

SHEALTIEL GAZETTE

The International Journal of the Family Association

שאלתיאל

Special edition: tenth Anniversary of the first Salties Reunion



Shealtiel Family, Amsterdam, 1994

I feel less of a wanderer, now I
have found my Roots
Stefan van Mierlo

Keynote Speech *Moshe Shaltiel*
Gracian

The hot blood of the Shealtiel
Family *Sarit Rosenbaum*

The rediscovery of the Family
Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen

GENEALOGY

*Notes of conversation Dr.
Henry Chadwick*

SALTIEL ARTISTS

Amalia Shaltiel

INTERNET

*New links and sources with
reference to Shealtiels*

¡Figo loco!

Founding Fathers
Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen

The Shealtiel Haggadah
Iris Fishoff

Contents

	Page
Organisation	3
Editorial	4
I feel less of a wanderer, now I have found my roots— <i>Stefan van Mierlo</i>	5
The hot blood of the Shealtiel Family— <i>Sarit Rosenblum</i>	7
The rediscovery of the family— <i>Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen</i>	11
Keynote speech— <i>Moshe Shaltiel</i>	13
The Holocaust in Salonica— <i>Henry Saltiel</i>	16
The Shealtiel Haggadah— <i>Iris Fishoff</i>	21
 ¡Figo Loco!	
Saltiel Artists— <i>Amalia Shaltiel</i>	23
Star of David— <i>various authors</i>	26
A theologian's Saltiel— <i>Dr Henry Chadwick</i>	31
Founding Fathers— <i>Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen</i>	32
The view from Gloucester Square— <i>Miles Saltiel</i>	35

Our next issue will include fascinating facts about Shealtiel the Prophet; accounts of the Von Saltiel Reunion in Brazil, as well as responding to the question, "Is the Sephardic tradition doomed to disappear?"

ORGANISATION

THE FAMILY

The current family has three known lines: the North Sea ports, the Levant, and the Danube valley, with links between them, but, as yet, undocumented. All are the descendants of a Sephardic-(Spanish-Jewish) family from Barcelona and *environs* which left before the expulsions of 1492-7. We are variously known as Chaltiel, Chartiel, Saltiel, Sealtiel, Shaltiel and Shealtiel, all derived from the Biblical שאלתיאל, generally translated as “asked of God”.

SHEALTIEL WEBSITE

The website has been designed by Steve Saltiel of Chicago and is funded by anonymous family donors. It offers an introduction to the family and its activities. It is possible to use the website to participate in such family activities the *Open Door* programme of hospitality exchanges, or subscribe to the *Gazette*. The website address is <http://www.shealtiel.com>

SHEALTIEL GAZETTE

The *Gazette* is an outgrowth of the *Magazine* published by Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen at the reunion in Amsterdam which first brought us together in August 1994. It is intended to be published and printed on an occasional basis in Amsterdam, Holland. It is distributed to subscribing members of the Saltiel Family World Association and to libraries and scholars upon request, as well as to others with a professional interest in our subject matter.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Gazette* is to act as an international medium of communication between members of the Saltiel Family World Association; and to support the re-establishment of ties between us. For the time being, the *Gazette* is being edited by Vibeke Sæltiel Olsen, who welcomes contributions of all kinds, including material enabling us better to understand our own history; personal reminiscences, as well as genealogical or historical material.

We are not, however, to be only backward looking. The *Gazette* is intended also to be the forum for the exchange of family news, advice of forthcoming events of interest to members of the family, and reports of newly discovered members or branches of the family; as well as for the organisation of co-operative endeavours.

MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION

As the *Gazette* very much relies on contributions from members of the family, we look forward to continuing to hear from you. The *Gazette* welcomes text and illustrations that relate to any aspect of the family, its history or its members; as well as opinionated articles and personal reminiscences of any kind. The Editor will acknowledge—but does not undertake to return—material. It is particularly convenient to receive files by e-mail. Contact details are set out on the right.

For those unconnected to the Internet, please help by sending

material intended for publication on a 3.5 inch disc, either in ASCII text, or formatted for Word for Windows 2.0 or above to the address following.

The Editor welcomes letters from readers, whether or not members of the family. Please write to the address below. If intended for publication, please mark accordingly.

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SUBSCRIPTION

The annual fee is € 60. Please click onto the website www.shealtiel.com, then following directions for payment

OUR COVER

We show the family assembled before its gala dinner on 27 August 1994, at the Koningszaal, Artis Centrum, Plantage Middenlaan, Amsterdam.

PUBLICATION

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Lay-Out:

Miles E. Saltiel

This issue of the Shealtiel Gazette is to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the first International Shealtiel reunion, Amsterdam, 27-29 August, 1994.

I have included the spirited newspaper articles by Stefan van Mierlo (NIW) and Sarit Rosenbaum (Yehudit ha Aronot). Also included are several of the interesting lectures that were presented to the family audience during the Amsterdam reunion.

The lectures were originally published in 1994 in an appendix to the Shealtiel Gazette. It is only now that the articles are included in the Gazette itself.

One of the most touching speeches during the reunion was the introduction by the late councilwoman Anemarie Grewel. Let me repeat her words now:

Welcome from the City of Amsterdam. On behalf of the Mayor and the City Council of Amsterdam it is a great honour for me to welcome you here in this city. You don't have to be afraid that they sent a non-Jew to be present at this dinner - I know all about Jewish families. I share your knowledge of how the war - the Second World War - gave rise to innumerable reasons why the Saltiel were dispersed all over the world, or even worse, killed.

Before the war, the Saltiel formed a huge family in Amsterdam and a well known family, but that is no longer a fact. The place where you

are right now is in the neighbourhood which has many sad memories and sad places.

The City of Amsterdam takes it as an extremely great honour that you chose our city for your reunion, coming from all over the world. We are very grateful that you chose us and we hope you enjoy your time here and you will come back. Families, like the Saltiel, are not rare in Amsterdam - I mean what happened to them - and I can tell you that I am the last person with my family name, so the same thing happened to my family.

I must say when you just were united for the picture, for an outsider like me it was a very moving sight. People from all over the world, several generations, united by a family tie so that all of a sudden there is once again a big family. You were a fine sight.

So, we thank you for being here. We are honoured to have you and we hope your reunion goes well and that you will all keep in touch. I know that some people found each other again previously thought to have been dead, and others discovered cousins, nieces, and nephews. So I hope you will all keep it up and that more families will follow this wonderful example. Thank you very much.

Ms Grewel's words moved me then and still do.

With best wishes

Vibeke Olsen

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE—I



I feel less of a wanderer, now I have found my roots

*The Sephardic Jewish family of Shealtiel has reunited after 500 years. They came to Amsterdam in 1994 from all over the world. A Special Reunion, by **Stefan van Mierlo**. Translation of article in Nieuw Israelitisch Weekblad. Amsterdam, 9th September 1994.*

It's a rainy Saturday morning on the J. D. Meyerplein in Amsterdam, and unusually busy at the *Snoga*, the synagogue of the Portuguese Jewish Community. More than one hundred members of the Sealtiel family are present for the service. This is good for the minyan, the quorum required for a service, and even better for the atmosphere. While the visitors to the synagogue enjoy a cup of coffee after the service, Victor Saltiel from New York recalls some memories. For several years he lived in Amsterdam after his family left Egypt in 1957, as a result of the Suez crisis. He had his Bar Mitzvah (the ceremony to mark religious maturity) in the Portuguese synagogue and he stood under its *chuppa* (wedding canopy). These are stories which go down well with those present and their enthusiasm shows.

Probably most enthusiastic of all about the reunion is its organiser, Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen (25), a Dane whose search for her roots started in 1991. "I was interested in the history of my family from my youth," says Olsen. "My mother has lived in Denmark since 1966. She always warned me to tell no-one of my Jewish background because it could be dangerous. This made me curious. For me, the Jews were people who had been killed in the war and the members of my family were the last survivors."

The enterprising Dane wanted to know more about them. "The immediate reason for my research was that I wanted to know whether or not I was Jewish," explains Olsen. "To my mind, my grandmother always behaved very much like a Jew. For example, she always told Dutch-Jewish jokes. In Denmark, I always thought that it was my Dutch descent that made me so different from the other people in the village. In the Netherlands I realised that this was not the case."

PRINCE OF JUDAH

When Vibeke Olsen started her research, the only thing she knew with certainty was that the maiden name of her grand-mother, "Sealtiel", was a Sephardic - i.e. Spanish or Portuguese Jewish - name. She did not know that the name meant "I asked God". Nor did she know that the first Sealtiel was a prince of the royal family of Judea and a descendant of King David. She found that out in 1991. "In March I went to the municipal archives in Amsterdam," explains the Dane. "My search started there with the marriage of the parents of my mother."

Olsen followed the trail of her ancestors back to the year 1800 of the modern era. "After that, the trail got into a blind alley with David Sealtiel who lived in Amsterdam," she says. "Until then it was an investigation of a straight genealogical line. But during my search I found more Sealtiels in the archives. Because I got stuck, I decided to study their history too." Olsen heard from her mother that many members of the family died in the war. She contacted the Dutch Council for War Graves. "There I found a list with names of 163 members of the family and those were nearly all the names I had on the family tree. That depressed me. I had a list of approximately 180 and of those, I could cross out 163." Olsen kept seventeen names of Dutch members of the family who probably survived the war. Using the Dutch telephone directories, Vibeke eventually found 75 members of the family.

Olsen went on and discovered that the name Sealtiel was written in different ways: Sealtiel, Sealtiel, Shealtiel, Saltiel and Shaltiel. "That was the clue to my discovery that the father of David (where the trail had stopped) was called Elias. On his marriage certificate it said that he was originally from London." This Elias turned out to be the forefather of the Dutch and English side of the Sealtiel family. It is believed that he originally came to London from Thessalonica and that he arrived in Amsterdam in 1757. "My grandfather on my mother's side is called Jacob Haim Sealtiel," Olsen said, "a son of our forefather Elias Saltiel."

The spelling had further consequences. "When I finally discovered that the name Sealtiel could also be written as Saltiel, I started to search in the London telephone directories. That is where I found Miles Saltiel. He turned out to be an offspring of a great-grandson of an Elias who lived in London in 1869." Vibeke can almost tell the story in her sleep. "This is how the collaboration with Miles started. We started to correspond in March 1993. In August he spoke of a reunion. On 21 November, 1993 we held a reunion for the Dutch side of the family with 75 members of the family present."

On the Dutch side there were only twenty members present on 28 August, 1994. This is over fifty less than at the Dutch reunion. "The reason for the absence of many of the Dutch was because of experiences in the war. They do not want to be confronted with their Jewish blood," thinks Vibeke Olsen. Miles, too, finds it understandable that a large part of the Dutch side did not turn up. "They wish to distance themselves from their grief at what has been done to them during the war," thinks the Londoner.

SOUVENIRS

In a building of the University of Amsterdam in Roetersstraat stands Felicity Miller Saltiel (Miles' wife) in front of a stall with family souvenirs. In the hall of the University are large bulletin boards with family information. One notice board has been specially appointed for the Polaroid pictures which are taken when the visitors enter. The notice board is getting filled bit by bit with pictures of Saltiels from the US, Israel, the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Austria and New Zealand.

We found most members of the family by looking in foreign telephone directories," explains Miles Saltiel in the accent of Margaret Thatcher. "We found them practically everywhere." The Londoner explains how he and Vibeke thought that the Saltiels had come directly to the Netherlands in 1492 after they had been banished from Spain. "Then we discovered that there were many Saltiels who lived in Thessalonica. I thought to myself that it could be that they had gone from Spain to London and Amsterdam via Thessalonica and that they had lived for 250 years in the Greek port. This turned out to be the case."

Joop Sealtiel (68) walks round the unfamiliar University hall. This uncle of Vibeke is a typical 'Amsterdammer'. He is a bit disappointed in the attendance. "There are more than 900 Saltiels on this planet. You might expect more than one hundred at the reunion. It is the first time in five hundred years that the Saltiels have had an opportunity to reunite. This is obviously unique." Joop doubts that family ties will be strengthened. "To my mind, it is all very well to meet people from all over the world. But everyone has a busy life, and, practically speaking, nothing will probably come of it. That is how it turned out after the Dutch reunion. That was for people who live in the Netherlands, but even so it has been difficult to keep up contact."

Joop Sealtiel interrupts the conversation. It is time for the first event. Diana Sommer, the Director of the Dorot Genealogy Centre in Tel Aviv, and Ed Motola; member of the Saltiel family from Salt Lake City, give a talk about genealogy. Sommer has to do this in the enormous hall of the University. The acoustics make her almost unintelligible. Putting down a coffee cup sounds like the breaking of a window. The crying children in the background do not improve the audibility. The attention of the Saltiels in the back row quickly ebbs. After the presentation the Saltiels gather round the notice boards with lots of coffee and souvenirs. In some cases visitors are led to the video room.

