

The Bridge

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

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Photo by Michael Ross

Chef Patrick oversees the Interfaith Dinner

Notes from the Editors

The cover photo of Patrick Goyau, SousChef of Nosh, reminds the residents of the Interfaith Dinner in December, themed as "Points of Light". Both the food and the inspiring program were universally acclaimed.

The less than perfect layout in this issue is explained in part on the facing page, "Final Notes From the Editors".

Our Contributors

July 2018

- **Mrs. Claire Aronson:** *IMO Shirley Averell*
- **Myron L. Atlas:** *IMO Shirley Averell*
- **Charlotte S. Backman:** *IMO Shirley Averell*
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August 2018

- **Georgia R Mittelman:** *IMO Shirley Averell*
- **Richard I Winneg:** *IMO Shirley Averell*

September 2018

- **Mrs Fay Bussgang:** *IMO Murray Herscott*

October 2018 (*none*)

November 2018 (*none*)



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

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Photo of New Bridge in Nameplate by John Averell

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Final Notes from the Editors

Yes, this is the last issue that Ed Goldstein and I (John Averell) will be publishing The Bridge. Serious health issues in one case, and some health issues and just plain burnout in my case, are the reasons.

This is a matter of urgency. We must have one or two resident volunteers to take over publication of The Bridge.

The qualifications to replace the current co-editors in chief are:

- Familiarity and comfort with current computers
- Expert experience with a text editor such as Word or its equivalent in Microsoft or Apple.
- Experience with layout of final document (critical requirement)
- Conversion (if necessary) to PDF format for final printing (by Fleming Printer)
- Ability to guide authors, associated editors and text editors that are willing to help you

We have no requirement that new volunteers follow our current process or programs for publication, as long as the end result continues to be a high quality printed product. Please contact John Averell for questions on volunteering for this position. I and Ed will work with you in any and all ways to make a smooth transition.

It is highly desirable to have two residents working together on this job, so consider possible partners.

Some History of The Bridge

The Bridge started in July 2011. Here is the introductory entry of that issue, which still applies today:

This is the premier issue of a new journal called "The Bridge", by and for the residents of Independent Living at NewBridge. The purpose of this publication is to help in the advancement of the many ongoing efforts to bring our community into a closer relationship with each other. We will be doing this by giving each of you the opportunity to read about each other, and to write or tell your story to one of the volunteer reporters. The volunteer staff is made up of editors, reporters, writers, and layout people.

The originators and organizers of this project are John and Shirley Averell. Volunteering to assist them is a small group of interested individuals. Our aim is to create this quarterly journal, printing articles written or reported to us by any or all of the residents of NewBridge.

The Bridge is not meant to be another newsletter but a journal of articles. Poetry, short stories, personal experiences, art work, and informative articles about volunteer opportunities and interest groups, are the types of items we seek. Therefore we turn to you, residents of Independent Living at NewBridge, to write anything that would be of interest, or ask one of our staff for assistance.

The Bridge will be published four times a year. Items accepted for publication may be held for a future issue, depending on space available. All items accepted will be edited in consultation with the author.

The cost of publishing The Bridge is not included in the current budget. We are indebted to supportive residents for a number of generous donations, and wish to thank these donors very much for covering the printing costs of this issue. In future we are hoping to include such costs in the regular budget.

This introduction was written by Arnie Heiger, who basically was my co-editor in the startup phase. Arnie was treasurer, and along with several others, was instrumental in getting The Bridge off the ground. Some of the initial authors are still active, notably Sybil Gladstone, who suggested the name of "The Bridge".

When Ed Goldstein arrived, we bonded to work together on all the succeeding issues. A number of other residents helped us do some first reading, editing, and rating of submissions.

All issues of The Bridge can be viewed online on the resident website at:

<http://Newbridgeresidents.org>

by clicking in the left column on:

Media/The Bridge/TheB Downloads

We continue to need you all to submit articles and photos, and to find some new volunteer publisher(s). You have said you like The Bridge, and now is the time to step up to this new time at NewBridge on the Charles.

