

Silurian News

**Society of the Silurians
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
AWARD BANQUET**

*The Cornell Club
6 East 44th Street*
Wednesday, November 16th

**In Honor of
RUTH GRUBER**

Drinks: 6 p.m.
Dinner: 7:15 p.m.
*Meet old friends
Merriment*

e-mail: silurians@aol.com

Reservations:
(212) 532-0887

*Members and One Guest \$100 Each
Non-Members \$120*

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THE OLDEST PRESS CLUB IN THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 2011

Ruth Gruber Winner of Silurians 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award **International Correspondent, Photographer on the Cusp of History Humanitarian of Heroic Tenacity**

By Eve Berliner

Images that haunt the mind – a hoisted flag, desperate eyes, outcries, pieces of time and memory, Ruth Gruber, at 100 years of age, a wizened, rather beautiful little butterfly, deep deep blue eyes peer-



Photograph by Ruth Gruber

The exiles of Exodus 1947, barred from entering Palestine by the British, await deportation back to Germany. A flag of defiance is raised overhead.

ing into time, her wings outstretched, drawn to the dispossessed of this earth, refugees of Nazi death camps and fear, no one to give sanctuary. Her epiphany, the harrowing voyage of *The Exodus 1947*, a ship carrying 4,500 Jewish Holocaust survivors to British Mandate Palestine in defiance of the British blockade.



Reel Inheritance Films

Ruth Gruber, special emissary of the Roosevelt Administration, documenting frontier life in Alaska, 1941.

Shadowed by British men-of-war and under constant threat, the *Exodus* was brutally attacked by a British flotilla, leaving three dead, 150 injured. The war torn vessel limped into the Port of Haifa, Gruber there with her camera to bear

witness. In the end, the British refused them entry and deported them back to Germany to the refugee camps of Elmden and Wilhelmshaven.

“I knew my life would be inextricably bound by rescue and survival,” Ruth

Gruber would utter.

Ruth, on that final tragic journey with the desolate, in her white suit and wide-brimmed straw hat, amid the teeming masses on board the prison ship,

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Summer of '77

By Owen Moritz

It may be hard to believe today, but in the summer of 1977 New Yorkers feared for their very lives. A serial killer was preying on young people. In slightly more than a year he killed six people, wounded seven others. No one knew what he looked like and the descriptions from survivors were so sketchy that each new composite drawing bore little resemblance to the previous one. We weren't even sure if we were looking for Jack the Ripper or Jill the Ripper. There had been suggestions the killer might be a woman.

I was among a number of Daily News staffers writing speculative stories on the police manhunt for someone calling himself Son of Sam. In my case I was getting feeds from Bill Federici and Pat Doyle at police headquarters. Meanwhile, columnist Jimmy Breslin was working his own sources.

We all knew certain things about the killer—he stalked couples in secluded parking spots, used a .44 caliber revolver



NYPD Mug Shot

Son of Sam, David Berkowitz, The .44 Caliber Killer who terrorized New York City during the summer of 1977, and murdered six young people.

and fancied pretty girls with shoulder-length dark hair. Thousands of women were so terrified they cut or dyed their hair blond or made a run on blonde wigs at beauty supply stores.

Moreover, there was the manic boast that put everyone on edge. He sent wild notes to Police Captain Joseph Borrelli and Breslin. “Sam’s a thirsty lad,” he wrote Breslin, “and he won’t let me stop killing until he gets his fill of blood.”

In the early morning of July 31, 1977 the killer struck again, stalking a young couple to a parked car in Bensonhurst. He crept up silently as the pair kissed and fired away at close range. Stacy Moskowitz, 20, died within hours and Robert Violante, also 20, lost an eye.

Ten days later, on Aug. 10,
Continued on Page 4

Bedbug

By Malachy McCourt

Concomitant with the rise of the tea party we are now infested with the rise of that disgusting horror known as the bedbug. Some people would rather deal with Al Qaeda than this new threat to our city. Very little is known about this verminous addition to our society except that it does like living with humans particularly conservatives as their blood has the bitterness quotient bedbugs need.

Our state government has passed a law requiring landlords to reveal the history of bedbug infestation in any building or apartment they have for release or rent. I can't imagine landlords revealing anything about their close relatives the bedbug.

Unlike other bugs the bedbug reputedly does not carry disease. The housefly takes a stroll on errant turd and carries some of it on its legs to your slice of bread. The mosquito sucks some malaria blood and spews it into your epidermis. The louse carries typhus and the flea is delighted to carry various other diseases.

