

# The Bridge

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL BY AND FOR  
THE RESIDENTS OF *NEWBRIDGE ON THE CHARLES* IN DEDHAM, MA

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 4

APRIL 2012



**“All’s Right With the World”**

Photo by Beth Lowd

## Notes from the Editor

We first wish to thank those many residents who have donated willingly to the printing costs of *The Bridge* for these first four issues, as well as the Marketing Department of NBOC for covering half the total costs this year. Your generosity is much appreciated.

We are announcing that *The Bridge* is joining the **Hebrew SeniorLife Special Funds** donation program. See below for details.

As we go forward with our resident journal we hope to continue to provide the opportunity for fellow residents to tell their stories, inform you of interesting topics and show you their artistic accomplishments. We encourage you all to try your hand at writing. Everyone has something of interest to say.

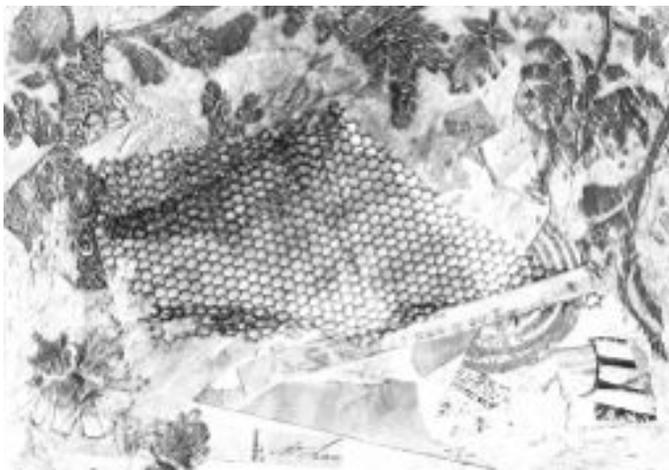
### The New HSL Donation Envelopes

The envelopes that you have used for such programs as the Library will now have a new look. The new envelopes will soon replace the current ones.

Four checkboxes for NBOC funds remain as before: Congregation NewBridge, Library, Trees of Life, and HSL Employee Lifeline. Two new checkboxes are: HSL Annual Fund, and Community Life Activities.

Under the checkbox titled **Community Life Activities** three programs are listed: Program Enrichment, Residents' Website, and *The Bridge Journal*. You are asked to circle one of the (currently) three programs, which will express your preference.

Remember all checks should be made out to *Hebrew SeniorLife*. The Memo line on your check may record your preference. All donations will now be tax deductible.



[www.newbridgeresidents.org](http://www.newbridgeresidents.org)

*Edward Goldstein*

In the last issue of *The Bridge*, John Averell told you that plans for a resident website were “in the works.” On January 27, it officially opened.

Anyone can enter it, but some of its features are accessible only to those who “log in” with a valid User Name and Password available to residents and their “proxies” — a member of the family or friend designated by a resident.

If you enter the website without logging in you can browse menus of our restaurants — Centro, Copper Beech and The Nosh — a calendar of events, a searchable list of all the media in our Library, news about clubs and committees; you can download the latest and past issues of *The Bridge*, a variety of useful forms and maps and more.

When you log in, you can find a searchable database of members' residences, phone numbers and email addresses, as well as a searchable copy of the NBOC Faces document. You can fill out Member Away forms; report problems with your TV, telephone and computers to IT; and you can originate work orders for all the services provided by our Facilities Department. After you have typed the information into the form, a click of a button causes an email message to be sent to the appropriate department, with a copy for your own records. You can also place a classified ad or browse the ads placed by other residents.

Plans are in the works for additional services. For one example, we are investigating the best way to provide a “forum” designed to let residents post questions and requests to which other residents will be able to respond with information or comments.

John Averell and I are also planning two-hour sessions to help residents learn the fundamentals of computers — just enough to enable them to use the website.

If you would like to join our dedicated volunteers for a couple of hours of work a week to help keep the site current please email me at [eg.nrdo@gmail.com](mailto:eg.nrdo@gmail.com)

Check it out!

A few statistics (Jan 1-Mar 14) that may interest you:

- Residents with Usernames and Passwords: 90+
- Different people who visited the site: 370+
- Average length of visit: 8 minutes
- Average number of pages per visit: 7.65

*[Ed is the Webmaster of the site and chair of the NRDO Steering Committee]*

## *Michael* *Sybil Gladstone*

Michael Wong appeared at my school in January. A Chinese immigrant with an elusive history, this fifteen-year old arrived at the junior high school, assigned to grade seven. As his counselor, I was responsible for his placement.

Michael had been sought out in China by cousins who, noting his obvious intelligence, asked if he would return with them to the United States. He accepted eagerly, and was brought to Massachusetts to the home of the aunt and uncle. Lacking school records, the teachers and I groped for a place that would help him advance to the proper level. He had advanced quickly through elementary school, displaying an awesome knowledge of calculus, while emanating an aura of loneliness and isolation. This posed a problem for faculty and administration.

Thus he came to our school, and teachers rallied around to provide the help he needed. Rhonda, experienced in teaching English as a Second Language, bought a Chinese-English dictionary and gave up her free periods to provide him with an English vocabulary. Uncommunicative, he gave no indication of his feelings, his background, his present home life, until the day she taught him the concept of pets, a concept unknown to him. When she said, "dog," and showed him the appropriate picture, he made appreciative sounds, as we might at the sight of an apple pie, or roast beef. Dogs were delicious.

In February, Michael's aunt called me to request a conference with his teachers to discuss the problems Michael was presenting. It would have to be a late afternoon meeting, she said, but the teachers agreed to stay for the young man who had earned their admiration for his dogged determination, his cooperation, his attitude. To my dismay, the flu kept me at home. On my return to school, his teachers burst into my office, complaining of Mrs. Chen's intransigence, her unrelenting criticism, her rigidity in the face of the culture gap Michael needed to bridge. In tones of disgust, she had spoken of dishes he used and returned to the cabinet unwashed, stale food she discarded but later found under his pillow, and perishable food found under his bed.

The situation deteriorated, and in desperation, I called a medical school classmate of my son, a Chinese doctor, who was a resident physician in Boston.