First Encounter

Sylvia Schatz

During the summer months of the 1930's and 40's, members of The Philadelphia Orchestra played concerts in Robin Hood Dell, an open-air amphitheater in Fairmount Park in West Philadelphia. Ticket prices were very low and The Dell was easily accessible by subway, trolley car, and bus.

My best friends, Louise and Sybil, and I often went to those concerts that summer of 1946. Even though it took about an hour to get there from Oak Lane (the neighborhood in northern Philadelphia in which we lived), it was an exciting excursion. We looked forward not only to the music but also to meeting with friends.

One evening during intermission we spotted Louise's cousin, Suzanna, with a group of her friends. They all sang in Shalom Altman's Jewish Community Chorus. They were "older", in their mid-twenties; they seemed so sophisticated. We hurried up the bleachers to meet them, glad for the excuse to say hello to Suzanna. There were about five people, but I only remember Suzanna, her boyfriend, and a handsome, slender guy with reddish curly hair, Leonard Schatz. He had been discharged from the army the previous February and was heading to the Wharton School in September for an MBA. I told him I had just graduated from High School and was going to Bryn Mawr in the fall. The intermission couldn't have been more than fifteen minutes, but it seemed we talked easily about many things.

That encounter must have made a big impression on me because after sixty some years I can still remember the dress I wore. It was apple green, of a light summery lawn, with short cap sleeves, high neck and cinched waist.

It was another three months before we met again when Louise and I had a party. With some trepidation I invited Len. Would he remember who I was? He accepted the invitation with enthusiasm. He did remember me and was happy to come. Years later, he revealed to me that that when he told his sister about the girl he had met and liked at the Dell, she said, "She's too young for you". Obviously, Len paid no attention to his sister's advice.

Good Shabbas

Rita Fireman

The phone rang
around sundown Friday night.
It was you calling to wish me Good Shabbas.
My eyes welled up at the words,
the Ashkenazi accent hit my ears and
bounced off the kitchen walls where
I could see the shadows of white candles.
I heard the slam of a car door
and Eddie's voice calling
through the screen, Good Shabbas.
We drank sweet Manischewitz wine
from two old silver kiddush cups,
one from his family, one from mine,
carried in pillowcases hand over hand
from Russian shtetls
to the golden streets of America.
O the music of prayers
sealed with winey kisses.

And you remembered your mother
in the dining room
of the apartment on Sutherland Road,
of how she lit the candles,
covered her head, moved her hands
in half circles over the flame.
You could smell the chicken soup
and the challah bread fresh
out of the oven
and you said your mouth was watering
O the perfumes of the Sabbath Queen.

Nothing's the same you said.
Yes, nothing's the same Sandy dear.
It slipped away buried in graveyards.
And we cried like lost children
unable to find our way back home.

Hungary for Opera

Richard Feffer

In 1948 I served in the Foreign Service, and I had a brief assignment in Budapest. The city was bleak and dreary, and still suffered from the devastating destruction of the war.

There were few hotels and they were second rate. Due to a very unfavorable currency exchange established by the new Communist government, they were very, very expensive.

Consequently, I skipped the hotels and, at the suggestion of some embassy people, stayed at a nunnery. This nunnery ran a guest house to accommodate travelers. The rooms were Spartan, but immaculate. A nun was assigned to each guest to assure the stay was comfortable. My nun was a pleasant, older woman who spoke perfect English. She told me that there was an opera playing that night that I would be sure to enjoy. She was right. The opera was Verdi's comic masterpiece *FALSTAFF*. When I returned from the opera, she was waiting in my room with an apple pastry and a glass of milk.

Twenty-five years later, Janice and I decided to include Budapest in our itinerary of a Balkan vacation. This time I stayed at the modern, deluxe Hilton. On our arrival, I asked the concierge if there was an opera playing during our stay. He said with great certainty "no."

That evening Janice and I planned to have dinner in a popular outdoor restaurant located in a park in the outskirts of the city. To get there, we took a street car that passed by the opera house. To my surprise, there were crowds of people, formally dressed, milling about the entrance plaza. I decided to check this out. The restaurant was a good choice. It served a great, native cuisine, and had strolling violinists who

played incessantly at our table until they received the appropriate tip.