There, Miles' brother tapes video interviews with all the visitors to the reunion. Just outside is the domain of Ed Motola. He has stored all the available family information on his portable computer. His computer work-shop attracts a lot of attention. Ed has specialised in the black sheep of the family. "For example, Emmanuel H. Saltiel went to Arkansas in the Wild West, where he had interests in mines in the Cotopaxi area. In New York he pretended to be a rich benefactor from the West, but in fact he was looking for cheap labour. The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) gave Emmanuel \$10,000 and placed twenty Russian-Jewish families in his care. He took them to Cotopaxi where they expected to be able to start a good life as farmers. In practice it was impossible to farm the rocky land. The families went bankrupt and the members were forced to work for starvation wages in the mines owned by Emmanuel. Years later this became known to HIAS which relocated the Jews elsewhere." This is but one of Motola's many stories. "One of my ancestors seems to have been a lawyer for Al Capone. But I am still sorting that story out."

So every S(he)altiel is contributing to the voyage through history which Vibeke Olsen started. She encourages everyone to help. In the first edition of the S(he)altiel Magazine she asks for research on such matters as: Why is there a statue of Sealtiel in a church in Malta? Did William of Orange grant Labrador to a Saltiel? Apart from publishing the family magazine, Olsen has a plan to organise an international exchange of family youth. "It could help them to strengthen their identity." Since she has discovered her own roots she feels far more complete. "I understand my identity better. I feel less of a wanderer, now I have found my roots. I am glad that I did not just stay in Denmark. I would have remained restless. I felt nowhere was my

home. I still do. After all, where does the family belong? Do we belong in Spain, or in Thessalonica or in London or in the Netherlands...? We have no real homeland. That is why the past must provide our foundation. The moment we forget our past, we begin no longer to feel at home anywhere. That is when we lose our identity." That was why Vibeke Olsen organised the reunion. "We tried to restore to the family some of the identity it has lost during its long journey. I think other members of the family feel the same. If our children know nothing of their roots, Saltiel will just be a funny name which no-one can spell properly."

Translation of article in Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad. Amsterdam, 9th September 1994.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE—II



The hot blood of the Shealtiel Family

One day an archaeology student from Holland met a television commentator from England and a millionaire from the US. Together they arranged an international reunion for the members of their family dispersed all over the world after the Expulsion from Spain. Sarit Rosenblum went there and heard why Shealtiels don't get heart attacks.

Three years ago Vibeke Olsen, a 25 year old Christian from Amsterdam, started to investigate her Jewish past. Olsen is the daughter of a half-Jewish mother and a Christian father, both of whom had moved to Denmark. She went to Amsterdam City Library and there she traced the 200 year history of her mother's family - the Shealtiels. After finding the certificate of the marriage of her great-grandmother Johanna Wilhelmina van Maanen to Jacob Haim of the house of Shealtiel, she sought to look further back.

"I wanted to know more about my Jewish past," said Olsen, an archaeology student. "Ever since I was small I was told I was not Jewish, but deep inside I always felt different. When I lived in Denmark, I felt that we were different from the other people in the village, but I thought it was because my mother was Dutch. There the people are very quiet while I am emotional. I would speak in a loud voice and wave my hands about. Now I know that these are common Shealtiel traits." Within a few months the search for her roots turned into an obsession. Olsen was able to trace the family back to 1800. At this point she decided she

had had enough of dead people and she decided to start work on the living.

She looked in the London telephone books, found two potential family members and sent letters. "Dear Sir," she wrote, "My name is Vibeke Olsen and I am looking for members of my family who originally left Spain for Europe. If you are linked to this family, or know anything about it, please write to me." She received one reply. The sender was Miles Saltiel, a 45 year old stock broking analyst from London. "Dear Miss Olsen," he wrote to her, "It seems that I am the man you are looking for." Two weeks ago Olsen and Saltiel completed the circle with an international family reunion in Amsterdam. Miles was one of three organizers of an event which took place, in part, thanks to his energy and financial commitment. Vibeke was the principal organizer. Her feelings were clear when she got up on the small platform on the first day of the reunion. She began her speech to the 120 members of the family who had come from the four corners of the earth to make her dream come true. "My dear family," she said to the strangers around her, "I am so glad you have come here." You could see the happiness in her eyes.

Of the two thousand members of the family they have found dispersed throughout the world - Jews and non-Jews - only these 120 came to the reunion in search of their past. Some could not be found; others preferred not to have anything to do with their Judaism, and there were those who could not make it from distant parts. Over the last weekend of August they came together in Hall E of the University of Amsterdam. At the outset they were bemused. But then they concentrated their labors to glean any possible details which might serve to enlighten them about their origins. They listened to lectures on family history, received a written family tree, were filmed on a family video archive, and discovered formerly unknown links between each other. Over the two days of the reunion it seemed as if the entire world was Shealtiels. The reunion hall was full of books on family history, pictures and other memorabilia about members of the family, as well as souvenirs specially prepared for participants in the reunion. A cassette of Sephardic songs sung by Aaron Shaltiel cost forty shekels; a booklet on the family's history cost fifty shekels; the first issue of the family magazine by Vibeke Olsen cost fifty shekels. Rumors of the identification of famous members of the family raced around the hall; for example, someone had read that the lawyer of the American gangster Al Capone was a Shealtiel.

"If we forget our past we lose our identity," explained Olsen to the group. "The knowledge that I have found makes it possible for me to feel that I belong. This reunion meant to return people to their identity which has been lost during the course of the journey they have taken in their lives."

The Shealtiel family started its journey in Spain. The oldest tombstone found during the family's investigations is that of Shmuel bar Shealtiel ha Nasi, who died in August 1097 in Northern Spain. There is a lot of evidence that the family lived in Spain in the Middle Ages. With the Expulsion at the end of the fifteenth century the family moved out into the world beyond. Most went to Thessalonica; some went to North Africa - to Tunisia and Algeria. Today they can be found all over the world: Canada and the US via Holland, England, France, Spain, Austria, Switzerland and Denmark; as well as in Israel, Greece, Iran & the countries of Africa.

The title *Ha Nasi*, featuring on the tombstone of Shmuel bar Shealtiel, means a

leader or a prince and was given to family members to signify that they were descendants of King David.

In addition, they are the family of the Biblical figure Shealtiel, the son of Jehoiachin and the father of Zerubbabel who built the temple after the Babylonian exile. "From the thirteenth century onwards we have documents where every time the name Shealtiel is mentioned, the title *Ha Nasi* is present," explains Moshe Shaltiel from America, one of the reunion organisers who came with his father Daniel, his wife Gila and his daughter Simone. "The meaning of the word is Prince, a title given only to the descendants of King David." Moshe Shaltiel (55) is a former Israeli lawyer who qualified professionally in America, became a successful broker, and is now a millionaire living in Chicago. With his success in the stock market, he opened an investment company and started to deal in property. Fifteen years after he arrived in America, he owns shopping centers with a total area of more than 75 acres.

Three years ago he suddenly became interested in his family's past. Since then he has dedicated most of his time and energy to finding his roots. "Until then I had all I wanted," he says. "I had made lots of money. I bought things that I loved. One fine day it lost its interest. I realised that my life lacked intellectual challenge. As I had always been interested in Sephardic history I decided to find out where I came from. I bought dozens of books and I began to read about Sephardic Jewry. Slowly I discovered a new and fascinating world. These days I waste only perhaps ten minutes a day on my work. My business affairs take care of themselves. Among all my computers and new office equipment, the most important thing for me is these books."

A year ago Moshe Shaltiel received a telephone call from a female member of the family in Chicago who had received a letter from Miles Saltiel in London. In that letter Miles said he sought to forge links with members of the family all over the world. "The idea inspired me," says Moshe Shaltiel. "I telephoned him and from then on we worked together on the idea. I have never seen him before, but he is the best friend I have."

What do you hope to gain from this reunion? "I want to give people the feeling that they are one clan, to give them warmth and a feeling of belonging. I want to create a channel of fixed links between every member of the family so that wherever they travel there will always be someone waiting for them there. There is something about the feeling of family which gives you strength. It is a very basic primitive

feeling of belonging. We all have the same instincts which make us want to feel at ease in our family. I have had a wonderful career, I have made millions of dollars, but now I am searching for a meaning to my life. Here at the reunion we have rich people and poor, wise and not so wise, but there are characteristics which all Shealtiels share, for example, generosity; the ability to love, high expectations in life. Shealtiels don't get heart attacks, they give them. Besides that we are all crazy. We shout all the time. Shmuel Shealtiel, for example - the one who died in 1097-was killed because he shouted and his house fell in on him. We are all aggressive, we all have hot blood. Most of us are very successful in a business or professional capacity. Wherever a Shealtiel lands, he will succeed."

On Friday afternoon Miles Saltiel and his gentile wife, Felicity, arrived at the Grand Hotel Amsterdam where some of the participants were staying. Saltiel, a balding bespectacled Brit in collar and tie, is familiar to attentive watchers of CNN for his commentaries on world stock markets. He is the reverse of exuberant Moshe.

"From my perspective," he told me candidly, "the reunion might be seen as the result of a misunderstanding. Vibeke wrote to my brother eighteen months ago and I answered her. We corresponded for three or four months without my becoming too involved. Over time I became more interested. In one of my letters I wrote that it would be nice to have a reunion one day, meaning that if I was ever in Holland we could go out for a coffee."

"I don't have a real interest in going back to ancient history. Indeed, the last Jewish experience I had was my circumcision. But before I knew what was happening, this reunion was an accomplished fact." His wife Felicity fails to endorse her husband's coolness. "He is on edge," she says. "This is a powerful gesture to honour his father's family."

All the guests were asked to pay a token amount for the meal as well as for their own flights and hotel accommodations. Members of the family unable to run to hotels were lodged in the houses of local Jews. Finalising arrangements and press coverage took innumerable transatlantic telephone calls. "Miles and I decided to split the expenses," says Moshe Shaltiel. "Up to now, I estimate we have spent more than \$100,000." It took many months to organise the reunion, but the time and

money have not gone to waste. To mark the event, posters and books on the history of the family have been printed, formal invitations and a program of events issued and a video of the occasion arranged, together with a group photo of the family, taken in front of the model giraffe in the zoological gardens adjacent to the banqueting hall.

Only three participants came from Israel: Jehudith Shaltiel, widow of the late General David Shaltiel who was a commander of the Haganah in Jerusalem during the 1948 War of Independence; his cousin Paula Aronson, a woman full of charm and vitality; and Aronson's grand-daughter, Hagar, who lives in Kiryat Shemona.

For two whole days the computer is running non-stop. Its data base goes back to 1870. Those interested turn up to contribute their own names, together with those of their parents, other known forbears and their children. In return they are given a computerized family tree. Making the printouts at the computer is Ed Motola (40) a software engineer from Salt Lake City, Utah. He is a Shealtiel on the side of his mother, Corina. Ten years ago he prepared a detailed tree of his own family which went to Mexico and then on to the US. This he deposited in the main library of his city. Several months ago, Moshe Shaltiel found the list which included names corresponding to his own relations and he invited Ed to the reunion. Motola pulls no punches in relating that several years ago he converted from established Judaism to become a Mormon. "I was looking for my own truth," he confirms, "and I was convinced of the joy of the real Messiah."

So would you still define yourself as Jewish? "The Mormon faith is very close to the Jewish faith. For example, we observe Passover and Hanukah." How did your family react to your conversion? "They were fine. They are all open reform Jews." But his mother, Corina Saltiel Handler, reflects, "It was a difficult experience. I did not want to lose him so I have accepted what he has done. When the grandchildren come to visit, they pray before each meal. As a courtesy to us they say, 'for the sake of the house of Israel,' instead of 'for Jesus Christ's sake.' Sometimes they forget but you have to give them credit for trying. I keep up strong links with them so that they are aware of Judaism and that there is a choice available."

The blessing over the bread at the dinner the previous evening was to have been made by George Cassuto, whose (great-grandmother) was a Sealtiel. At the last minute he declined. Cassuto (64) is a descendant of the famous Florentine Jewish family. When he was a boy,

his father was arrested in The Hague by the Nazis. In 1941, his mother was able to bribe her husband's captors to release him and the family went underground. At the end of the war, two girls from George's class took him on his first visit to a church. Some years later he took up clerical studies, but he claims he has never changed his religion. His return to the embrace of Judaism was started, for all that, by his gentile wife Hannah. "She met me in church and asked me, 'What is a Jewish boy like you doing here?' She sent me off to learn about Judaism and went herself to learn Hebrew. The great turning point was a year ago when I took part in a reunion of Jewish children who were hidden during the war. There they told me, 'You are torn between your work and your Jewish past. Why don't you stop?'"

Cassuto, whose Jewish name is Shlomo, listened and was convinced. A month ago he gave his last sermon. Now he wants to learn Jewish history and the Talmud. In the mean time, his eldest daughter has followed in his footsteps and converted to Judaism. His younger son, David, defines himself as "Christian, but also a bit Jewish". "I love Judaism because it is a religion of tolerance," George concludes. "Actually, it is not just a religion. It is a way of thinking. In the meantime, I am in the middle of a long process. Perhaps the time will come when I will go up to read the Torah in the synagogue. I have a friend who did so at the age of fifty. I feel Jewish because according to Jewish law I am, but actually I am a wanderer - a stranger to both Judaism and the Church."