Out of pure kindness, Hon drove to our suburban school, where we attempted three-way counseling. Michael, Hon and I sat in my office. "Did he want to stay here?" I asked. Hon translated. "Yes." Was he willing to live the way his aunt expected him to? No reply. Was he happy in America? "Yes." Would he change his ways to remain here? No reply. Did he realize that to remain, he would have to change? He was mute. I explained to Hon the stakes were high. Michael might be sent back to China if he could not modify his habits. Hon spoke. Michael was silent. A sense of defeat spread like a menacing cloud through the office. I thanked Hon, regretfully sent Michael back to class, then escorted Hon to the principal's office so that Dr. Phillips could express his gratitude for Hon's effort. As we walked toward his car, Hon explained that Chinese people conceal their emotions, do not speak of their feelings, and would deem it shameful to describe themselves as happy or unhappy.

A couple of weeks later, Michael did not arrive at school. A call to his aunt elicited the whole, angry story. Finding his presence unbearable, and his insistence on remaining in the United States nearly insurmountable, she deceived him by saying she was taking him to visit relatives in Chinatown, so he would need to pack some clothes. Instead, they drove to Logan Airport and put him on a plane to the West Coast, where an airline attendant would supervise his transfer to a Hong Kong flight. In Hong Kong, a representative of an international agency would place him on a plane to the People's Republic of China.

Heartsick, I could hardly conclude the conversation in a civil manner, but managed to express to Mrs. Chen my regret at the failed attempt at transplanting this Chinese youth to American soil. I did not know at the time that China's poorest people cooked in open courtyards in communal pots, had no dishes, lacked enough food to eat, never had enough to store for future use, had no knowledge of refrigeration, and had only a determination to survive, to endure, knowing no other way. My joy was boundless when I learned, years later, that Michael never disembarked from the flight to Hong Kong. Somewhere, he eluded authorities. Strong and determined, he may be in the United States, in Massachusetts or California, learning American ways, being his own person. •

## *Dancing* Sheila Klein

Whenever we attended a wedding or Bar/Bat Mitzvah where there were musicians and people got up to dance, Al would wait until the dance floor was packed and then "graciously" say to me "let's get it over with." Needless to say, we didn't do much dancing.

In 1971, after a lengthy hospital stay to repair a broken ankle, I underwent many months of physical therapy learning to walk again. My therapist, Mr. O'Donnell, was also the therapist for the Yale wrestling team. He was a very short, muscular, no-nonsense man. I think my doctor thought I needed someone really tough. He paid no attention to my moans and groans and proceeded with a very rigorous regimen. At one point, he put on a record and announced that we were going to dance. We must have been a really funny pair but he was very determined and I had no option but to go along. After several dancing lessons, he suggested that I register for a dancing class with my husband.

Al was not thrilled with the idea of dancing lessons but was willing to do anything to help with my recovery. We located a dance group in the New Haven Jewish Community Center and started attending weekly lessons. Fortunately, the other couples were as inept as we were and we formed some delightful friendships that we maintained for many years. Eventually, the teacher and her husband decided to form a dance club. The club met once each month in a ballroom in New Haven. There was a three-piece band and we were served a very nice dinner during the evening. We became charter members and continued with the club for twenty-five years. The members came from all areas of Connecticut and were quite diverse in their occupations. We had surgeons, professors, carpenters, artists and people from other countries. From time to time, members performed special dances and traditions from their native countries.

During this time, we became proficient dancers and both of us really enjoyed dancing. One time, when we were guests at a hotel in the Catskill Mountains, we were asked to demonstrate a Jesse Polka on the stage. Much to my surprise, Al quickly agreed to do it.

As a result of our newfound expertise, when dinner was being served at a dance or social function, Al would say, "never mind the food, the floor is empty — let's go!" •

## *I Want* Diana Bronner

To soar on the wings of angels  
to magnificent heights

To hear music that moves my soul

To read words that  
make me ponder  
the meaning of life

To see sunsets and moonrises  
that cause me to gasp  
with awe and wonder

To go to the far corners of the earth  
and see God's creatures  
in their natural home

To love from the depth of  
my being and to touch  
the hearts of those I love

To flee from the hard skeleton  
of my body  
and probe what lies beyond

To disappear into my self  
and leave the harsh world  
of heartache and sorrow

To ignore the materialism that surrounds  
me and find a niche that  
nurtures and sustains my being

To feel in my hand the newly hatched  
turtle, the heartbeat of a tiny bird,  
the fluffy warmth of a kitten,  
the hand of a child

To walk with my dog in the peace of  
the woods, hear the cry of the lonely goose,  
the call of the woodpecker, the tremolo  
song of the loon on a moonlit lake •

### **Donations to The Bridge**

*The Bridge* is fortunate to have a crew of committed volunteers who do everything — from reading and editing articles you submit to producing the final copy that goes to the printer — to bring you this journal four times a year. The only thing we pay for is printing, about \$400 per issue. NBOC Marketing has contributed about half this cost for the first three issues. The rest has come from you, our readers; we are grateful for your generous contributions. As explained in the article on Page 2, the method of contributions will change. Please remember to check **Community Life Activities** and to circle **The Bridge Journal**. Contributions will be tax deductible.

## *Growing Up on the Lower East Side* Nat Goldhaber

I have many memories of my childhood growing up in the lower East Side of New York City. Some of them left vivid images in my mind. When I was eight or nine years old, I was starting to notice girls. Although my father had died when I was only two years old, I grew up in a family of all males (seven in all) other than my mother. So when I entered grade school, I was not that comfortable interacting with girls. I did find myself attracted to one girl, Anne, who was in my class. Anne was pretty, with curly blond hair, and with every few steps she took she would twirl around, spinning so that her skirt flared out revealing her bright red bloomers. No Victoria's Secret for her. Her bloomers looked like boys' knickers. I of course was much too shy to actually talk to her.

Some years later I was one of about a dozen youngsters preparing to become Bar Mitzvah at the Jewish Center on Stanton Street on the Lower East Side of New York City. The Jewish Center was many things. It was a *Cheder* School, a synagogue, and a community center with a basketball court in the basement, a pool room on the second floor, and a large ballroom for socializing. The twelve of us formed a social athletic club at the Center, and we called ourselves the Zeniths. We played a lot of basketball, and challenged other community centers in the area such as the Henry Street Settlement and the Educational Alliance.

