

# Baycrest Funds Update



The Baycrest Centre  
Foundation

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E N D O W M E N T & C O V E N A N T F U N D N E W S

## Rigorous mental exercise may help brain compensate for Alzheimer's

Higher education and rigorous mental activity may be better for you than you think. A growing body of research, which includes work supported by research-designated endowment funds at Baycrest, shows that Alzheimer's patients who have stayed in school longer tend to demonstrate less cognitive decline than those with lower education levels.

"Research shows us that people with higher education levels tend to be more resilient to degenerative brain disorders such as Alzheimer's," says

**Randy McIntosh**, assistant director of **The Rotman Research Institute**.

"Patients who have had a higher education tend to function at a higher level and tend to have fewer behavioural problems," adds **Cheryl Grady**, senior Rotman Research scientist and professor of Psychiatry and Psychology at the University of Toronto. "However, with this benefit comes the risk that the early signs of cognitive loss may be masked, causing some people to delay getting help sooner."

Both scientists point out that this "brain resilience" or ability to compensate for cognitive loss may not be due to education alone. "These people may have used their brains more rigorously throughout their lives or are just more mentally active in general," explains McIntosh.

"It really depends on the individual and how the disease manifests itself, but being more mentally flexible is very important. It's essential for people to keep mentally active, no matter what their level of education," he adds.

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## Happy birthday Martin Markus !

Five years ago, **Judith Markus** decided to do something special in honour of her husband **Martin's** 80th birthday, so she established a Baycrest endowment fund in his name and donated a Torah to the Adath Israel Synagogue. To mark Martin's 85th birthday, the couple recently made another gift to Baycrest and now have their names on a permanent plaque located on the Centre's Endowment Wall of Honour.

"Over the years we've had some friends who have been in Baycrest Hospital and we saw the good care they received and thought it was a worthy place to make a donation," Judith explains. "They do a wonderful job of taking care of people," she says.

Judith and Martin will mark their 55th wedding anniversary in January. Martin still goes to work most days, in the downtown clothing business he and Judith started some 47 years ago. They have two children and seven grandchildren and divide their time between Toronto and Florida.

"We've brought our children and grandchildren to visit Baycrest to see the good work that the Centre does," says Judith. "I would certainly encourage others to give to Baycrest as well."

The **Markus** family at a recent plaque dedication event at Baycrest.



# Son honours mother's love of gardening

Kingston natives **Ethel and Harry Abramsky** often went out of their way to help others. Now their generosity and kindness are extending as far as the elderly who depend on Baycrest.

"My parents loved to help people," explains son **Mort Abramsky**. "When they weren't busy raising three children or working at the family department store, they were doing something for one of many community causes."

While Ethel was most active with Hadassah-WIZO, Harry donated his extra time to B'nai Brith, The Canadian Zionist Federation and Kingston's Beth Israel Congregation, notes Abramsky, recalling his parents' well-earned reputation as two of the city's leading philanthropists.

In fact, according to him, the only thing Ethel Abramsky was better known for than her charity work was her renowned flower garden, which was an entire city block long.

"My mother cherished her garden and loved to spend time in it," recalls Abramsky, who helped to establish the **Harry and Ethel Abramsky Endowment Fund** which provides potted and fresh flowers to add a festive touch to Baycrest for the High Holidays, in honour of his late parents. The fund also makes sure the Baycrest synagogue is adorned with fresh flowers for the Jewish New Year, Passover and Shavuot.

"My parents would be very happy to know clients and patients at Baycrest are enjoying the flowers provided by

them," he adds. "It makes me happy too."

"Having such things as flowers during the holidays really enhances the lives of our elderly," adds Baycrest Culture and Heritage co-ordinator **Arlene Sanders**. "Now, the Abramskys have ensured this beautiful initiative for many years to come."



**Harry and Ethel Abramsky**

## Memory of beloved wife helps others remember

**Bill Clarfield** is hoping to keep alive the memory of his beloved wife, **Phyllis**, by helping others to improve their ability to remember.