After two days the reunion comes to an end. The university building empties and the members of the crowd disperse to their hotels. Moshe Shaltiel stays on till the last few moments working out *the who and how* of kin-ships. One of his discoveries is that

an old friend, Henry, is actually his cousin. In the two weeks since then it has become clear that the reunion has had a positive effect on the apparently sceptical members of the family. On the day this report was written, I received a fax from Miles Saltiel of London.

"Felicity tells me that I may have given you the impression that I was cynical about the reunion, that I regarded it as a mistake, and that I regretted having taken part in it. This is far from the case. When we spoke, the pressures of this extraordinary occasion were getting to me. I took part in the reunion for reasons related to my own family history. My early life was dominated by my mother's extroverted Ashkenazi family. By contrast, my father's family was obscure, fragmented and undemonstrative. I have always had something of a yen to restore the balance."

"My part in the reunion does not, however, have anything to do with religion. One half of the Jews of the current generation are abandoning their traditions, given a free choice (cf. the US). This is my own position, as of many at the reunion. On the other hand, the thrust of a family reunion has to be, 'Hurrah for us.' It is pleasing that we should find pride in whatever our forebears happened to get up to. As they were Jews, they got up to Jewish things. I know that my spirits improved between Friday and Sunday. Today, I am proud of our extraordinary achievement, which could only have come about because of the exertions, obsessions, and generosity of a collection of strong personalities. There is no doubt that it was one of the most moving experiences of my life."

Translation of article from Yediot Aharonot. Jerusalem, 16th September 1994

REUNION WELCOME



The rediscovery of the family

These are the remarks made by Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen at the reunion.

Dear family of mine, welcome to Amsterdam. I am so happy to see all of you here and I understand that many of you wondered why I should start something like this: to trace my family, make reunions and to invite people from all over the world.

I would like to tell a little about how I came to do this genealogical research, why I did it and how it developed over time. Because it really only started in March 1992. Before that, I was always interested in my Dutch family. My grandmother was from Holland and my mother was born in Amsterdam. She went to live in Denmark. I was born in Denmark. I grew up there and I moved to Holland in 1987.

My grandmother was a very special person. She had a good sense of humour, was singing and joyful and she always had a quick response to anything that anyone said to her. I loved her very much. She died in 1988 when I was still quite young, and we never had much contact because she lived in Holland and I lived in Denmark. I visited her about two or three times a year. I became interested in looking for her parents and I wanted to find out something about her origin.

So, in March 1992, I went to the archives of Amsterdam. I looked and found the marriage certificate of my great-grandfather and great-grandmother, who was not Jewish. Our family is not Jewish because we are only Jewish from the fathers' side. I started to research my great-grandfather, Jacob Haim Sealtiels' family. I traced the direct line of his forebears back to the year 1800, and then I was not able to go any further.

So, I decided to trace the family relations between all the Dutch Sealtiels, and I was lucky because they all lived in Amsterdam, so I did not have to go far. I live in Amsterdam so I could go every day, if I wanted to do more. I found 250 names. Eventually, I found all the births until 1939, and I wanted to know what hap-

pened to these people. I went to the Museum of War Memories and found out that 163 of them were killed in the war.

This meant that only twenty people were alive. This made me sad as I had this family that lived in Amsterdam for two centuries, and they were killed. I decided I would try to find the members of the family that were still left. I did this by talking to my own family who knew some of the members, and by looking in telephone directories.

This was how I found the last Sealtiels of Amsterdam in Holland. At the same time, I discovered, by coincidence, that the name of my forefathers could be spelled without the first e-as "Saltiel". When I discovered this I was able to find in the Amsterdam Archives instances of my family forebears as far back as 1750. I discovered that the first family member arriving in Amsterdam, Elias Saltiel, born in 1738, came from London to Amsterdam.

Then I looked in the telephone directories of London. I found three references to Saltiel. I decided to write to them because I thought they might be related to me. I sent them a letter. I received two responses, one of which was from Miles Saltiel, whom you have already met, and together Miles and I contacted the rest of the Dutch family.

We decided to make a reunion for the Dutch family, and this we did on November 21, 1993. Seventy-five members of the Dutch family came, and that was almost all of the family in Holland. At this mention we learned about our family and our background. I talked about the things I had discovered in the archives, and we decided that we would make an international reunion for the family, including the branch of the family that went to England in 1869 on August 27 - This was exactly 125 years ago today.

Since this reunion, we have been working to find family all over the world. And as time went by, more and more family members became interested. We made contact with Moshe Shaltiel of Chicago, Ed Motola of Salt Lake City, and many, many others whose names I cannot mention now.

But you know who you are because you are sitting here right in front of me. Over the last two months it became enormous, because many people heard about this reunion. Many people wanted to come and everybody that was able to come contacted me. Miles and I have done a very big job and we have been working three weeks all in one week. But finally we succeeded, and here we are!

About the family history: I completed my genealogical research on the Dutch Sealtiëls, but, as we now have discovered, we probably all have roots in Thessalonica. There is still a lot more to be learned about the history of our family. I hope that all of you will contribute to helping us trace our origin.

KEYNOTE SPEECH



The August 1995 Shealtiel reunion keynote speech by Moshe Shaltiel

Good Evening. This event is a result of collective efforts, devotion and the commitment of a lot of people - but two of them are so special that to single them out is a must. We all have to thank them and acknowledge their incredible work. Ladies and gentlemen, everybody knows the name Vibeke. (*Introducing Vibeke*) Vibeke, I took it upon myself, on behalf of the entire family, to present you with this special award. This award is to express our gratitude and love. (*Presenting award*)

We all know Miles. I don't think that there is one person here who did not receive communications, or a phone call from Miles. Well, this is Miles. Dear Cousin Miles, what can I say? We never met before yesterday, but over the last year, working together on the telephone, we have become very close. Miles, as a cousin and a close friend I have to apologise to you. Do you remember that I agreed not to have an award for you? Well I lied! (*Presenting award*)

Roots, the importance of roots! What is it that brings us together; eleven languages, twelve countries, four or five religions? The answer, I think, is in that wonderful warm feeling of belonging - of a tribe ("Aida", in Hebrew), and, of course, the name. The pride in the name Shaltiel and the desire to belong reminds me how one year ago, in Jerusalem, some time after midnight, I got lost.. I had driven my daughter Simone, who is here tonight, to her residence-she was spending the year in Israel on a study program. Driving back to our flat, I got lost.

Now you have to understand that my wife Gila and I lived in Jerusalem for several years while I attended law school at the Hebrew University. Even though we have been living in the US for twenty five years, I still consider myself a native of Jerusalem and I, the native, got lost. It was such a beautiful and clear night as it could be only in Jerusalem. The stars were so bright, the full moon, I really didn't mind making a little detour. I drove slowly, observing the

beauty of the unfamiliar part of Jerusalem when suddenly my car stopped - just stopped. In front of me, I saw a magnificent, brightly lit building; the sign on the building is what brought me to a stop. The sign read, The Ajandro Saltiel Mexico City Jewish Community Centre. Well, I thought, there was *the* purpose of my getting lost. I was determined to meet this Ajandro.

A week later, back in Chicago, USA, in my office, I had a visit from an old friend who introduced me to his companion, a young woman, a professor of Jewish history. This woman, after introducing herself, told me she had close friends in Mexico City by the name of (you guessed it), however, they, Mr.& Mrs. (Saltiel), have some bad news for you. The good news is that he would love to meet you and the bad news is that he has asked me to tell you that his real name is Alex Goldberg. Actually, his name is Whitman, but I thought Goldberg had a better punch line.

On a more serious note, I would like to thank each and every one of you - not only for attending this great event, but for your full cooperation and especially for your prompt and positive response to my request for blood, urine, hair and nail samples. A one-hundred-per-cent response is quite unique. We have the results of the DNA testing and the results are quite surprising. Yes, we are all related, we are all descendants of the same ancestor. We have all inherited the same Shaltiel genes. The distribution of the genes, however, is somewhat different between the "Pure Greeks" and the "punch".

It seems that those generations that remained in Thessalonica, after Eli Shaltiel and his family left to settle in Holland, have accumulated the largest amount of gene-B. So, while the Dutch have five times the average gene-B over the regular population, the Greeks and their descendants have twice as many as the Dutch.

Now, let's get to details. Gene-A: Integrity, Generosity, and Capacity to Love - all the Saltiels are well stocked with this gene. Gene-C (please note) I am leaving the discussion of gene-B for the end. Gene-C: longevity - just wonderful, as we Saltiels live long, or, as my

former secretary, Susan, used to say, "Shealtiels don't get heart attacks, they give them". Gene-D, also known as Ta (like in telephone book) there is a tradition to which most Saltiels subscribe when landing in a new city - *with the possible exception* of Rwanda, Zaire or the North Pole - they go to the first telephone directory to find a cousin - another Shaltiel. We have all done it with great success.

Most of the time what we found made us proud, they are nice people. The reason I said "with the possible exception" is that I have heard so many bizarre stories that anything is possible. Finally, gene-B: sanity, temper, aggressiveness, over reaction and toughness. Now let's make it perfectly clear no Shealtiel is insane-sometimes the rest of the world is. Temper, no Shealtiel ever, ever loses his temper. We are just unique in the way we are expressing ourselves, and sometimes people around us just cannot hear well. That's why we sometimes - just sometimes - raise our voices a little bit.

By the way, do you know the cause of death of Shmuel Shealtiel who died in 1097? The tombstone located at the Jewish Museum in Toledo, Spain mentioned that his roof caved in. My wife, Gila, who is here tonight, has her own theory on why the roof caved in.

Finally, no Shaltiel is aggressive, tough, professional or financially successful, and Shealtiels never, never over-react. Question: What is the common denominator between an Israeli General, Dutch Priest, Jewish Rabbi, a Jehovah's Witness, a member of the Mormon Church, an English securities analyst, a scientist from the Weitzman Institute, a real estate developer from Chicago, corporate executives from Holland, England, US, France, and lawyers from practically every major metropolitan area? Yes, they are all Shealtiels.

This is a very exciting moment in my life, almost comparable to the day I learned of the birth of my son, and the moment, eight days later, of his joining the line of the children of Abraham. Then, like today, I felt as if my ancestors were standing by my side and crying out to me and to my son, "Well done, well done". All of us here are experiencing, as Gila and I did 28 years ago, that moment of exultation, as we added another branch to our family tree and by gathering here tonight and tomorrow, we, all of us, nurtured this family tree.

Five hundred years ago, our family, and the entire Jewish community of Spain were expelled from a place they called home for centuries. These persecuted people who were robbed of most, if not all, of their earthly possessions, of their homes and of their dignity, found shelter in Italy, North Africa, Turkey and Greece (mostly in Thessalonica) where our family settled. From there some moved on to England, Holland, Germany, the Americas and elsewhere.

The expulsion, however, was not an end to hardship, but only a chapter of a long and often trying experience. The reality is that our people, by escaping from Spain, did not discover heaven on earth in any one single country. Yet with all the hardship, those who fled Spain were the lucky ones. Many, especially from Portugal, could not leave and were forcibly converted. For those who escaped, sometimes our host country was tolerant and liberal and sometimes not. In that regard our extended family fared better than most, and Greece and Holland can both be proud of their historic relationship with our people.

A superficial look at some of the evidence of this relationship may mislead. For example, here is a translation of a proclamation that appeared on the public building on the island of Kerkyra on the night of June 9, 1944, the day on which the entire Jewish community of the island was arrested. "Kerkyran patriots: Now commerce is in our own hands! Now it is *we* who will reap the seeds of our labours. Now the financial and provisional situation will be to our benefit, etc." At first sight this implicates the Greeks in the actions of the Holocaust. New research, however, puts a different light on matters:

1. The German garrison commander presented three representatives of the Greek authorities with the proclamation with their names already printed on it and instructed them to see to its circulation..
2. The proclamation was printed by the German authorities in Larissa, not on the Kerkyra. It appeared on public buildings on Kerkyra, but its circulation was limited
3. The intention of the Germans was to create the false impression that the persecution of the Israelites would be profitable for the people of Kerkyra and, at the same time, that the native people of the island approved of the measures against the Jews.

An evil episode, but one of which our neighbours, the Kerkyrans, were innocent. I will not go too deeply into this as our cousin Henry Shaltiel, whose family lived through the

Holocaust, has researched the era and written extensively about it. Tomorrow, he will lead a workshop on that subject. The fact is that many Greeks risked their lives to save our people and for that we are eternally grateful. Nor should we forget that even though General Franco was close to wartime Germany, he issued an ordinance in 1949 which granted Spanish citizenship to Sephardic Jews.

