

# GALLERY גלריה

## Ofer Aderet

In September 1866, The Nellie Chapin set sail from Jonesport, Maine with 157 men, women and children aboard – members of the Church of the Messiah who'd fallen under the sway of its leader George Adams, and followed him to the Levant. Their provisions included dismantled wooden houses, with which they planned to assemble an infrastructure for the return of the Jews to the Holy Land in order to hasten the Redemption.

"They were crazy," says architect and Jaffa historian Shmuel Giller, who recently completed a comprehensive history of these families in Israel. Adams, who was an actor before becoming a priest, was a "scoundrel and a liar," says Giller. "He promised them a land flowing with milk and honey, kind of like Trump, who promises his believer a 'great America.' Adams cheated them, he stole their money and used it to buy alcohol."

Now, after many years of neglect, the most important legacy left behind by this messianic group has become a lovely area between Tel Aviv and Jaffa – the "American Colony," comprised of two beautiful intersecting streets (Auerbach and Bar Hoffman).

Last month, several descendants of those settlers came here from the United States, Britain and New Zealand to mark the 150th anniversary of the colony's founding. Giller took them on a tour that ranged from the cemeteries where their ancestors are buried to the impressive buildings they erected in Jaffa and Jerusalem.

Between stops, they heard about what their ancestors encountered from the time they stepped off the ship. In the wintery October of 1866, they were forced to live in tents on the beach north of Jaffa while they awaited permission from the Ottoman rulers to establish their colony. Nine of the group, including six children, died of cholera during this time. Thirteen more died during the first year here.

The Clark family lost the father George and two young children. The widow, Hellen, was left to raise the other three children alone. The Floyd family also watched their baby die in the harsh conditions.

Even after they obtained permission to settle in what



Clark House in Jerusalem, 1911. The family hired expert stonemasons from Bethlehem to prepare the fine stone.

Photos courtesy of the Clark family

## Jaffa's messianic American Colony

One hundred and fifty years ago, members of the Church of the Messiah settled in the Holy Land in order to hasten the Redemption. They failed

is now known as the American Colony, the group did see many results from all their toil. Within two years, most had returned to America, their messianic vision unfulfilled. The American Colony was later taken over by the German Templers, who are now well-known for another colony they founded – Saron.

The descendants who came to visit Israel are members of the Clark and Floyd families – the only two families out of the entire group who stayed in this country despite all the hardships. For some, it was their first visit to the Holy Land.

Giller was able to trace the families' stories through a surprising source: files kept by the Clark family's Arab lawyer, Hana Atallah. The documents, kept in the National Archives, include agreements, wills, bank accounts and records of quarrels over family inheritances. Unlike their friends who left here with nothing, the Clark and Floyd families managed to make their mark. Herbert Clark, one of George's sons, became fluent in Arabic and led tour groups through the Jaffa al-



Homes in the American Colony, Jerusalem.

leyways. He later became a representative of the Thomas Cook travel company and organized its tours here. In 1895 he opened an independent travel agency, with a branch at the Jaffa port. From 1887-1910, he served as the deputy American consul in Jerusalem.

### House of Friendship

The first stop on the tour was a remarkable wooden house at 16 Bar Hoffman Street on the Tel Aviv-Jaffa border. The house has three floors and a basement. It was originally built by Rolla

Floyd, who opened a tourist agency and cargo shipping (by wagon) company, and was one of the first tour guides in the Holy Land. Over the years, this house, like the others in the colony, fell into ruin. Today it is the home of artist Sophie Jungreis, who bought it years before the area became so highly desirable. With the aid of an Amish carpenter, Jungreis put a lot of time and effort into fixing it up, and the house is now considered a model of preservation.

Further up the street, we came to the most famous house in the neighborhood – the Maine Friendship House that contains a small museum about the colony. Own-

ers Jean and Reed Holmes bought the place in 2001 and saved it from demolition. They also invested a lot in renovations, though not to the complete satisfaction of the Preservation Council, which complained at the time that the facade did not match the original. Reed died last month, a few months before he would have turned 100 years old – on the day that the Eretz Israel Museum in Ramat Aviv held an event marking the American Colony's 150th anniversary.

The next stop on Giller's tour was a small forgotten cemetery in the unkempt backyard of the Anglican Church on Yefet Street in Jaffa, next to the Scot-

tish Tabitha School. There, among the tall grass, are broken tombstones from the 19th century, including those of some important historical figures like Dr. Thomas Hodgkin, for whom Hodgkin's Lymphoma is named, and Brigadier General Thomas Mitchell, a British officer who was sent to help the Turks repel the Egyptian invaders in the early 19th century. The descendants of the Clark and Floyd families on Giller's tour knelt by the graves of the Clark family members, and of Theodosia Floyd and her son Alexander, who are buried there.