Most of the things we did, we did together. I remember on two occasions a few of us went to the Bowery Burlesque Theatre. We had gotten discount tickets from Porky, who owned the Porky's Pool Parlor on Rivington Street between Norfolk and Suffolk Streets. He placed a poster in his window advertising the theatre and for that he received discount tickets which he distributed, and he gave my friends and me a few. The theatre was on its last legs and was only operating on the weekends. We went to the theatre one Friday and had no difficulty getting seats up front; it was sparsely attended. The

theatre had a piano player at the base of the stage. He wore a straw hat and garters on his shirt sleeves. Two candy girls carrying trays with straps hanging from their necks paraded up and down the aisles in between acts. The first act was a comedian wearing a tie hanging down to his knees and baggy pants, and after that came a stripper. She strutted back and forth across the stage, and after a while the men began yelling "take it off." She never completely did, often hiding partially behind a curtain or a large fan. It wasn't all that exciting, and we went back only one time.

Although we favored basketball, we occasionally would play baseball on empty building lots. There were no real baseball fields. One day my best friend Irv, whom we called Red because of his red hair, slid into second base and tore his pants. He was frightened of facing his mother; so while walking home, we all chipped in and stopped at a tailor who wove the torn fabric back together. His mother never noticed the tear. A few years after we became Bar Mitzvah at the Jewish Center we decided to confirm our manhood. Laizer had learned where we could achieve this – a building on the west side. Skipping services again on a Friday night, five of us went to the building. Laizer went up first and very shortly thereafter came down shaking his head saying "she would not take her brazier off." We all returned home with I think a sigh of relief. We were 15 or 16 years old and were not ready for this. Years later, Laizer admitted to me that he had not even gone into the woman's apartment.

Then the war came and with it the draft. We decided to give each of us who was drafted a ring to wear as a sign of our togetherness. However when it came down to the last few who were left, it became too expensive. I was drafted later than most of the others, and I never got a ring from my buddies. When my wife Bunny learned of this many years later, she surprised me with a gift of a ring similar to the rings my friends had gotten. I still have the ring and all those memories of growing up on the Lower East Side. Life on the Lower East Side was often hard, but also often fun. •

## *Flowers* *Edward Goldstein*

In 1962, my department — that, a month or so earlier, I had been promoted to manage — was the first to move into a beautiful new building that had just been constructed for Bell Telephone Laboratories in Holmdel, New Jersey.

My office was rather small, but it was the first one in my career that boasted both a door that could be closed and a wall-to-wall carpet (but no windows). Its walls — and the whiteboard that occupied almost all of one wall — were made of enameled metal.

It had just one problem: having walked on the rug, people would draw a painful spark when touching, or even getting close to, its walls or whiteboard. My visitors and I were the only ones subject to this inconvenience, since none of the other people in my department rated the luxury of a carpet and no other departments had moved in yet.

It took only a couple of days for me to get really tired of these painful shocks and of the remarks from my visitors. In addition — as a Bell Labs engineer — I felt quite embarrassed. I decided to fix the problem.

The diagnosis was simple: the humidity was too low. Some brief research disclosed that the air conditioning contractors had not yet connected the machinery that controlled humidity throughout the building.

The theoretical solution was obvious: increase the humidity in my office. But how could I put it into practice?

That evening, I went shopping at the local five and dime. The next morning I brought my purchase — a rather cute red and yellow plastic watering can — to the office. I filled it with water and sprinkled my rug from corner to corner.

To test the result, I shuffled my feet on the rug, took a key out of my pocket and held it within a half inch of one of the walls. Nothing! Eureka! A low-tech solution, but it worked.

From that day on, I gave my rug a thorough watering first thing every morning when I came to work and every lunch hour. The people in my department, especially the secretaries, seemed to enjoy that spectacle very much and would ask their friends and any visitors to come to my open door and watch “Mr. Goldstein water his rug.”

One morning when I arrived at my office, I noticed a bright yellow daffodil, maybe three inches tall, seemingly growing out of the rug in one corner of my office. It was obviously artificial, but I thought it made a nice addition to the otherwise rather drab décor. I watered it along with the rest of the rug.

That seemed to be exactly what that little flower needed. By the next morning, it had nicely grown to about six inches in height. And the morning after, with additional watering, it was a full nine inches tall.

Then came the weekend. On Monday morning, next to the nine-inch flower, there was also a three-inch one.

And so it went. Eventually, my little garden contained four fully-grown daffodils.

At that point, the building engineers finally fixed the humidifying system. The humidity rose and I stopped watering my rug.

The next day, each of the four flowers, instead of standing up straight, drooped sadly toward the floor. Desperate, I gave them a thorough watering. But it was apparently too late for that.

By the next morning, the flowers had disappeared.

I never found out who was responsible for this little miracle. •



## *Remembrance of Trees Past* Sherwin (Sam) Lehrer

Forty-four years ago we watched the construction of our house on a wooded lot in Lexington, Massachusetts. We got the developer to move the location of the house to the rear of the lot in order to avoid cutting down an elegant old white pine. There were other trees not more than 10 feet from the house foundation that we labeled to make sure that they would not be cut down during construction. Trees were better than grass, we thought — less work, no weeding, no mowing.

I watched those spared trees change slowly over the years. One small tree was a spindly young oak with a narrow bare trunk that rose about twenty feet straight up toward the sky. Right after moving in, I was surprised to see the trunk completely covered with caterpillars slowly advancing upwards. I was intrigued at what I thought was just a part of living in the woods. I soon learned that they were gypsy moth caterpillars that devastate oak trees, and began a vigorous campaign against the creatures on many trees over cyclical infestations that took place every few years. At some point I got too tired to keep up the fight, and did nothing, yet the tree survived subsequent invasions; forty years later it is a tall adult tree with a massive trunk. I can still imagine seeing the moving caterpillars.

The stately old white pine that we saved lived in front of the house and greeted me each day. The branches made a U high up against the sky. Fifteen years later we realized that we needed a carport and a shed and the pine had to go. Even though it was gone I pictured it every time I drove into the carport where it used to be.

