

## IN THE NEWS

**Gerald Ford dies at 93**

Gerald Ford, the U.S. president who in his brief term engaged in intensive diplomacy that paved the way for Israeli-Egyptian peace, died at age 93.

Ford's wife, Betty, reported the death in a statement Tuesday. Ford, Richard Nixon's vice president, assumed the presidency in August 1974 when Nixon resigned in the wake of the Watergate political spying scandal. Ford's two-and-a-half years in office were eventful and engaged, particularly in the Middle East.

He kept Henry Kissinger as his secretary of state, mindful of the delicate fabric of the armistice emerging after the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Kissinger's intensive shuttle diplomacy and Ford's active interest culminated in a truce between Israel and Egypt in 1975. That truce laid the groundwork for the 1978 Camp David accords. Ford met frequently with his liaison to the Jewish community, Max Fisher.

**Israel to target Gaza rocketeers**

Israel announced it would resume military strikes against Palestinian rocketeers in the Gaza Strip.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's Security Cabinet made the decision Wednesday after a rocket salvo the previous day from Gaza wounded two boys, one critically, in the Israeli border town of Sderot.

**Israel postpones humanitarian measures**

Israel postponed the implementation of a series of humanitarian gestures toward Palestinians in the West Bank.

It was decided Tuesday that the army would not begin removing roadblocks until the beginning of next week, partly due to weather conditions. The army does not intend to remove the blockade around Nablus because of terrorist cells known to be active there.



# WORLD REPORT

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## As camps get more professional, directors turn to CEO-like training

By JACOB BERKMAN

**N**EW YORK (JTA) — As Jewish camps become more Pellegrino than bug juice, a new fellowship at Brandeis University is aiming to make the Jewish camp director more CEO than glorified counselor.

The Foundation for Jewish Camping and Brandeis University will offer a fellowship to train the next generation of directors of nonprofit Jewish camps, the two announced at a Nov. 29 cocktail reception in New York at the Samuel Bronfman Foundation.

The fellowship, started in honor of camping foundation founders Rob and Elisa Spungen Bildner, will allow one student to pursue a degree in Jewish communal service together with a master's degree in business. It is believed to be the first program of its kind in the Jewish camping world.

"This is a story about the professionalization of Jewish camping," said Jonathan Sarna, a Brandeis expert in Jewish history who helped design the fellowship. "Whereas once upon a time, people who ran Jewish camps learned how to do it on the job or learned by being the associate director, there is now a sense that camp is a big business. I expect that a generation from now we will look back and say that in our era, Jewish camping came into its own as a distinct profession."

Several recent studies have shown that overnight camps are the most effective tool for establishing Jewish continuity, as they provide immersion in Jewish settings along with positive social experiences.

In the past 10 to 15 years, however, non-

profit Jewish camps have struggled to keep pace with the growing world of private camps that offer more specialized programming and better amenities, the foundation's executive director, Jerry Silverman, told JTA.

And while it used to be that families felt allegiances to individual camps — often sending generations of children to them — those ties have eroded, Silverman said.

"As the field has changed, the expectation for Jewish leadership has changed and what is expected of them has changed," he said. "The market has become much more competitive. It requires a new set of skills."

Unlike private camps, which typically draw on executives from the hospitality and hotel industry with backgrounds in business, nonprofit Jewish camps tend to take their directors from a pool of social workers, teachers and rabbis, Silverman said.

That may no longer be feasible. A camp director today is expected to be "an educator, a construction expert, a major fund raiser, a financial genius, a health expert — as well as someone who understands the psychological growth of children, teens and the college-aged counselors that work for them," Silverman said.

Debbie Sussman, director of Camp Yavneh in New Hampshire, said that while private camps can charge steep tuition fees that cover costs and allow them to make capital improvements, Jewish camps tend to cost less and offer thousands of dollars in scholarships.

Yavneh, which is under the umbrella of

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FOCUS  
ON  
ISSUES

## ■ Nonprofit Jewish camps have struggled to keep pace with private camps

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Hebrew College in Newton, Mass., covered its operating expenses from tuition the past two years, but Sussman had to raise more than \$1 million from grants and donors to renovate Yavneh's sports fields and replace its septic system, she said.

"We come at this with a lot of enthusiasm and love of the job," she said of Jewish camp directors. "But we don't have the financial or fund-raising or marketing background."

According to Silverman, "less than five" of the 135 directors of Jewish camps in North America have master's degrees in business.