When I was a resident in some of the more colourful slums of Limerick Ireland we were hosts to all manner of bedbugs. My brother Frank wrote in vivid prose about how he and my father carried a mattress from the dreadful furnished room we had just moved into and beat it and shook it till the clouds of bedbugs lost their hold and tumbled on to the wet pavement.

Having fleas was the cause of great shame in holy Limerick as it was attributed to having a dirty home. You were not allowed fleas, lice or tuberculosis because you would be destroyed by the vicious whispering gossip of your Catholic neighbours. We moved from furnished room to furnished sordid room accompanied by armies of hopper's as my mother called them. Some people said you couldn't have fleas and lice at the same time; same tale as not having mice and rats living in harmony. They were wrong. We had everything that walked crawled or flew. On any given morning one look at us would indicate that measles had broken out during the night and dotted our fair skins with the usual red measles dots bitten as we were.

My father refused to acknowledge the



The great writer, thespian and raconteur, Malachy McCourt.

bug's existence except when nagged to do something. My mother spent hours catching them and crushing them on her thumbnails but it was impossible to imagine an itch free, bite free night in any of our crowded beds.

Most people keep dogs cats birds and goldfish as household pets but our pets were the aforementioned vermin with whom we were on very intimate terms. In some cultures the men cut their thumbs and mingle the blood in order to become blood brothers. Our bugs just helped themselves at night without asking, with the result that the McCourts are blood Bros to a vast number of the vermin world. The Bible tells us that Jesus wore a seamless robe which kept the lice and bugs in a state of frustration as they like to hang out in seams. Where else do they reside? Beds of course, armchairs and the film industry is quite annoyed that the bugs are slipping into cinemas now without paying one dime. They love to travel so now they are frequent flyers much to the chagrin of the airline industry and they get rides

on the most luxurious of limousines to some of the best hotels in these United States. They snuggle down in your luggage and disembark at the nearest bed where frequently they meet the love of their lives and they settle down for a while particularly if it's the honeymoon suite.

As they are a somewhat benign mini terrorist you won't get much sympathy if you call upon Homeland Security to help repel them and despite the fact that our country spends \$2 million every minute of every day on defense, the U.S. cavalry will not help you in any way.

However there is a sure way of killing a bedbug:

- A. Secure two small blocks of wood 2" x 2"
- B. Capture the bedbug
- C. Place bedbug on one block of wood
- D. Strike said bug with the other block of wood until dead
- E. Repeat with all other bedbugs until they are all dead

It is not known if these creatures emit any sounds but perhaps we could try an-

other elimination method. Suppose you trap one of these little beasts and holding him firmly in tweezers, pull his legs off slowly with another tweezers and having enlisted that electronic genius your son, who is an expert on sound, to set up the most sensitive sound system ever devised so that the screams of the dying bedbug will be heard by his family and by every bedbug in New York with the result that they will all flee to Alaska and take refuge in Sarah Palin's house. I would advise against letting bedbugs into your house even if you are a Tea Party member because they don't vote and they bite you even if you feed them and they lay eggs all over the place as well as that they are always off somewhere at the movies, Sarah Palin's jet armchairs, other people's luggage, luxury hotels, synagogues and mosques and churches and they use you as a walking ATM for blood.

They are not nice and I think they should be deported to a place that is without blood. Any conservative country will do.

The Medical Wars

By Robert Bazell,
Chief Science and Health
Correspondent for NBC News

It was the regular afternoon story meeting a few months ago for that evening's NBC Nightly News. The senior producers along with Brian Williams the anchor and managing editor listen as correspondents and producers present the proposed pieces that will make up that night's broadcast. Some offers make it. Others are changed or dropped.

I was offering a piece about the results of an early trial of insulin pumped directly into the brain with a special inhaler as an experimental treatment for Alzheimer's disease.

"Is this a breakthrough?" Pat Burkey, the executive producer, asked me.

I was about to respond when just in time I noticed the suppressed smirks on enough faces around the table to realize that I was being set up. So I stopped myself from uttering my typical, expected rant about "breakthrough" being the ultimate meaningless cliché in science and medical reporting. I saved myself from a part in the afternoon's entertainment.

Let's put aside for the moment that "breakthrough" has long been a lazy substitute for an adequate explanation of why an experiment or new treatment matters. Where does it originate?

