



# BULLETIN JERUSALEM ROTARY CLUB

Chartered 1929  
Club #13459 District  
2490

11 March 2020



Club #13459

### **Club Officers 2019-2020**

#### **President**

Robert Hammer

#### **Secretary**

R/ Geert Cohen Stuart

#### **Treasurer**

Eli Kenner

#### **Immediate P/P**

David Seligman

#### **Board Members**

P/P Don Edelstein

P/P Eli Kenner

P/P Ruth Harris

PDG Irène Lewitt

P/E Russ McDougall

R/Mark Mina

R/Dieter Ziulkowski



### *Today's Program* – "Purim 1953 -- The Sudden Collapse of Comrade Iosif Stalin, a Modern-Day Haman"

#### **Moderator**

Rotarian Art/Aaron Braunstein, USFSO (ret.), American Soviet Jewry Activist, 1966-86

#### **Introduction:**

Stalin suffered a stroke on Mach 1, 1953, during Purim, and died shortly thereafter.

### **Upcoming Events**

18 March, 2020, tba

In the few years before, he had launched a series of antisemitic show trials and executions, e.g. members of the war-time Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, Soviet Jewish writers, etc. The Communist leaders of Czechoslovakia and Hungary followed suit against "Imperialists" and "Zionists". Such preparations coincided with the infamous "Doctors' Plot" in the Soviet Union. Within an increasingly antisemitic atmosphere many Jews lived in fear. Some historians write that Stalin's plan was to initiate massive deportations of Jews to "save" them from secretly orchestrated pogroms.

Jews and the world were thus saved from a modern-day Haman on Purim 1953. Stalin's death was the first of a series of earthquakes to rock the USSR and its Eastern-European satellites leading to the eventual collapse of the "Evil Empire" (speech by Pres. Reagan, March 8, 1983, a week after Purim that year !).

**Brief Video Statements about Purim 1953** [15 min running time]:

- Natan Sharansky, former Soviet Prisoner of Zion -- recorded when he was Chairman of the Jewish Agency
- Rabbi Yosef Medelevitch, participant in the "Leningrad Hijack Plot" (1970), former Soviet Prisoner of Zion
- Andre Libbik from Hungary (recorded in Budapest)
- Yeshayahu Nir, former Cultural Director of Hashomer Hatzair Kibbutz Lehavot Haviva, originally from Slovakia

**Live testimonials:**

- Yosef Begun, former Soviet Prisoner of Zion, who spent many years in Soviet jails and Siberian exile due to his struggle for the affirmation of Jewish identity; Yosef published his Memoirs in Moscow (2019)
- Dr. Dan Roginsky, fellow Zionist activist and former Soviet Prisoner of Zion and currently physicist at the Hebrew University

**Conclusion:**

Larry Pfeffer, historian and video professional, was in Budapest during the planned 1952/3 Hungarian "Zionist" and "Wallenberg" Show Trials. In late 1956, in his early teens, he escaped to the Free World together with some 200,000 other asylum seekers.

- The Communist show trial plans in Hungary
- The Knesset Initiative

**Questions and Answers**

*Foundation Greetings:*

Carry and Louis Polak will be sharing some "bubbly" on March 12 to celebrate their anniversary!

*Foundation Thoughts of the Week:*

Purim is upon us and we read the Megillah. "But there is no point in our ancestors speaking to us unless we know how to listen". (Mortimer J. Adler)

Purim donations to the Foundation can be made in or out of costume!



# The President's Corner

Save the Date:

The Jerusalem Rotary Club's annual presidential changeover will be held on Wednesday evening, 24 June 2020, 1900 hrs, at the Beit Shmuel Courtyard, Shama'a Street 6, Jerusalem.