That's why the camping foundation is pushing to bring the field up to professional speed.

In October, the foundation ran the first of what will be seven seminars for its Executive Leadership Institute. Over 16 months, the institute will provide intense training to 19 camp directors. The curriculum, which took two years to develop, includes marketing, financial management and professional leadership development training at "a CEO level," according to Silverman.

The Robert and Elisa Spungen Bildner Fellowship at Brandeis will focus on the next generation of Jewish camp directors. The student selected as the first fellow will take classes at Brandeis' Heller School for Social Policy and at Hornstein: The Jewish Professional Leadership Program @ Brandeis.

The program also will include a Jewish camping component that revolves around the history of Jewish camping and a study of the literature on Jewish camping, much of which was written by Brandeis professors, according to Sarna.

The emphasis on training better camp leaders is not cheap. The camping foundation's Executive Leadership Institute cost more than \$1 million to develop, and the Bildner fellowship was funded by the foundation's board of directors at a cost of more than

\$125,000, according to Silverman.

It's an investment the Bildners were honored to have made in their name.

"From the very beginning, when we started the foundation, the idea was to help the professional leadership in Jewish camping, from the directors to the senior counselors to the staff," Elisa Spungen Bildner said.

"We wanted to improve the accessibility of the Jewish camp. So the idea to have a graduate program in Jewish camps was something we had hoped for." ■



## Guide to U.K. Jewish sites sells out

LONDON (JTA) — A new book documenting sites of Jewish interest in England has sold out its first printing.

"Jewish Heritage in England: An Architectural Guide" was published last month to coincide with the 350th anniversary of Jewish resettlement in England.

The guidebook sold thousands of copies in its first month, and publishers have ordered a second print run for January.

Written by Sharman Kadish, an academic in Jewish studies at the University of Manchester, the book showcases more than 300 sites of Jewish interest in Britain, mostly synagogues and cemeteries.

"This is really the first book of its kind in England, and will make the Jewish community feel more a part of the national heritage," Kadish told JTA.

"These sites are communal property," she said. "But they are also testimony to the fact that Jewish communities once existed in all these tiny places around the country."

There are some 350,000 Jews living in England, mostly in London and Manchester. But the book also covers some outlying communities that have disappeared.

"We've been all over the country to places where Jews once lived, from Inverness to Southampton, Dublin to Cork and the Isle of Man," says Kadish, who directs Jewish Heritage U.K., an independent organization set up in 2004 to preserve architectural Jewish heritage.

Kadish has spent much of the past 10 years identifying, researching and visiting sites of Jewish interest in England. She was awarded grants of more than \$910,000 by the National Lottery and the University of Manchester to facilitate the survey.

"The guidebook plays an important role in showing for the first time the magnificent contribution Jewish architecture has made to the nation's heritage," said Simon Thurley, chief executive of English Heritage, an organization dedicated to preserving sites of national importance.

The book also raises concern that Jewish architecture in Britain is more at risk than ever.

Celebrated and decorated buildings like the Singers Hill Synagogue in Birmingham and the Princes Road Synagogue in Liverpool — both more than 100 years old and featured in the book — face uncertain futures as dwindling communities struggle to meet maintenance and repair costs.

But Kadish remains positive about her findings.

"These buildings include some of the finest synagogues in Europe, especially precious because they escaped the ravages of the Second World War," she said.

"They still have great value, both spiritual and cultural, in providing Anglo Jewry with a sense of history and identity." ■



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# Hateful chapter closes in Poland

By DINAH A. SPRITZER

PRAGUE (JTA) — In the end it wasn't the years of lawsuits and pressure from Catholic and Jewish groups that caused the demise of Poland's best-known haven of anti-Semitic literature, but a newly appointed parish priest who decided enough was enough.

The Antyk bookstore, which quietly closed in October, had become a symbol of some of the last remaining vestiges of Jewish-Catholic tension.

It had been opened in the basement of All Saints Church, directly across from Warsaw's Nozyk synagogue in 1997.

"The bookstore should have been closed a long time ago because it did not represent contemporary Catholicism," the Rev. Henry Malecki, 55, told JTA. "The Church does not function according to prejudices and hatred."

Malecki rejoined the parish last June, having served there as vicar 20 years ago, and told the bookstore that he would not renew its lease.

"He has shown how the moral stance of a single person can make a difference to many," said Piotr Kadłcik, chairman of the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland.

Antyk's closing gave Polish Jews another reason to celebrate as the New Year approached, joining the rebirth of their community and continued support from the president and prime minister.