The trees that we saved and planted helped us to avoid having to mow grass but we didn't have less work. Weeds and vines grew. We forgot that the white pines and the oaks have needles and leaves that they release every fall. My wife said that we should leave the leaves on the ground. After trying it for one season we learned that the insects and worms and mold that grew under the leaves were not pleasant. We became leaf rakers every fall and spring. But it was fun and the piles were a source of enjoyment for our children.

A curious oak with a curved lower trunk grew around a big boulder. It looked like a dancer. When we decided to install a roof over the back deck, we built the extended roof around the tree, leaving it in a square hole. Over the years we all watched nervously during wind storms as the oak swayed, wondering if it would damage the roof. It didn't. Some years later, a storm knocked down a neighboring tree, which crashed into the roof near the hole. Needing to repair the roof, we decided to cut the tree down. No more tree, no more hole. Looking at the proper, solid roof afterwards, I continued to feel that something was missing.

A most unusual stunted pine tree lost most of its trunk above four feet from the ground. I presumed it would die. But over the years, one of its lower branches curved up a bit more until it became the trunk. It survives to this day, and it is hard to tell that the trunk was once a branch.

Another tree that I watched was a spruce, not native to this area, which my wife brought from a Maine Island as a two-foot high sapling. I planted it where she said, thinking it would not survive in our too-shady woods. But it proved me wrong, taking root and growing into a fine tree, if not as fast as it might have on the Island. I hope that this misplaced tree is not lonely among the oaks, pines and hemlocks.

I also worried about a massive old oak tree located close to the house because it could damage the house severely if it fell. It seemed to lean away from the house so I thought that we were safe. It hasn't fallen yet. It still remains. I wonder — do trees live forever? Will they fall when they die? Away from the house?

Although we do not live there anymore, the trees remain in my thoughts. We now live in an apartment in a retirement community. From our window I can see tall pine trees with thin trunks and needled-covered branches near the top. They are stately but appear somewhat aloof. Yet near the top, the branches of several trees touch each other and appear to gather together as if part of a group. Maybe over the years I will be able to identify more with them. •

## *My Grandmother's Samovar* Glorianne Wittes

The late 1890's in Russia and Poland were riddled with pogroms against Jews and long conscriptions of young men such as my paternal grandfather, Solomon Matutzin, who often were never able to return to their families. So it was that my grandfather left Bessarabia and his four young children with Rachel, my grandmother, to avoid conscription and to earn enough money for all of them to emigrate to safety somewhere else. That somewhere else turned out to be Canada where the government was offering land grants to settlers who would farmstead in the prairies for five years after which the land would be theirs. To earn enough money for emigration my grandfather, a small tobacco farmer in Bessarabia, worked his way across Europe as an itinerant laborer and later in Wales as the first Jewish coalminer ever to mine there. His reminder of that time was the permanent darkening of his skin and fingernails from coal dust.



**The Schwartz Family: Charly, Solomon, Fanny, Nellie, Jack, Ethel, Abe & Rachel**

My grandmother was therefore no stranger to raising a family on her own and working their small farm when she went to Canada. But she was surrounded with family and friends in their *shtetl*, which gave her much-needed supports, unlike what she was to experience in the prairies. I've drawn a skimpy story of this stage of her life from remembrances of my Dad and his older brother, Abe. The Matutzin family arrived in the port city of Quebec. Rachel, my grandmother, had packed only one change of clothes for each family member, her Russian samovar and her silver candlesticks. The family was greeted by a representative of Jewish Family Aid who had arranged to put them up in an over-

crowded Montreal boarding house. But not until persuading my grandfather to change his Russian-sounding family name from Matutzin to what he claimed was a good Canadian name, SCHWARTZ. How and why did he choose that name? From the dark coal dust coloration of Solomon's skin, and his dark hair, eyes and beard. You see, in translation from Yiddish, Schwartz means "black."

The family lived in Montreal with dozens of others in a cockroach-infested tenement for about four months before all was arranged with the Canadian government for them to go to their homestead in Manitoba. The nearest town was Brandon where there was a small Jewish community. Not so in the prairie area in which the Schwartz homestead was located. Farms were spread out over forty or fifty miles with nothing but wilderness in between, and few Jews farmed there at all. In no time, my grandfather and uncle Abe had to leave their homestead for months at a time, leaving Rachel totally alone to raise the children, plant and harvest wheat, and deliver her fifth and last child, Ethel. Why did they have to leave and where did they go? The Canadian government did not provide settlers with seed for the wheat they were to grow, nor did they have money to buy seed. My grandfather and uncle Abe had to work on the new coast-to-coast railroad that Canada was building. Or travel throughout the prairies as itinerant farmers and butchers in order to buy seed.

Meanwhile the rest of the Schwartz family had to cope with living in a one-room hovel, its roof and walls often stuffed with rags to fill the holes through which rain and cold would enter, its stomped-down mud floor often icky with moisture. Winters in the prairies are savage with freezing winds and heavy snow threatening to destroy the hovels in which homesteaders lived. My father remembered the icicles that would form and melt down when Rachel lit the potbelly stove in the mornings. It was too much of an extravagance to keep it lit at night when bodies would huddle together in an attempt to warm up. There was little or no firewood with which to light the stove for heating and cooking since costly firewood had to be bought. Animal dung took its place, and Dad remembered the smell of the dung with great antipathy. He remembered how he, the oldest child left in the farmstead when his Dad and brother were gone, had major responsibility to help his mother with the hard physical labor of farming the land with wheat

and a pitifully small vegetable garden, and caring for the cow, horse and chickens. In the winter these animals had to be brought indoors to live with the family since there were no means to house them in a barn. Dad recalls, with even more antipathy, the sounds and smells of these animals. All the while the family was practically starving, their mainstay for meals being flour made into bread, dumplings, noodles. That they could be made tasty was a tribute to my grandmother's cooking imagination and ingenuity. They rarely had meat. Ironically, my grandfather and uncle frequently butchered meat and fowl for others. Solomon refused to bring any of it home to his starving family since it wasn't kosher. Uncle Abe and my grandmother were furious over this. Was keeping kosher more morally appropriate than feeding one's starving family?