**The Phyllis and Bill Clarfield Research Endowment Fund** is the first fund of its kind to be directed toward supporting the Memory Clinic in Baycrest's new Brain Health

Centre, which specializes in the multidisciplinary treatment of people suffering from dementias such as Alzheimer's disease.

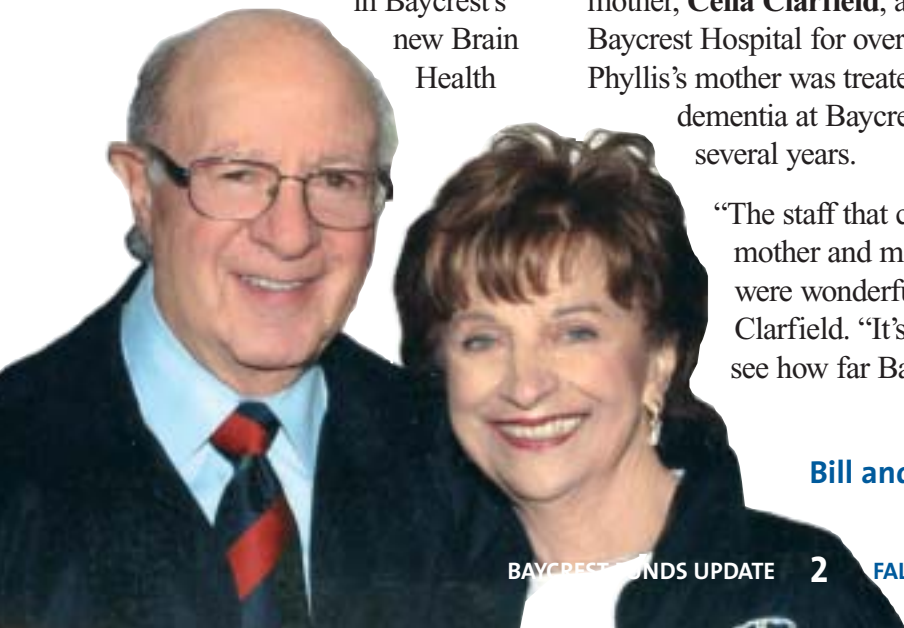
"I'm very proud to help further the incredible work conducted at the clinic," says Bill Clarfield, a long-time Baycrest supporter. In addition to his mother, **Celia Clarfield**, a patient at Baycrest Hospital for over five years, Phyllis's mother was treated for dementia at Baycrest for several years.

"The staff that cared for my mother and mother-in-law were wonderful," recalls Clarfield. "It's amazing to see how far Baycrest has

come in treating this disease and for this I thank the experts at the Memory Clinic."

Members of Baycrest's Memory team include medical specialists and researchers who are working together to find better ways to care for clients and their families, identify new treatments, interventions and possible preventions.

"Even as her life was coming to an end, Phyllis derived great comfort and joy in looking back and recalling all the great times spent with family and friends," adds Clarfield. "She would have been very pleased to know her gift to Baycrest will be helping others to remember happier times as well."



**Bill and Phyllis Clarfield**

# Bequest to Baycrest makes children proud

Whether it was in her personal, professional or public life, responsibility was something **Aviva Heller** took to heart.

In fact, whether it was assuming the role of single mother of three teenagers, going back to work full time as head of the Math department of the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, or serving as a Board



member of Jewish Family and Child Services, Aviva Heller could always be

**Aviva Heller**

counted on to fulfill her obligations with skill, grace and 100 per cent dedication.

“She was a woman with boundless energy – staying up grading exams until midnight or preparing meals late Thursday night so the family could enjoy Shabbat together,” says Heller’s son Hart.

“Being a reliable wife, mother, teacher and community leader was the essence of who Aviva was,” explains her sister **Rhoda Frisch**. “She learned from our parents early on to be a responsible community member and a compassionate person.”