Many had long wondered how a bookstore in a church basement could be allowed to sell literature claiming that Jews controlled the world, collaborated with the Nazis and are the enemies of Polish national interests.

In the post-Communist era, the Church has been accused of showing insensitivity to Jewish issues or in some individual cases even promoting anti-Semitism, despite then-Pope John Paul II's deep embrace of the Jewish people.

Antyk was opened by an extreme right-wing politician, Marcin Dybowski.

Stanislaw Krajewski, co-chairman of Poland's Council of Christians and Jews, said the closing of the bookstore was important "because it was such a shame and a problem, and for years and years we were all told nothing could be done

about it. So it has special meaning when a single person changes that."

After several protests, the store claimed it had toned down its offerings, but a year ago JTA found 15 books in stock that criticized Jews or reinforced negative stereotypes. The so-called patriotic bookstore, frequented by fringe Catholic nationalists, made an odd partner to the statue of Pope John Paul II in front of the church.

Zuzanna Radzik was 19 years old when she brought the bookstore into the limelight.

"When I first visited the store in 2001 with a Jewish friend, I found that it was not only awfully anti-Semitic but also anti-Church, criticizing certain reforms that have been made," said Radzik, now studying at a Catholic university in Warsaw. "The message from its literature, posters and discussions was decidedly anti-Christian."

Radzik sought out the intervention of the priest at All Saints, but says she was rebuffed. He said he would not play the censor, according to Radzik, and was grateful to have the rent money from the store.

"What was clear to me was that he lacked good will," Radzik said.

So Radzik circulated a letter against the bookstore with 200 signatures of prominent Catholics and sent it to the archbishop's office in Warsaw.

"When I asked for a meeting with the bishop after handing in the letter, I was told by his secretary that they didn't care about my project and had more important things to do," she recalled. "I cried when finding out how the Church works."

The soft-spoken Radzik continued to hound various bishops and even the primate's office, which refused to respond even after the story was reported in a mass circulation daily newspaper, Rzeczpospolita.

Radzik then wrote an article about the bookstore in 2003 in Catholic cultural weekly, Tygodnik Powszechny.

Antyk held a press conference condemning Radzik, and Church officials continued to ignore her, but she raised public awareness of the issue. The major television networks covered her story.

"It was a painful but at the same time life-changing experience," she said. "I found out that I want to study theology and how important it is

to work on Christian-Jewish dialogue. Ironically enough, the bookstore case became for me a turning point."

Radzik, who recently returned from a fellowship studying Christian-Jewish relations at the University of Notre Dame, said she feels no sense of victory now that Antyk is closed.

"The truth is that we didn't succeed," she said. "It was not lay people protesting or the media, but one good parish priest who changed everything."

Malecki as the vicar at All Saints in the 1980s had been a maverick, taking young people to visit the Jewish community's headquarters.

He did not want to discuss his predecessor as priest, but indicated that the Church needed funding for renovation and Antyk had paid a relatively high rent.

Malecki hopes to renew contacts with the Jewish community, something Kadłcik wants as well.

"We definitely want to meet him and encourage him," Kadłcik said.

The community was in the midst of a lawsuit against the store that had been stalled in court.

Officially, Krajewski said, relations between Jews and the Catholic Church in Poland are good but not close. He said some Church leaders are ready to be more open to Jewish sensitivities, "but they are a minority it seems. It's certainly a slow process."

The Rev. Henry Malecki "has shown how the moral stance of a single person can make a difference to many."

Piotr Kadłcik  
Chairman, Union of Jewish Religious Communities  
in Poland

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## MIDDLE EAST

**Egypt: Shalit alive**

Egypt said an Israeli soldier held hostage in the Gaza Strip is alive.

"We are working to release him and we know that he's alive," Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed About Gheit told reporters Wednesday about Cpl. Gilad Shalit during a visit to Israel.

Egypt has been the main mediator in efforts to recover Shalit, who was abducted by Hamas and other Palestinian gunmen in a June 25 cross-border raid.

Shalit's captors have demanded that Israel release some 1,400 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for the soldier.

Israel has signaled that it could agree to a less lopsided swap.

**Nevzlin named in poison probe**

Russian authorities said an Israel-based business oligarch could be a suspect in the murder of a former Russian spy in Britain.

"A version is being looked at that those who ordered these crimes could be the same people who are on an international wanted list for serious and very serious crimes, one of whom is... Leonid Nevzlin," the Prosecutor-General's Office in Moscow said in a statement Wednesday.

