

The First Certified Mohel In Las Vegas



Another milestone in the growth of the Jewish Community of Las Vegas has been reached, the presence of the first Certified Mohel in Las Vegas.

Dr. LeRoy Bernstein, a pediatrician who arrived in Las Vegas in June, 1982, has received Smicha (certification) as a Mohel under the auspices of the Rabbinic Council of Los Angeles. The council convened a Bet Din (House of Judgement) of three rabbis who reviewed Dr. Bernstein's qualifications for performance of this sacred ritual.

During the past year, Dr. Bernstein received training in the ritual and laws of Brit Milah from Rev. Samuel Zadok, an Israeli Mohel now practicing in Los Angeles; Rev. Zadok has stated that Dr. Bernstein is now "qualified in every way to perform a ritual Bris".

Dr. Bernstein, who has performed "literally scores" of medical circumcisions, concurs with generally accepted Rabbinic opinion that a medical circumcision performed on a Jewish baby is not in any way the equivalent of a ritual Bris, and does not fulfill the commandment of Brit Milah with which the child enters into the covenant of Abraham as prescribed by Jewish law. It is the religious ceremony that must accompany the surgical procedure that together are of prime importance. Jewish law also provides for the situation wherein a Jewish male, child or adult, who has been circumcised without benefit of the accompanying religious ceremony, can be brought into the Covenant of Abraham by a special religious ritual, showing that the circumcision alone was not sufficient.

The ritual traditionally dates back some 4,000 years, when God commanded our patriarch Abraham to accept the covenant of holiness, and circumcision was to be the outward sign that Abraham, and his posterity, was ready to comply.

The law regarding Brit Milah is mentioned in the Torah in each of the first three books of the Bible.

Brit Milah is regarded as one of the basic rites of and a symbol of allegiance to Judaism. There is no Jewish institution that has been preserved and practiced more faithfully than Brit Milah. During the most adverse times in Jewish history, when Jews were deprived of all religious rights, and when tyrants sought to destroy the very roots of Jewish heritage by depriving them of practicing the basic precepts of Jewish faith, Jews still clung most tenaciously to their practice of Brit Milah.

The time-honored technique, combining spiritual and surgical skill, has in no way deteriorated, but has only improved, medical and surgical skills have kept pace with modern technical and hygienic advances, and is a far cry from the days of Abraham and Moses when circumcision was performed with sharp stones. And yet, Brit Milah remains to this day in strict accor-

dance with the laws set down in the Torah.

The modern mohel is trained in Jewish tradition and in the surgical techniques. Dr. Bernstein, of course, as a physician has had the knowledge of surgical and hygienic techniques that are so important to insure safety and rapid healing. His recent training by Rev. Zadok regarding the specifics of the religious traditions of Brit Milah added to his already profound commitment to Jewish traditions and his knowledge of Judaism.

Dr. Bernstein, a native of Denver, Colorado,

Librarian Who Salvaged Jewish Books From Nazis Dies At Age 87

JERUSALEM — Shlomo Shumani, one of Israel's most distinguished librarians and bibliographers, died yesterday in Jerusalem at age 87.

Mr. Shumani, who also was an author and educator, served for 40 years, until 1961, on the staff of the Jewish National and University Library at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

He made tireless efforts to salvage cultural treasures, mainly books, of the Jewish communities in Europe that were overrun by the Nazis. In 1946, the library sent him to Europe to arrange for the transfer to Jerusalem of a portion of the so-called Alfred Rosenberg collection. Rosenberg, the notorious Nazi propagandist, had established a giant library of Jewish books to be used for propaganda purposes. Shumani succeeded in bringing a total of some 400,000 books to Israel from Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Poland.

In 1947, Shumani was

Neo-Nazi Is Formally Charged With Murder of Jewish Publisher

BON (WNS) — Karl Heinz Hoffmann, the jailed head of the outlawed neo-Nazi group which had masqueraded as a sports club, has been charged in Nuremberg with the 1980 murder of the Jewish publisher Shlomo Levin and his German friend, Frida Poeschke.

According to the indictment filed by state prosecutors, Hoffmann, 46, is also charged with recruiting youths to fight alongside the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon, the use of intimidation, production of forged currency and threats against local law enforcement officials.

Hoffmann has been imprisoned since July, 1981 for his right wing activities, including offenses perpetrated abroad. He was accused

also in charge of relations between the Jewish National and University Library and Christian institutions, and was a liaison between the Hebrew University and the Syrian Metropolitan in Jerusalem for the purpose of the Dead Sea scrolls.

Shumani was born in Hungary and arrived in Palestine following his graduation from the Ecole de Bibliothecaires in Paris. In addition to his other activities, he taught bibliography at the Hebrew University Graduate Library School, was chief bibliographer of the Encyclopedia Judaica since 1962, and was a counsellor for the Institute of Hebrew Bibliography in Jerusalem since 1964. In 1971 he helped to organize the Yeshiva University Library in New York City.

Shumani was the author of "Bibliography of Jewish Bibliographies," and editor of the "Lakoreh" (Readers' Aid) and the "Israel Librarians Association Journal."

He is survived by a son and a daughter.

received his early religious training at the Hebrew Educational Alliance Synagogue in Denver. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Colorado with majors in History and Biological Sciences. His post-graduate studies included Electron Microscopy at Colorado State University, and Pharmacology at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

After completion of a tour of duty in the U.S. Navy at the Naval Medical Research Institute in Bethesda, Maryland, Dr. Bernstein attended the George Washington University School of Medicine and received his M.D. degree in 1968. He interned at the University of Michigan Hospital, and received his pediatric training at the Children's Hospital National Medical Center in Washington, D.C. and at the University of Maryland. He was in private pediatric practice in Columbia, Maryland from 1972 until June, 1982 when he relocated his practice to Las Vegas.

Dr. Bernstein's primary vocation is his pediatric practice, caring for infants, children & adolescents, and he views his certification as a Mohel as a means of providing a needed service to the Jewish community of Las Vegas.

Lee, as he is known to his friends, is 44 years old, has been married to his dear wife Charlotte for 14 years, and has two children, Melanie, 11, and Jay, 7. The children attend school at the Hebrew Academy of Las Vegas, where their work has been outstanding, especially Melanie's almost straight "A" average; both are members of the Las Vegas Sandpiper swim team, where in the recent state championship swim meet, Jay finished second in the state in his age group.

Dr. Bernstein's other interests include sports, gardening, and cooking. He has worked with children in many capacities including President of the Liberty Jewish Center Synagogue P.T.A. in Baltimore, Maryland, and as an assistant coach for a Little League Ice Hockey team.

The Bernstein's are members of both Temple Emanu-El and Temple Beth Shalom.

Dr. Bernstein is looking forward to serving the needs of the community as a Mohel. He states that "the operation is as old as Judaism and as young as we keep it alive."

Happy Passover
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