Giller says that the Clark and Floyd families became connected when Herbert's widowed sister Mary Jane married Rolla Floyd after he lost his wife. After they married, Clark adopted her son Albert from her first marriage. Giller describes him as "a wild kid who got into fights and was arrested a few times."

Newspaper clippings from the time describe some of the fights between Albert and his adoptive father. "A curious incident ... happened in our city yesterday ... Shouts and curses and shattering glass was suddenly heard coming from the yard of the

American, Floyd. A fight broke out between old Floyd and his son, young Floyd ... The father charged at his son, the son eluded his grasp and held a gun in his hand ... The father pulled out a knife and ran at the son to strike him. The son fired a few shots in the air." Years later, the younger Floyd became a businessman and the builder of the legendary Eden Cinema in Jerusalem.

### The past comes to life

Giller's research into the Clark and Floyd families found that after the breakup of the colony, their trail led beyond Jaffa. The tour continued to Jerusalem, where in the early 20th century Herbert Clark built an elegant house on a street that would later be known as Mamilla. Today the reconstructed house stands in the middle of the Mamilla Mall.

Giller discovered that to build the house, which was completed in 1903, Clark hired a family of expert stonemasons from Bethlehem to prepare the fine stone that he purchased. Green marble and white Carrara marble were imported from Italy to Jaffa and then transported to Jerusalem by camel. On the ground floor were three shops. The living quarters were above. The family's living quarters included an opulent marble foyer and a living room with arched windows and a door to a balcony overlooking the view. There was also a kitchen and dining room, and four bedrooms.

Herbert kept his collection of 7,000 antiques in glass cabinets throughout the house. On the top floor was a laundry room with a washing machine imported from America that was the first of its kind in the Holy Land.

Clark died in 1920 and is buried in the Protestant cemetery on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

When the War of Independence broke out, the Clark House was used as an Israel Defense Forces position, and a machine gun was installed on the roof. Herbert's widow Clorinda and her faithful maid Saida had to leave the house right away, and fled to the YMCA building, which housed a Red Cross station.

"When she came back to the house after the fighting she found it destroyed and everything in it plundered," says Giller. The 77-year-old Clorinda moved into a small apartment that was given to her in the YMCA, and lived there for 10 years. After that, until her death, she lived in New Zealand with her daughter

ter Brenda. In her will, written in 1958, she bequeathed all her assets to her, including several buildings.

Brenda had a turbulent life. She first fell in love with a British officer serving in Mandatory Palestine. She married him and had a son with him. But their marriage ended when she discovered he was having an affair in Cairo. Her second husband was a pilot from New Zealand. They had children together, but that marriage also ended when her husband had an affair.

**In the wintery October of 1866, they were forced to live in tents on the beach north of Jaffa.**

In 1960, she gave power of attorney to Irwin Shimron, father of Prime Minister Netanyahu's attorney David Shimron, to deal with her assets. To her surprise, she learned that she could not sell her assets, as planned, because they had been seized by the state as abandoned property and other tenants – Mizrahi Jews – had been placed in them.

In May 1966, she wrote a furious letter to the U.S. State Department in which she told about her family history. "How dare they declare my mother an absentee resident when she was respected by Arabs and Jews alike, and lost all her property for which my father and mother toiled for years?"

Brenda's son Patrick was the last descendant of the American Colony to be born in Israel. After his mother's death, he got involved in dealing with the assets. In 1979, after lengthy negotiations, the family reached an agreement with the state, which compensated them for the loss of their properties.

"With the signing of the agreement, the story of the American Colony, which began 113 years before that in Jaffa and ended in Jerusalem, came to an end," Giller told the tour group.

"This trip brought together, around the Holy Land, a group of people from all over the world, just as the original settlers of the American Colony did 150 years ago," said Fran, one of the descendants, upon returning to her home in London. "When I visited the buildings, I felt like the past had come to life and I could imagine what my ancestors saw."

## With Nobel Prize no-show, sour Bob Dylan strikes the wrong note for millions of fans

### Uri Misgav

It's doubtful whether Stockholm is exactly heaven in December. But the obscure artist who moved an entire global generation when he sang of "Knockin' on heaven's door" – and who almost 20 years ago declared with mischievous sobriety that he was just "Trying to get to heaven before they close the door" – didn't bother finding out.