Our people and our family have survived! We have prospered, we have regained our pride and status and, tonight, ladies and gentlemen, tonight, we, the descendants of these proud people, are reassembling here to pay tribute to our heritage, to honour the memory of our fathers and mothers, to reiterate our commitment to maintain our family roots and values. I know that if our ancestors would have known at the time of their ordeal and sorrow that we, their children, would gather here, five hundred years later, to pay homage to them, and celebrate our heritage, they would have felt as good as we do tonight. Pride, family pride, yes, we are a unique arm of our people, even within the sphere of the

Sephardic experience. Full of pride, full of self esteem - perhaps its even justified for haven't we given the world teachers, rabbis, philosophers, doctors, bankers and people of the arts, merchants, corporate executives and, perhaps apologetically, lawyers - lots of lawyers - some of them actually not so bad. The Shealtiel Haggadah is but another heirloom from the rich past of our family. This magnificent manuscript, the book of Passover, from the 14th century, located in the British Library, will be discussed tomorrow at the workshop along with a slide presentation by Dr. Iris Fishoff, chief curator of Judaica at the Israel Museum. Dr. Fishoff is our guest tonight.

Our family is old - our name is biblical and the full name on the tombstone of Samuel Shaltiel Nasi suggests our family is a descendent of the house of David. As the father of a contemporary Samuel Shaltiel, a distinguished scientist at the Weitzman Institute use to say, "Shealtielim Son Reyes," the Saltiel are royalty. So please, remember, never forget: Shealtielim Son Reyes, and with royalty goes the famous Shealtiels modestly! So welcome to you all here tonight, and to all of us congratulations on making it here through a five hundred year journey.

HISTORICAL NOTES



The Holocaust in Salonica by Henry Shaltiel

For some time now Miles, Moshe and Vibeke have been asking me to submit the text of the presentation I gave in our reunion in Amsterdam. What they did not know was that there was no text for the presentation. There was only a very brief outline, some points to bring me back to the topic if I strayed too far. The substance of the presentation came from the fact that after many years of reading and discussion have been permanently etched into my consciousness.

The following is a rushed and feeble attempt to flesh out the outline of my presentation. I have really not had the time, for a number of personal reasons, to devote to this important and worthwhile project. At the same time I have not been successful in convincing Moshe, Miles and Vibeke to wait. I have agreed to submit what follows only if it is understood that it is incomplete and that it requires significant additional work. I promise to do that work in the near future. At the same time, if it can serve as a catalyst to generate additional interest and discussion, then it will have been worthwhile. Sincerely, Henry Shaltiel, July 24, 1995. *A Chronology of the Holocaust of the Jewish Community of Salonica.*

The years leading up to and the beginning of World War II saw a succession of dramatic and audacious military and political actions by Hitler that produced little or no substantive reaction by the democracies. Success after German success was followed by cries of foul and anguished debates in the capital of Europe, but little or no action to curtail the Nazi onslaught. In what seemed like a flicker of an eye, the German army occupied or controlled most of Europe. When Benito Mussolini saw the ease with which military success had come to Hitler, and the apparent lack of resolve on the part of the great democracies, he decided to get in on the action. Through his alliance with Albania, a number of Italian divisions were stationed in that country. On October 28, 1940, he threw seven of his divisions against Greece. Even by the standards of evil prevailing in World War

II, this had to be one of the most unjustified attacks of the period. There was no enmity between the two peoples, no disputed territory, no ethnic minority in each other's land, no necessary resources. In short, no reason at all for the attack, except the cynical pursuit of personal glory.

On October 28, 1940, at three o'clock in the morning, the Italian ambassador to Greece calls on the Greek Strongman General Metaxas and presents him with an ultimatum from Mussolini requiring Greece's immediate and unconditional surrender. When Metaxas immediately answers, "Oxi," or "No," the Italian army pours through the Albanian border in the North West corner of Greece. Taking advantage of surprise in what has to rank as one of the most unprovoked acts of aggression, the Italians are initially successful and they overrun significant areas in the mountainous region of Epirus.

The Jews of Greece respond to the call to arms in numbers that are equal to or higher than the general population. There are approximately 80,000 Jewish men, women and children in Greece in 1941. The Greek armed forces include 12,898 Jews who suffer 4,256 casualties including 513 dead. December 1940, the Greek army has not only repelled the Italian attack but has launched a successful counter offensive. They have advanced an average of one hundred kilometres into Albania. They have captured the towns of Koritsa, Agioi Saranta, Argyrokastro and Pogradec and are threatening to break through the new front and advance on the Albanian capital of Tirana.

Instrumental in stopping the Italians' attack and leading the offensive in Albania is Colonel Mordechai Frizis, a Jew from Chalkis. His detachment has routed the Italian Julia division. December 5, 1940, Colonel Frizis, famous for leading his troops on his white stallion, dies in a strafing mission against his advancing forces by the Italian Air Force. He is killed instantly when he refuses to take cover and continues to ride his horse in defiance of the attacking aeroplanes.

December 15, 1940, the harsh winter conditions in the Albanian front stall the Greek advance and the two opponents dig in to wait for the spring thaw. Adolph Hitler, although initially upset by Mussolini's unilateral decision to open up the Greek front, determines that he cannot afford to have his partner and ally embarrassed. He decides to divert troops to the Balkans in order to shore up his alliance.

April 6, 1941, the German Twelfth army under Field Marshal List, having been given access to Bulgarian territory and roads, attacks Greece and Yugoslavia concurrently. General Tsolakoglou, the Greek field commander, sues for peace without authorisation from his government, and without much of a fight. Later, he will be appointed to the presidency of Greece with German concurrence.

April 9, 1941, the German Army enters Salonica. The collapse and surrender of the Greek army to the Germans is followed up by the partition of Greece into three zones. The Italians are given all of Central and Southern Greece and a majority of the Aegean islands, this includes Athens. The Bulgarians are given Thrace and the access to the Aegean they have always coveted. The Germans retain only a portion of Macedonia, and the Greek railway system. Salonica, with its large Jewish community, in what is certainly no coincidence, is included in the German sector. The Gestapo immediately follow the conquering armies and set up its operations in Salonica.

April 1941, Gestapo arrests Jewish leaders in Salonica and close down Jewish newspapers. The Germans requisition a number of Jewish homes and take over the Baron de Hirsch hospital. There is a roundup of leading Jewish citizens creating some concern. The Gestapo, however, releases them quickly and things return to normalcy. The Germans are tough on all citizens of Salonica and do not single out Jews.

Mid-May 1941, the Jewish council of Salonica is dismissed by the Gestapo and Sabetai Shaltiel is appointed as the leader of the reconstituted Judenrat. He is made responsible for Salonica and all the other communities of Greece. His assistant, I. Albals, born in Kastoria and brought up in Vienna, shady background, but speaks German. The community is charged by the Gestapo with maintaining approximately forty Jewish refugees from central Europe.

The unusual nature of this request and the Gestapo's concern with Jewish refugees leads to questions about their true identity. These refugees will eventually form the nucleus of the Jewish police force in the yet to be established Salonica ghetto. Subsequent actions on the part of these refugees will add to the speculation. Sabetai Shaltiel is not a man that the family can be proud of. Weak and irresolute in matters of importance, yet at the same time narrow-minded and vindictive in matters of personal authority and power, he does the German's bidding. He occupies himself with petty power struggles while some of his subordinates enrich themselves at the expense of the community.

The Greek resistance, EAM, visits Rabbi Koretz, the Chief Rabbi for Greece and offers to cooperate. Koretz refuses. Rabbi Korea is the religious head of the Jewish community of Greece. He is an Austrian national who was appointed to the post well before the war, because it was deemed that there was no-one qualified for the position among the Jewish community of Greece.

May 1941, Koretz is arrested in Athens and imprisoned for officially objecting to the bombing by the Italian Air Force of the church of Aghia Sofia in Salonica. His arrest clearly intimidates him as this may have been the last courageous act of his involvement with the demise of the Jewish community of Greece. January 29, 1942, the Wannsee conference on the Final Solution takes place just outside Berlin. The decision is made to systematically annihilate European Jewry.

Spring 1942, General Tsolakoglou visits Salonica and meets with Koretz and Shaltiel. Koretz and Shaltiel, blind to the impending disaster, are preoccupied with their own petty power struggle. Koretz pursues rights he sees as his as the Grand Rabbi Sabetai Shaltiel disagrees and is intent on maintaining whatever little power he has as the president of the community. Ten days later Koretz is arrested and is sent to a concentration camp in Vienna. Shaltiel remains in charge with Albala as his assistant.

The German command, led by Dr. Max Mertens, an administrator who represented himself as a friend and protector of the Jews, gradually and slowly begins to introduce restrictions and laws aimed only at Jews. Jews are restricted from holding certain government offices, and some official responsibilities. Their access to certain services is restricted and non-Jews are given priority on many others. With every new restriction, the Jews became more upset and more demoralised, but, assured by

Mertens that these were minor inconveniences needed to appease the aggressive and impatient Nazi hierarchy, they do not panic.

They feel that although they are definitely being singled out and persecuted, it was something they would have to endure until things changed. They did not feel that their lives were in any way threatened and except for some isolated incidents, this was the case until July 1942, (July 8, 1942). Early in the month a memorandum from Dr. Mertens was circulated through the Jewish community requesting all male Jews between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to report to Plateia Eleftherias, (Freedom Square) on Saturday, July 11, 1942, at 8:00A.M.

Softened by the continual issuance of restrictions, most people saw this as simply another inconvenience to the growing list of minor persecutions that they were suffering. At 8:00 A.M., as ordered, approximately eight thousand male Jews had arrived in the square. It was a beautiful July morning of what was to be a typically hot and sunny summer day. Suddenly, a few German soldiers that had been standing casually in one corner of the square were joined by about another 150 men with dogs and machine guns.

The detainees were lined up in the square and were kept there through the incredibly hot midday sun without water or shade while German soldiers with guns at the ready would walk up and down the rows inspecting closely each person. Anyone that moved or talked or stumbled from the heat was kicked and beaten. Others were made to jump, roll on the sidewalk, and were generally ridiculed. The German soldiers laughed hysterically at the predicament of the civilians, while all around the square in apartment balconies, the wives of the German officers and male and female army personnel laughed at their plight and taunted them.

Following the debacle, the Germans announce that the Jews assembled will be recruited into forced labour units. The mayor of Salonica at the time is the collaborator Simonidis, and there is no objection or response from the municipal leadership. August 29, 1942, Yacoel is put in charge of organising forced labour for the youth of Salonica. The majority of con-

scripts are assigned to work headed by I. Muller. Conditions are atrocious.

October 1, 1942, I. Muller, after reviewing conditions of forced labour with Yacoel, suggests that perhaps Greek workers from the islands may be better suited to the work, and asks if Jewish community would be prepared to submit two billion drachmas in place of the workers. He asks Yacoel not to disclose this because he has not yet reviewed it with German occupation authorities.

October 13, 1942, Mertens, accompanied by the interpreter, Officer Meissner, meets with the council. He says that he is concerned that Jewish workers will not survive winter. He offers to release them in return for payment of the damages which he estimates to be three to five billion drachmas. Yacoel immediately suggests that the sum is too high and the time is too short. Mertens says that he has intervened on behalf of the community with Berlin to ensure that the anti-Jewish measures are not taken, despite pressure from local Greek groups. The payment however is not negotiable, only perhaps the method of payment. He suggests the council think about it.

October 15, 1942, Mertens returns after Muller approaches him on behalf of the community and suggests a compromise of 3.5 billion drachmas - two billion in cash, 1.5 billion in property, and the Jewish cemetery. He reiterates cynically and falsely that local populace wants measures taken against Jews and that he, as a friend of the Jews, is the one standing in the way and protecting them. After some negotiation, the community accepts a ransom of 2.5 billion drachmas and relinquishes the rights to the cemetery. The ransom decimates the community's wealth. The destruction of the cemetery represents a psychological blow of immense proportions.

November 1942, the Gorgopotamos Bridge is blown up. Large Jewish contingent is involved. Some reprisals are undertaken against the Jewish population of Salonica but these are soon curtailed. December 1942, Koretz returns from prison in Vienna. Director of Gestapo offers Yomtov Yacoel presidency, but Yacoel declines.

December 1942, Germans dismiss Sabetai Shaltiel and the council appoints Rabbi Koretz as president of the Community council. In his inaugural address to the community workers, Koretz assures them that there is plenty of food in Germany and offers himself as a well-fed example of a concentration camp prisoner.

February 6, 1943, Dieter Wisliceny and Alois Brunner arrive in Salonica. They report directly to Eichmann. Wisliceny later testifies that at the time he knew the purpose and objectives of the deportation of the Jews, the first directive from the office of Mertens to the Jews of Salonica requiring the star, the move to special city sections and the marking of Jewish business and offices. Wisliceny will later testify that he could not have done his job as efficiently without the cooperation and support of the Wehrmacht (Mertens). Strategy is to terrorise and overwork Rabbi Koretz and community leadership.

