

'Norman' looks at cultural divide between Israeli, diaspora Jews **PAGE 15**

STL JEWISH LIGHT

STLJEWISHLIGHT.COM

7 LYAR, 5777

MAY 3, 2017

VOL. 75 NO. 18



SAYING Kaddish

a Century Later

Remains of Jacob Weinthal are laid to rest—after a 100-year delay

BY ROBERT A. COHN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF EMERITUS

Monday afternoon at New Mount Sinai Cemetery, 15 people gathered for the funeral of a man they had never met. In fact, the man died decades before anyone attending was born.

One hundred years after his death, Jacob Weinthal's remains were laid to rest during a service led by Rabbi Susan Talve and attended by a minyan of strangers who could recite Kaddish.

I have written hundreds of obituary stories for the *St. Louis Jewish Light* over the past four decades, but this one, about Mr. Weinthal's burial a full century after his death, is by far the most unusual.

Mr. Weinthal, a native of Germany, immigrated to St. Louis in 1892; he was 52 at the time. He became an American citizen in 1905, according to Pat Weinthal, his distant cousin, who resides just outside of Boston.

Mr. Weinthal was a bachelor



with no known survivors. He was an upholsterer and saddle maker in what was probably a one-person operation. Later Mr. Weinthal became a resident of the Home for Aged and Infirm Israelites, one of the two original facilities for frail elderly members of the local Jewish community.

On Jan. 2, 1916, Mr. Weinthal executed a will, leaving everything to the Home for Aged and Infirm Israelites. Mr. Weinthal died on April 9, 1917, at the age of 77. His cause of death was listed as anemia and arteriosclerosis, a term often associated with dementia in the early part of the 20th century. Since Mr. Weinthal had no local

family to claim his body, and was apparently indigent, his remains were cremated and were stored initially at the Hillcrest Abbey Crematory. Around 1998, they were transferred to the Valhalla Cemetery in North County, which has thousands of unclaimed sets of remains.

The box containing Mr. Weinthal's remains was stored at Valhalla for decades until Pat Weinthal set in motion through emails and phone calls a search to locate the remains and then plan a proper Jewish funeral in a Jewish cemetery.

TOP: Rabbi Susan Talve of Central Reform Congregation leads a funeral service Monday at New Mt. Sinai Cemetery for Jacob Weinthal, who died in 1917.

ABOVE: New Mt. Sinai caretaker Scott Eirich prepares to place Weinthal's remains in a grave.

PHOTOS: MIKE SHERWIN

See **BURIAL** on page 7 ▶

Israel honors fallen soldiers, terror victims

JTA REPORT

JERUSALEM — Israelis across the country stood at attention for a minute-long siren marking the start of the 24-hour Memorial Day, or Yom Hazikaron.

The siren sounded at 8 p.m. Sunday. Over Memorial Day, Israel remembered the 23,544 men and women who died defending the State of Israel and its prestate Jewish population since the start of the Zionist movement in 1860.

The day also recalled the 3,117 terror victims who have been killed in the same time period.

Some 97 Israelis have been added to the count since last Memorial Day, including 37 disabled Israelis who have died of their injuries.

In a Memorial Day eve service at the Western Wall, President Reuven Rivlin and the widow of Haggai Ben-Ari, who succumbed in January to his injuries sustained during the 2014 Gaza war, lit the memorial torch. He had been in a coma for 2 1/2 years and died at 31. His widow was flanked by two of her three young children.



Reuven Rivlin

"By this wall of tears and of hopes, this evening, 50 years after the liberation of Jerusalem, we remember: Our liberty is sacred, both sacred and hard," he said.

The president turned to the families at the ceremony and said: "Dear bereaved families, we are living that privilege. You paid the price. The price of our liberty purchased in blood."

Rivlin also called for continued efforts to bring home the bodies of two soldiers that remain held by Hamas in Gaza since the 2014 war.

There are 9,157 bereaved parents, 4,881 widows, and 1,843 orphans under the age of 30 of killed Israeli soldiers and security officers, according to the Defense Ministry.

A second siren, lasting two minutes, for Memorial Day sounded at 11 a.m. Monday. Following that siren, the national ceremony for the fallen soldiers was held at the national cemetery at Mount Herzl, and ceremonies were held at military cemeteries throughout Israel. Two hours later, a ceremony in remembrance of terror victims also was held at Mount Herzl.

During Memorial Day, regular television programming and entertainment is suspended. The names and ranks of every killed soldier are shown on a 24-hour television broadcast, each flashed on the screen for several seconds.

Memorial Day ended at 8 p.m. Monday with a ceremony on Mount Herzl, including the lighting of 12 torches that heralds the start of Independence Day.

Burial: Jacob Weinthal's remains laid to rest 100 years after his death

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"It felt unseemly and unjust that the remains of this citizen of St. Louis were treated ignominiously. Now at last he will get the decent Jewish burial he deserves," Pat Weinthal said.

In early March, Pat Weinthal reached out by email to me to enlist my help in tracking down her relative's remains. I connected her with Diane Everman, director of the St. Louis Jewish Community Archives at the Brodsky Library, and Daniel Brodsky, executive director of New Mt. Sinai Cemetery.