It is the most common of the military metaphors invoked in medicine and medical reporting most often for cancer, but by association with other conditions that can be difficult or impossible to treat including Alzheimer's. We have had a "War on Cancer" for almost forty years. We seek to "overcome the dreaded enemy" consisting of "invading" cells "overwhelming the body's defenses." We work to "kill" the invaders with "all the weapons in our armamentarium." The attack can summon chemical weapons (the first cancer chemotherapy, mustard gas, was first developed as a weapon of war) Treatment also calls in radiation attack and of course surgery.

The military medical metaphor exchange goes in both directions. We hear often of "surgical" airstrikes which equate to a cancer doctor removing all the tumor with as little healthy tissue as possible. But inevitably in cancer treatment as with bombing runs there is often "collateral damage."

"The Iraqis are sick people and we are

the chemotherapy," US Marine Corporal Ryan Dupre told the Times of London reporter Mark Franchetti shortly after a bloody battle outside the Iraqi city of Nasiriya in the spring of 2003.

The confluence of military and medical language did not begin with our current cancer "crusade."

"A murderous array of disease has to be fought against, and the battle is not a battle for the sluggard," wrote Thomas Sydenham, often portrayed, as the Hippocrates of England in the mid-17th century. "I steadily investigate the disease, I comprehend its character, and I proceed straight ahead, and in full confidence, towards its annihilation"

These days the military metaphors stick mostly to cancer and other incurable conditions like Alzheimer's precisely because the "wars" against them have enjoyed relatively few successes. In the seminal work on this subject "Illness as Metaphor," Susan Sontag wrote that the military metaphors for cancer persist as a "vehicle for our insufficiencies" regarding our attitudes about death as well as an array of social and economic challenges. Just as tuberculosis carried a metaphor of romantic death before the advent of antibiotics to treat it, Sontag predicted that, as cancer

treatments improve, "the cancer metaphor will be made obsolete...long before the problems it has reflected so vividly will be resolved."

Abraham Fuks of McGill University (whose works provided me with some of the quotes above) argues that military metaphors are part of "the shift of attention of the physician from the patient to the disease entity." Because of the military metaphors, the patient's body becomes the battlefield where the heroic physician fights "the enemy". Meanwhile the patient, like the civilian population in a war zone is reduced to the bystander often suffering extensive unintended harm. Medicine could do a better job, Fuks argues, by thinking more in terms of patients and not just the diseases that afflict them.

Medical journalism, I would argue could serve its audiences better than simply declaring whether or not a finding is "breakthrough" (through the enemies defense). Certainly at NBC my views on the matter are known all too well.

My report on insulin as a potential treatment for Alzheimer's did air that night although like almost everything in medical research the early findings must be repeated in a larger, longer study. Stay tuned for further breakthroughs.

The Question Box

By Ray Corio

Ever wonder about the average weight of major league umpires? Or if a perfect game can include an error by the winning team? Or why baseball players spit so often?

Quite a few readers were curious about those and other such sports-related matters, I learned, during my "interim" term tending to The New York Times SportsMonday Question Box from 1984-1993.

Over a range of more than 400 columns, distilled from an average of 15-20 letters a week, I answered roughly 2,000 questions. But one I never answered stands out: which sport elicits the most questions?

Baseball, unquestionably. By a city and country mile. It made up more than 85 percent of the letters submitted. Be it Super Bowl week, Kentucky Derby week, the N.C.A.A. basketball tournament, the Olympics or World Cup, readers wanted to know "If a runner on second base with one out leaves the base too soon..."

The national passion for the national pastime was just dandy for me, a lifelong sports nut encased in a baseball shell. So when S. Lee Kanner retired in 1984 as the Question Box editor at The Times, this assistant sports editor, naturally, was asked to pinch-hit until a successor emerged.

What an at-bat!

By the time the column was retired nine years later, I had been nicknamed "Mr. Box" and designated as the staff's go-to guy for any reporter or editor in the entire newsroom.

Beyond the newspaper, friends and relatives also caught on. "Hey Ray, I've got one I bet you can't answer," became a daily challenge, and nuisance.

The column, born when SportsMonday was created in 1978, invited readers to submit questions on any aspect of sports: statistics, records, rules or strategies. Sounds dry, even by Times standards, so I would enrich the answers with a smile or two. And a cartoon by Tom Bloom with a witty caption helped, too.

Letters arrived from all types, particularly doctors, teachers and retirees; lots of retirees.