Believing the concierge had misinformed me, the next night I decided to go to the opera house myself. When I got there, the same crowds of people were gathered at the entrance. I broke into one group and with great anticipation asked, "What opera is playing tonight". The response was spontaneous laughter. I was told that there was no opera. They were extras in a movie. A scene was being shot in the opera house, and they were waiting for their cue!

Moving On

Caryn Finard

I have my regrets
As time elapses I forgive
I'm moving on

It's a long and arduous journey
to alter one's state
To grow and go forward
I'm moving on

Time is fleeting
I want the earth to stop
Turning
I want today to be steadfast
And silent
Tomorrow to linger and be
Tranquil
I'm moving on

I've had my share of loving
Relationships
Some with their limitations
Others passionate and tender
I'm moving on

When I go to my place of
Rest I hope my spirit will be
An everlasting comfort to
Those I leave behind
I'm moving on

Three Short Stories

Sybil Gladstone

Cole Porter at the Oak Room

"You Do Something to Me" sang the sinuous brunette standing a few feet away from our table at the famed Oak Room of the Algonquin Hotel in New York City; made famous by the great wit Dorothy Parker and her circle of sardonic, acerbic writers, thinkers, and *bon vivants*.

Storied members of the erudite group included the playwright George S. Kaufman, columnist and humorist Robert Benchley, and Edna Ferber, the novelist (*Giant*, *Show Boat*). Since most people never had the opportunity to join this august circle, we thrilled at the idea of actually being in the Oak Room and being entertained there. My husband and I decided to celebrate our wedding anniversary in New York, and he made a dinner reservation there.

A glance around the hotel lobby, as we entered, was disappointing, as it was peopled by ordinary beings, obviously waiting to meet friends. Even the Oak Room looked ordinary until the gorgeous singer took her place by the piano, in close proximity to our table. "Night and day, you are the one," she crooned. Then "You are so easy to love". It was all Cole Porter, all the way. Cole Porter, who had taken his piano along when he entered Yale. Cole Porter, the genius of "Begin the Beguine" and "So in Love" (with you am I). The slender, glamorous chanteuse became another being, and the people in the room followed her into that romantic dream world, never to be liberated from it all the rest of their lives.

Bear Jam

In the glorious summer of 1962, the Gladstone family made its never-to-be forgotten trip across this country. In California, land of beauty, land of gold, we thoroughly enjoyed Yosemite National Park, drinking in the splendor of El Capitan, Half Dome, and Yosemite Falls. But our most dramatic experience came the day we got caught in a "Bear Jam".

Yosemite may have as many bears as it has tourists. Ideally, they should never

meet, as bears are extremely dangerous wild animals. They have learned to come out of the woods to approach tourists who might feed them. One day, as we drove from one wondrous destination to another in the park, we encountered a long line of cars stopped in front of us, as people lingered to see or feed the bears. We stopped and waited. A mother bear approached my side of the car. I hastily closed my window. She stood up on her hind legs and looked at me through the glass. I looked at her, frozen with fear. What if the window broke? After a long minute, she dropped to the ground and lumbered away. We proceeded down the road.

When we got out of our station wagon later in the day, we were thrilled to see large muddy paw prints on the car door. We vowed to keep them forever, but the next rain washed them away. Muddy prints don't last, but memories do.

Rex Harrison

Dick and I were enjoying a New York weekend. We had seen an all-absorbing performance of *My Fair Lady*, overwhelming in its authenticity, drenching us with emotion. Loving and hating Rex Harrison's portrayal of Professor Higgins: he was such a boulder, yet so charming. We decided to take a late evening stroll, around the corner from our hotel, to see the shop windows on Fifth Avenue.

Lingering in front of Bergdorf Goodman in the frigid night air, I became aware of the couple standing beside us. Sharp intake of breath: it was Rex Harrison and his beautiful second wife, the exquisite Lille Palmer. He held her close to his side; she nestled into his warm and loving gaze. They stopped walking. We did too. They went on. We remembered for so many years.