Immediately upon his arrival, on February 6, 1943, he issued a memo under Dr. Mertens' name in which he ordered the following:

1. All Salonikan Jews must immediately begin wearing a yellow star for easy identification; all Jewish offices and businesses must be clearly designated as Jewish.
2. All Jews must move to a specially designated section of the city.
3. All costs associated with these requirements are to be borne by the individual.
4. The Jewish community is to report to the (above) office on the execution of these orders by February 25, 1943.

He followed this up with a memo under his own name on February 10, 1943, in which he defined the specifications of the star to be applied to the clothing, the signs to be posted on business premises; and the criteria to be used to define who is a Jew. February 10, 1943, relocation of all Jews to the two designated areas begins and is completed by February 25. Jews are not allowed to live in the large apartment blocks in the main streets.

February 25, 1943, Thursday, first day of wearing the Star of David. Initial apprehension is soon eliminated by positive response and support by Christian population, teachers in school, etc. At the same time, Wisliceny announces the formation of the Jewish police. The Jewish police, under the leadership of Albala and made up largely of the Austrian expatriates, are given broad powers in the ghettos. They do their work diligently, in some cases matching and exceeding the Germans' cruelty and rapacity.

February 25, 1943, news is printed that all Jews to be excluded from holding office in corporations, government corporations, professional unions, etc. Much more serious than it sounds, impact on economic life of community devastating.

March 1, 1943, Jews are asked to enumerate and report the value of all property and valuables to the SD. Impression that the objective of SS actions is to enumerate property and tax it, feeling that perhaps the end of the atrocity is near. Concurrently, Jewish police are doubled under Albala and the Baron Hirsch camp is secured. Camp is under command of 23 year old Gerbin. His interpreter is the notorious collaborator, Vital Hasson, who counts in his gang Dario Hadayo, Jacko Aboav, Barsion, Dino Hasson, Jacko Kazes, Blumenfeld, Amster and Kapel.

March 5, 1943, Koretz demands adherence to Nazi directives. He has become a facilitator for the Nazi objectives. He sends memo asking Jews to maintain their calm and courage in the face of the unfounded rumours. Just go about your business quietly and have confidence in your community leaders.

March 6, 1943, Saturday, ghetto is cordoned off. Non-Jews and non-Greek subjects are allowed out. Greek Jews are kept in and suggested that they return to their homes.

March 7, 1943, meeting (takes place) between many notable Jews and Brunner in the offices of the community. He tells them that they were supposed to be hostages but, thanks to Korea who pledged his head, they will be free and asks them if they are willing to help with the SS program.

Circa March 15, 1943, first convoy leaves Salonica for Poland, forty wagons, approximately 2800 people. All of these are Hirsch concentration camp inmates. People are made to change money and gold for Zloty IOU's. Money is deposited in the Bank of Greece and is at the disposal of Mertens.

March 15, 1943, Aghia Paraskevi Bloco: the first of a number of blocks that occur prior to another train convoy. The designated area is blocked off by Jewish police, Greek police, Shuppos and SS. People have twenty minutes to collect their goods and assemble. They are then led to the Baron Hirsch concentration camp next to the train station. They are shipped out in the first available transport.

March 17, 1943, second convoy leaves for Poland. Furious delegation of Jews approached Koretz to demand an explanation. Koretz says he will answer at 4.00 P.M. at the Monastiriotis synagogue. At 3.00P.M., the synagogue is full. Koretz preaches co-operation and resignation. The crowd is agitated and threatens violence against Koretz. They treat him as a traitor. He narrowly escapes without his overcoat and has to be protected by a group of Jews to get into his car. Convoy –

March 19, 1943, March 22, 1943, overwhelmed by the pressure applied to the Government by virtually all segments of Greek leadership including political, business, legal and church, Prime Minister Logothetopoulos writes to Altenbourg, the German ambassador. There is little effect. Convoys –

March 23 & 27, April 3, 5 & 8. Rallis, recently installed premier of Greece, replaced Logothetopoulos, visits Salonica for a few hours at the request of the Athens community. Koretz, at first reluctant, eventually agrees to lead the delegation and is joined by the Metropolitan Genadios. No result. Rallis is not taken seriously by the Germans and does not have the courage to deal effectively with the SS.

April, 1943, having lost his influence and thus ability to help the SS, Koretz is arrested and taken to Hirsch concentration camp. Albala, the chief of the Jewish police is made the president of the community. All pretences are gone. The community is now assured of deportation. The cruelty and extortion practised by the Jewish police against their own people is now without control. Convoys –

April 13, 16, 20, 22, & 28; May 3 & 9; June 1, eight hundred and twenty “privileged” Jews depart ostensibly for Thereisenstadt. They were members of many different associations that had cooperated with Koretz. They included professors and other directors, the elite of the Jewish community. They have been promised that, as a reward for their co-operation with the SS, they will be taken to Thereisenstadt, a much more civilised camp. True to form, the SS had played a practical joke on them and they were taken to Birkenau. Almost all of Salonica’s Greek Jews are now deported.

Convoy - August 2, 1943, the most privileged of the Salonica council and the Spanish Jews are taken to Bergen-Belsen; 367 Spanish Jews and Greek Jews, mostly members of the council and their families, and Jews who formed a part of Wisliceny’s deportation system (who) include Albala, Topouz, and Edgard Cunic of the Jewish police. Vital Hasson, the most notorious of the collaborators, escaped at the last minute and fled to Albania.

Convoy -August 7, 1943, the last Salonica convoy leaves for Poland made up primarily of 1800 male slave labourers. This makes it a total of 45,659 for Birkenau and 441 to Bergen-Belsen.

Epilogue Of the 45,659 Jews that were deported to Poland, it is estimated that approximately two thousand survived. A few returned to Salonica after the war to find a changed city where the influence and presence of the Jewish community was almost totally eradicated. Unable to live with the memories, most of them sooner or later left Salonica, many for Athens, some for Israel and others for North America.

Dr. Max Mertens, the military governor of Salonica and the person responsible for confiscating and disposing of the Jewish property, was recalled to Germany in March 1944. He returned, weighed down with an amount of Jewish (money). With this capital he became a successful businessman, participating fully in the German economic miracle.

Incredibly, in 1957, convinced that he was safe, he returned to Salonica in order to get the balance of the treasure he had not removed from Greece. He was arrested, tried, convicted and imprisoned. His stay in prison, however, was less than one year. His friends and collaborators, many of whom were now in a position of power, arranged to have an amnesty law passed while the national assembly was on holiday.

The sole beneficiary was Mertens. Whisked away by a chartered Lufthansa plane, he returned to Germany to live out his life as a successful businessman.

THE SHEALTIEL HAGGADAH



This is the analysis presented to the Reunion by Iris Fishoff, Curator of Jewish Studies, the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

The Shealtiel Haggadah, or, as it is more commonly known, the Brother Haggadah, is one of about twenty Spanish illuminated Haggadoth that survived the upheaval of the expulsion. For almost 120 years it has been kept in the British Museum, now the British Library, and is cherished as one of its treasures. On its spine you can see the museum's identification, or accession number: "British Museum: Oriental 1404".

The book's colourful and rich decorative style points to a Catalan origin of mid-fourteenth century. This is, for example, an illuminated page from the Shealtiels Haggadah with the *Dayenu* - meaning "That would have been enough for us" - Editor, in which the repeated words, *Ilu* - meaning "If he had not..." - Editor, and *Veloh* - meaning "and did not" - Editor, are very skillfully and artistically incorporated into the decorative design of the entire page. The history of the Shealtiels Haggadah is somewhat enigmatic.

There is no scribal colophon that would tell us where and when it was written, by whom and for whom it was written, however, on stylistic grounds; we may assume that it was written in Catalonia, Spain, probably in the middle of the fourteenth century. We also know that, already, in 1402, this valuable manuscript was sold, apparently, in Spain, by Meir Ben Malchiel Ashkenazi to his brother-in-law, Moses Ibn Kebes, or Kabes - I'm not sure how to pronounce this name.

This information is indicated on a strip of vellum stuck on the original first leaf; on folio one, at the beginning of the Haggadah. It says Meir Malchiel Ashkenazi sold the Haggadah to his brother-in-law Moshe Ben Kabes in the year 1402. We do not know how long this Moses Ibn Kabes kept the Haggadah in his possession, but another note at the end of the manuscript tells us that it belonged to Abraham Hen, son of the prominent Rabbi, Judah, physician, son of the exalted Rabbi Immanuel Hen, the physician of the House of Shealtiels, of which God has graciously given to his servant.

This is a paraphrase of Genesis 33:5 and the words (Transliteration: Me-asher chanan Eloim et avdo) are hinting at the owner's name, Hen: Chanan and Hen. On the screen is this owner's signature. This is the signature. There was an empty space on the page at the end of a hymn at the end of the book, and this is where the inscription, the owner's inscription, was painted. We call the whole inscription the signature.

I will read it in Hebrew. There is a signature which was added by a later hand in Sephardi Hebrew script. (Name of God) is written without (A R L) for the same reason that (Yeuda) is written with a K, and not an N (Yehuda), not to write the name of God. Experts in Hebrew paleography - and I am especially indebted to Dr. Mordechai Glatser of the Hebrew University - identify the script as Sephardi with some local Byzantine elements.

These elements are found in manuscripts written in Western Turkey, the Greek Islands, the Balkans, Crete and Rhodes. This inscription is not dated, but according to its script, as well as the formula and the titles used, it can be attributed to the sixteenth century from the former Byzantine area. The spelling of Yeuda, with an x for example, is not found in the so-called Byzantine cultural area prior to the sixteenth century.

The Byzantine nature of the inscription fits well with the identity of the owner that I am about to present to you. Abraham Hen son of Judah son of Immanuel of the house of Shealtiel appears to be the son of the noted Judah Ben Immanuel Hen who flourished in Candia, Crete in the sixteenth century and who is frequently mentioned in the Responsa of Joseph Caro, the author of the Shulchan Aruch. The harbour town of Candia in the Greek Island of Crete had, of course, a considerable population of Jewish exiles from Spain.

Although further study is needed, I would like to suggest that the owner of the Haggadah is Abraham, the son of the same Judah Ben Immanuel Hen who lived in Candia in

the sixteenth century. He might have been the descendent of the famous Spanish rabbi and physician Gracian - he is known as Gracian - or Zecharia Hen, son of Isaac, son of Shealtiel, who moved from Spain to Italy around 1277, and he is known to have translated several medical treatises such as the cannon of Ibn Sina of Lucena and some of Maimonides' medical works. There is no evidence as to the whereabouts of the Haggadah in the following centuries until it was acquired by the British Museum in 1876.

There is a note in pencil of this date. On a paper flyleaf there is a pencil note in English saying, "Spanish manuscripts of this age are so rare that the British museum has not one like this". Let's see now what's so special about this book that made the British Museum's librarian write such a note.

As we open the book it starts with a sequence of full-paged pictures illustrating biblical episodes narrating the story of the exodus of the Israelite from Egypt. On the first page we see Moses herding the flock of Yitro (Jethro), his father-in-law, right here on the mountain. On the left, Moses is in front of the burning bush lifting his leg and putting off his shoes. The depiction is very exact following the detail of the text of Exodus with great precision and even the angel's face as it appears in the flames. I hope you can see the angel's face just as it says in the book of Exodus.

Below Moses is depicted in three scenes in sequential order; God's signs to Moses. On the right, Moses holds his crook and points at it. In the middle, Moses raises his hands in astonishment at the crook that turns into a serpent, while on the left; Moses holds his crook, the lower part of which is a serpent's tail.

A very similar depiction appears in the Rylands Haggadah; another Catalan Haggadah of the fourteenth century, so called because it is kept in the John Rylands library in Manchester.

It is in the light of the striking similarity between these two Haggadoth that the Shealtiel Haggadah of the British library was named as the Brother Haggadah. To sum up, the splendour of the Shealtiel Haggadah evinces the flourishing Spanish Jewish community which lived in harmony with their Christian neighbours.

Richly illuminated Haggadoth of this type belonged to wealthy members of the Jewish community who had close connections with the court. In the fourteenth century, Jewish rabbis, physicians and astronomers, in contact with Catalan aristocracy, must have been familiar with local artistic trends. The Shealtiel Haggadah displays a blend of local and foreign stylistic influences such as the French Gothic grotesques and the Italian modelling of the figures.

The Haggadah has always been one of the most popular, and perhaps *the* most popular Jewish religious book. It was apparently compiled as a separate book in the seventh or eighth century. Just twenty have survived dating from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century in manuscript form prior to the invention of printing. Some of these manuscripts were profusely illuminated and have attracted special attention. The Shealtiel Haggadah is one of the finest examples of those illuminated Haggadah manuscripts.

Figgo Loco and Asovrindar



This edition of *Figgo Loco!* has more of the lighter and creative writing we want to include. *Figgo Loco!*—named for the Wild Fig from which the Synagogue of the family took its name—is intended to be the family forum for creative material, giving all the opportunity to put their talents on display in the Gazette. It will also cover material with a lighter touch, including humour and

anecdotes. To make *Figgo Loco!* varied and interesting, we hope to receive contributions from as many members of the family as possible, so this request is aimed at **YOU!** We would welcome any material that you have which relates to you or to our family in some way.