Grandma Rachel was a woman with enormous resilience and imaginative coping abilities which she modeled for her children and which they all learned well. I have no doubt that they also inherited their father's work ethic. My Dad and Aunt Ethel especially developed the enormously warm, electric personality of their mother, as well as her striking good looks. Dad recalled how despite all her chores Grandma Rachel always had time to tell them stories of the *shtetl*, and invent little games for them to play. Occasionally she would shed tears, perhaps when the lengthy absence of her husband and son became more than she could bear, perhaps when the loneliness and a lack of Jewish neighbors, ANY neighbors, became overwhelming, perhaps when illness would strike her children or herself. Whatever, she modeled how it's alright to cry when the going gets tough and that it's also necessary to pull oneself together and get on with life when the crying was over.

The samovar came out and the candles were lit for Shabbat dinners to celebrate my grandfather and uncle's occasional returns. My grandmother would prepare a remarkably delicious dinner (not much of it) on the occasion. The food was as welcomed by my Dad and his siblings as much as the hugs and kisses they bestowed, and the stories they would tell of their "adventures." The end to these trials finally came after three years of "roughing it" as homesteaders. With great relief the Schwartz family entered a new phase of life in a town with Jewish neighbors, a synagogue and traveling rabbi, kosher

food, and even a school to educate the children. The land grant was sacrificed, and various enterprises took the place of wheat farming. My grandmother now made regular dinners with the samovar and the lit candles and was known for her hospitality. The family made a move to Winnipeg where my Dad met and married my mother, Sarah Rubin whose educated, scholarly father rejected Dad as the son of a man who had been a butcher! Apparently, he and others felt that butchers, like the animals they killed were *traife*, not Jewish, an attitude that bespoke of his "better than thou" attitude.

I was born in 1929, the year of The Crash, and my father and Uncle Abe lost their grain elevator and livelihood. My Dad moved to Quebec City with my mother and me where he went into the Bronfman family's liquor business. (They were the wealthy Jewish barons of Canadian industry as the owners of Seagram's) After a year there, my family moved to Montreal where my mother's oldest brother lived. I did not meet any of my grandparents until my first visit to Winnipeg and Minneapolis when I was twelve. By then my grandfather Solomon had died and my grandmother Rachel was living with Ethel, the child she had delivered by herself in that prairie homestead. She and I struck up an immediate love affair when we met, and she turned out to have all the wonderful qualities I had heard about from my parents. Despite the fact that she spoke no English and I spoke no Yiddish we communicated wordlessly with hugs, kisses, and smiles. I envied my cousins who lived with her, for their daily contact with this wonderful woman. They in turn envied me for something special, that being my grandmother's gift to me of her samovar. I was very proud of this gift and felt singularly loved by her because of it. It occupied a place of honor on our dining room buffet after I married. Sadly however it disappeared when I left it behind, packed in a box in the basement when we moved to Ann Arbor for what we thought would be a few brief years. We rented out our house for the interim, and though I cannot believe our tenants would have stolen it, nonetheless it was gone on our return along with a huge box of treasured music records, both very significant to me. However I did not lose my memories and appreciation of my *bubbie* Rachael whose hugs and *kvelling* I can still feel and hear to this day. •

## *Call of the Wild*

*Diana Bronner*

After breakfast, we left Mammoth Hot Springs, located in the northwestern part of Yellowstone National Park, and drove east toward Lamar Valley. Our mission was to find wolves, and Lamar Valley in winter is the premier area to find them. Because there is not much winter snow in this valley, an abundance of wildlife, especially elk, move here to browse off the easily available grass giving the wolves great hunting opportunity.

In the late morning, while at a pit stop, (the best place to get wolf scuttlebutt) we were told of a lone bull elk that had been standing for a long time high on a nearby ridge; this meant a lot to our knowledgeable guides. We proceeded down the road in our van and sure enough, there was the elk, silhouetted on a high north ridge. Not only that, there were two wolves, lying down on the slope beneath the elk and at varying distances from him. We began to realize that the elk was in an untenable position having been boxed in by the wolves; they would keep him trapped there until they needed a meal. He would stand until he dropped of exhaustion or starvation.

As we stood watching through our binoculars, a coyote appeared on the scene near the elk and we could see he looked very sickly, very mangy, a sign that, in fact, he had mange, a deadly painful mite infestation that passes quickly from one animal to another. This coyote quickly passed through the scene and out of sight. We knew this animal would not survive, another reminder of the harsh reality of this world of the wild. After hanging around in the cold for about an hour, we finally moved on to a visit with Dan Hartman, a premier wildlife photographer spending time with him for lunch and a slideshow of his work.

After leaving Dan, we drove back to the same location to find the elk was still standing there, but the two wolves were not in sight. On the opposite side of the road, on the south side, atop a high snowy hill, were four people, all intently focused on their scopes. None of them had cameras so I knew immediately these were not tourists, but rather volunteer wolf watchers/researchers who will stand for hours, despite the weather, watching, interpreting, recording the movements and interactions of every wolf. Seeing them there was a good omen. We clambered up the ridge and sure enough, in the val-

ley, about a half-mile away, we could see a couple of grey wolves, just meandering back and forth. Gradually more and more wolves appeared out of nowhere; we were told by our guides that this was the Lamar Canyon Pack, a pack of eleven wolves, but we could only see ten. They were interacting with one another, walking from one place to another or just lying down with no apparent agenda. In the distance was a large herd of bison. These animals knew from the body language of the wolves that they need have no fear, as these were not wolves on the hunt, and so the bison were spread out across the valley in a 'relaxed' mode.

We stood on the cold, windy hilltop, watching the wolves through scopes and binoculars. Photography was difficult because of the distance, and made further difficult by my eyes that were blurred with tears and fingers that were numb from the extreme weather conditions. I began to think about retreating to the vehicle, about a quarter mile down the road for a hot chocolate and some warmth, but resisted the temptation. When we turned to look for the elk, he was gone; what a relief to know he would live another day — maybe.

Suddenly we heard a sound that made my hair stand on end. Though I'd never experienced the sound in the wild, it was so unmistakable. I was hearing the howl of a lone wolf. My whole being came to a standstill and my breathing was suspended. We all stood frozen in anticipation. The howl appeared to have come from behind us. Yes, across the road, high up on the north slope, where the elk had been. As a second howl died away the air was suddenly rent with eerie calls and cries. It took a moment to realize these were the howls of multiple wolves, all in stunning unison.