Later I learned that two of Rex Harrison's six wives committed suicide. His private life resembled that of Professor Higgins. He was self-centered, exceedingly conceited, highly successful, extremely wealthy. An Academy Award winner, he earned large sums and spent them on clothes and creature comforts. He was Professor Higgins, in love that evening with his lovely wife, Lilli Palmer.

My Father in Haller's Army

Ed Goldstein

When he was 22, in 1913, my father was drafted into the army of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, of which the *shtetl* in Eastern Galicia in which he was born was a part. Three years into the First World War, which started in 1914, the Italian Army took him prisoner. Some time during 1918 he volunteered to serve as a warrant officer in Haller's Army to defend the newly created Polish republic from Ukrainian nationalist and Soviet Bolshevik armies. My brother and I both recall that he was proud of having served in that army.

A few years ago, having run into a brick wall in my attempt to trace the genealogy of my father's family, I decided to try to find out as much as I could about Haller's Army. The basic facts were easy to come by through Google, my favorite Internet search engine. General Jozef Haller, a Pole who had commanded one of Pilsudski's Polish Legions fighting against Russia on the side of the Germans had, after the collapse of the Russian front, been spirited to France. There, in 1918, he took over command of various army units fighting on the side of the Allies, made up of ethnic Poles, mostly from the United States, but also from the French Foreign Legion and several other countries.

After the creation of the Polish Republic in November 1918, its president urgently asked for help against the Bolsheviks and Ukrainians who were fighting to dismember the new country. In April of 1918, the Polish Army in France, under the command of General Haller, by that time more than 50,000 strong, was sent to Poland to help in that task. Trained and well equipped, they proved to be of great help to the various ragtag units made up of volunteers, paramilitaries and ex-soldiers from the various armies—Russian, German, Austrian—in which Poles had served during the war that had just ended.

Many members of Haller's Army had been recruited in Allied, especially Italian, prisoner-of-war camps from among the many prisoners who were ethnic Poles or

whose homes were in the area now included in the Polish Republic. My father was among them.

These were the basic facts about Haller's Army. But as my research continued it raised some questions that troubled me greatly. On the Internet, I found about a dozen references to pogroms in several Jewish communities allegedly perpetrated by units and individuals of Haller's Army. These pogroms involved killings as well as non-fatal atrocities. And, when I looked up the entry "Haller's Army" in the Encyclopedia Judaica, a standard reference work, I found that its very first sentence read as follows:

"HALLER'S ARMY ("Blue Army"), force of Polish volunteers organized in France during the last year of World War I, responsible for the murder of Jews and anti-Jewish pogroms in Galicia and the Ukraine..."

These new facts made me wonder about how my father had survived two years of combat service in such an army. And what was he, and any other Jewish Hallerczyki, doing while these pogroms were going on? After all, he was an officer, albeit a low-ranking one; could he just look on? There was an even more puzzling question: Why had my father been so obviously proud of his service in this organization? I had no answer, but decided to find out more.

I emailed Professor Wrobel of the University of Toronto, whom I had come to know when I published one of his scholarly articles about the history of Jews in Galicia in the genealogical journal I edit. He is a historian specializing in the history of Poland, and especially Polish-Jewish relations. I asked him what he knew about Jews who had served in Haller's Army. He was quite familiar with the army itself, but told me that he had never read or heard anything about Jews serving in it. He consulted books, journals and colleagues; after a week or so, he emailed me to the effect that he had found not a single reference to the subject.

At about that time, I found that the *PolishRoots* website on the Internet had a

section devoted to Haller's Army, but nothing on the subject of Jews who might have served in it. I knew that a Dr. Paul Valacek, who was in charge of that website, had a grandfather who had served in Haller's Army. I emailed him and asked my usual questions; I got the usual answer: he knew nothing about Jews who had served in it. Then, a couple of months later, I got another email message from him. In it, he told me about his current research into some newly uncovered casualty lists for three regiments of Haller's Army. At the end of the message he mentioned that he thought there were some Jewish names on those lists.

