

פרץ פאפירן **Peretz Papers**

May - June 2005



I.L. Peretz

The next issue of Peretz Papers will be published in late August. Have a great summer!

Happy 25th Birthday, Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir!



Annual Spring Concert:

Sunday, June 5, 2:30 PM

Tickets: \$15.00

This year marks the choir's 25th birthday. To celebrate this anniversary, the choir's spring concert will feature a variety of old favourites in a mostly-Yiddish program. Repertoire will include excerpts from *Di Yam Gazlonim* [Pirates of Penzance] and *Ikh Bin a Yid* as well as a selection of songs arranged by the choir's founder, the late Searle Friedman. The program will also premiere a work, *Fond Memories of Ivje: a Medley of Yiddish Folk Songs*,

Continued on page 6

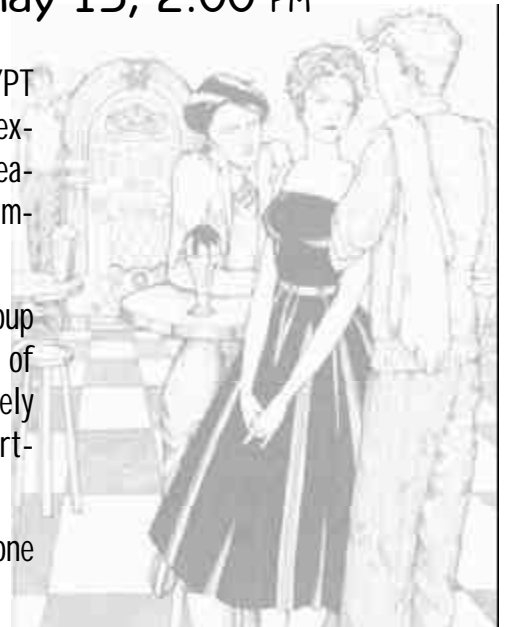
Register now for
Community Third Seder
April 30

The Jewish Young People's Theatre presents New Works by Young Artists Sunday, May 15, 2:00 PM

Over the past months, the JYPT has met every other Sunday to explore various aspects of live theatre, including voice, movement, improvisation and scripted work.

On Sunday, May 15, the group will present a small collection of their favourite creations, completely original, created by the young artists who will perform them.

Admission is free and everyone is welcome.



Fraytik Tsu Nakht

You are invited to participate in our popular monthly non-religious Friday night shabbes dinner: Candle lighting, wine, challah, a fabulous potluck meal, and a talk by a guest speaker.

To attend, you may bring a dish (couples please bring two dishes or a double-sized dish) or pay \$10/person. Please RSVP to Gallia, 604-322-6077.

May 20, 6:30 PM: Dr. Harold Kasinsky's work in zoology has enabled him to live in Catalonia, Spain, several times during his career. His talk and slideshow, which includes a focus on the history of Jews in the region, is called *My Homage to Catalunya*.

June FTN: TBA.

No Fraytik Tsu Nakht in July and August.

In Memoriam: Ruth Kaplan

Ruth was born in Winnipeg on June 9, 1930, the younger daughter of Myer and Rose Sherman, who had only a few years before immigrated from Ukraine. Ruth and her sister Goldye grew up in the poor but vibrant and close-knit Jewish community of Winnipeg's north end. It was there she developed her love of *Yidishkayt*, her sense of social justice, her commitment to family, and where friendships she made as a child lasted her whole life. As young students at the Talmud Torah, Ruth Sherman and her friend Sylvia Jackson, as they were then, lobbied for Yiddish classes to be included in the curriculum. They were successful, and theirs was the first Yiddish class taught at the school. Ruth never stopped lobbying for what she thought was right. She was always a rebel!

In 1953, after completing business college in Winnipeg and becoming a bookkeeper, Ruth moved to Vancouver. She stayed for the first three months with her friend Sylvia, who had preceded her here from Winnipeg, and Sylvia's husband Searle Friedman. Through them, she immediately became active in the UJPO drama workshop. There she met Clive Kaplan, whom she married in 1954, and with whom she had three children: Karen, Cheryl and Stephen.

To help ensure the health and well being of her family. Ruth worked full-time, to raise her three children to adulthood, earning their lifelong love and devotion. Once her children were on their way in life, Ruth turned her attention elsewhere. She became active in COPE, coordinating their phone campaign, and instigating the change to the eye-catching black-on-yellow election signs. She



became active in the Peretz School, of which her mother-in-law Rose was a founding member. Concerned that Rose and others like her should continue to feel they belonged there, Ruth played a leading role in the inception of the Peretz Sholem Aleichem Seniors, and was a leading member of the Steering Committee. In the last three years, she also took responsibility for the Peretz School's rental bookings.

Her experiences raising her children on a limited income taught Ruth how to budget wisely. She turned this skill into a successful career, teaching budgeting classes at night school. She was so successful a teacher that lawyers began referring clients to her for counseling. She was able to help many people with debilitating head injuries to take care of their finances properly. Ruth was also a brilliant shopper. She could return any item to any store anywhere. No "no-return policy" had ever been known to stand in her way, and she was on speaking terms with all the store managers.