There were inquiries from Brazil (basketball), Canada (curling), and the entire United States (fencing, boxing, six-day bicycle races, etc.) Even a question from my former high school mathematics teacher, who remembered me from the school newspaper. That led to a reacquaintance.

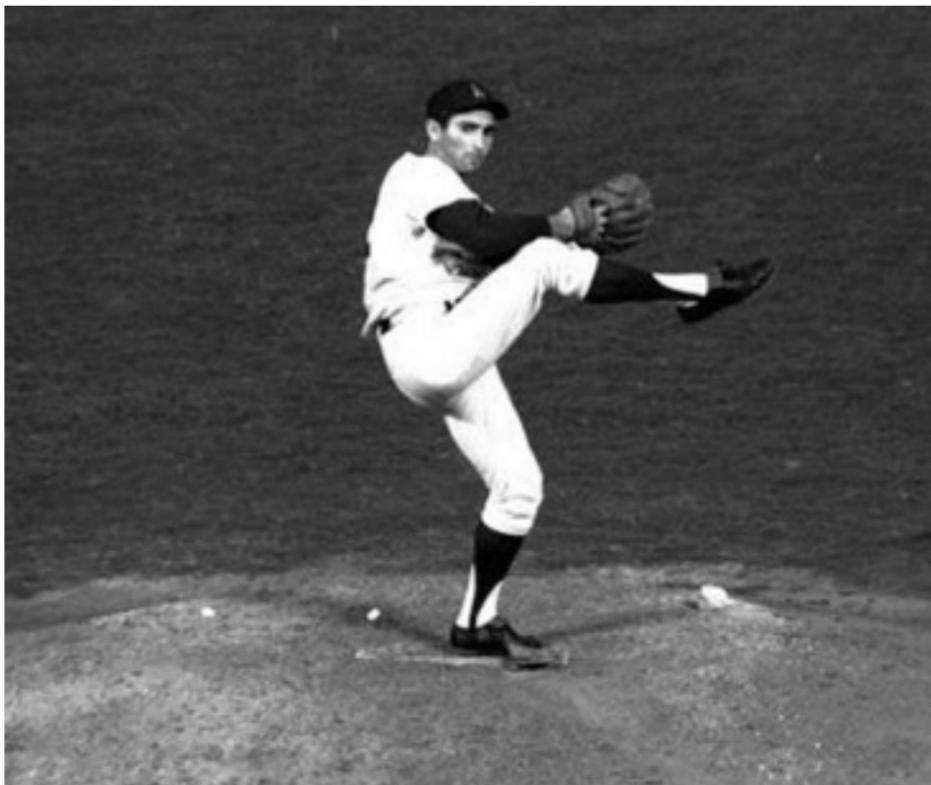
Another reader wondered if I was related to Ann Corio, the legendary stripper from burlesque days. It's a question I've been asked many times, and the answer is still, "Not even barely."

As for sports questions, they often demanded research, which often turned up an irony or interesting note that upstaged the original question. This was all pre-Internet, so my sources were record and rules books, as well as phone calls to team media directors (not so good), halls of fame (better), headquarters for the sports (even better), the Elias Sports Bureau (always reliable) and often major league umpires like Marty Springstead (the best). I learned never to disagree with umpires.

Over the years, I also learned how truly popular Babe Ruth, Ted



Oklahoma's record 47 game winning streak came to a stunning end in 1957 with a touchdown by Dick Lynch, rolling around right end from 3 yards out, one of the greatest touchdowns in collegiate football history.



The great Sandy Koufax's perfect game for the Los Angeles Dodgers against the Chicago Cubs on September 9, 1965.



The "shot heard round the world," Bobby Thomson's pennant-winning, epic home run for the New York Giants against Ralph Branca of the Brooklyn Dodgers at the Polo Grounds on October 3, 1951. It endures as perhaps the most dramatic play in baseball history. Thomson seen here in ecstatic embrace with Giants manager, Leo Durocher.

Williams, Joe DiMaggio, Sandy Koufax, and the Bobby Thomson-Ralph Branca dynamic still are.

Here's a sample question:

If a Dodger fielder dropped a foul pop during Sandy Koufax's perfect game against the Cubs in 1965, would the perfect game be spoiled?

The answer: Hardly, so long as Koufax retired the batter and every other one without anyone reaching base. But the fielder would be charged with an error for "prolonging the player's at-bat." So there would be an error for the winning team in a perfect game by the winning pitcher.

