

HARRY AND HARRY'S NEWEST EXPLOIT

Bringing Kosher Shechitah to the Wilds of Boro Park

Harry and Harry, the irrepressible traveling duo, thought they'd seen it all. But nothing compared to their latest trip.

We stood there rubbing our eyes in disbelief. It had taken a while to arrive, what with security asking suspicious questions about the rusty *shechitah* knives in our suitcases (which they mistakenly assumed to be box cutters), the vacuum-packed pastrami we'd taken for the long hungry days ahead in the foreign territory of Boro Park, and the *argaman* dye kits Harry Greenspoon had packed for his Purim costume. Finally, after we promised to bring back some coleslaw for the hungry guards, they let us through.

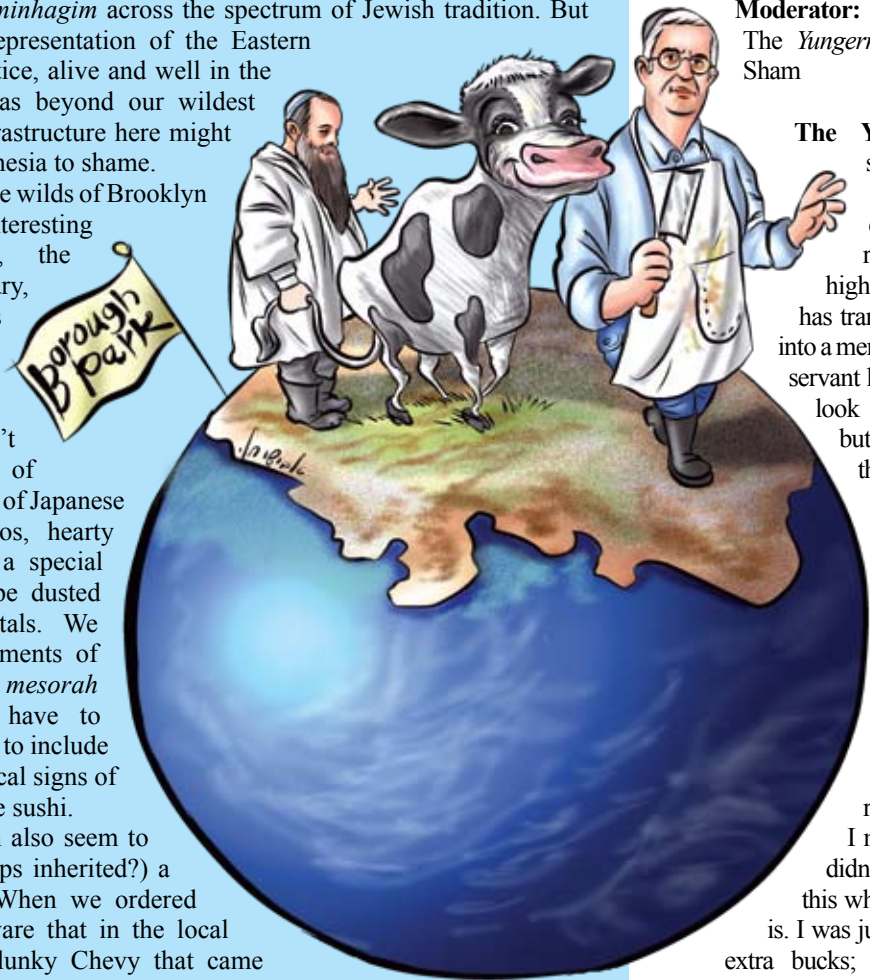
There in the middle of the modern metropolis, at the greatest cultural crossroads of all time, we were astonished to find a vestige of the storied Eastern European culture of old. We couldn't believe it; this would certainly top our list of exotic communities. Ever since we'd taken up the study of *shechitah*, we'd been exposed to many of the different *minhagim* across the spectrum of Jewish tradition. But to find such a vibrant representation of the Eastern European traditional practice, alive and well in the Northern Hemisphere, was beyond our wildest dreams. The religious infrastructure here might even put the Jews of Indonesia to shame.

Our initial foray into the wilds of Brooklyn resulted in some really interesting discoveries. Apparently, the Jews of Poland, Hungary, and Russia were not as isolated as the history books describe. The menu of their descendants, who claim that they haven't abandoned a single tenet of "the *alter heim*," is a blend of Japanese sushi, Italian frappuccinos, hearty Hungarian goulash, and a special cookie in a bow-tie shape dusted with coarse sugar crystals. We intend to incorporate elements of this potpourri in our next *mesorah* dinner, but first we'll have to amend the source material to include references to the astrological signs of Adar, a sure allusion to the sushi.