But nothing gave her more joy than her three grandchildren, Brent, Madison and Jarod. Ruth spent the first two years of Brent's life teaching Cheryl how to be a mom, and all three grandchildren dearly loved her and would do anything for their Baba.

Ruth was a wonderful daughter who took care of her parents in their old age. She was a wonderful friend who was always there for you. And a most wonderful loving parent to all her children who would go to the ends of the earth for them.

The Cultural Arts Department of the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver, in association with the Kirman Memorial Foundation for Yiddish Culture and the Peretz Centre for Secular Jewish Culture, presents

My Life as a Yiddish Writer: **a Literary Lecture with CHAVA ROSENFARB** **Thursday, May 19, 7:30 pm**

Adult Lounge, Jewish Community Centre
950 West 41st Avenue, Vancouver BC V5Z 2N7



Celebrated Yiddish novelist and Holocaust survivor Chava Rosenfarb talks about her career as a Yiddish writer, with an emphasis on her two most recent publications in English: a collection of short stories set in Canada entitled *Survivors*,

and her award-winning magnum opus, *The Tree of Life: A Trilogy of Life in the Lodz Ghetto*. The first volume of this epic novel about the Holocaust has just been reissued in English translation by the University of Wisconsin Press, with subsequent volumes scheduled to appear shortly.

Chava Rosenfarb has received numerous literary prizes for her work, including the 1993 and 1988 Prize of the Congress for Jewish Culture (New York, U.S. A.), the 1990 Sholem Aleichem Prize (Tel-Aviv, Israel), the 1985 Atran Prize (New York, U.S. A.), and the 1972 Niger Prize (Buenos Aires, Argentina). Her novel *Der Boym Fun Leib*, (*The Tree of Life*) won the 1979 Itsik Manger Prize, the world's highest Yiddish literature award. Chava Rosenfarb currently lives in Lethbridge, Alberta with her daughter, Goldie Morgentaler, an associate professor of

English at the University of Lethbridge where she teaches nineteenth-century British and American literature. Goldie Morgentaler has published numerous translations from Yiddish to English, including several stories by I. L. Peretz. She has been the translator of much of Chava's writing, including *The Tree of Life*.

This literary lecture is supported by a Canada Council for the Arts Literary Reading Program.

For more information, please visit jccgv.com or contact Reisa Smiley Schneider 604-257-5111; reisa@jccgv.bc.ca

Free admission. Everyone welcome.



Children's Seder: April 24, 11:00 AM

Community Third Seder: April 30, 6:30 PM.
Reservations required.

JYPT presentation: May 15, 2:00 PM.

Lag b'Omer picnic: May 29. Details TBA.

Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir Spring Concert:
June 5, 2:30 PM

Advertisement

Kabbalah class to be given at the Peretz Centre

Starting Tuesday, May 3, 7:30-9:00 PM, Joseph Saltoun, Rabbi and Kabbalistic Scholar from the Yeshiva of Kol Yehuda, Jerusalem, with 25 years experience teaching Kabbalah, will give a four-session class on *The Wisdom of the Kabbalah—Jewish Theology and Spiritual Philosophy*.

Course outline:

1) Introduction: the first Kabbalist, Ancient and modern Kabbalah, Modern Science, Quantum Physics,

psychology and para-psychology, the sixth sense and the Biblical code.

2) The Kabbalistic version of creation versus the theory of the Big Bang.

3) Practicing the laws of the Universe in our daily life: Cosmic Harmony.

4) Atlantis, reincarnation and the Bible, ancient civilizations and genetic engineering.

For more information, phone Rabbi Saltoun at 604-271-0044.



You are invited to attend the B'nai Mitzvah Dress Rehearsal

June 19, 10:30 AM

The graduating B'nai Mitzvah '05 class invites you to the dress rehearsal of the students' presentations. As the B'nai Mitzvah ceremony is an invitation-only event, the dress rehearsal is an opportunity for the larger community to experience the ceremony. It provides a preview for the class of '06 and their families of what they'll be planning for next year. And it also helps the students to practice before an audience.

For more information, call the office.



To our Youth Delegates to the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations Conference in Toronto, the weekend of May 27-29 (Fabiola Díaz, Kerry Dyson, Toby Dyson, Anton Friedman, Heather McLean, Ben Neuman, Mark Neuman, Samantha Scott, Chloe Smith and Rachel Taub) and to Tammy Neuman, accom-

panying adult: May you have a safe journey and a fun and inspiring time. We look forward to sharing your reports with Peretz Centre members and friends via The Peretz Papers.

The Peretz Centre fulfills its commitment to the community (Tsedoke) by:

- ◆ Collecting for and hosting the Jewish Food Bank
- ◆ Providing meeting space for the Council on Poverty



**We invite you to join the Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir
– call 604-325-1812 for information**

A Sheynem Dank!