And this one: Did Bobby Thomson hit any other home runs off Ralph Branca in 1951 before the pennant-winning "shot heard 'round' the world" in the playoff against the Dodgers?

The answer: Thomson hit two others off Branca that season, one in the first playoff game two days earlier. Interestingly, Branca allowed 19 homers that year, 11 to the Giants, and Thomson hit 8 of his 32 homers off the Dodgers.

For one question, I got the answer directly from the subject, Dick Lynch, whom I met at my chiropractor's office (apparently a frequent hangout for ex-football players).

Lynch was a former Notre Dame halfback and defensive back, whose 3-yard touchdown run against Oklahoma in 1957 ended college football's longest winning streak at 47 games. A reader wondered if Lynch had ever played at running back during his career with the New York Giants in the National Football League.

"I never had a down in the pros," Lynch told me, pointing out that the Giants were so successful that they kept him at defensive back and kick returner. Lynch managed 37 interceptions and scored 7 touchdowns, but the player who carried the day for Notre Dame never carried the ball from scrimmage as a pro.

That answer was obtained easily, but others, like the weight of umpires and the penchant for spitting in baseball, wound up in my can't-answer file, along with one I received a year after the column had been phased out. It came from a marketing consultant in Englewood, N.J., a frequent contributor:

"Hey, what happened to Ray Corio and his Q&A?"



Barney Stein
Losing pitcher Ralph Branca.

Son of Sam Terrors

Continued from Page 1

1977, by a turn of fate, I was assigned to the 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. shift as a vacation fill-in. The fateful evening started slowly. But toward midnight we were hearing murmurs from headquarters that detectives were pursuing a lead in Yonkers. We were getting leaks—the suspect was a post office worker and investigators had found his battered car.

The news travelled fast. We awaited an official press conference. But 1977 was an election year and Mayor Abraham B. Beame, fighting for his political life, wanted to be on hand for the announcement. That meant nothing definitively until after 1 a.m.

Meantime, rumors of an arrest were swirling and I was told to start writing. Like a mirage, the news room filled up with veteran reporters, offering their services for one of the great news stories of that or any era. Editor Mike O'Neill arrived from his home in Westchester, a copyboy having dropped him off at The News before parking his car.

O'Neill promptly bumped Bill Umstead, the night assistant managing editor, from the news slot—a humiliation the late Umstead never forgot. Some minutes later, into the now busy and humming news room, came a police officer in uniform, escorting a black youth.

He asked to see O'Neill. "He was driving your car," the officer told the editor. "Do you know him?"

"Yes," O'Neill said. "He's my driver."

More facts were coming in from Doyle and Yonkers sources. The suspect, arrested outside his Yonkers apartment, had told detectives: "Well, you got me." Inside his cluttered car, cops found not only the Bulldog .44 caliber weapon, but also a fully loaded submachine gun and a letter addressed to Suffolk County police. He apparently planned to hit the Hamptons next.

Meantime, it occurred to me that in the pell-mell fury of writing we didn't have



New York Daily News

Serial killer, David Berkowitz, Son of Sam, who stalked and killed his victims, set off a panic that consumed the city.

the suspect's name from police. I turned to Brian Kates, in the next seat, who was phoning everyone he knew in Yonkers where he used to work.

"Do you have a name for the perp?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered. "David Berkowitz."

It was one of those jarring moments. Any name is possible. But Berkowitz? I knew a few people named Berkowitz and none of them was a serial killer.

Finally, well after 1 a.m., in a scene of bedlam, the mayor made the announcement that his constituents were aching to hear: "I am happy to announce that the people of the City of New York can rest easily this morning because the police have caught the person known as Son of Sam."

Back in the news room, O'Neill shouted, "Keep writing." Pages were added to the news hole to make room for sidebars and pictures.

My lead remained unchanged. ("A 24-year-old, gun-loving mailman was arrested late last night as Son of Sam, the .44 caliber killer who has terrorized New York for more than a year and murdered six young people. 'Well you got me...')." But



New York Daily News

The rampage of murder comes to an end.

inserts and urgent updates were added through the night.

Staff members called the victims' families for comment. When we got information that Berkowitz may have grown up in the Glen Oaks section of Queens, reporters scoured the now-quaint cross-street phone book for the names of residents to call. A reporter was dispatched to Glen Oaks, presumably to knock on doors at 3 a.m. and ask if anyone knew Berkowitz. Another tip: he had attended high school in the Bronx. These developments became grist for the following day's editions.