I located the casualty database on the Internet and managed to print out all the 3,800-some names on it. It was clear from these names that at least five percent of the casualties had been Jews! In the absence of indications to the contrary, I concluded that probably at least 5% of the members of Haller's Army were Jewish. When presented with this evidence, Professor Wrobel agreed with this conclusion.

But my own troubling questions had not been answered.

Additional research on the Internet and via email uncovered four more Jewish Hallerczyki (as members of Haller's Army were called). I corresponded with the son of one of them, who told me how proud his father had been of his membership; he added that his father had faithfully attended reunions of Haller's Army and had, in fact, taken his son to one of them.

One more piece of research: A pogrom was reported to have been committed by Hallerczyki at Lida, in Belaruss, on the eve of Passover 1919. Something clicked in my mind, viz., that the trains carrying the first units of Haller's Army from France to Poland had arrived in a different part of Poland no earlier than on April 15 of that year. I looked up the secular date of the eve of Passover that year ... it was April 17. How likely was it that these Hallerczyki could have arrived on the 15th in a distant part of Poland, made their way to Lida, and carried out a pogrom two days later on the 17th?

All of these pieces of the puzzle did not provide a definitive answer. But they led me to a hypothesis, something like the following.

First, there are just too many eyewitness accounts to these incidents in the record to doubt that some Polish soldiers, individually or as part of their units, committed pogroms and other antisemitic acts during the turbulent period between 1918 and 1921.

Second, as the incident in Lida I just described demonstrates, it is quite possible that members of other military units may have committed atrocities attributed to Hallerczyki. After all, as I mentioned earlier, there were many ragtag military formations active all over Poland during that period. And I am not convinced that the victims of these atrocities were in the best position to distinguish precisely among them. Professor Wrobel, whom I mentioned earlier, subscribes to this supposition.

And finally, even though it is likely that some individuals and units of Haller's Army may have participated in these atrocities, it is not likely that every unit participated. Indeed, one may speculate that those units in which the Jewish Hallerczyki served might have been least likely to do so.

And, yet, there are troubling questions that remain in the back of my mind ...

The Immigrants Shoshanah Garshick

Today we are besieged by propaganda about illegal, unsavory immigrants. We are all the offspring of immigrants unless we are descendants of the native Americans Columbus called Indians. By sheer happenstance many years ago, I happened to write about my mother and how she came to immigrate to the United States. When I was a senior at New Bedford High School in 1942-43, my English teacher, Miss Newman, asked us to write a theme per week. My inventiveness ran out, so what else? I asked my mother how she got here in the US and proceeded to write the following two stories about her voyage and her first job in the new country. For background's sake, she was born about 1884 in Kremenitz, Ternopil, Ukraine, the oldest of three daughters, with 12 brothers.

In sequence, she was # 3 of the children. We have been able to find the birth certificates of the younger members of the Barth (Barth) Family, but not hers.

We are also looking for a marriage certificate. According to my aunt, Lena (Leah) Barth Alter of Manchester, NH, my mother, Sarah Deborah, was the prettiest girl in the village, helping her grandfather Mordechai (Max) with his wayside inn in Shums'k, so she probably had a good dowry. She was chosen to be the bride of a Talmudic scholar, or the rabbi's son. That was supposed to be an excellent shiddach or match. This story came from her sister, Lena (Leah) Barth Alter through my cousins, her daughters, and, after her death, because my mother NEVER told us. That wedding night, after her husband fell asleep, she climbed out of the window and ran to her grandfather's house. We don't know what caused this or why. There must have been a divorce or Jewish get, otherwise she would not have married my father in 1910, in Manchester, New Hampshire. How did she get the funds to travel to the US? I think that, at the death of her grandfather about 1902, she inherited the inn and so was able to purchase tickets in 1905 for herself and her younger sister, Minnie Barth Cohen, probably half-fare. In 1905 when they emigrated, Minnie was 11; my mother about 21. My mother lived with her uncle Wolf Barth, who with his brother Isaac had already reached the US. Wolf had settled in Manchester, NH, while Isaac lived in Newburyport, MA. My mother put Minnie in Manchester's public school and went to work for both of them.