Be there, as we hand over the gavel to P/E Dieter Ziulkowski, our president for Rotary year 2020-2021. Be sure to invite family and friends, to this, our premier social event of the year

Robert Hammer



## International Toast – Rotary Club of Florence, South Carolina

Three historical events that happened on the day of our Rotary meeting on 11 March:

**1744** English auction house Sotheby's holds its first ever auction (of books) in London. Sotheby's is a British-founded American multinational corporation headquartered in New York City. One of the world's largest brokers of fine and decorative art, jewelry, real estate, and collectibles, Sotheby's operation is divided into three segments: auction, finance, and dealer. The company's services range from corporate art services to private sales. It is named after one of its cofounders, John Sotheby. Sotheby's was established on 11 March 1744 in London. The American holding company was initially incorporated in August 1983 in Michigan. In June 2006, Sotheby's Holdings, Inc. reincorporated in the State of Delaware and was renamed Sotheby's. In July 2016, Chinese insurance company Taikang Life became Sotheby's largest shareholder.<sup>1</sup> Sotheby's maintains a significant presence in the UK, and its UK operation is headed by Lord Dalmeny. In June 2019, Sotheby's announced that it was being acquired by French-Israeli businessman Patrick Drahi at a 61% market premium.



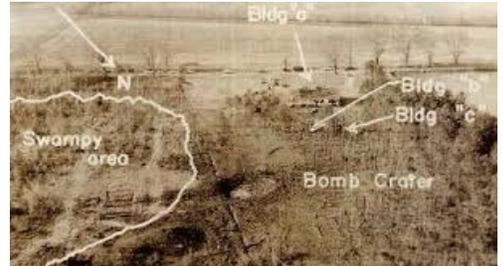
Sotheby's auction



Flagstaff war



Mars Bluff crater hole and location



**1845** The Flagstaff War: In New Zealand, Chiefs Hone Heke and Kawiti lead 700 Māoris to chop down the British flagpole and drive settlers out of the British colonial settlement of Kororareka because of breaches of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi. The Flagstaff War, also known as Heke's War, Hōne Heke's Rebellion and the Northern War, was fought between 11 March 1845 and 11 January 1846 in and around the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. The conflict is best remembered for the actions of Hōne Heke who challenged the authority of the British by cutting down the flagstaff on Flagstaff Hill (Maiki Hill) at Kororāreka, now Russell. The flagstaff had been a gift from Hōne Heke to James Busby, the first British Resident.

**1958** American B-47 accidentally drops nuclear bomb 15,000 ft on a family home in Mars Bluff, South Carolina; creates crater 75 ft across, bomb without its nuclear capsule. On March 11, 1958 a U.S. Air Force B-47 Stratojet

with a nuclear payload left for nuclear training exercises for war preparations in the United Kingdom and South Africa. The navigator mistakenly pulled the emergency release pin which resulted in the bomb falling out of the plane. Although the bomb was not armed with the trigger (a removable capsule of fissionable material which was securely stored in a containment area on board the plane), it nevertheless contained a high-explosive detonator. The resulting explosion created a crater estimated to be 75 feet (23 m) wide and 25–35 feet (7.6–10.7 m) deep. It destroyed a local playhouse, near the residence of Walter Gregg, and leveled nearby trees. Nobody was killed by the blast but several people in Gregg's family were injured.

This week we are toasting the Rotary Club of Florence, South Carolina on their 're-birth', unimaginable, if the bomb would have been armed! The RC of Florence is celebrating 100 years, being chartered in 1920. Congratulations.

Dieter Ziulkowski



### *Some other news*

Past President David Seligman presenting the 'vote of thanks' to last week's speaker Jon Immanuel:



### *One of our projects, past and present*

From the Rotary Year 2015 - 2016:

**Beth David Institute Center for the Deaf-Blind** A contribution to help fund a mentoring program for students at the Kiach School for the Deaf who suffer from Usher's Syndrome. This is a congenital condition which includes deafness and a progressive loss of sight, that occurs in children whose parents are close cousins.



**The Jerusalem Rotary Club meets every Wednesday at 1 p.m. (13.00) at the Jerusalem International YMCA on King David Street. On the last Wednesday of every month it meets in the evening at 7 p.m. (19.00). NIS75 covers lunch/dinner, the Rotary program and a presentation by selected speakers. Kosher meals can be ordered until 90 minutes before the start of the meeting, by sending a message to our secretary 054-4295680. Visiting Rotarians and visitors are welcome.**