- Do you have an interesting hobby?
- Have you written a poem or a song?
- Did you read a fascinating book?
- Have you traveled somewhere recently?
- What is your family's favourite food?
- Which jokes did you laugh about?
- Do you have a story to share with us?

Shealtiel Artists

Several members of the family are performing artists. This column is dedicated to their work and to other artists who have published artwork with reference to our family. We take a look at the work of Amalia Shaltiel

We do it a dozen times a day without a second thought. Each person in the United States produces about four pounds of trash a day and disposes of it without a second thought; food, paper, plastics, and countless other materials...where does it all go? What happens to it when we toss it in the garbage can or recycling bin?

For as long as humans have been making garbage, dumping it has been the most convenient way to get rid of it. In some ancient societies, people simply dumped their garbage where ever they wanted, then moved on to a new home. With the rise of villages and cities, people needed to have somewhere, besides the floor of their home, to put their garbage. Archaeologists have learned plenty about ancient people by exploring the garbage they left behind in primitive dumps, in caves, ditches, and riverbeds. For a few millennia, nobody gave garbage a second thought. Then in this century, the dumps began to fill up. One reason for the mounting garbage was that the population had reached an all time high. Another reason, at least in the United States, was that the economy was better than ever.

Factories and businesses sprouted all over the country in the years following the end of World War II in 1945. Jobs were easy to find. People were making more money and buying more products than ever before. They also began wasting more than ever. Because advertising had become a big business, there was even more to waste. Many manufacturers began packaging their products in boxes and other containers that allowed room for advertisements.

Until this age of prosperity, most people bought only what they needed and used all that they bought. Cloth flour sacks, for instance, were turned into clothing. Some men and women made their living by gathering and reusing trash. They would push wagons through the streets of town and collect old rags, used clothing, tin cans and paper. By the 1950s, however, it was no longer necessary for most people to be so thrifty. They could afford to waste a bit.

Lifestyle changes in the 1960s and 70s added to the mountains of garbage. Many home-cooked meals gave way to takeout food, frozen dinners, and ready-made foods that could be popped into the microwave. All of these substitutes came with plenty of packaging----foil trays, paper bags, plastic forks and foam cups. By the 1980s, countless disposable products such as

disposable diapers, cameras, lighters, even clothing had replaced items that were once used and reused over and again.

Along with the quantity, the quality of garbage has changed as well. Early in this century, American garbage consisted mostly of food wastes. But the development of new materials, especially plastics and other synthetic or man-made products, replaced many organic products.

An organic product is made from something that was once a living organism. When something organic is thrown away, it naturally decays or breaks down into dust. Plastics and other synthetics are inorganic. Some are almost indestructible. That's good if you're making something that's built to last. It's bad when it becomes trash. In the 1980s, the garbage glut seemed to have become a national crisis. That crisis was symbolized by a trash-filled barge that could find no place to dump its load.

For more than four months, the barge sailed down the Atlantic Coast, around the Gulf of Mexico and back to New York City. At port after port, it was turned away. Nobody wanted to deal with its cargo of trash. After the barge had anchored for an additional three months in New York Harbor, the 31 tons of baled garbage was finally burned. But for people across the country who had watched the barge on nightly newscasts, the point became clear. The United States, the world's largest producer of garbage, was running out of ways to dispose of its trash.

Many of the recycling programs now in place resulted from the garbage crisis of the 80s. Let's take a look at how we treat our trash today. The city dump, a smelly, rat-infested, trash heap, is a thing of the past. Most of the garbage you produce ends up in a sanitary landfill. Here's what happens to it. You toss an apple core into the trash, probably without a second thought. As far as you're concerned, that apple core is gone forever. But for the core, the journey is just beginning. First it goes from your household garbage can to an outdoor dumpster or trash can.

The trash collectors transfer it to the collection trucks. Then it takes a ride to the sanitary landfill, where bulldozers and earthmovers are waiting. The collection truck dumps its load. Your apple core tum-

bles to the ground along with crushed cans, scraps of cloth, crumpled paper, and lots of mushy, moldy food waste. Bulldozers ride over the top to flatten the solid waste. Then a layer of fresh dirt is added to the top. This process goes on all day long. When the final layer of soil is added, there is no evidence of garbage to attract flies or rats.

But let's give that apple core a second thought. Your garbage has just become part of a scrumptious feast for millions of living things called microorganisms. These are bacteria and fungi such as the mold that grows on bread that's left unwrapped. As the microorganisms eat your apple core they change it in a process called decomposition which means rotting or decaying. The apple core will eventually break down into tiny particles and gas. Ammonia and other gases produced by decomposition usually don't smell very good - that's why decaying garbage generally stinks. Microorganisms will feed on anything that was once alive. A candy wrapper made from wood pulp that came from a tree. An old leather belt made from cow skin. Or a cotton rag. But don't expect the microorganisms to make your garbage disappear. Decomposition takes place very slowly at a landfill. After a few years of piling layers of garbage and dirt there is very little air deep inside the landfill. Bacteria die without air, so the solid waste stops decomposing. Also, even though microorganisms don't appear to be picky eaters, they won't touch the metal, glass, or plastics that take up much of the space in a landfill. Your apple core might have had a very different journey if you had chosen to compost it. And the microorganisms still would have gotten their fill.

In a compost pile, food wastes and yard waste such as grass clippings are piled together and left to rot. Horse or cow manure, shredded newspaper, and soil may also be added as an extra incentive for the microorganisms to speed up the decomposition. Over time, the wastes decompose into a rich black soil called humus or compost. Mixed into a garden, the compost is rich in the nutrients new plants need to grow. Compost is so good for plants that some gardeners buy it at a store. But most people produce more than enough of the raw materials needed to make their own compost heap. A third route your apple core might have taken is to an incinerator. That's a large furnace where solid wastes are burned into ashes.

Burning waste is one way to decrease the volume or the amount of space that our garbage occupies. For every ten truckloads of garbage that go into an incinerator only one truckload

of ash comes back out. The problem is that the ash, which often contains poisons from melted plastics and metals, can be too dangerous to dump in a landfill. The smoke and gas produced by the furnace might also be toxic which would pollute the air. Most new incinerators are designed to remove most of the poisons from the smoke and gas. At some incinerators, the heat that goes up the smokestack is collected and harnessed into energy that can be turned into electricity for nearby homes. The long-term effectiveness of these new incinerators is still being studied.

Recycling is the fourth journey that much of our trash takes. Apple cores aren't typically recycled. But even products that CAN be recycled often aren't. That's one of the problems with recycling. Recycling means that a product goes in a circle; first, from the factory to the customer, and then back to a factory to be made into something new. Today, more than one third of all households in the United States need to go no further than their curbside to recycle glass, aluminum, and newspapers. Many others voluntarily haul their recyclable materials to community centers. Recycling not only diverts trash away from our landfills, it helps preserve our natural resources, such as the trees from which paper is made. But there are drawbacks to recycling. One is that recycling demands a big investment of time, energy and money to collect, sort, transport and process the materials. Local governments usually get the responsibility of building and managing systems to deal with recycled materials. A second drawback is that most items can only be recycled a limited number of times. Paper, for example, loses up to 20 percent of its fibers each time it's recycled. So after five trips to the recycling center, the paper becomes a worthless scrap. Still recycling is an important part of the solution to our garbage problem, especially as a growing number of items can be recycled. Cereal boxes, carpeting, and blue jeans to name a few.

But there's something better than recycling. It's called source reduction. It means simply that if you reduce the amount of things you use, you'll generate less trash. For most of us, source reduction begins at the stores where we shop. Here are some tips. Buy products that will last and ones that can be repaired if they break. Choose products with little or no packaging. When you have to buy packaging, choose products in lightweight packages such as alumi-

num cans, paper, or plastic beverage containers. Although glass can be recycled, about 70 percent of it is not. Instead it takes up a disproportionate volume of space in landfills. Reuse bags, boxes, foam peanuts, and bubble wrap as much as possible. Buy food products in larger sizes and refill containers if possible. Use concentrated products. This single plastic carton of mix will provide 16 gallons of lemonade. By adding the water yourself you can do without 16 plastic gallon jugs. Use paper on both sides or use e-mail to send messages. Paper takes up more space in landfills than any other material.

Waste is inevitable. No matter how much you recycle, reuse, reduce, some things will eventually become garbage. Or will they? Archeologists have always valued trash for what it can teach us about ancient civilizations. But when archaeologists gave modern trash a thought they made some discoveries about our own lives.

More than 20 years ago, an archaeologist named William Rathje began the Garbage Project at the University of Arizona. The project involves sifting through garbage cans and trash heaps and sorting and classifying the rubbish we throw away. The Garbage Project has made many fascinating, if slimy, findings. It has found, for instance, that kids aren't the only ones who don't eat their vegetables. Adults likewise toss theirs, making fresh produce the biggest source of food waste in our garbage. By boring deep inside landfills, the Garbage Project has made other surprising discoveries, including the fact that much of what was thrown out decades ago, has not decayed as expected. Food debris and yard waste, about 50 percent of it, biodegrades in the first 15 years. And then it stabilizes. As the Garbage Project burrows deeper into our disposal habits, its uncovering new ideas for dealing with the messes we make.

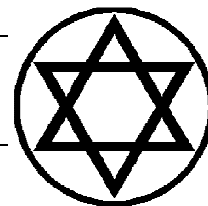
Meet Mr. Observer. He's a sculpture made from pieces of trash that would have ended up in a landfill or incinerator. Mr. Observer was made by Amalia Shaltiel who travels to schools to share her sculpting techniques with students. Each student in her class adds something to create a sculpture---a lid from a worn-out marker, a bottle cap, or a scrap of material. Using only a glue gun and lots of trash, Ms. Shaltiel is teaching kids to give garbage a second thought!

AMALIA: "In a way, anything can be turned into an art piece." Amalia Shaltiel has been an artist most of her life. With a MFA in sculpture from the Parsons School of Design, NY, she has

conducted classes and workshops in the Central PA region for people of all ages. Her work has been exhibited locally and at the Harrisburg Museum of Art in 1994.

<http://www.ciu10.com/artsedu/artists.html>
Amalia Shaltiel may be reached by phone (814)867-1462

Star of David



On a recent trip to Spain **we(who?)** were surprised to note that the six-pointed star was frequently seen as part of the artwork in "Moorish" buildings, but was not to be found in the decorations of the old synagogues we visited. Those Jewish buildings date from the same time period as the "Moorish" ones, and we wondered when the Star of David became a symbol associated with Jews.

Hebrew MAGEN DAVID, "Shield of David". The familiar star known in Hebrew as Magen also spelled MOGEN, composed of two overlaid or interlaced equilateral triangles that form a six-pointed star. It appears on synagogues, Jewish tombstones, and the flag of the State of Israel. It has been used explicitly in this way for only a few hundred years. Its origin is cloaked in the mystery of Antiquity.

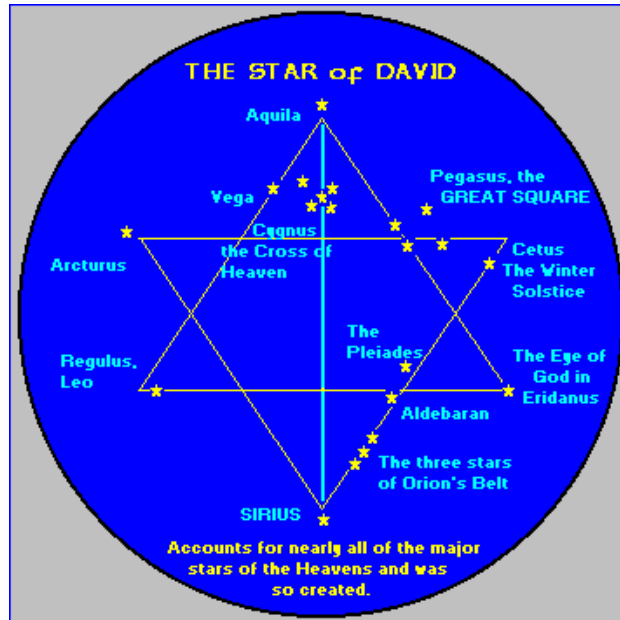
The Star of David is a hexangular star, also called hexagram. The symbol--which historically was not limited to use by Jews--originated in antiquity, when, side by side with the five-pointed star, it served as a magical sign or as a decoration. The hexagram was used in ancient history as a magical sign among the Greeks, Romans and the Babylonians, and taken over later by the Jews.

There are various theories about the origin of the Star of David. Most theories ascribe gentle origins to it. I personally believe that the Star of David is of Hebraic origin. The name, Star of David, derived from the Hebrew "Magen David" (literally, "Shield of David"), hints that there would be a direct connection between the star and (King)

David. A legend states that David would have worn a Star of David on his shield whenever he went into battle. At least one theory is that it really was inscribed on the shields of the armies of the Davidic line.