The first story is dated Dec. 7, 1942; the other one was written a week later. I was 16. I rewrite them because they are in current, and this generation has difficulty reading it. We had no computers and only a few students who were in commercial courses had typewriters. These are my mother's descriptions.

The Immigrants

Even before we grew out of pigtails or short trousers, this story of a search for a better world was known to us. This adventure became so real to us that it was we, not those poor immigrants, who journeyed across the face of Europe. It was we, especially I, I

think, who stood at Antwerp, wondering if we could at last leave for America, our land of hope.

Night had spread her dark blanket over the sleeping world. In the heavens twinkling stars and a lustrous moon shone with unearthly splendor. All was quiet. The warm summer air breathed the fragrance of the darkness. The trees' shadows lengthened into grotesque forms that seemed alive. Dark figures appeared to move about, speaking in sibilant whispers. The rustling of grass grew louder; the tramping of feet, muted and hushed, drew nearer. Shadowy shapes became people, walking softly through the leaves. Heavy packs slung over their shoulders bowed their backs. A beam of moonlight struck the red hair of a little girl, panting under her heavy load. Close by strode an older counterpart, a young woman, just emerging from her teens. Neither the weighty packs nor her great responsibility, the problem of getting both her and her sister to America-America, their promised land, bent her shoulders.

A whisper ran through the band. The border! The Austrian border! We're there! As swiftly as it had begun, all sound ceased. The Russian police were on the watch for people such as they, people who dared to leave the land in defiance of all commands, people who dared to search for something better-who dared to cross the border to avoid the exorbitant fees paid for passports. This great sum had been placed upon those precious keys to the New World to prevent the downtrodden peasants from migrating. Russia-the czar- forbade his subjects to leave. He made it almost impossible by this usury. The inhabitants could not better their condition. An empty, hopeless future filled with back-breaking labor for a few groshen stretched before them, if they remained. There was a way to escape from this enforced slavery. Money was given to an agent who arranged the whole journey. An Underground Railway, as it were, took care of all these people who opted to run.

Silently they crept across the border. Friendly lights beamed a welcome from a nearby farmhouse. Here for the night, the immigrants rested their weary limbs. This was only the first stop of the great adventure. They had to prepare for the future with food and rest. Morning dawned upon a joyous crowd

climbing into the farmer's wagons. The heavy vehicles rumbled along the dirt road to the city for official entry into Austria-Hungary.

Guards stood upon the outskirts, barring the way. Sarah fumbled in her pocket and drew out the half a ruble that would see her and her sister safely through the barriers. Everyone produced their money. The gates opened. The huge carts clattered into the city. An inn stood open ready to receive the travelers. They sprang down. A samovar appeared. Tea was drunk hastily. In only a few moments they had to catch the train to Krakov (Cracow). Catching up their bundles, they ran to their carriages. Hardly had they closed their bleary eyes, when a rude voice broke in upon their slumbers. "Krakov!" The conductor bellowed.

Again, clutching their bundles, they caught the train to Misslivitch. That was in Germany. The end was near. Here, the group was led across the station. A committee of doctors was waiting, waiting to examine these travelers. In a few hours, a few stood aside, weeping. They had come thus far only to be rejected by an invisible fate. Others could hardly stand still for joy. They could go on to Antwerp!

To Sarah and her sister this was a queer city of dog carts clattering down the streets. To them it brought the knowledge that they could at least board the ship to America. They were fortunate. Here, too, there was a rigid doctors' examination. Sarah and her sister, having passed, could look forward to the future. Others, heartbroken, could only see a lifetime of hopelessness. But these two girls could now see across the water, a land holding out freedom, security and hope for a better world, not only for them, but for their children.

Thus it was always the custom here for us to say here in the story,

"And, Mother, that young woman was you, and the little girl was our Aunt Minnie."

The Job

It was late October in 1905. The red and yellow leaves of the wind-swept trees floated down in the air, and finally settled on the sidewalk. Two girls hurried along, the cold air snapping at their cheeks, slowly pinching the roses into bloom. As they rounded the corner, the huge Amoskeog Mill, at least five miles long and six stories high, came into view. At the sight of the imposing factory, the younger of the two hung back. The older one pushed her forward and asked, "You want to get a job, don't you?"