Another mystery was solved. Where did Berkowitz get the weapon? He had served with the Army in Vietnam, a de-

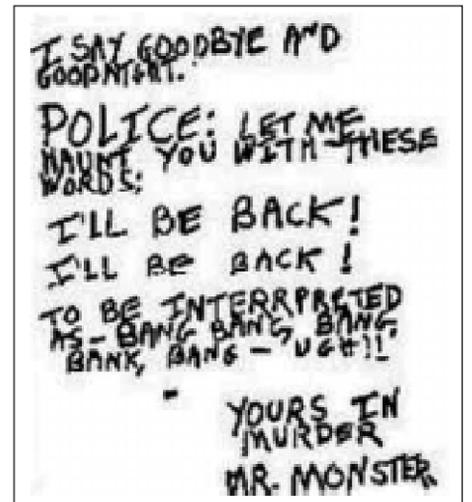
tective explained, and "it was a gift from a buddy" in May or June, 1976. He had also been trained in guerrilla warfare, which could explain his stealth moves in tracking his victims.

A front page proof came up. A copyeditor, Harry Demarsky, didn't like the headline—thought it had Berkowitz arrested and convicted—and so told O'Neill. The editor redid the headline to its iconic state: NAB MAILMAN AS .44 KILLER.

We learned how police broke the case. A vigilant dog-walker had come forward four days after the Bensonhurst attack and told police she remembered seeing a cream-colored Ford Galaxy parked illegally near a fire hydrant. The killer "looked right in her face," a detective said. Berkowitz's car had been ticketed and detectives were able to trace the ticket back to Berkowitz's Yonkers address.

At 5:10 a.m., a police official confirmed the .44-caliber gun seized in Berkowitz's car was the weapon used in the murder of his last victim. Also in his car was the trove of a sick mind: A pair of men's underpants, soiled maps, newspaper clippings of his six murders—and the parking ticket.

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NYPD Police File

The first Son of Sam letter to Captain Joseph Borrelli of the New York City Police Department.

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Observations from Down Under



Radioman Eric Williams, now broadcasting from Melbourne, Australia, with former President Bill Clinton.

By Eric Williams

Melbourne, Australia – When looking at the local newspapers, and viewing the newspapers from back home online, the late New York Times columnist, William Safire, would have a field day. Now I am not professing to come anywhere near the brilliance of the late master of the origin of various English words, but one thing becomes clear for this ex-pat: I may be in an English speaking nation, but we do not speak the same language. Or write it, for that matter. This is especially true in the matter in which headlines are written, or the reporting of certain events.

One case in point is the recent sentencing of Judith Moran, the mother of

use of such words, and phrases, "sad old hag" and "evil witch," struck this writer as raw, and edgy.

Testimony during the dramatic trial had revealed a riff between 'Tuppence' and Judy Moran. 'Tuppence' had paid his sister-in-law \$4000 dollars a month following the death of his brother, and nephews, but he grew tired of that near decade-long arrangement, and confronted Judy in early 2009 about it. Judith Moran, who lived the lavish life of a gangster's moll, had believed 'Tuppence' had access to a fortune of 'Black' money "stooked" away (as the local papers put it) by her late gangster husband, Lewis. The secret stash of so-called 'Black' money has not been found, and the fate of Desmond 'Tuppence' Moran, is now in the record books.

What also strikes me is the use of certain English words and phrases one would never see in an American publication. Phrases such as a 'Standover man,' used for the muscle, or enforcer by a gangster, comes to mind. A "punter," or gambler, and the act of "punting" is another that jars the senses. One sentence by Andrew Rule, the noted Herald Sun associate editor, and crime reporter, who is also the co-author of the UNDERBELLY books, would make an American reader re-read the following sentence several times. "Judith Moran had already moved in with another violent career criminal, Lewis Moran, who had graduated from pick pocketing and standover to wholesale and retail drug dealing to subsidise his punting." If you didn't know what

'Tuppence' Moran, in broad daylight, on a calm weekday afternoon in Ascot Vale, a wealthy Melbourne suburb, in June 2009.

Moran, 66, had received a stiff 26 year sentence in August of this year, and the local papers screamed with headlines, and sub-titles, depicting Moran as, "A sad old hag with a tragic past." While the Herald Sun court reporter, Paul Anderson, started the first paragraph of his story with a quote, "Judy Moran was an evil witch who deserved a lonely death in jail."