With one accord, we turned to the scopes that were focused on the wolves down in the valley and saw to our amazement, every wolf, sitting or standing, head raised to the sky, mouths open, howling in a singsong rhythm as they responded to the howl of that wolf across the road. We realized that lone wolf was asking, "Where are you?" and the pack was responding, telling of their location. We stood breathlessly, silently waiting for what would happen. We turned to look back on the 'elk' ridge and there, out of the brush, appeared a single wolf. Running down the steep ridge of the slope, it quickly crossed the road, raced the half-mile distance through the sage toward the waiting, howling pack.



Here was the missing wolf, the eleventh wolf. As the pack greeted this newcomer, they surrounded her, with tails lowered, licking her face in joyous reunion. It became clear that this wolf was the Alpha Female and her pack was treating her with great deference as is required in the wolf family hierarchy. We realized that the pack had just been 'hanging out' waiting for the return of their female leader. They were, now, once again, reunited, a complete family and together, they turned northward and slowly trotted across the landscape drifting further and further away from our view, never knowing of, never caring about the rapt, adoring audience they were leaving behind.

I had been transported out of my human self to become totally one with those wolves, almost forgetting I was not a wolf, not one of them. For me, it was so primordial, so primitive, so heart stopping, to both see and to hear what few can experience, one of those unforgettable moments, one now deeply imbedded into my psyche.

We were never allowed to get as close to the wolves as we would have liked and though at the time it was frustrating, I am now grateful. It forced us to keep that important distance between us and the wolves, thus preserving the integrity of the pack and the separation necessary to keep the wolves in their world and us in ours, maintaining the magic of the Call of the Wild. •

## *Traditions*

*Rita Fireman*

It was the first Passover I can remember.  
My mother and I walked down  
to the Murray Avenue fish market  
to buy *gefilte* fish.  
"What's a *gefilte* fish?" I asked.  
"It's a tradition," my mother said.  
I knew this word tradition.  
Lighting the Sabbath candles,  
drinking a glass of Manishevitz wine,  
these were traditions.

A yellow speckled fish moved slowly  
back and forth in the water  
of a big bathtub in the window  
of Katz the fishmonger's shop.  
I pressed my nose and mouth  
against the smeary glass to see  
the first live fish I ever saw.  
I tapped at the window.  
I made a fish mouth with sucked in cheeks.  
We kissed through the glass.

A bell tinkled as we walked through sawdust  
to the counter where Mr. Katz stood,  
a blood-stained apron wrapped over his stomach.  
Inside the cases that lined the wall  
I could see slabs of fish, their skins  
glinting in the light.  
"Which one is the *gefilte* fish?" I asked.  
Mr. Katz gave a big hoot and laughed and laughed.  
"Didn't he know this was nothing to laugh at? It was  
our tradition."

"What can I get you Mrs?"  
Mr. Katz asked my mother.  
"I'd like the fish in the window."  
Oh I can't sell you that beauty. I promised it  
to another customer."  
I ran over to the bathtub.  
I took a last look  
at the *gefilte* fish safely swimming  
round and round.  
And I said to my mother, I can't do this tradition.  
"Don't be silly," she said. We'll try at Mr. Cohen's.

These days I buy gefilte fish in a jar. •

## *The Inferno*

Max Potter

It was the winter of 1947-1948; the site, the Philadelphia General Hospital. A large group of post-adolescent men and somewhat more mature women, having graduated from various medical schools, were now put out for ripening as interns in this great municipal hospital, which sadly no longer exists. We worked long hours for sums too low to be considered a pittance. Instead, we were provided with shelter, laundry and relatively large quantities of mediocre food.

In those days Pennsylvania required internships to be rotating in nature, meaning one went to a different specialty each month in order to round out his medical training. This was before the era of EMT's; many hospitals had their own ambulances. As interns we were assigned to ride along to handle emergencies. (Interns were cheap and were frequently called upon to perform menial tasks, such as filling out labels, which was considered too burdensome for student nurses.) Let me say a word about these ambulances. One was a 1936 Chevrolet, *café au lait* in color and one was a blue 1940 Dodge which had started life as a panel truck, but unfortunately lost its springs and was acquired cheaply as an ambulance.

On this one particular night, a bunch of us on call were hanging out in the doctor's lounge where we played poker, shot pool or played chess. We were broke, but had enough money to order in either pizza or corned beef sandwiches, a sybaritic repast the City of Philadelphia failed to provide. Naturally, a beer or two, elevated our boredom to the equivalence of a night on the Left Bank, albeit the Schuylkill, not the Seine.

I was enjoying a corned beef sandwich with coleslaw and gusto, when a call came in, saying "Hey Potter, you have an ambulance run!" I was forced to put down my sandwich, put on my inadequate top coat over my whites and head into a cold, slushy night aboard the clanging ambulance. "We're off to a fire" the driver told me, and like a bat out of hell, we headed into South Philadelphia, home of the row houses.

And there we were! A magnificent fire in an old school building. It was late at night, and thankfully empty, but it was loaded with well-oiled floors, which burned merrily and shot flames high into the air. It was a goner. As the city ambulance, we were required to be parked next to the lead fire truck. I got a good view of the hoses arcing water

*[continued on bottom of next column]*

## *Time Crept up on Me*

Sam Lehrer

Whose arms are these? I ask  
Time says: "They are the arms of all  
who have aged."

Why did I suddenly notice?  
Time says: "Because you had time."  
The spots on my arms and face  
are freckles, I told my grandson.  
The others know but say:  
"My, how well you look."

Why can't she remember?  
Time says: "Time clumps our brains"  
All that is left now is a cheerful child  
with little talk, so different from times past.

Do I have time to finish?  
Time asks: "What?"  
I have much to do.  
Time says: "Keep doing  
though you may not finish,  
for time does not wait."

What good is time?  
Time says: "To see the new.  
With time you may  
watch the short cycles of seasons,  
the longer cycle of his growth.  
And be gone before the sadness  
of the end of their cycles."  
Time says: "Let time pass." •

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into the flames, and whether it was this or the beer I suddenly got a call from nature. There I was, standing in the slush, freezing and in distress. Next to me was Capt. Centani, of the Philadelphia Fire Department, a dignitary. I explained my plight to him and he suggested a barroom down the street. So I strode off, wondering how I was to handle this. I had seen enough movies to plan my entrance. I stretched myself to my full height and assumed a mien of great authority, and said, "Is there a telephone in here?" "Oh sure, Doc. In the back." There were shouts of let the Doctor through, as I manfully approached the rear. My surmise proved correct. There was the Men's room next to the pay phone, and I was able to accomplish my mission with great expedition. I was able to leave with the erect posture and clear vision of a General Patton, having overcome the main crisis of the night.

