

OXFORD CENTRE FOR POSTGRADUATE HEBREW STUDIES
45 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LW, England (0865) 511869

SPECIAL TO THE JEWISH CHRONICLE: 13 SEPTEMBER 1985:

FOUR WIN PRIZES AS YIDDISH COURSE ENDS

Eighty-seven students from twelve countries participated in a graduation ceremony marking the end of this summer's Oxford Programme in Yiddish last week. The graduation was held at Yarnton Manor, the early 17th century estate of the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, which organizes the course each year. The guest speaker was Professor Dov Noy who conveyed congratulations from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on the Oxford Centre's remarkable successes in the field of Yiddish Studies in recent years.

A highlight of the graduation was announcement of the winners of the First Annual Oxford Summer Programme Prize in Yiddish Literature. The \$500 Prize was established last month by the New York Workmen's Circle, the literary organization that publishes the weekly Yiddish *Forward*. The jury, comprised of the programme's faculty, divided the Prize into one First Prize, won by Ms Nadia Dehan, of Paris, for her critical study of the works of Yiddish novelist Yoyne Rosenfeld (1880-1944), and three Second Prizes, awarded to Ms Dorothea Greve (Hamburg) for a study of the fiction of Isaac Bashevis Singer's late sister, London Yiddish novelist Esther Kreitman (1891-1954); Ms Lindsay Levy (Oxford) for an original short story; Ms Jutta Strauss (Heidelberg) for a sociological survey of the demographic composition of this year's Oxford Summer Programme. All of the students' term projects in the higher classes are written entirely in Yiddish.

In addition to the Programme's core -- intensive daily language instruction at four levels -- this summer's course featured a series of guest lectures entitled *European Centres of Yiddish Culture*. After being launched by Anna Tzelniker's *History of the London Yiddish Theatre*, the series proceeded to cover *Yiddish in Moscow since World War II* (Professor Wolf Moskovich, Hebrew University); *Yiddish Culture in Pyeterkov* (Mr Majer Bogdanski, London); *Yiddish Literature in Vienna in the late 1920s and early 1930s* (Mr I A Lisky, editor, 'The Jewish People', London), and two lectures on Vilna: Mr L Raizin (London) on *Vilna as the Capital of Yiddish* and Mr A Karpinowitz (Tel Aviv) on *The Dreamers of Vilna*.

The highpoint of the lecture series was the Third Annual Avrom-Nokhem Stencl Lecture in Modern Yiddish Literature, established to commemorate the late beloved Yiddish poet of Whitechapel (1897-1983). This year's Stencl Lecture was delivered by Professor Dov Noy of the Hebrew University who spoke on *Yiddish Creativity in the Ghettos and Camps: On Holocaust Folklore and Folkloristics*. Professor Noy brought to light dozens of previously unknown Yiddish poems, stories and research studies created during the darkest days of World War II. Like the two Stencl lectures before it, this year's commemorative event was chaired by Mr Montague Richardson, the veteran director of the Jewish Institute at Adler House in Whitechapel who has worked for decades to help enable Yiddish writers in the East End to create in dignity and tranquility.

Plans are being finalized for next year's Oxford Programme in Yiddish, to be held August 4-29 1986.

'discovered' by the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies in 1979 as an expert in older Yiddish bibliography. He has since been invited on numerous occasions to Oxford, New York and Jerusalem to share his latest exciting discoveries. Mr Süss discussed the introduction to a sixteenth century Yiddish book.

The series of guest lectures focused on *European Cities as Centers of Yiddish Culture*. It was launched by the doyenne of the London Yiddish stage, Miss Anna Tzelniker, who traced the history of the London Yiddish theatre from 1933 to the present. Professor William J Fishman of the University of London rounded off Yiddish in London with a historical walking tour of Whitechapel in London's old East End (comparable to New York City's Lower East Side) where a century of Yiddish authors lived and created. The Oxford Centre has just published Professor Fishman's study of the London years of Yiddish poet Morris Winchevsky (1856-1932).

Hebrew University's Professor Wolf Moskovich talked about *Yiddish in Moscow since World War II*. Mr Majer Bogdanski, an East End tailor who is chairman of a Yiddish literary group in the area spoke on *Yiddish Culture in Pyeterkov*, of which he is a native. Mr I A Lisky, editor of a London Yiddish monthly recounted his memories of *Yiddish Literature in Vienna in the late 1920s and early 1930s* where he made his own literary debut under the sponsorship of Mendl Naygreshl (1903-1965).

Two widely differing perspectives on Vilna, the 'Jerusalem of Lithuania' were offered by Mr L Raizin, son of the great Yiddish scholar Zalmen Reyzen (1887-1940), a cofounder of the Yiddish Scientific Institute (YIVO) in Vilna in 1925, who spoke on *Vilna as the Capital of Yiddish*; and, Tel Aviv Yiddish novelist Avrom Karpinowitz who described in mystical prose the *Dreamers of Vilna*.

The highpoint of the lecture series was the Third Annual Avrom-Nokhem Stencl Lecture in Modern Yiddish Literature, established in 1983 to commemorate the beloved Yiddish poet of Whitechapel (1897-1983). This year's Stencl Lecture was delivered by Professor Dov Noy of the Hebrew University who spoke on *Yiddish Creativity in the Ghettos and Camps: On Holocaust Folklore and Folkloristics*. Professor Noy brought to light dozens of previously unknown Yiddish poems, stories and research studies created during the darkest days of World War II. The Oxford Centre publishes each year's Stencl Lecture in pamphlet form.

Plans are being finalized for next year's Oxford Program in Yiddish, to be held August 4-29, 1986. Inquiries should be directed to the course's Administrative Director, Ms Jean Nightingale, at the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, 45 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LW, England.