The Jews of Brooklyn also seem to have developed (or perhaps inherited?) a vehicular caste system. When we ordered a "car," we were not aware that in the local parlance, this meant a clunky Chevy that came along with Igor, a surly driver of Ukrainian extraction.

For reasons we are still trying to decipher, the most elite vehicles seem to be big, black SUVs with red lights on top. These vehicles have parking rights anywhere and have permission to ignore traffic lights.

The Jews were fascinated when we offered to demonstrate *shechitah* to them. They seemed to know very little about the process and were under the impression that *shechitah* was a pastime reserved for Jews in Argentina. A sizable crowd gathered around our makeshift abattoir in the Gravesend Park on Eighteenth Avenue. It was going really well, until we were interrupted by a coterie of tough-looking men wearing Shomrim uniforms. "We thought we smelled blood," they said. ■



AN EXCLUSIVE ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The Generation's Most Pressing Problem: Pesach Hotels

It might be termed the silent killer of Judaism today. It's a seductive scourge, luring our best and brightest away from the bastions of *frumkeit* with its dazzling allure. Can it be countered? *Mishpacha* gathers some of the brightest minds for a penetrating discussion of the Pesach hotel

Panelists:

Chef Marco Rosso
Brachie Lehrfeld
Max Kirschman
Eli Korman

Moderator:

The *Yungerman* Whose Life Is a Sham

The Yungerman: It's no secret by now that our impressionable young children have been repeatedly exposed to a highly potent catalyst that has transformed their *frumkeit* into a mere shell. As your humble servant has observed, they may look *frum* and act *frum*, but deep inside the only thing they care about is whether they will be going to a luxurious Pesach hotel, and if so, which one. What are the reasons for this decline?

Chef Rosso: It's the ribs, my friend. Though in truth (wait, did I roll my rr's enough?), perhaps I made a mistake there. I didn't realize how serious this whole Pesach thing really is. I was just looking for a couple extra bucks; I really didn't mean to disenfranchise a whole generation of Jewish children. And I really didn't mean to land anyone in the hospital—or to pay their bills. Maybe lighten up a little?

Brachie Lehrfeld: What? What did you say? Sorry, let me just hang up the phone. I saw the *cutest* ad for a Pesach hotel and I was thinking that, you know, it's just not so easy for all of us to figure out how to beat the egg whites for the Pesach cakes. I mean, cucumbers I can probably cut okay,

and tomorrow my mother is going to teach me how to drain tuna. But I could totally hear that some people, like, have a hard time with the cooking, you know? And also, on Pesach we need to focus on inspiring the kids. Rebbetzin Berlinger taught us this *amazing* lesson about the power of the Pesach Seder. Imagine! You have these young minds, and this amazing opportunity to give over the most important lessons... why spend all your time draining tuna and stuff when you can be *inspiring* people?

Max Kirschman: Look, maybe you don't realize that the most important thing is for the family to be together. I know what you think, that I'm old and out of touch. But let an old man say his piece. You think that you gain by keeping the family home for Yom Tov? Doesn't Suri work hard enough? She needs to start making Pesach too? If I know my son-in-law Yosef, I know that he has some idyllic ideas about sitting at his own table, maybe with a couple of strange characters he calls guests. But I've been around a little longer, and I know a thing or two about Pesach. Pesach means tradition. It means that the whole family stays together, in one hotel, and sits at one big table served by the same waiters. Okay, so stay home if you want. Give me a heart attack. Who cares about me? I'm just an old grandfather who doesn't know anything.

Eli Korman: Are you saying I'm not a good father? I spend so much quality time with my kids; I really know how to give them a good time. And you have to remember, these hoteliers also can make a buck sometimes. It's not us and them, you know? We are them. Plus we all have to learn how to enjoy the little things a little more, you know what I mean? Life's not so *serious*. Chill a little, try to enjoy life. ■

THE STUFF OF LEGENDS

An Exclusive Interview by Yisroel Besser

Though his 180th birthday is soon approaching, Rav Feivelson, a great man in his own right, still clearly remembers the luminaries of yesteryear, who illuminated the darkest of times with words of succor and encouragement.

Long ago, there was a land. A land of dizzying opportunity, of crumbling borders, where everything sacred and familiar was viewed through new eyes—eyes that sought pleasure and thrills, retaining little regard for the traditions of old.

Yet, even in the land of golden opportunity a group of dedicated men spent days and nights hunched together on unforgiving benches, sheltered from the threatening winds of change by the pursuit that united them. And there, on the foreign soil, so distant from the *varme shtetls* they had known as children, they found a new source of life, a source of knowledge and wisdom that satiated their endless thirst.

They found Rav Feivelson.

He was a bastion of wisdom in the foreign, smoky atmosphere that marked their exile. He was a courageous leader in an era where leadership was weak, at best. He was a brilliant and proud teacher, a visionary who could inspire and encourage and educate with the slightest nod of his head or twist of his tongue.