If I were to name each individual who deserved to be thanked in each issue, this column would take up most of the issue. As I often mention, it is our volunteers who make it all possible—the special events, the ongoing programs and the day to day operation of the Centre (including the folding, putting into envelopes, stamping and sealing of the Peretz Papers).

So each time I write the column I have to make a difficult choice: whom to thank by name, whom to acknowledge in a group thank-you. And of course I always miss a few people; if you are in this group, I apologise to you.

♥ *This issue, I want to start by thanking Victor and Tammy Neuman and Leslie and Shane Dyson for their imaginative and successful fundraising efforts on behalf of our 10 young people attending the CSJO Youth Conference in Toronto in May.*

♥ *And a huge special thanks as well to the young people themselves—Fabiola Díaz, Kerry Dyson, Toby Dyson, Anton Friedman, Heather McLean, Ben Neuman, Mark Neuman, Samantha Scott, Chloe Smith, Rachel Taub—first of all for their commitment to attend the conference, and second, for their contribution to the various fundraising activities: selling snacks at the recent concert and lunch at the Purim party, working the door at the religious comedy nights at the Laughing Bean coffee house (third and final evening: April 29; admission \$5; 2695 East Hastings; phone 604-251-5282 for reservations), and their upcoming work at the Third Seder.*

Let me wish you all a belated but heartfelt happy and prosperous New Year. These are difficult times and call for the best from all of us. The strength of community, our community, the Peretz Centre, is necessary and important. We depend on one another and the Peretz Centre is crucial in this process. So join me in pledging a renewal of efforts and a long-term commitment to the values we hold dear.

Reservations for our superb Third Seder are coming in and we predict we will once again be full to capacity. This is one event you don't want to miss. The Peretz Centre is alive and well and both deserves and demands your support, indeed your active involvement. Please answer when called and even better, step forward and find out what you can do to help. Your suggestions for events and new programs are welcome.

I also encourage you to try and attend the Jewish Film Festival, which is on until April 17.

I want to thank all those whose efforts have been above and beyond expectations. We could not function without your help. Finally let me offer my condolences to the family and friends of Ruthie Kaplan. I cannot imagine the Peretz Centre without her presence and enthusiasm. I miss her.

— Richard Rosenberg

♥ *As this is the last issue until the Fall, I would like to thank in advance the many many people who will be contributing their time and labour so that our Community Third Seder continues to be so fulfilling and successful, including (but certainly not limited to) the kitchen, set up, clean up, lights/sound and childcare crews (which will include the B'nai Mitzvah '06 class and Youth Group) the Hagode committee, the Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir, the head table readers (which will include the B'nai Mitzvah '05 class).*

Continued on page 6

Peretz Centre Schedule, May-June

No classes Victoria Day (May 22)

Youth

B'nai Mitzvah 05: classes Sunday May 1, 15, 29, Jun 12; rehearsals schedule: check with teachers

B'nai Mitzvah 06: Sunday May 8, 22, Jun 5, 19

Sunday School (ages 5-6): every Sunday except May 22, 10:30-12:30

Jewish Young People's Theatre: Sunday May 1, 15, 29, Jun 12

Special Events

April 24, 10:30 AM Children's Seder

April 30, 6:30 PM Community Third Seder

May 15, 2:00 PM JYPT Presentation

May 28, 10:30 AM Lag b'Omer Picnic. Details TBA

June 5, 2:30 PM: Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir Spring Concert

June 19 10:30 AM: Last Sunday

Adults and Seniors

Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir rehearsal: Tuesdays, 7:30-9:45 PM.

Fraytik Tsu Nakht (Secular Shabbes celebration and guest speaker): **May 20, 6:30 PM:** Harold Kasinsky, *My Homage to Catalunya*. **June: date and time TBA**

Sholem Aleichem Seniors: Fridays, 10:30 AM. Speakers and topics:

Continued from page 1: Choir

arranged and offered to the choir by New York musician Thomas Garber.

The choir will be producing a Souvenir Program for the event. Please consider taking out an ad or a greeting in the program. For more information, please call.

Continued from page 5: Sheynem Dank

♥ *Another special thank-you—<JKMI JT CGFCB<J—to our custodian, Iosif Gershtein, for his dedication, commitment, and ongoing contribution to our Centre.*

♥ *Also to Harold Berson, who consented to be a fill-in B'nai Mitzvah teacher until we were able to find a permanent teacher and who is still teaching the class ...*

♥ *And finally, a belated sheynem dank to people I've missed in past columns: Rikki Hoffer, Judy Nicol Smith and Rima Kaplan for their help in organizing and putting on our Russan Cabaret in January, and Delta Vásquez León, who made our short-lived but very appreciated dreidl piñata for Khanike.*

—Donna Becker MacDermot
Program Coordinator



We extend our condolences to

- .. **Sholem Aleichem Seniors member Jennie Phillips on the loss of her husband, Jack**
- .. **Hinda Avery, on the loss of her sister**
- .. **Karen, Cheryl and Stephen Kaplan and their families, on the loss of their mother and grandmother, Ruth Kaplan**
- .. **The family of long-time friend of the Centre Frank Newby**