The fire was extinguished, there were no casualties, and I was able to finish my corned beef sandwich. •

## *Yes, I Joined the Navy*

*Ruth Kay*

Thousands of young men were drafted for military service, and many others voluntarily enlisted. At age 23, Jewish, and quite aware that this war was about "my people," I gave serious thought to enlisting. It seemed only right that I, as a woman, should be able to serve. However, I needed to make certain that I would be doing the right thing, not only for me but for my family as well. If I joined up, I would be the last of three children to leave home. My brother was already an enlisted marine in a unit headed for the Pacific, and my sister was in Kansas where her husband was serving with the army. My enlistment meant an "empty nest" for my parents, and I was concerned about the impact this would have on them. Their well-being was important, and I didn't want to be selfish, uncaring, or add to their worries.

By September 1943, after much discussion with family, friends, WAVE recruiters, and the "big" boss, I made my decision to enlist in the Navy. All were understanding and supportive, and with their blessings, I signed up.

On arrival we received our first Navy issue of clothing. The I. Miller pumps had to go in exchange for new black oxfords with very sensible heels.

Gone, too, were the sheer silk stockings! I arrived without hat, but was soon issued one that I thought was not very flattering. Several blouses, white and blue, along with black ties were added to the not exactly exciting wardrobe. But the nicely tailored WAVE skirt and jacket with the Seaman 1<sup>st</sup> Class insignia on the sleeve had a more positive effect on my feelings, and I donned the assembled uniform with self-approval and pride.

After being outfitted, we moved to our living quarters in apartment buildings taken over by the Navy. Furnishings in the apartment I shared with four other WAVES were sparse, but the two bureaus and double-decker bunk beds proved to be quite adequate. Duty assignments as well as dress code for the day (influenced by the weather) were announced over the loudspeaker system early in the morning.

Training sessions were held in Hunter's classrooms, and as "boots", Navy lingo was first on our agenda. Stairs became ladders, walls were now bulkheads, and a bathroom was a head. The curricu-

*(continued at bottom of next column)*

## *Beyond God*

*Al Rosen*

Into the wilderness  
The measurer changes  
Whatever he measures  
To know is to wonder  
What is not yet known. •

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lum also covered an intensive study of ships; aircraft; ranks; ratings; and Navy history.

Three months from the time of enlistment, boot camp and Stillwater, I returned home for a visit prior to reporting to my new assignment in the Bureau of Personnel, Washington, D.C. My mother's greetings came as a surprise: "I don't know why I worried about you these past few months. You look just fine, but you've gained weight!" Fortunately (or unfortunately) my well-made uniform still fit my new plump figure.

Soon after the warm and wonderful home visit with family and friends, I reported for duty in Washington, D.C. at the Bureau of Personnel, Office of Transportation. When I first saw the extremely large office to which I was assigned and the many sailors working with huge stacks of papers, I was a bit overwhelmed. We soon learned that they were processing travel claims, a task to be assumed by the WAVES who were replacing sailors being transferred to sea duty. Yes, we were proud to serve where needed, but we were not insensitive to the fact that these young men were going to combat duty assignments.

A major responsibility of the Office of Transportation was to coordinate with other military services to plan and manage air or rail troop travel. The office also served to provide necessary air or rail arrangements and papers for military personnel or civilians on military orders. One such request created a bit of a stir in the office, when Robert Taylor, the popular and handsome actor of the era, appeared at the travel desk for help. Yes, he was on a military mission.

My WAVE career gave me the opportunity to meet new and interesting places and people of the North, South, East and West. Life as a WAVE came to an end when I was discharged as a Chief Yeoman in September 1946.

Am I glad I joined? You bet! •

## *My Grandfather's House*

*Dottie Sacks*

On my third trip to Turkey, three of my cousins offered to drive my husband and me to Cesmé, a little seaside village, where my Father was born. Cesmé is on the shore of the Aegean overlooking the Greek Islands. It is breathtakingly beautiful. As we approached the village I began to sob loudly. I was overcome with emotion and I was very sad that my father was not there with me.

At the entrance to the village there is a statue of a huge muscular Turk and a fierce looking lion. The statue faces Greece and it is inscribed, "Do Not Dare Return To Our Shores." That was one of the reasons our family left Turkey. After one war they were ruled by the Greeks and after the next they were ruled by the Turks. Life was very difficult.

My Turkish cousins knew the house where their father had lived, but they were not sure where my father's house was. They stopped an older man in the street who told them he had lived in Cesmé all his life. They asked him if the name Maurice Tuvi was familiar to him. He was astounded. "Why I played with him when I was a boy. Maurice is the only one I ever knew who went to America." My cousins told him that I was Maurice's daughter. He hugged me and offered to take us to my grandfather's house. It was a very impressive two-story stucco house with balconies and a tall wrought iron fence in the front yard. I knew that the family was not affluent – so how come they had such a beautiful home? I learned that not only had my grandfather and his family lived there, but at the same time two of his sisters and their families shared the house.

The woman who now lived there invited us inside. The kitchen was quite primitive, possibly not much different than when my grandparents lived there. The sink was made of concrete. There was a pump for the water, and a wood-burning stove. The woman proudly showed us her new toilet in a step up room that was smaller than a closet. The toilet was the type with the box on top near the ceiling and a long pull chain – very old-fashioned to us, but wonderfully new to her. I do not remember seeing a bathtub anywhere in the house.

We went out to the backyard because I have a picture of my grandparents taken in the yard when my grandmother was pregnant with my father. In the picture, my grandfather is seated, wearing his

*[continued at bottom of next column]*

## *Twins*

*Babs Radner*

When I was in the doctor's office for my third pregnancy, I asked him why I was so big, was I going to have twins? He responded, "Don't be greedy." I never asked him again. One memory of that pregnancy was stopping on the way home at Dunkin Donuts if I hadn't gained too much weight since my previous visit to the doctor.