In addition to her work as an educator,

Heller was active in numerous community organizations, giving generously of her time and money.

“Charity was very important to my mother, especially helping the elderly,” says son **Hart Heller**, who together with siblings **Jay** and **Susan**, are proud of their mother’s commitment to the community through an endowment fund established in the names of **Ron and Aviva Heller**, made possible through a bequest in her will.

“My mother supported Baycrest for many years and was always proud of the way it cared for the elderly,” explains Hart. “She had great confidence in the way Baycrest was run.”

## Family recognizes decorated war veteran

The late **Morris Cohen** cared passionately about three things: his family, his community and his faith.

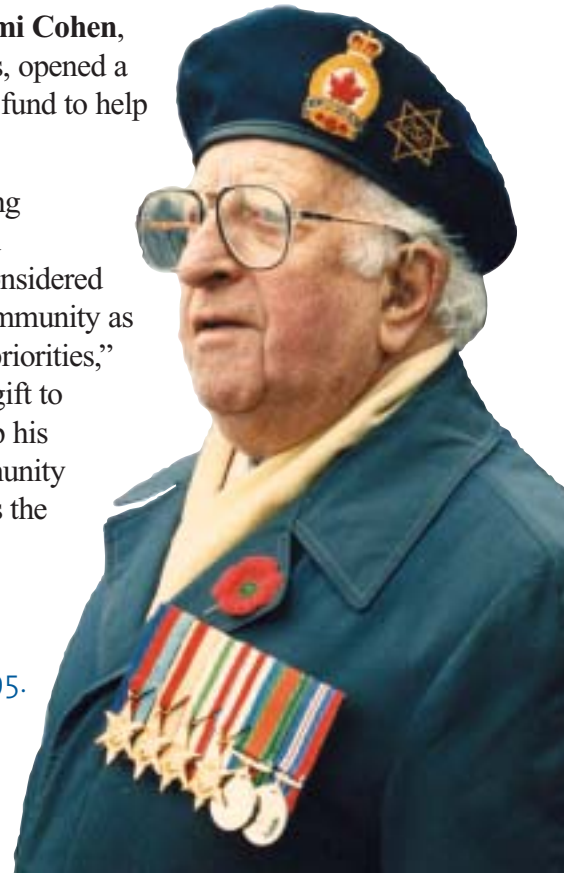
A decorated war veteran, Morris gave six years of his life during the 1940s to the British army. His duties ranged from fighting hard in the trenches of Baghdad to the extremely sensitive work he did on behalf of Holocaust survivors during the early days after the war. Throughout his service, and no matter what the circumstances, Morris stayed true to his Jewish values and religious obligations.

“My father was a very dignified and observant man all his life,” says **Beverley Silverman**. “After a serious stroke a few years ago, we knew he needed special attention. Baycrest, with its kosher food and Jewish programming, was our first and best choice for him.”

Morris passed away in January 2004 at the age of 86. To

honour his life, and recognize the medical staff on 6 East of Baycrest Hospital where he lived for two years, **Naomi Cohen**, his wife of 53 years, opened a Baycrest memorial fund to help others.

“Morris was a loving husband, father and grandfather who considered the needs of his community as one of his highest priorities,” says Naomi. “Our gift to Baycrest helps keep his memory and community service alive. It was the least we could do.”



Dedicated war veteran **Morris Cohen** on Remembrance Day, 1995.

# Memorial fund honours deep respect for elderly

Attending synagogue and helping the elderly were two things in life **Harvey Peranson** always made time for.

He almost never missed going to one of two synagogues he belonged to every Saturday and made regular visits to his older relatives and their friends, even as a young boy.

“Harvey always had a deep compassion for the elderly from the time he was a child,” explains wife, **Lillian**.

“Having grown up with grandfathers, as well as several older aunts and uncles, Harvey developed a great deal of respect for the elderly early on.”