The absence of Bob Dylan from Saturday's Nobel Prize ceremony, at which he would have been a focal point, was a bitter disappointment – and not just to the organizing committee. It also left a bad taste in the mouths of the fans, admirers and followers of the Admor from Minnesota. The great light was found for a moment to be merely a shooting star, as per the lyrics of one of his greatest songs, from the album "Oh Mercy" in 1989.

The reason wasn't the contempt for the Nobel Prize, but the way he did it. After all, this prize was a total honor. The decision over who deserves to receive the prize in a nonscientific field like literature is always subjective, and expanding the pool to include a poet whose texts are set to music like Dylan could be interpreted as a mixture of romance and PR. The unhappy winner could have simply said he refused to accept the

prize, with or without a valid reason (and he was never one who bothered providing explanations). That was part of his power and charm.

No one would have complained if he had chosen to forgo the honor. It's hard to imagine him delivering an address in his field of expertise (part of the winner's obligations) and then putting on a tuxedo to attend the ball in the Royal Palace. At best it could have provided inspiration for a new song.

**It turns out we're talking about a 'common man' who simply cannot say thank you.**

But instead, Dylan chose to play hide-and-seek with the prize committee and half the world waiting for him to speak, and exploited the committee's weakness by claiming the prize (and its accompanying \$1.1 million cash award) without bothering to collect it. He took the money and ran even before he made it to the scene of the crime – a trick suited to one of the characters in his adventurous road anthems, like "Tangled Up in Blue" or "Idiot Wind."

Dylan is far from being a fool, but he is certainly antipathetic. His underly-

ing misanthropy is an open secret to his acquaintances and fans. In his personal life, according to numerous testimonies and interviews, his mystery and charisma covered for him. In his art, meanwhile, we were compensated with his unending reservoirs of talent, wisdom and sensitivity. His live performances – always without a modicum of communication with the audience or a word of thanks to his loyal musicians – were where the genius and sourness met.

It turns out we're talking about a "common man" who simply cannot say thank you. He fired G.E. Smith, his devoted lead guitarist and music director during his endless series of appearances during the late '80s, without blinking an eye when the latter asked for a small pay raise. At the time, Smith was making \$5,000 a month, while Dylan's monthly take was estimated at a million bucks.

His absence from Stockholm is just further proof of something that doesn't need to be proven. Because of an unfortunate decision, what could have been a nice birthday present for having reached 75 turned into an angry spectacle by a grouchy old man. At least the explanation he gave to the committee was dipped in his typical, biting humor: "Preexisting commitments," which actually sounds like it could be the title of Dylan's next album.



Bob Dylan accepting another award in 2015.

Vince Buccia/AP

### Weather

#### Better, then worse

Today will be partly cloudy and a bit warmer. Overnight, rain will fall in the north and on the coastal plain. Tomorrow will be partly cloudy with intermittent rain, high winds and a chance of thunderstorms throughout the north and center of the country. Toward evening, the rain will spread to the northern Negev. The mercury will drop, and there's a risk of flooding in coastal cities. Tomorrow night, snow will fall on Mount Hermon.

Tuesday Wednesday Thursday  
Sunrise | Sunset  
06:30 | 16:36  
Air pollution index: 11.12.16  
low medium high very high  
Jerusalem Tel Aviv Haifa Krayot  
pollution forecast for this morning:  
low-medium



After the astounding success at the Abu Gosh Festival

**PHOENIX**

**Nabucco**  
A Sicilian Baroque oratorio by Michelangelo Falvetti (1642-92) and Verdi's "Chorus of the Hebrew slaves"

Conductor, musical director: **Myrna Herzog**  
Soloists: **Einat Aronstein, Liat Lidor, Yuval Oren, Anne-Marieke Evers, Oshri Segev, Guy Pelc**  
Ensemble **PHOENIX** on early instruments  
Special guest: the Italian violinist **Fabrizio Longo**

**Raanana** Tue. 13 December at 20:30  
The Performing Arts Centre, HaPalmach st. 2, Tickets at Pashbar, 03-5745005

**Tel Aviv** Thu. 15 December at 20:30  
Enav Centre, Ibn Gvirol st. 71, Tickets at Pashbar, 03-5745005

**Haifa** Sat. 17 December at 12:00  
Mar Elias Church, 23 Ein Dor st., Wadi Nisnas, Reservations: 3804-836 04

**Jerusalem** Mon. 19 December at 17:00  
The Rebecca Crown Hall, Jerusalem Theatre, Etnachta concerts, Free Entrance

With the support of the Italian Cultural Institute in Haifa, the National Lottery (Mifal HaPais) and Israel's Ministry of Culture and Sport