This is not to say that American, and especially, New York City newspapers, in general, do not use harsh terms when describing the act of a bad guy. But the

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Witness to History

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Runnymede Park, a mother figure to them all. Her powerful story and searing photographs of the Jewish refugees surrounded on all sides by a barbed wire cage, raising the Union Jack flag – the flag of Great Britain – upon which they had defiantly painted the hated Swastika – was published by the New York Herald Tribune on its front pages in Paris and New York, picked up by the Associated Press, and seen around the world!

It's been an epic life.

It all began on September 30, 1911 in Brooklyn, New York, Ruth, one of five children born to Gussie and David Gruber, émigrés from Russia with aspirations for their daughter. They resided at 14 Harman Street in Bushwick in an insular loving Jewish world and Ruth dreamed of being a writer. Her father gave her a little upstairs space to work and Greenwich Village on Harman Street was born. A poet at age 15.

But Ruth had to get away. She had to get out of Brooklyn. She had to get away from her family and the cocoon where she couldn't breathe. She loved her family but she needed to break free.

In 1931, Ruth won a fellowship from the Institute of International Education to study in Cologne, Germany where she lived with a German Jewish family, the Herz's, and their daughter, Louisa, and won a Ph.D in one year's time from the University of Cologne. At age 20 she became the youngest person in the world to receive a doctorate. The subject of her thesis: "Virginia Woolf: The Will to Create As A Woman." Ruth was mesmerized by her courage to write as a woman and believe in herself as a woman. Woolf's "A Room of One's Own" became her bible. She would ultimately be invited to tea by Virginia Woolf, the image of Virginia in her long silk gown lying in front of the fireplace, a cigarette between her fingers, endures still; the letters they exchanged, one of her life's treasures.

The most ominous, portentous experience of her year-long stay in Germany, never to be erased from the mind, was her attendance at an enormous Hitler rally in 1932. Hitler on the march, the Herz's, her German host family, near hysterical at her unyielding determination to go. She traveled by herself across the Rhine, and there, in a huge fair grounds filled with hundreds of thousands of people, she was seated in an area reserved for German citizens. She found herself remarkably close to the podium, surrounded by tens of thousands of brown uniforms, SS troops with Swastikas emblazoned on their arms. At last, the doors flung open and Hitler entered, surrounded by thirty bodyguards. A total silence fell upon the stadium. No one dared to speak or move.

She could never forget that voice. It was unlike anything she had ever heard. Piercing and almost subhuman, terrifying in its fever pitch of emotion and evil, its mad crescendo screamed over and over: "Death to the Jews. Death to America!"

Gruber returned to the United States and at age 24 was personally asked by Helen Rogers Reid, publisher of The New York Herald Tribune, to join that great paper's staff as a special foreign correspondent.

Gruber became the first foreign correspondent to fly through Siberia into the Soviet Arctic! The year, 1935. Stalin's long rumored Gulag was expanding. Gruber penetrated the Siberian Gulag, interviewed Soviet political prisoners ex-



Refugees awaiting forced deportation from Haifa, 1947.

Photograph by Ruth Gruber

iled in the Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Yakatsk. She interviewed and photographed the exiles. There were said to be tens of thousands of prisoners all over Yakutkia Republic, Gruber pushing deeply into the Soviet Arctic, traveling to Igarka, near the Arctic Circle.

With the outbreak of World War II in 1941, Ruth Gruber was asked by Harold L. Ickes, President Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior, to become his special assistant. Shortly thereafter, she was dispatched to Alaska! The ostensible purpose of her exploration was to determine



Courtesy of Ruth Gruber

A young Ruth Gruber at her typewriter.

the feasibility of homesteading wounded and shell-shocked returning American soldiers to the Alaska Territory. Gruber documented frontier life and the unique role of women, traveling the Alaska frontiers. She fell in love with Alaska. She became enchanted with the Eskimos and their way of life, and the powerful role that women played in their society.

Upon her return to the United States, the U.S. House of Representatives blocked the pay of Dr. Ruth Gruber declaring, "It was time to stop the propaganda of Communism." Her new book, "I Went to the Soviet Arctic," expressed "Communist philosophy."

"Any of us who vote to pay this woman's salary is not fit to sit in the House of Representatives," shouted Rep. Taber.