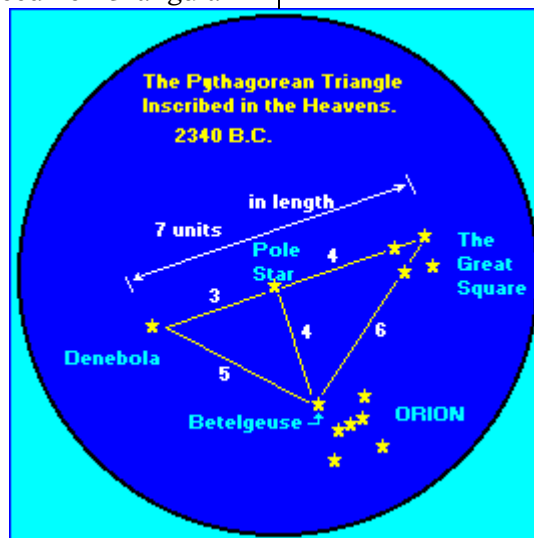
In the modern Hebrew *aleph-bet* (alphabet), the D-sound is represented by the *dalet*, which looks like a backward 'r'. But in the ancient Hebrew *aleph-bet*, the *dalet* looked like a triangle. The Star of David (also called the *Shield of David*) was made up of these two triangular *dalets*. When pagan nations went to war, they many times painted fearsome dragons, snakes, or other disgusting creatures on the shields of the soldiers. The Israelites chose instead to use the Star of David - the two *dalets* which contained the first and last letters of King David's name. King David had a well-deserved reputation as a great man of war, and the mere thought of him (and the Israelites who fought with him) could strike fear into the hearts of Israel's enemies. It was an excellent and effective symbol for warfare. It was not used as a religious symbol by the Jews until several hundred years later.

Our investigations indicate that the Star of David is appropriately called a "STAR" and represents a double-triangulation which accounts for most of the major stars of the Heavens. As such, the Star of David was originally probably the secret symbol of the stargazing priests, later adopted by the Israelite Kings, David and Solomon, and subsequently by the Hebrew people as a whole. Here is what this double-triangulation of the Heavens probably looked like. It is very practical, and once you understand it, you can find stars in the Heavens with ease.



We must recall that “humans” created the constellations according to their needs and grouped the stars according to an organised system. Although most historians and astronomers have thus far believed that the constellations were created out of fancy, this appears not to be true for the astronomy of the ancient Pharaohs. Moreover, anyone who has ever surveyed land - as I have - appreciates the need for triangula-

tion to map any territory. You need at least three points - two are not enough. Another example of triangulation is the obvious stellar system made up by three elements: the 4-square of Orion, the 4-square of the Great Square and the star Denebola, so named as the “nub” of Heaven. Why was that? The following triangulation shows this quite well.



In other words, the ancients created the two 4-square “stones” of Heaven, i.e. Orion and the Great Square at 90 degree angles to each other and triangulated to Denebola. If we set the distance from Denebola to the lower right corner star of the Great Square as 7 units, then we obtain classical Pythagorean units for the resulting triangles. The perpendicular line points to the Pole Star (in 2340 B.C. viz. 3761 B.C.) and the relationship between Orion and the Great Square forms an isosceles triangle. Since the ancients could have organised the stars any way they wanted, I

doubt whether this is chance. Rather, the ancients actually “mapped”, i.e. surveyed, the Heavens, and the triangulations used were written into the sky.

The theory that the Star of David was originally an astronomical map may reflect its present use as an amulet by Bedouins in the Sinai. The hexagram is also used as a navigation tool.

Historians concur that the symbol almost certainly had nothing to do with the tenth

century BCE reign of King David. A six-sided star appears in the writings and practices of magicians of Solomon's day. The Star's earliest attested Jewish use, but not adoption for the faith, was a seventh century BCE seal of one Joshua ben Asayahu of Sidon. It was found on a frieze in a second century CE Galilean synagogue, alongside a swastika cross, which then had overtones of paganism, not persecution. The hexagram may have been employed originally also as an architectural ornament on synagogues. A David's shield has recently been noted on a Jewish tombstone at Tarentum in southern Italy, which may date as early as the third century of the Common Era.

The symbol has been in existence for many thousands of years, and is thought to be useful as a protector. The Hindus employed the hexagram as a means of protection. Thought to be representative of Fire and Water, active and passive, positive and negative, heaven and Earth, this symbol became connected with thoughts of peace, perfect balance and the union of the higher and lower selves which everybody strives to attain. To students of yoga, this shape represents the heart centre in the chakras, and the powers of the air. The number 6, linking with Venus and with love, linking with the colour indigo, is considered to be a very spiritual number. This double triangle is connected to the desire to share and desire to receive, and cabalists will link it to Tiphereth. The name 'shield of David' may have been given it in virtue of its protective powers. The syncretism of Hellenistic, Jewish and Coptic influences did not originate the symbol.

However, the six-pointed star has been used for centuries for magic amulets and cabalistic sorcery. It is possible that it was the Cabala that derived the symbol from the Templars. The Cabala, in fact, makes use of the sign for arranging the ten sefirot, or spheres, in it, and placing it on amulets. In alchemy (actually this is still used in chemistry) a pointed up triangle under the = sign in a chemical equation indicates the application of heat/fire -- (esh). The pointed down triangle indicated the application of water (mayim). Together the two triangles - fire and water (esh and mayim made heaven (shamayim).

The term Magen David, which in Jewish liturgy signifies God as the protector (shield) of David, gained currency among medieval Jewish mystics, who attached magical powers to

King David's shield just as earlier (non-Jewish) magical traditions had referred to the five-pointed star as the "seal of Solomon." Cabalists popularised the use of the symbol as a protection against evil spirits.

The earliest Jewish literary source which mentions it, the 'Eshkol ha-Kofer' of the karaites Judah Hadassi (middle of the 12th cent.) says, *inch. 242*: "*Seven names of angels precede the mezuzah: Michael, Gabriel, etc... Tetragrammation protect thee!*" And likewise the sign called 'David's shield' is placed besides the name of each angel.' It was therefore, at this time, a sign on amulets. In the magic papyri of antiquity, pentagrams, together with stars and other signs, are frequently found on amulets bearing the Jewish names of God, 'Sabaoth,' 'Adonai,' 'Eloai,' and used to guard against fever and other diseases.

In the Middle Ages the Star of David appeared with greater frequency among Jews but did not assume any special religious significance; it is found as well on some medieval cathedrals. In the Middle ages the Jews used the hexagram specifically to the following three ends:

- as a decoration, and in particular as a graphical picture of a rose with six half round leaves;
- as a magical symbol. Thus pregnant women used the image of a hexagram as protection for the unborn child; others used it as a deterrent against demons; as an astrological symbol, and in particular as a graphical picture of the sun or a big star.

Simultaneously, with the yellow spot with which Jews were 'branded' in the Middle Ages, the hexagram, which more and more became known under the name "Star of David", developed into a specifically Jewish symbol. More and more Jews started to use it, e.g. in synagogues, on drawings and on stamps. In 1354 or 1357 (the exact year is not known) the Emperor Charles IV granted the right to carry their own flag to the Jewish community in Prague. On this flag, made of red and gold, the Star of David is depicted with, in the middle of this star, a Jew hat, while the red flag with which the Jews met King Matthias of Hungary in the fifteenth century showed two pentacles with two golden stars. Around this time the Star of David started to serve as a "decoration" on Jewish tombstones. Striking is that the Star of David was depicted in 1656 together with a

cross on a border stone in Vienna, which outlined the Jewish and Christian parts of the city. Later on you could find the Star of David in various Jewish communities situated in the Middle of Europe.

The Jewish community of Prague was the first to use the Star of David as its official symbol and from the 17th century on, the six-pointed star became the official seal of many Jewish communities and a general sign of Judaism, though it has no biblical or Talmudic authority. The star became a Passover Seder symbol around 1770, and in 1882, the Rothschild banking family adopted the Star of David as its coat of arms. It is placed upon synagogues, sacred vessels, and the like, and was adopted as a device by the American Publication Society in 1873. In 1897, it was adopted by the First Zionist Congress in Basel as its symbol and later by other bodies.

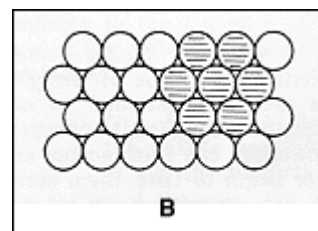
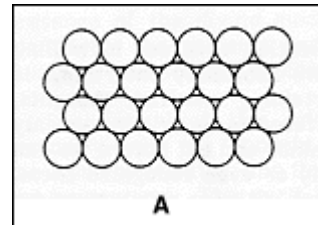
In the 19th century the Star of David had become the most occurring and generally recognized Jewish symbol. Also non-Jews then started to acknowledge the Star of David as a Jewish symbol. Striking is that the Star of David, especially in those countries with a great tolerance towards Jews, developed itself as a Jewish symbol. The yellow star that Jews were forced to wear in Nazi-occupied Europe invested the Star of David with a symbolism indicating martyrdom and heroism -- Copyright 1994-1998 Encyclopaedia Britannica. In 1948, the six-pointed star became the central figure in the flag of the new State of Israel. Even though the symbol has no biblical or Talmudic authority, it is now one of the major signs of Judaism

Starring the Circle, By Troy R. Bishop

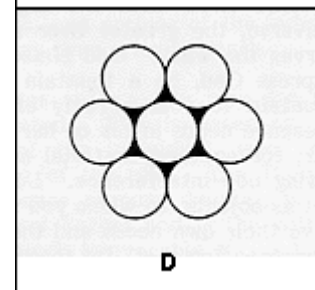
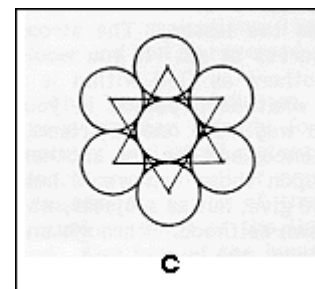
What have a handful of pennies to do with the Star of David, ancient symbol of Judaism? And what connection is there between the Star of David and atoms--or between the Star of David and a snowflake? To find out, lay twenty or thirty pennies flat on a table and arrange them as close together as you can. The result should be several alternating rows of pennies, each row slipped from alignment with those adjoining it by half the width of a penny (Figure A).

This arrangement is known in solid state physics, which concerns itself with the way atoms arrange themselves together in solid matter, as planar close packing. Select one of the pennies and mentally place a mark on it.

If it is not on an edge, it will be touched by exactly six neighbouring pennies. Mentally mark these six pennies as well. You will now have the pattern of seven marked pennies shown in Figure B. This pattern is repeated throughout the entire arrangement, except where the edges interfere, and is known in solid state physics as a unit cell, meaning that the arrangement is built of repetitions of this basic pattern.

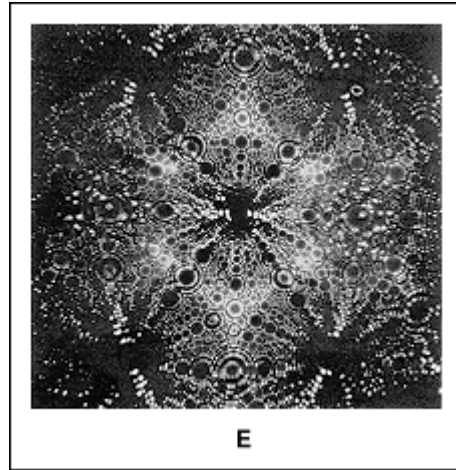


Figures C and D show how the unit cell of planar close packing contains the figure known as the Star of David, a six-pointed star formed from two interpenetrating triangles. The Star of David, a figure based on a six-sided polygon of straight lines, is inherent in a figure based on seven circles.



Could there be more symbolism behind the Star of David than most of us know today? Using an instrument called a field ion microscope, it is possible to observe matter as a collection of individual atoms, each atom a dot of light and the space between a dark void. In Figure E, a bit of tungsten examined through a field ion microscope has disap-

peared to the senses and all that remains is a pattern; because of human understanding of the significance of this pattern, though, its identity as tungsten remains real to human mind. Each dot, which represents an individual atom, appears in at least two different intersecting circles--as if it needs the two separate centers of force, represented by the centers of two different circles, to balance it and keep it from being pulled into any one. Hold the illustration quite a distance away and a large Star of David will be seen in it, the picture revealing itself as seven huge circles arranged as a unit cell of planar close packing. Sixteen thousand eight hundred and seven dots and some precise positioning were required to develop this figure, which displays unusual symmetry and balance, six-pointed stars, and the general appearance of a snowflake, one of nature's beautiful associations of free particles.



Sources:

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<http://www.starspring.com/ascender/star/star.html>
<http://www.christianbiblestudy.org/OPS/wm/wm0055a.html>
http://www.euronet.nl/users/pi_alfa/david1e.htm Star of David/Hexagram
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A theologian's Shealtiel

Notes of exchanges with Dr Henry Chadwick, former Regius Professor of Divinity, Oxford, 11th March, 1999

Question: What weight should be attached to the pedigrees ascribed to Jesus by the Evangelists?

Answer: These lists had a symbolic as well as an historical character, though some of the symbolic meaning is lost to us. Thus, the pedigree ascribed to Jesus by Matthew has only fourteen generations on each side, the significance being the multiple of seven. In this case names have been left out rather than inserted.

The pedigree ascribed to Jesus by Luke has a more realistic number of generations in the sense that it is closer to the number required to go back the c950 years to King David. The selection of personalities in the lineage is likely having symbolic significance, however, with such equivocal female figures as Tamar likely to be intended as a signal of the universal character of Jesus' ministry.

To summarise, the lineage lists of the Gospels should be neither disregarded nor regarded as authoritative.

Question: What is known of the place of archangels in Gnostic theology?

Answer: The Gnostics were a group of mutually inimical sects with similar beliefs of a world in contention between generally equivalent forces of good and evil; and

claims generally of the secret knowledge necessary to negotiate a passage through this world to the next. Part of this knowledge was of secret names, the use of which might serve successfully to challenge eponymous antagonists, among them the archangels who served as the gatekeepers to heaven and whose indulgence must be won. The names of the archangels reflected their function; all such names had great prestige and secret power. After Gnosticism was suppressed, Christianity and Islam developed the more benevolent view with which we are familiar today of archangels as intercessory figures.

Question: What weight might be attached to speculation that the Hebrew phrase, "asked of God" *LayTlav*—*transliteration*, Shealtiel, might have had an esoteric force among sectarians at the time of Christ and thereafter?

Answer: As already mentioned, names were very important to the divines of the day, but we lack the knowledge to speculate further.

Question: Are there any general comments you would like to make about the material (Draft *Grand Narrative*, 5th March 1999) sent for review?

Answer: It is likely that Shealtiel was in use among the Jews as a name for actual persons prior to its re-emergence into the record in medieval Spain. This is distinct from the matter of lineage claims, which prior to the emergence of surnames would not depend upon the continuity of the use of Shealtiel (or any name) but rather on records or oral traditions of pedigrees.

Founding Fathers

1) The famous Salonikan Rabbi Avraam Shmuel Saltiel is mentioned on a tombstone, *anno* 1875. He was probably identical with the Grand Rabbi of Salonika who was born *ca.* 1796. Rabbi Abraham is mentioned in the Shealtiel Family Book entry 380. There is a comment by Sol, son of Nico Saltiel, who recalls that his family is related to Edwin Saltiel, another descendant of the Chief Rabbi Abraham (Elli) Saltiel. Sources: Genealogy of Bernard Saltiel and Henry Saltiel of France. There were four children: Samuel Behor (first-born), Yosef, Moshe, and Saul who became founding father for a line of Rabbi's, through two sons, Abraham and Eliau. We know the names of 464 of his descendants.

2) "Moshon" Saltiel, born *ca.* 1793 is believed to have lived into the 20th century, which would mean he reached an age of at least 107 years. He married twice; the name of his first wife was probably Dudun. She gave birth to at least eight children: Solomon, Delicia, Elie "Liaou", Rachel, Abraham, Semtov "Sinto", Yosef and Oro. We know the names of 1583 of his descendants.

3) Moshe Saltiel, born *ca.* 1795, is only known through the name of his son Yosef Moshe Bochor Saltiel, born *ca.* 1820. Han Bochor Saltiel has been mentioned several times in books and records on Salonika as an important man, leader, and President of the Jewish Community. Family legends claim that he died when he was 114 years old, and that he fathered his last child (from his second wife, Palomba) when he was in his 80s. It is believed that Han Bochor had a brother, Jacob. A good lead for investigating Han Bochor Saltiel is through a property he owned, called Han Telegraph. This property was rented at the turn of the century through the 30s by at least by three tenants: 1) The Bourlas who ran a wholesale liquor business. 2) The Saltiels who ran a chemical business there. 3) A Greek family who also ran a wholesale liquor business. Moshe Shaltiel discovered that Han Bochor's real name was Yosef Moshe Bochor Saltiel. In an old Sidur, published about 1917 for the Catalan Hadash, there is a page dedicated to the contributors for the funding of the book. The above name is listed there as the second

largest contributor (the first is Shmuel Yomtob Shaltiel who may have been a grandfather of Rabbi Avraam Shmuel mentioned in part 2). The time is correct as at that time we know Bochor was the President of the Jewish Community. I went back and found that indeed every male son of Han Bochor named his son Joseph and that Han Bochor named his first son Moshe. These two factors satisfy me that the finding is correct. Han Bochor had two other sons: David and Salomon. Salomon was a silk merchant. We know the names of 489 of their descendants. Source for Interview: Bella Saltiel Capon

4) Haim Saltiel was born *ca.* 1815, and he was the father of Salomon Saltiel. This has been deduced from the family records of Serge Saltiel, whose grandfather, Haim Bokhor, would have been named after Salomon's father. Salomon had at least two sons: Haim Bokhor "Victor" Saltiel and Sabetai Saltiel. The link between the families appears to be a correct finding as Haim Bokhor named his first son Salomon Bokhor. Sabetai had five children: Salomon, Abraham, Josef, Oro and Bonita "Binuta". Haim Bokhor also had five children: Salomon Bokhor, Moshe, Raphael Shabetai, Binuta and Mazaltov. We know the names of 176 of his descendants.

5) Yehuda Saltiel, born *ca.* 1800, is believed to have had two sons, Moshe and Josef. Moshe also had two sons: Isaac Saltiel Hadji and Leon "Yehuda" Saltiel. There is no known offspring of his brother Josef, but he may be identical with another Josef, born 1835, who married Esther Behar and had two sons named Juda and Moshe. We know the names of 188 of their descendants. Sources: Lucie Benozillo, Yifat & Meier Shaltiel, Dr. Yoseph Shaaltiel (Family Book entry 277).

6) Saltiel Saltiel born *ca.* 1840 is only known through his son Samuel. Source: family history of Santiago Saltiel of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Santiago stated that his grandfather's name was Samuel Saltiel ben Saltiel. We know the names of 28 of his descendants

7) Sabetai Saltiel, born *ca.* 1845, was the father of Moise Saltiel, who married twice. His first marriage was with Maria Esquenazy, with whom he immigrated to Cuba from Salonika. The two sons of his first marriage were Salvator (Sabetai) and Enrique (Aron). At an elderly

age, Moise immigrated to Greece, married a young woman with whom he had two more children, whose names are unknown. We know the names of 30 of his descendants.

8) Jacob Bechor Saltiel of Bulgaria lived from 1860-1940. He married Mazal and had six children: Adela, Salomon, Abraham, Yaakov, Shmuel and Reyna. We know the names of 36 of their descendants. Source: Shlomo and Oprah Shaltiel from Israel.

9) Abraham Saltiel of Sofia, Bulgaria, presumably lived between *ca.* 1845-1930. He was a gabai in the synagogue of Pirot in Yugoslavia. This is on the border of Bulgaria, not far from Sofia. The family probably arrived there from Salonika though Bosnia. Abraham married Tamara and later their teenage nanny, Mazal. His wife Tamar, while sick, asked her husband to marry Mazal after she died. He did so, and named his first daughter with Mazal after his first wife Tamara. Their first son was Benjamin. Two other sons were Solomon and Moshe. Moshe died young, Benjamin and Solomon both immigrated to Israel in the early 1920s like their older half-brother Meshulam had also done before them. Benjamin had a store in Tel Aviv, Hashuk street no. 36, for shoes and related items.

They married and raised their families in Israel. There were two children of the first marriage of Abraham: Meshulam Bochor Menashe Saltiel born *ca.* 1870, and a younger brother Yosef Saltiel, of whom we have information from his grandson, Solomon Mois, who lives in Sofia, Bulgaria. We know the names of 123 of his descendants.

10) Benjamin Jochanan Saltiel was born *ca.* 1875. He had a son David, who married Binuta Jackuel. We know the names of 25 of his descendants. Source: Leon Saltiel

11) Haim Saltiel was born *ca.* 1852, he had three sons, only two names are remembered. Their sister married Mr. Aronis. The two brothers, Judah and Jacob, were salesmen of whole produce in Salonika. Jacob married Flor Saragussa and had a son, Joseph. The names of Judah's two daughters are not remembered. Source: Flor Saltiel.

Dear Vibeke,
Yosef S., the laundry owner, as you must know, was my great-grandfather; Maurice was my late father's first cousin. I had an error in naming his wife. I have since discovered the names of his two wives. None of them was Gatengio, as I had previously thought. The same is true with Yehudah, who was my great uncle. His descendants are all known to me. A new one was a Leon who showed up in Salonika. The second Leon is also a cousin (first) of my father and Maurice. The Calamaros are of the same branch. Shemtov is not only *not* a rare name - it is the most common name in the family. I wrote and talked about it. You may have heard it in the version of Sinto. It is so much a Shaltiel name that Prof. Mina Rozen thought for a long time that it was a version of Saltiel. Every Salonika branch has a Sinto, which, by the way, is the same as Yom-Tov (Shem-Tov and Yom Tov were interchangeable in Spain). Some of your theories are well thought out and are, in fact, correct. Be VERY careful in regard to Salonika, we are all related within three to four generations, that is why the names are so similar. You must review dates, generations and check with the living relatives.

Love, Moshe.

Sometimes you just don't know what you are getting into. At our last reunion at Montpellier, we resolved that the Family would take over the award-winning website developed by Steve Saltiel in Chicago between 1997 and 2003 and make it the principal way for the Shealtiels to keep up. This was not the least to take away from our top-end Gazette, which continues to do our heavy lifting—now on the web. It is more that the Internet slashes the cost of contact, compared to hard-copy printing and mailing. What's more, many in the family were asking for something less formal.



On our return to our various homes around the world, the newly elected committee threw itself into its self-appointed task with every kind of enthusiasm. As I look back, I feel so sorry for Philippe who had to withstand torrents of emails over the next few weeks. But our fervour bore fruit: we got up a new home-page and published reminiscences and photos of Montpellier, minutes of the formal meeting and our Articles of Association in English and French. Then—it must have been September 2003 or so—we paused.

Our breather came to a summary conclusion when in November 2003 we heard catastrophic news: the firm hosting our files would no longer support us. Steve tells me that some of the companies he was dealing with have changed ownership several times; as I write you can still see a ghostly shadow of the site as at 2000 at <http://homepage.interaccess.com/~ssalt/home.html>, but I have no idea how long that will stay up.



All of this meant we had to rebuild the site using copies Steve had been smart enough to

hang on to. But it was an out-and-out nightmare and took much of the last quarter of 2003—indeed we were still at the finishing touches as late as May 2004. Eventually we got up all the old features—the much-loved forum/post-box and photo gallery; and some new ones—password-protection and payment facilities—though at that point we had no use for them.

For much of 2004 I was under water with a start-up business and consequent lawsuits and my

The view from Gloucester Square

eye fell off the ball. Little happened for many months as we tried and failed to recruit a part-time specialist to help us out. All we needed was a few hours a month, but it was impossible to find the right person for nearly a year. At last we found Susan Holmes, who is associated with the company providing hosting for us: she has done us sterling service since March 2005.

First we had a vast catch-up. In going through the site, we found that inconsistencies had snuck in. We also realised that the family had a treasure trove which ought to get onto the web, principally archives of Gazettes and Vibeke's encyclopaedic and loving family book. Animated maps of the family's history were put up to give a visual sense of our three-thousand year journey.



We introduced a routine of monthly updates, for example, family announcements; and upgrades, password-protection for family addresses and financial pages; and—as preparations for the great event took off—a Jerusalem Reunion section in six languages: Dutch, English, French, Hebrew, Portuguese and Spanish (we needed lots of help translating; thanks to

all concerned). As 2005 progressed, Susan let us in on technical upgrades her firm was working on and we brought in some of them one by one. They include an email newsletter which enables us to test the family's interest in one, or another part of the site; and a menu bar to ease navigation through content by now up tenfold. The menu bar was such a success that we decided to go for a complete redesign. First we consulted throughout the family and then we put the new site up in parallel with the existing one. Finally in late February 2006, we kicked off to many compliments from the family. Thanks to all of you for these.



The family's website has come a long way since Montpellier '03. Then it had some sixty pages and occupied about 4MB of storage. Now it has around one thousand pages and occupies around 90MB. In addition, it has links to publishers of books about or by the family, the English College of Arms, Israeli tourist attractions, not to mention a website of an English aristocrat who approached us to ask about his own Jewish links. It has animation, password-protection, links to radio programmes and arrangements for e-commerce..

The most humbling part of all of this has been the stats on feedback. Of course the family is interested in the dramatic themes of our history—the Davidic claim, the *Haggadah*; and the remarkable events of our recent past—our spectacular triennial reunions. But what folks click onto most of all is photos—and Jerusalem '06. So please send in more pictures, or whatever else you want to share—after all, it's your website.

Miles Saltiel

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