With Everman and Brodsky's help, the remains were found and transferred to New Mt. Sinai. Brodsky got approval from the cemetery's board to provide a grave space for Mr. Weinthal's remains to be interred.

Rabbi Talve of Central Reform Congregation joined in the effort and organized a minyan to attend out of respect for Mr. Weinthal.

At the service Monday, Talve addressed remarks to the open grave for Jacob Weinthal in a moving, conversational tone.

"Well, Jacob, I guess you did not expect a woman rabbi would be addressing you at your funeral," she said, before paying tribute to the life and work of Mr. Weinthal. She also praised the work of his distant cousin, Pat Weinthal, who was unable to attend the service.

Also offering remarks at the service were Rabbi James Stone Goodman of Neve Shalom and Rav Shulamit Cenker. Leslie Caplan chanted "El Maleh Rahamim" at the service. Also attending was Susan Ing of the Missing in America project, which works to connect families to unclaimed remains stored at Valhalla. She took photographs to share with Pat Weinthal.



After Kaddish was recited, those in attendance gently shoveled the earth into Jacob Weinthal's grave to bring a literal "closure" to the century-long journey from his death to his burial. Nancy Weigley, executive director of

TOP: At the end of the funeral service on Monday at New Mount Sinai Cemetery, attendees including Rabbi James Stone Goodman (right) shovel dirt over the container holding the remains of Jacob Weinthal.

BELOW: Leslie Caplan chants "El Maleh Rahamim" at the service. Jacob Weinthal died and was cremated in 1917. His remains were recently found at Valhalla Cemetery in North County. PHOTOS: MIKE SHERWIN

CRC, said the ceremony was "a beautiful and moving hour of my life. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to participate and lay Jacob to rest."

Rabbi Goodman commented that "each person, regardless of status or position takes up the same physical space of a single human being, and each life matters."

And so, Mr. Weinthal was finally laid to rest — thanks to the efforts of his distant cousin and the support of members of the current Jewish community.

May Jacob Weinthal find perfect rest in the shadow of God's wings, and may his memory be for a blessing.

INSIDE SPORTS

by Skip Erwin



Skip Erwin wrote & broadcast sports shows for KMOX for 25 years. Member JCC & UMSL Sports Hall of Fame.

Leroy Robert "Satchel" Paige was the first African-American player named to "Baseball's Hall of Fame" on Feb. 9, 1971, by Bowie Kuhn, Commissioner of Baseball.

Paige was a lanky righthander who started pitching as a teenager. He was nicknamed "Satchel," barely old enough to work, lugging suitcases to earn some money.

How old was he? No one ever knew for sure, although the record books had him born in Mobile, Ala., on July 7, 1906.

He played in the Negro League, mainly for the Kansas City Monarchs and the Pittsburgh Crawfords, but also was often sent out to other Negro League teams, who paid Kansas City and Pittsburgh for his services, since "Satchel" brought in thousands of fans, not only black, but also white. He was the highest paid player on the Negro League barnstorming tours.

In a game against the "Dizzy-Dean All-Stars," Dean called Paige "the pitcher with the best stuff he's ever seen." Joe DiMaggio called him "the best and fastest pitcher I've ever faced."

Satchel's main goal was to play in the Big Leagues. So when he was 43 years old, in 1948, Cleveland Indians owner Bill Veeck signed Paige in late summer. He had key wins that brought Cleveland the pennant and the World Series Championship.

Paige's famous "Hesitation Pitch" completely baffled batters. It was delivered with a motion that appear never to finish, and was released high over his head. The fans loved it, but Major League Baseball eventually ruled it illegal, because it resembled a balk, and banned it.

Paige's salary started at \$50 a month, but it rose as high as \$40,000 a year. It seemed like he pitched forever, and apparently ended well into his 60s.

His expression, "Don't look back, something may be gaining on you," worked for Leroy Robert "Satchel" Paige until the day he died, June 8, 1982 in Kansas City, Mo., almost a month to the day the record books say he was born, which would have made him 76 years old.

This Yom HaAtzma'ut, celebrate red, white, and blue.



Magen David Adom, Israel's largest and premier emergency medical response agency, has been saving lives since before 1948. And supporters like you provide MDA's 27,000 paramedics, EMTs, and civilian Life Guardians — more than 90% of them volunteers — with the training, equipment, and rescue vehicles they need. So as we celebrate Israel's independence, make a difference in the health, welfare, and security of the Israeli people with your gift to MDA. Please give today.

AFMDA Midwest Region
3175 Commercial Avenue, Suite 101
Northbrook, IL 60062
Toll-Free 888.674.4871
midwest@afmda.org
www.afmda.org



SAVING LIVES IN ISRAEL

Sponsored by
COOPER DISTRIBUTING CO.
COATES BROS.

- Air Conditioner Service
- Battery & Ignition Service
- Brakes
- Engine Tune-Up
- Exhaust
- Lube, Oil & Filter
- Radiator Flush & Fill
- Shock Absorbers/Struts
- State Inspections
- Transmission Service
- Computer 4 Wheel Alignment
- Computer Engine Diagnosis

6405 Manchester Ave. at Tamm
(314) 647-2334