Then just about at due date I told my mother that I wanted to take my second child, a boy, on the swan boats, something I had done for our first born daughter. So my mother and I walked down Commonwealth Avenue from her office to the Public Gardens, and took my son for a swan boat ride. That night I delivered *twins*. I did not have natural childbirth so I didn't know about the twins until I woke up from the anesthesia. Then, I kept saying to my husband — "two babies, two babies?"

My obstetrician had told my husband and my parents that I was carrying twins, but his philosophy was not to tell the expectant mother, because if she delivers and expects only one child, she will be happy. If she expects two babies and one dies (a common occurrence in 1957) she would be very unhappy.

Fast forward to 2012. I can't write enough about how wonderful and helpful both twin daughters are to us at NBOC. Thank you Wendy (you came first) and Nancy (you are our youngest). •

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fez and my grandmother is standing in front of a small tree. The very same tree is still standing there some 80 years later; now it is a huge sturdy tree.

We then went upstairs to the bedrooms, and I thought, "here I am in the very same room where my father was born and where my grandmother died." At the age of 17, six weeks after giving birth to my father, my grandmother, for whom I am named, fell in the street, hit her head on the rocks, and died of a concussion. Her name was Doña Cohen and she came from the Greek island of Chios. Three years later my grandfather, David Tuvi, married Leah Fiss, from the island of Rhodes, who bore him eight more children. My aunts Victoria and Dora were both born in that wonderful house in Cesmé, Turkey. •

## *Blue Plate Special*

*John Averell*

Have you ever really looked into the bookcase in the Terrace Room with all those beautiful blue plates displayed? This fine collection of Dedham Pottery has an interesting history here at NBOC, locally in Dedham, and internationally as well.

When Natalie Wolf, Artistic Director of NewBridge on the Charles, undertook the task of locating and purchasing art objects for our new facility, she was faced with the enormous task of acquiring over 1000 items. Dedham Pottery was a natural. Here was an internationally recognized art medium in our own town. The largest public display of Dedham Pottery is housed in the Dedham Historical Society; its volunteer curator is Jim Kaufman. Jim was already connected with NewBridge as a supporter of the NBOC project during the politics of pre-construction approval in Dedham. His two children graduated from Rashi School.



*photo courtesy of Jim Kaufman*

Working together, Natalie and Jim chose the collection of 19 plates you see housed in the bookcase in the Terrace Room. Although Dedham Pottery made a variety of ceramics – bowls and small items – dinner plates make the best display items for visibility. Availability, cost, and variety of pattern were considerations for selection. The wonderful collection of rabbits, mushrooms, pond lilies, turkeys, and selected other animals and flowers are a testimony to their care. In our library is a large loose-leaf book containing photographs of all artwork placed in NBOC by Natalie, including color photographs of each of the 19 Dedham Pottery plates.

Dedham Pottery was an outgrowth of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Arts and Crafts movement in Europe, led notably by William Morris. It first came from England to America at Boston, beginning the American Art Pottery movement lasting from 1890 to 1930. At this time pottery had been decorated cheaply us-

ing a transfer decoration method. In the new movement, everything was to be hand made and painted, a much more labor-intensive, expensive process.



*photo by Diana Bronner*

In 1896 master potter Hugh Robertson moved his business to Dedham. He developed the first fine crackle glaze process for ceramics in this country, based on studying thousand year old pottery of Asia. This glaze makes his pottery unique in the period and widely sought after by collectors and museums. The cobalt blue borders, although not outstanding artistically, still attract buyers and users for the whimsical subjects. Because of the difficulty of painting identical art, and controlling firing conditions, there are hundreds of variations of design and color of the plates. Rarity leads to value in the pricing.



*photo courtesy of Jim Kaufman*

NewBridge residents are urged to visit and view the extensive collection of Dedham Pottery at the Dedham Historical Society. For a token fee you can join DHS. Look for future opportunities at NBOC to hear more again on the subject. •

## *Hammond* *Frankie Wolff*

Last Tuesday, November 24, I was among those at NewBridge attending Stan Rosenzweig's Nostalgia program when he began talking about The Lone Ranger, then playing that oh-so-distinctive call "Hi Yo Silver!" I was immediately transported back to our family's country home in Hammond, first to the place itself and then to me. I loved everything about Hammond: riding horses, just being around them, feeling like Daddy's little "boy." We shared a love of horses. My sister, four years older, didn't love them at all but I LOVED all of it – the smell of the tack room, going for the cows, leaning under branches as we rode, etc. I think I must have been about 12. I had a real "crush" on Mr. Harold, who took care of the horses.



Hearing Hi Yo Silver ring out, I could "see" Daddy: his faded checked robe, the way he fingered his hair by his ear, the plaid chair he was sitting in, his familiar posture. The long-ago music was so evocative! A tingly feeling of excitement was sweeping over me! I was aware I was having an incredible experience "seeing" Daddy again in a way I haven't in many, many years. It felt wonderful! Then I realized I couldn't tell Merce, my sister who died last year. I have become increasingly aware that I think of Merce when there is something special I want to ask/tell her or if there is talk of a recipe.

Hammond stayed with me — its beauty, the white house, the glass enclosed porch, the muddy river, the patio. But then, I was out of the "setting." Shall I leave now and listen to the presentation? I've lost interest in the words I was hearing. I want to continue my memories, go back to Hammond.

Other memories surfaced: Mr. Leo and Miss Nette, and their tiny country grocery store. The Sears catalogue that I played "house" in on Saturday nights in Hammond. (Lots of laughter in the



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NBOC residents are invited to submit essays, articles, short stories, poems and artwork of interest to the NBOC community.

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See the box on Page 5 for new information on making contributions to *The Bridge*

Photo of New Bridge in Nameplate by John Averell

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room so I lost my trend of thought.) "White Christmas" playing now — so familiar. So reminiscent of another time. I "see" myself dancing at the Jung Roof. I see my white evening dress trimmed with silver – and Eddy Rosen dancing with me, the feel of his arm around me. I remember the stirring I felt — how "cute" Eddie was.

And now he is dead. Gone — just like the Lone Ranger's rousing call. But the memories stay firmly in place. •