“Being observant was a big part of who he was,” explains son **Elliott Peranson** who, together with sister **Penny Cader**, chose to honour their father’s memory by transferring a memorial fund from the Benjamin

Foundation to Baycrest to help enhance the synagogue experience for residents.

“He would have felt so much satisfaction to know he was helping to make sure the synagogue has everything it needs,” notes Cader, calling the special gift an ideal opportunity to pay tribute to their father in a way that reflected who he really was. Thanks to the fund, the synagogue purchased new prayer shawls just in time for the High Holidays last fall.

**Rabbi Norman Berlat** says gifts to the synagogue are significant because residents derive a great deal of support from spiritual life. “These services are especially important for our cognitively impaired clients who benefit greatly from participating in the services, listening to familiar tunes and recalling pleasant memories,” he adds.

“Traditions and symbols that bring back memories of a better life are very important,” echoes senior social worker **Paula David**. “Memories help keep the good times alive.”

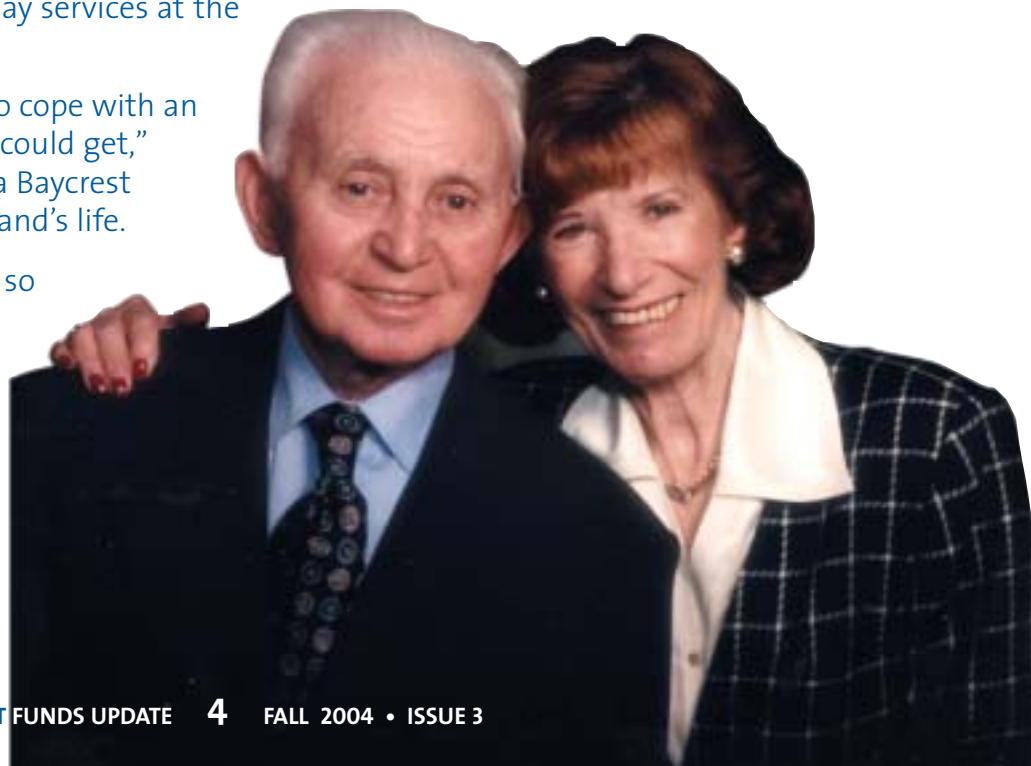


(L-R) **Elliott Peranson, Harvey Peranson, Penny Cader and Lillian Peranson.**

**Dina Shyllitt** and her late husband, **Nathan**, a resident of the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged, for seven years, enjoyed attending Saturday services at the Baycrest synagogue.

“As a Holocaust survivor and having to cope with an ill husband, I needed all the support I could get,” says Shyllitt who recently established a Baycrest memorial fund in honour of her husband’s life.

