable to Keren Yosef, a fund established in his memory to help assure the continuity of Kehillat Shalva in its traditional location.



"Joe and Tsipora Heckelman, 1948"

Following are two letters sent on the occasion of a memorial service for A. J. Heckelman in Connecticut in March 2001.

Dear Rabbi Wiesenberg,

I regret that we will not have a personal representative from the A.V.I. to speak for Rabbi Heckelman's comrades in our organization. Time, lack of proximity and illness have limited the number able to undertake this last tribute.

I have attached a message of condolence from our President, Mr. Simon Spiegelman,

OBITUARIES (continued)

for presentation at the Memorial Service. I was fortunate in meeting Rabbi Heckelman at one of our A.V.I. Reunions in Eretz several years ago. The reunion itinerary was specifically designed to bring us to his home in Safed where he and his wife Tziporah were our gracious hosts. His greetings were warm and encouraging despite his severe physical handicaps. We were left with a strong sense of comradeship and great respect for his and Tziporah's lifelong endeavors.

Thank you for including the American Veterans of Israel in this Memorial to one of our own.

David Kaplan
Vice President AVI

March 2, 2001

Mrs. Tziporah Heckelman
P.O.B. 1195
Safed, Israel

Dear Mrs. Heckelman,

It is with deep sadness that I convey to you most heartfelt condolences on behalf of each and every member of the American Veterans of Israel on the loss of your husband and our *haver*.

He was truly an exceptional person. He was a friend and a rabbi in the real sense of the word; he was one of us, woven of the same cloth. Those of us who dealt with Joe found him a serious, passionate and dedicated person and friend. He knew Israel and also understood the Jewish diaspora, especially the American. As our president in 1962 he helped reorganize the A.V.I. into a functioning, cohesive group.

We recall with fond memory our visit to your home on our reunion in 1996. The warmth and feeling of comradeship that you and Joe projected was palpable throughout our stay.

We join you in your sorrow. We will miss and remember our Rabbi Joseph Heckelman, *Alav Hashalom*.

His and your lives' story will be an example and inspiration for the generations that follow us. May you be consoled among the mourners of Zion and Yerushalayim.

With warmest regards,

Simon Spiegelman
President, American Veterans of Israel

WE REGRET TO REPORT

Jack Horn of Jefferson, LA died on August 7, 2000 in Clifton, NJ at the age of 72.

Mendy Mendelsohn of Kibbutz Ma'ayan Baruch died in the early months of 2001.

Harvey Sirlin (formerly Sirulnikof) of Thornhill, Ontario died recently. He had volunteered in 1948 from his hometown of Winnipeg and served in Palmach's Negev Brigade and in army artillery.

Leonard Fox, originally of Toronto, died in February 2001. He had served in the Givati Brigade.

David Drutz of Downsview, Ontario died recently. He had served in the RCAF as a Radio Operator. In Israel he was, briefly, with the 103rd Squadron. In July 1948 he participated in the bombing of Kuneitra where he escaped death in an accident with the DC3 in which he was a crew member. Later he joined the IAF training command and provided instruction in the use of Morse Code in in-flight radio operation.

CORRECTION

The death of Joe Warner of Canada was recently reported erroneously. The correct information, as supplied by Jerry Rosenberg, is that his wife of many years had died.

President's Message
continued from Page 1

involved in AVI activities and issues. Much remains to be done. Please, contact me at (212) 685-8548, (spiegelman@aol.com) or Dave Kaplan at (845) 357-2929, (litvak@juno.com) for further information.

Si Spiegelman

From the editor..

We are all aware of the increasing space in our Newsletter devoted to remembering comrades who have died over the past few months. This is one occasion to recall their service, to honor them with an appropriate recitation of their lives and to comfort their survivors.

Yet, as you will note, the information we have on our comrades is quite uneven. For some we have only been able to record their name and the fact of their passing. Perhaps, this is a reflection of the fact that, while we are members of AVI, the past associations recede until we are not able to locate a person who direct us to survivors, a published obituary or memories of 1948.

If you recognize a name with sparse information, please contact the editor so that we may compensate with a fuller obituary in a future issue of the AVI Newsletter. Editor: Samuel Z. Klausner, telephone 215 473 6034, FAX 215 473 3998, sklausne@dca.net.

**YOUR AVI DUES REMITTANCE IS IMPORTANT
FOR ALL OF US**

**OUR RANKS ARE THINNING
PLEASE DO YOUR SHARE. TODAY**

WHEREABOUTS OF US MACHALNIK SOUGHT



The special IDF unit dealing with Missing In Action (MIA) cases, is trying to locate the US Machalnik pictured above who may know something that will help them determine the fate of two 1948 MIAs.

The person they're seeking served in the Palmach's Yiftach Brigade in May and/or June 1948 when it was based in Rosh Pina. He was also at Filon army camp, Rosh Pina, several days before the first UN Truce where the the group photo below was taken. Perhaps someone may identify others from this photo.

If you can identify this person, or others in the photo below, or know their whereabouts, please contact IDF MIA researcher Yaoz Ribinzon or Eddy Kaplansky at addresses below.

Yaoz Ribinzon, 2 Ein Gev St
Givat Ella 23800. Israel
e-mail: alonwine@netvision.net.il

Eddy Kaplansky, 58/83 Hillel St
Haifa 33728, Israel
e-mail: kaplansk@bezeqint.net



AL SCHWIMMER PARDONED BY CLINTON

Al (Adolph) Schwimmer, AVI member and long-time director of Israel Aircraft Industries was among those pardoned by President Clinton in the last days of his presidency. Schwimmer had been convicted, along with Hank Greenspun, in 1950 of violating the Neutrality Act. He paid a \$10,000 and was deprived of his civil rights, including the right to vote or claim government benefits. President John Kennedy had pardoned Greenspun, restoring his civil rights, in 1961. Schwimmer, now 83, had never applied for a pardon. Brian Greenspun, son of Hank, and a Las Vegas attorney, submitted a petition for pardon to President Clinton.

Schwimmer was a native of Bridgeport and had served in WWII as a flight engineer. He volunteered for the Haganah in 1947 and was instrumental in bringing some two dozen planes to Palestine and assisting in the recruitment of pilots for the nascent Air Force. He retired from the Israel Aircraft Industries in 1980 and currently lives in Tel Aviv.



AMERICAN VETERANS OF ISRAEL

VOLUNTEERS IN ISRAEL'S WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

UNITED STATES & CANADIAN VOLUNTEERS

136 East 39th St., New York, N.Y. 10016

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED