

Tefilla Notebook

18 Av • Eikev

August 4-5, 2023

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

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Dear Members and Friends,

I doubt you will have ever heard of Ewen Edward Samuel Montagu. He was born in 1901 into an illustrious British Jewish family, as the second son of Louis Montagu, 2nd Baron Swaythling (1869-1927). Ewen's grandfather, Samuel Montagu, the 1st Baron Swaythling (1832-1911), was a prominent banker, philanthropist, and politician – but he is best remembered as a devout

Orthodox Jew who nevertheless rose through the ranks of British society, and established himself as an influential figure in the world of international finance and politics. He was deeply involved in Jewish community affairs, and was particularly passionate about helping Jewish immigrants – a role that saw him found the Federation of Synagogues, an organization that built and maintained synagogues and associated religious services for Jewish immigrants in London.

His grandson, Ewen, was cut from a different cloth. Educated at Westminster School in London, and Trinity College, Cambridge, he pursued a career in law, becoming a barrister in 1924 – and was elevated to the rank of King's Counsel in 1935. But Ewen really came into his own during World War II, serving in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve, where he worked in the Naval Intelligence Division. His keen intellect and boundless creativity proved critical; it was in this role that Ewen developed and executed one of the most effective deceptions of the war, known as Operation Mincemeat.

Ewen later described this audacious operation in his 1953 book *The Man Who Never Was*; and Operation Mincemeat has also inspired two blockbuster movies, the most recent in 2021 starring Colin Firth and Jason Isaacs. The strategy Ewen came up with involved deceiving the Nazis into thinking the Allies were planning to invade Southern Europe through Greece and Sardinia, rather than Sicily, which was the actual point of invasion. The plan was carried out by dressing up a corpse in the uniform of a British army officer and releasing the body off the coast of Spain in late April 1943, where it would inevitably be discovered.

Ewen and his colleagues concocted an entire backstory for the corpse, down to the most trivial details, so that the ruse would be believed. The dead man was supposedly Captain (Acting Major) William Martin of the Royal Marines who had drowned in the Mediterranean, but in reality, the corpse was Glyndwr Michael, a homeless man from London who had died after eating rat poison. And along with the elaborate range of personal effects that Ewen's team had planted on the body, the dead man also possessed false operational plans for the invasion of Southern Europe, information that was later passed onto the Germans by Nazi sympathizers, until it made its way up the chain of command, ultimately reaching Hitler himself.

This story is truly stranger than fiction, particularly when you realize it was the tiny details that convinced the Nazis and their collaborators that Captain Martin was real – a photograph of his fiancée Pam, love letters, the receipt for a diamond engagement ring from a West End jeweler, letters from his father, small change in coins, and an overdraft repayment demand from his bank. To guarantee that the letters and the documents would still be readable after exposure to seawater, Ewen enlisted the help of MI5 scientists, tasking them with conducting experiments on various inks to determine which would withstand submersion in water the longest.

Operation Mincemeat worked like a dream. Hitler informed Mussolini that Greece, Sardinia, and Corsica had to be defended "at all costs," asserting

that German troops were best suited for the task. By the end of June 1943, the number of German soldiers stationed on Sardinia had surged to 10,000, along with dozens of fighter planes and naval vessels – German torpedo boats were shifted from Sicily to the Greek islands as part of the preparations.

On July 9th the Allies initiated Operation Husky and invaded Sicily. The deceit had been so effective that even after the Allies troops had invaded, the Nazi leadership paid them little attention and twenty-one German aircraft were dispatched from Sicily to bolster Sardinia's defenses. For a significant period after the Allies had landed in Sicily, Hitler remained convinced that Sardinia was the real point of invasion, and in late July he dispatched General Rommel to Salonika to take command and fortify the area. And by the time that German high command recognized their miscalculation, it was already too late to alter the course of events.

I read Ewen Montagu's book many years ago – long before I was aware of his connection with his illustrious grandfather. What struck me then, as I read through Ewen's account of Operation Mincemeat, was how important it was for the operations team to think through, and address, every detail of the persona they were creating, so that the false information they planted on the corpse would never be doubted by those who found him. Even the smallest mistake would have scuttled the entire plan – and Ewen was acutely aware of this throughout the planning. Interestingly, this idea of little details being important is central to the Jewish faith – as exemplified by a Midrash on the word that gives Parshat Eikev its name – "eikev."

The word "eikev" is translated into English as "if" or "because." The first verse of the portion reads: וְהָיָה עֵקֶב תִּשְׁמְעוּן אֶת הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים הָאֵלֶּה – "And it will be, if/because you listen to these laws, and keep them and do them, that God will keep the covenant for you." But "eikev" is an odd word to use in this context; the usual word for "if" or "because" in Hebrew is "im." Midrash Tanchuma explains that the word "eikev" is used here instead of "im" because it has the same root as the word in Hebrew meaning heel, like the heel of your foot – alluding to the kinds of Jewish faith obligations people might ignore or minimize, such as things you would crush underfoot because you consider them inconsequential.

But little details are not inconsequential at all. Observing seemingly minor mitzvot makes all the difference, and ignoring them may be the worst mistake you can make. Just as in Operation Mincemeat, where seemingly minor elements played such a significant role, those who take their faith seriously have to realize that observing so-called lesser mitzvot could make all the difference between maintaining or breaking their covenant with God. For Ewen Montagu and his team, the minor details were instrumental in selling the deception to the enemy, and for us the minor details are instrumental in convincing God that we take our relationship with him seriously.

Reflecting now, so many years after first encountering the Operation Mincemeat story, I wonder whether Ewen Montagu was cognizant of this Midrash when he meticulously attended to the minutest details of the dead Captain Martin deception – channeling the concept that it is exactly those details one would ordinarily disregard which are the linchpin of success. And we can also learn this lesson, namely that taking seriously those aspects of our faith we tend to overlook or underappreciate could be the critical key to a meaningful relationship with God, marking the difference between failure and success.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom, and a great week ahead,
Rabbi Pini Dunner



FRIDAY, AUGUST 4

7:33pm CANDLELIGHTING
6:30pm KABBALAT SHABBAT

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5

8:30 am GEMARA SHIUR
9:15 am SHACHARIT
7:15 pm PIRKEI AVOT SHIUR
7:40 pm MINCHA
8:30 pm MAARIV
8:32 pm SHABBAT ENDS

WEEKDAY DAVENING

Sun	8:00am	7:30pm
Mon- Thurs	7:00am	7:30pm
Fri	7:00am	6:30pm

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

Mr. Reinhard Prinz
& Family

Let's Talk Sisterhood

with Gina Raphael & Maryjo Schnitzer

Join us for a special pre-New Year evening of inspiration and challah braiding for teens and women of all ages. Featuring special guest hosts "The Sephardic Spice Girls" and Jewish Children's Author **Sarah Sassoon**.

Sign up now, space is limited.
Thursday August 31st, 5-7pm
Sign up at yinhb.org/challah



Join us for the book launch of Hearts & Minds II on September 7th, in partnership with Wizo, and featuring guest Ruth Wasserman Lande, former MK and News Correspondent.



Join us for Shabbat and Sunday Gourmet Lunches on Rosh Hashana 5784. Sign up now!

Happy Anniversary

Behrouz & Nora Soroudi

THE GREAT COAT CLOSET CLEANOUT OF 2023

Please take all personal possessions out of the coat closet.

Early next week we will send an email with images of all remaining items in the coat closet. Anything that is not claimed by September 11th will be donated.

Yahrtzeits

Eugene Nissel

Yechiel ben HaRav Chaim
Menachem z"l
Father of
Raphy Nissel
Yahrtzeit - 18 Av

Frances Fay Cohen

Faygie bat Zev Wolf a"h
Mother of
Hart Cohen
Yahrtzeit - 19 Av

Denis Spencer

Dovid Tzvi ben Chaim z"l
Father of
Antony Spencer
Yahrtzeit - 19 Av

David Kellerman

David ben Ephraim HaLevi z"l
Father of
Hillel Kellerman
Jonathan Kellerman
Yahrtzeit - 21 Av

STEVEN & VIVIAN DORFMAN KEILIM MIKVAH



The Keilim Mikvah is open for use. You can buzz-in for access via the intercom at the entrance to the garage, during weekday office hours. It is customary to give tzedakah before doing to mitzvah of toveling Keilim.

You can give a donation directly to the keilim mikvah by visiting yinhb.org/keilim

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

LAURELLE WOLFE

JULIE BOYER

DAVID SILVER

JOHN FOGELMAN

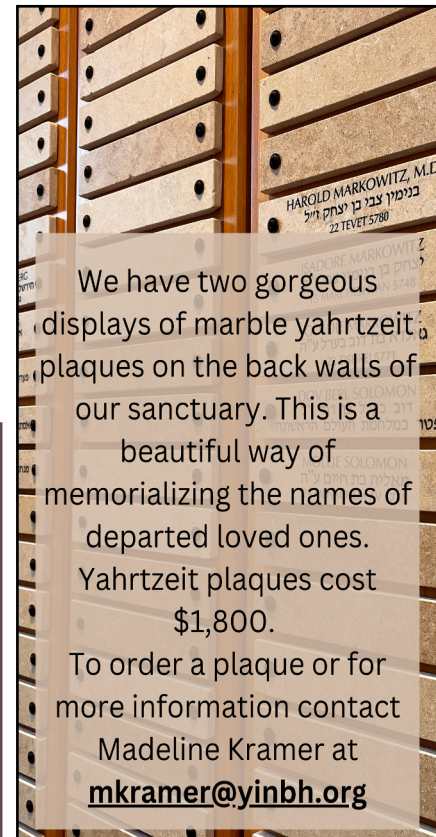
JONATHAN KELLERMAN

REUBEN GRABEL

FARIBA NAIM

CHAVI HERTZ

YOAV SOFER



We have two gorgeous displays of marble yahrtzeit plaques on the back walls of our sanctuary. This is a beautiful way of memorializing the names of departed loved ones. Yahrtzeit plaques cost \$1,800.

To order a plaque or for more information contact Madeline Kramer at mkramer@yinhb.org

Thank You

Susan Graysen for sponsoring next week's Parsha shiur in memory of her husband **William Graysen, Beil ben Moshe z"l**, whose yahrtzeit is on the 25th of Av

Membership Renewal 5784

All current members are invited to renew their membership for the upcoming year 5784. Please visit yinhb.org/renewal. You can also call the office at 310-276-7650 or email office@yinhb.org.

Once you renew your membership, you can...



Reserve your **High Holiday Seats** at yinhb.org/seats. Please Reserve by September 8th.



Order your **Arba Minim** directly from the shul. Please order by September 21st. Order online at yinhb.org/arbaminim



Place names in the **Yizkor Booklet**. Please submit by September 11th. Sign up at yinhb.org/yizkor



Sign up your children or grandchildren for **Youth Group** during High Holiday Services. Sign up at yinhb.org/youth.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS ALREADY
RENEWED THEIR MEMBERSHIP FOR 5784

ROSH HASHANA 5784 LUNCHEONS

SPACE IS LIMITED - SIGN UP NOW



YINBH SISTERHOOD IS PLANNING ROSH HASHANA LUNCHEONS
ON BOTH DAYS OF ROSH HASHANA SHABBAT & SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 16TH & SEPTEMBER 17TH, 2023

\$225 ADULTS
\$150 AGES 10 AND BELOW

www.yinhb.org/RHLunch

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Yinhb Mikvah



HOURS

The Mikvah is open every evening including Shabbat, Yom Tov and Motzei Shabbat.
Kallah appointments also available.
All appointments must be made in advance.

TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

www.yinhb.org/mikvah or Download the MikvahCloud app

YINBH
MIKVAH

OUR LOCATION
9261 Alden Drive
Beverly Hills

CONTACT US
310-299-1792 (Text Only)
www.yinhb.org/mikvah

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Challah Braiding

THURSDAY, AUGUST 31ST
5:00-7:00PM

Challah braiding with inspiration for the new year.
Teens & Women of all ages welcome!
Light Refreshments served.

FEATURING

Sharon Gomperts &
Rachel Emquies Sheff,
The Sephardic Spice Girls

WITH SPECIAL GUEST

Sarah Sassoon,
Author of "Shoham's Bangle"



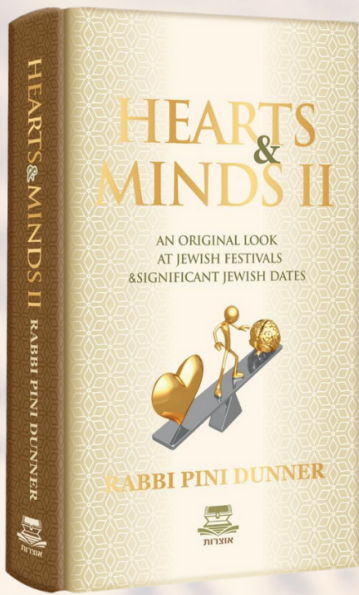
Register at yinhb.org/challah

\$54 per person • \$18 under 25 • Sponsorships start at \$180



SHARSHERET®
The Jewish Breast & Ovarian Cancer Community





Book Launch Party

Thursday,
September 7th 2023

**Ruth
Wasserman
Lande**

Former MK & i24 news commentator

6:30pm

Reception

7:30pm

Book Launch Q&A:
Rabbi Dunner with
Ruth Wasserman Lande
\$54 per person including a
signed copy of Hearts & Minds II

Special Guest



Rabbi Pini Dunner

This event is being graciously sponsored by
Bob Zeller & Nadine Gerson

Find us on Facebook & Instagram

For more information visit
www.yinbh.org/booklaunch



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