“Rabbi Berlat was always there for us, so when it came time to give something back, I was happy to help support the synagogue any way I could. Making sure others can participate in synagogue life is a wonderful way to honour Nathan and support a facility that has meant so much to our family.”



Throughout her impressive career as a physiotherapist at Baycrest, **Anne Pritzker** thrived on helping others. So when the opportunity arose to provide funding for Baycrest’s new Wellness Library, she jumped at the chance.

Today, the **Anne and Louis Pritzker Wellness Library** provides a wealth of valuable and easy-to-access information on numerous chronic conditions and illnesses. Run by volunteers, the library is located in the Physiotherapy Department, on the main floor of Baycrest Hospital. It is open to clients, visitors and staff.

In addition to providing initial startup capital, Anne also established an endowment fund, which, over the

years, will provide annual funding for upgrading and maintenance of the library and its contents.

“As a former physiotherapist at Baycrest, I wanted to assist that department to help even more people and provide accessible resources on severe conditions,” she explains.

Anne was one of the first Jewish women to graduate from the University of Toronto’s Physiotherapy program in 1936. After graduation, she went on to work as a physiotherapist in the Canadian Armed Forces for several years, before joining Baycrest in 1960. Now retired, Anne worked as the Centre’s assistant supervisor of Physiotherapy until 1982.

Her late husband, **Louis Pritzker**, was also well-known at Baycrest as an active volunteer with the Baycrest Men’s Service Group.

“Anne always related exceptionally well to patients and residents here at Baycrest,” says **Sam Ruth**, former Baycrest CEO and the man responsible for bringing Anne on board. “This is a wonderful way for her to continue to help people.”



**Anne Pritzker** (seated second from left) and her family celebrate the recent opening of the **Anne and Louis Pritzker Wellness Library** at Baycrest.

When it came time to find a supportive home environment for their frail mother, **Annie Petroff**, siblings **Shaya Petroff** and **Hindy Hirt** (shown left to right) thought immediately of Baycrest. “We wanted a Jewish facility with kosher food and good quality care,” says Shaya Petroff. “Baycrest met those criteria.”

Annie lived at the Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged, for two and a half years until her passing in January 2003, at age 97. To honour her life, and the life of their late father, Hindy and Shaya chose to attach their family’s name by establishing the **Izzie and Annie Petroff Endowment Fund** to provide stable funding for Baycrest programs and services, now and for the future.



# Fund celebrates life of Baycrest's Music Man



As it turns out, his name wasn't the only thing the late **Sammy Davis** (left) had in common with the Frank Sinatra side-

kick and legendary singer.

Known around Baycrest as "The Music Man," Sammy Davis, who brought music to the bedsides of residents and patients for close to 20 years, also left a legacy for people to continue to enjoy for years to come.

"Helping elderly patients by sharing his music was what he loved to do," explains his wife, **Helen**, who in addition to establishing a covenant

fund in support of client care, donated her late husband's large music collection to Baycrest in his honour.

"Sammy had a huge record collection," says friend and fellow volunteer **Jack Baker**, "and if he didn't have the music that a client wanted on his cart, he'd get it for them."

Sammy also volunteered in the Men's Service Group (MSG) Thursday Night Club for male clients, the Thursday Morning Program in the Hospital's Palliative Care Unit, and Sunday brunches. For his considerable contributions, he received the MSG Man of the Year Award in 1995.

Every Thursday morning, Sammy would bring his music cart to the Palliative Care and Complex Continuing Care floors for patients to enjoy, recalls therapeutic recreationist **Amy Clements-Cortes**. "His enthusiasm and dedication were incredible."

In 1997, Sammy said, "Words can't describe the fulfillment I receive in sharing my love of music with others. There hasn't been a medication invented that can put smiles on the faces of those people the way music can."

**Helen Davis** (seated second from right) with her family at a recent Baycrest event honouring her husband's volunteer service.



## Contact Us!

*Baycrest Funds Update* is published semi-annually to keep you up-to-date on individuals, events and programs that relate to activities at Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care.

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