"Yes, oh yes, of course I do!" replied the other firmly.

They scurried along and joined the procession that thronged through the door. Taking her hand, Ida led her young friend forward, in front of an authoritative-looking man. "This is my friend," she said. "She'd like to work here in the twisting department." The overseer nodded. They needed workers. America was expanding; her factories, growing; help was getting scarce.

Along the corridor walked the two girls. They turned left, and now, for the first time, Ida's companion saw the long room which was to become so familiar. The machine to which she was assigned, number fifty-one, lay with the others on one side of the room. There were two long lines of the iron monsters near the windows. Electric lights hung overhead. The other part of the huge chamber was occupied by scales upon which, she learned, each worker had her day's output weighed and noted on the board which was posted out in front. Everyone was paid according to what she produced. Her attention was caught by a low, humming noise up ahead. There near the machines huge belts turned the rumbling wheels. Way underneath was a steam boiler puffing at full speed in an attempt to satisfy the insatiable appetite of the belts. The drone, drone, drone grew into a roar as the belts whirled faster and faster. A deafening din filled the room. "I'll be here at number forty-six," shouted Ida.

Far from confident, the girl turned to the misshapen mass-twenty-five long and four feet high upon which she had to work. A woman was already operating her part of the machine. She noticed that every contrivance had two workers-one on each side. She forced her inexperienced hands, which suddenly seemed to be all thumbs, to do the same tasks she noticed her fellow operator performed. The bobbins were full; the machine was stopped; the fine, thin threads were retied; the mechanism again started. The greedy, quarrelsome belts made conversation impossible. The inspector came along, looked on approvingly, and continued her promenade.

Twelve o'clock noon! A harsh clanging finally penetrated the noise. Immediately the roar ceased. Each worker took out her lunch,

sat down beside her machine and ate. One o'clock! The droning began.

The exhausted girl stopped working. It was time to go home. The six o'clock bell had rung. Slowly she put on her coat and re-joined Ida. The sky was dark and starlit just as it had been at six o'clock that morning when she had begun her task. Wearily she wondered if there had been any day at all. She hadn't seen it.

Thursday was payday, a happy day for the girl; her first real salary, five dollars. Just think, when she'd be put on as steady help, she might earn as much as eight dollars. Then she'd work five and one-half days per week.

For four long years (actually almost five, I think) the young girl worked in the New Hampshire factory, the largest in New England. Her job was terminated by marriage in 1910. She and her family moved to Massachusetts, to a thriving community, the fastest-growing on the east coast, called New Bedford. There her four children were born, the youngest of whom her husband named Shoshanah.

Partners in the Waltz

Liane Reif-Lehrer

My husband is securing the large bow on the back of my gown with a safety pin. I supervise the operation in the mirror. He looks over my shoulder, and comments that I look nice in this fuchsia satin floor-length dress. It does have a somewhat regal look. I smile, thinking that I paid less than \$15 for it at Filene's Basement. I button the suspenders to the back of my husband's trousers. He looks so handsome in his white tie and tails.

My excitement is mounting. It is the first Waltz Evening of the season, the beginning of our 19th year at these fairy-tale events. Miraculously, in all that time, except for the year we spent on sabbatical in London, we have missed only two dances.

We are ready to leave. My husband is procrastinating. I want to be there before the dance begins. He would rather get there after most of the others are dancing.

As we approach the grand Ballroom at Boston's Copley Plaza Hotel, my pace quickens. We check our coats and enter the ball-

room. The music has begun and one couple is already gliding across the floor, which is newly polished. Twirling around its periphery to the strains of a fast Viennese waltz is like flying. The space seems vast, having it as we do, almost to ourselves.

The orchestra plays a waltz. I am suddenly transported back 50 years in time. How shy I was then, having come to the United States at age seven, in November 1941, on the brink of World War II. I was small for my age and having to learn a third language and culture made me feel so different from the other children. How much time I spent alone - day dreaming - whenever I wasn't doing homework. How I ached to take ballet lessons, but my mother's salary in a New York factory did not allow such luxuries.