It is Rav Feivelson that I have come today to visit.

As I step inside the home of Rav Feivelson, I hesitate. Will he answer my questions? Will he share the treasures amassed inside his vast storehouse of memories? Will he bring me into the world he knew, the streets he walked, the landscapes of eras gone by? His first sentence gives me the answer.

"Do you want to come with me to the *shtiebel*?"

Indeed, I do. How could I not grab this chance to accompany a scion of chassidic royalty, intimate of Lithuanian greatness, schooled in the mysticism of Sephardic *chachamim*, close follower of the German *mesorah*, a great man in his own right? And yet he constantly brings the conversation back to the great men he knew, who still live on in his heart and mind, who color his world—a world of computers, of instant communications, of cell phones and iPads—with the purity and holiness of simpler times.

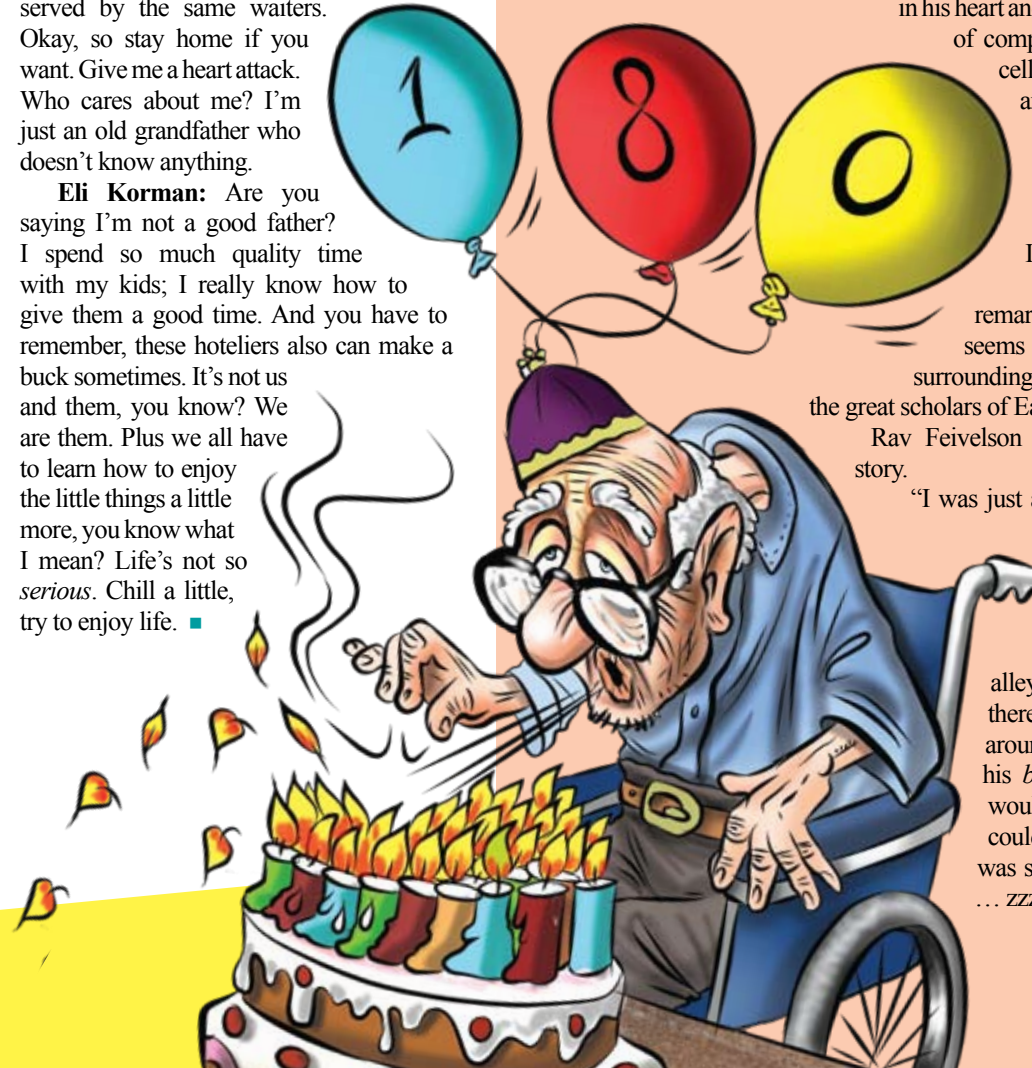
Though he is fast approaching his 180th year, Rav Feivelson's firsthand memories of Rashi and the Rambam are as clear as ever. It is those memories I have come to hear.

I begin our interview by casually remarking that the name Feivelson seems curiously out-of-place in our urban surroundings. Indeed, it is a name reminiscent of the great scholars of Eastern Europe.