Nevzlin, former manager of the Russian conglomerate Yukos, knew Alexander Litvinenko, a former Russian spy who was poisoned to death in London last month.

Nevzlin denied wrongdoing in the case and said he had handed over related files to Scotland Yard investigators.

Nevzlin, who is involved in several Jewish charities, was one of several business moguls forced out of Russia in what many see as a deliberate corporate takeover campaign masterminded by President Vladimir Putin.

**Israel approves U.S. extradition**

An Israeli court ordered the extradition of a man wanted in the United States for ducking a felony conviction.

The Jerusalem District Court on Wednesday approved the extradition of the man — identified by local media as Dr. Yonatan Efrat — at the behest of the FBI and Interpol.

The man, who changed his name after moving to Israel two years ago, is believed to have been convicted in California of drugging and raping two women in the late 1980s.

**Israel snowed in**

Snowstorms froze much of Israel. Winter blizzards brought heavy snow to the Jewish state Wednesday, from Mount Hermon in the North to Jerusalem to the Negev Desert in the South.

Police reported dozens of injuries from traffic accidents.

**Gaydamak boosts Bibi**

A Russian-Israeli billionaire endorsed Benjamin Netanyahu's bid to retake the Israeli premiership.

Arkady Gaydamak, whose lavish public philanthropy has stirred speculation that he could enter Israeli politics, said in an interview Wednesday that he did not plan to run in the next election.

Instead he voiced confidence in Netanyahu, Israel's opposition leader and a former prime minister.

"Of all the people on the list of prime ministerial candidates, Netanyahu is the most fitting and the most responsible," Gaydamak told Ynet.

He also had warm words for Ami Ayalon, the frontrunner to succeed Defense Minister Amir Peretz as Labor Party leader, but was dismissive of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

## NORTH AMERICA

**Toronto bookstore picketed for Israel donation**

Protesters picketed a Toronto bookstore because its owners made a donation to an Israeli cause.

A group of about 25 picketers waved Palestinian flags this week on Bay Street as they urged a boycott of the Indigo bookstore chain because its owners, Heather Reisman and Gerry Schwartz, contributed to an organization that assists Israeli soldiers.

The Canadian Jewish News reported Dec. 21 that Reisman and Schwartz pledged to fund 100 scholarships annually for the next three years through the Heseg Foundation for Lone Soldiers, a charitable organization that assists Israel Defense Force graduates without parents or extended family in Israel.

The protesters said they were from the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid.

Timed to coincide with the pre-Christmas rush, their protest "appeared ineffective judging by the throngs lined up at the cash register," according to one report.

**Rachel Corrie play nixed in Toronto**

A Toronto-based theater removed a controversial play about a pro-Palestinian activist's death from the short list for its upcoming season.

Martin Bragg, artistic producer for the Canadian Stage Company or CanStage, said "My Name Is Rachel Corrie" was dropped from consideration because it was dramatically weak, not because of its political content. Bragg said he reached the decision after seeing a production of the play in New York that failed to engage the audience. "It didn't seem as powerful on the stage as it did on the page," he told Variety.

While Bragg said the play was never officially accepted into its 2007-08 season, CanStage's decision sparked some intense reactions in online reports, some of which have reported the play was censored and canceled because of its potential to offend Jewish sensibilities.

One blog claimed the play was pulled due to the influence of the American pro-Israel lobby. Corrie, an American activist with the International Solidarity Movement, was accidentally run over and killed by an Israeli bulldozer as it tried to uncover arms tunnels in the Gaza Strip in 2003.

**Young Jewish activists awarded**

A Jewish group launched awards for young Jewish activists. Jewish Funds for Justice announced the Cornerstone Awards, which will go to four people, age 40 or younger, working full-time in nonprofit or low-income community organizations.

Each award is worth \$10,000, with 25 percent going to the honoree and 75 percent to their workplace. The first awards will be presented at a ceremony in spring 2007.

## WORLD

**Limmud launches international board**

A Jewish festival in Britain formed an international board. Limmud, a nondenominational Jewish educational event held annually in Nottingham, which has grown to include dozens of spinoffs in other countries, formed the board Monday.

Limmud began more than two decades ago with about 50 attendees, and drew some 2,300 participants this year. It attracts speakers on topics such as Israeli politics, Jewish homeopathy, Talmud and Holocaust scholarship.

This year's Limmud also featured a concert by Joshua Nelson.