Instead, I improvised in our living room to this very same waltz played on an old wind-up phonograph rescued from our home in Vienna. Ah, Vienna. Now - on this dance floor - I am in old Vienna - the pre-war Vienna of my mother's dreams and my starry-eyed imagination, where ladies in white gowns danced in the line of direction with men in white tie and tails. Not the gray-skyed Vienna I visited in 1963.

The hotel ballroom is quite grand. More couples are arriving, and the lights have been dimmed. We are going around and around. In the soft glow of the candelabra, my mind flirts with the past, only to be plucked back from time to time by the nod of a passing dancer.

What lures me - the logical rational scientist that I was trained to be - to this rhythmic swaying in three-quarter time? Was I imprinted at an early time, like birds that fly a predetermined course? My mother spoke often about festival balls; occasionally, she danced with me. And once, my older brother, who played the violin but never danced, surprised me by doing a mock gavotte with me to a Mozart piece emanating from the radio. Mostly, I danced alone and learned the ballroom dances from the Arthur Murray "footstep" books, borrowed from the Brooklyn Public Library.

The floor is very slippery tonight. I caution my husband to hold on tight - he has a wonderfully strong lead. And then my thoughts drift back to the group of students

with whom I often went dancing after work during an internship at Brookhaven National Laboratory, the summer before my junior year in college. How uninspiredly most of them shuffled around the floor - except for one tall young man, a Viennese waltzer.

He was the first person with whom I ever danced seriously. I remember flying across the floor with him - but no face or name comes to mind. My husband and I go faster and faster. The ballroom is quite full by now. Suddenly the spike heel of a passing dancer comes down hard on my instep. The pain reminds me of the evening I flew out of the grasp of my long-ago faceless partner and suffered my first sprained ankle.

But all that was before the real beginning of my dance mania. My future husband and I met during our first week in graduate school. We both lived that first year at the University of California at International House in Berkeley.

Every weekend there was an international folk dance one night and a ballroom dance the other night; we went to all of them. I had come 3,000 miles away from home intent on learning to be less shy - and as an ardent feminist (though it was 1956, long before the women's movement), I methodically asked every one of the men to dance. My future husband, a natural athlete, learned quickly, became a good dancer, and an especially good Viennese waltzer.

The music stops for a few minutes, and the woman who did the last waltz with my husband comes to tell me what a good waltzer he is - how lucky I am. Yes, I am, I think to myself, remembering our first Waltz Evening. When we moved to Cambridge in 1960, we went folk-dancing every week for many years (though we stopped for a while after our children were born). But our ballroom dancing was confined mostly to our own living room. Then in 1973, my husband noticed an article in a Boston newspaper

about an "open" Waltz Evening at the Copley Plaza Hotel on the night before my birthday. This was to be my present. He was somewhat nervous accepting this invitation because he had never danced wearing either white or black tie and had never been at an occasion where "invitations are customarily geared to the Social Register" as the Boston Globe described it.

We were a comic pair that wonderful evening. I had only one gown - from before the children were born. It barely closed, and only when I held my breath very hard. My matching white pumps, from an era gone by, were painfully tight. My husband borrowed a tux from a friend who was a size smaller. We could barely sit down, but our posture was never better.

At the hotel, we found ourselves at a table with a group of very good dancers. Unaware that our dancing was being assessed, we had a glorious time. What impressed me most was that there was no food, little drinking, and few sat out a single dance. These people were serious. At the end of the evening, a woman from our table asked if we would like to be on the guest list. Of course we said yes. After 10 years we were invited to be on the Committee.

It's after midnight. The crowd has come and mostly gone so we can fly unencumbered again, around and around and around. My husband lifts me off the floor on the count of one and on "three" my toe touches the floor ready to start the next "One, two, three."

The few remaining dancers seem like planets going around the sun, all the while spinning on our own axes. One a.m.; time for the last waltz. "Before I get too old," I say to my husband, "I want to dance all night." He smiles at me, "You never have enough, my little dreamer!"

(Written by the author in November, 1992)