Rav Feivelson nods sagely and shares a beautiful story.

"I was just a youngster," Rav Feivelson recounts with surprising clarity. "My parents, with tremendous self-sacrifice, sent me to learn with the great men of the generation.

As I was walking along the narrow alleyways of Troyes, tired and bewildered, there he was... Rashi. He put his arm around my shoulder and invited me into his *beis medrash*, where I knew my life would never be the same, even though I couldn't understand a word because he was speaking in Old French. And just then... zzzzz..." Strong words. ■



AHARON GRANEVICH-GRANOT Has a Quiet Day

by Yocheved Lavon

“All my life I’ve heard of people having quiet days, but I never dreamed it would happen to me!” says **Mishpacha’s** intrepid reporter.

Granevich-Granot reports that the day began with Shacharis in the neighborhood shul followed by a typical Israeli breakfast of bread, salad, and an omelet. “I saw an alley cat, and the garbage truck came around. No shooting,” he says. He then drove to his office at **Mishpacha’s** Jerusalem headquarters with normal levels of traffic. The electric kettle in the kitchenette worked with no flying sparks, and he had a couple of cups of instant coffee with sugar and milk. No attempt was made to substitute anthrax powder for the sugar.

“I sat down for a normal day’s work. I wrote an article about flying to the US and how my life was threatened by terrorists on the way; I wrote about how they didn’t want to let me through passport control at JFK because they thought I was a terrorist; I wrote an article about staying in Brooklyn for a week, and all the harrowing experiences I had trying to get a falafel; I wrote an article about my speaking engagement in the US, which nearly cost me my life. I kept at it until I’d met all my deadlines.”

Five articles later, he noticed the odd quiet around him. Looking for adventure, he set out to the bank. “In the line for the ATM I saw a typical-looking Yerushalmi fellow. I struck up a conversation, and found out he was a typical Yerushalmi. Then I took out some cash. No shooting.”

That evening he drove home, where his wife permitted him to cross the threshold with no security clearance. Supper consisted of pita with cheese and olives. “I enjoyed a quiet conversation with my wife while the children slept peacefully. No shooting.”

Was Granevich-Granot disappointed by the uneventful day? Not at all. “It was an awesome experience,” he says. “I’m going to write five articles about it tomorrow.” ■

THE TRAVELING MASMIDIM

On the road with a Rav Chaim and a blindfold

They’re the newest outreach sensation: a group of boys who really had no idea how much they could accomplish, simply by sharing the principles that safeguard their own spirituality.

“I thought I had all the answers,” says Chaim Ozer Kleinerman. “I thought I knew what *frumkeit* was all about.”

Then, on a plane ride back to Brooklyn for his nephew’s *upsheren*, in the midst of a really *geshmakeh* winter *zman* in the Ir HaKodesh, Chaim Ozer got the lesson of a lifetime.

“I found *ah gitte plantz* for my hat box in the overhead bin, settled myself in my seat with and a *fehste* deli sandwich, took out my Rav Chaim so I could *chap* some more *kedushah* before facing all the *chitzoiniyus* of America, and asked the stewardess to give me a blindfold, so my eyes wouldn’t get ruined by the *treife* films they show. I didn’t realize that my seatmate was watching the whole thing, and I had no idea how much inspiration he was drawing from all these *zachen* that seemed so ordinary to me.

“He was especially fascinated by the blindfold. He wanted to know how they make it, where it comes from, how often I wear it. I mean, I know all the *ikrei emunah*, and this *zman’s sugya* I know cold. But who would have dreamed that the blindfold would turn someone on to *emunah*?”

Chaim Ozer kindly allowed his seatmate to try on the blindfold. It was amazing, he reports, seeing what a bond he was able to establish just by sharing his concern for his spiritual wellbeing.

Now Chaim Ozer has formed a group that’s bringing his message to the masses. At a moment’s notice, they’re ready to pack up their seforim and head out to the boondocks, to share the beauty of the blindfold with their brethren.

“We call ourselves the Traveling Masmidim,” he says. “Wherever people call us, we pack up and go. We’ve brought so much inspiration to Jews across the world. It’s amazing how the simple blindfold breaks barriers.”

Oh, and they also bring beer. “We read in an article somewhere that it’s a *shtarke segulah* for *kiruv* experts to open beer for unaffiliated Jews,” Chaim Ozer concludes. ■

Coming Next Week!

YOUTH AT BRISK

Veteran mechanchim and prominent experts reveal that learning will keep people on the derech by Shimmy Blum

KOSHER 'N TIRED

- Easy-way-out dinners for exhausted mothers
- 7 variations on the peanut butter sandwich
- Cholent every night! Leftovers take on new appeal
- Who said takeout is a copout?