Here is the book's closing sentence: "But I know that some day I shall go

back, and bathe again in the Yenisei at Molokov Island, take midnight walks in Igarka, work with its newspaper people and pioneers, get up at dawn at a polar station, swim in the Arctic Ocean and rush back to a steaming breakfast shouting "Zdravstvuyte" until that full-mouthed greeting seems to ring across the Arctic."

In 1944, while war and Holocaust raged, Gruber was assigned a secret mission to escort 1,000 Jewish refugees from Europe to the United States, in what would be a harrowing voyage of sanctuary. Acting on executive authority, President Roosevelt secretly circumvented the government policy of strict quotas that kept our doors effectively sealed against Eastern European Jews, and moved to give shelter to 1,000 Jewish refugees. He dropped the project in the lap of Interior Secretary Harold Ickes who assigned Ruth Gruber to lead the mission. Ickes formally declared Gruber to be a General. In the event the military aircraft in which she was flying to Europe was shot down by the Nazis, her life would be protected by the Geneva Convention.

Throughout the 13 day rescue, the Army troop transport *Henry Gibbins* was hunted by Nazi seaplanes and U-boats. In the end, the refugees were locked behind a chain link fence with barbed wire at Fort Ontario in Oswego New, York, the threat of deportation at war's end a cruel reality. Gruber fought on, lobbied for the United States to give them permanent refuge.

When the war ended the Oswego refugees remained in America.

This was the only attempt by the United States government to shelter Jewish refugees during the Second World War.

In 1946, Ted Thackrey, editor in chief of The New York Post, asked Gruber to cover the work of a newly created Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine.

The Committee was to decide the fate of 100,000 Jewish refugees who were living in European camps as displaced persons, [DPs]. The Commission traveled throughout Europe, Palestine and the Arab countries for four months, collecting testimony in Munich, Cairo, Jerusalem, Tyre [Lebanon], Haifa, Baghdad and Saudi

Arabia [Gruber not permitted entry] – with another month of deliberation in Switzerland. They toured the displaced person camps of Germany, many filled with orphaned children. They went to Dachau. They attended the Nuremberg Trials of the German war criminals, Gruber staring into the face of Hermann Goering, head of the German Luftwaffe, dressed in his immaculate blue uniform stripped of its medals.

Ben Gurion testified before the Com-

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Photograph by Ruth Gruber

Holocaust refugees, imprisoned by the British in the hold of the *Runnymede Park*, which will transport them back to German refugee camps, 1947. Gruber was the only journalist permitted on board by the British to accompany them on their terrible journey.



Photograph by Ruth Gruber

Families from Romania reunite in Haifa port, 1951.

Gruber 2011 Honoree

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mission, as did Chaim Weizman and Golda Meir.

In the end, the twelve members of the Commission unanimously agreed that Britain must allow 100,000 Jewish immigrants to settle in Palestine. President Harry Truman implored Great Britain to open the doors of British Mandate of Palestine.



Courtesy of Ruth Gruber

Ruth Gruber

But the British Foreign Minister, Ernest Bevin, would not relent.

The answer was "No."

Britain renounced its Mandate over Palestine. It no longer wanted to rule.

The nascent United Nations created its own Committee – the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine – UNSCOP.

Tribune owner Helen Reid assigned Gruber to accompany UNSCOP as a special foreign correspondent, traveling, once again, to Europe, Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria.

On November 29, 1947, the 58 members who comprised the United Nations General Assembly began voting on the Partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab entities, Gruber, in the press section overlooking the proceedings, as 33 nations including the United States of America and the Soviet Union, voted Yes, 13 No votes, largely from the Arab states, 10 Abstentions, Great Britain among them.

The State of Israel was born.

* * *

Through the ensuing years, Ruth's work has remained relentless – covering the Yemenite "magic carpet," transporting of 50,000 Yemenite Jews to refuge in Israel on "wings of eagles," [1949], the secret airlift of 120,000 Iraqi Jews to Israel, [1951], the North African exodus off the coast of Tunisia and the ingathering of Jews from Romania, the Soviet Union and Ethiopia [1951 to 1988]. Ruth would be the chronicler of every major Jewish emigration to Israel.

* * *

The little birch bark cradle had been given as a gift to Ruth in 1935 by an old woman named Marfa Mokhaolovna in a small village near Yakutsk in the Soviet Arctic.

The 104-year-old Yakut woman castigated her for not being married and warned her sternly, "Don't wait too long." She brought out a beautiful birch bark cradle and said she had rocked every one of her 20 children in that cradle. It was constructed of birch bark ingeniously carved to fit a baby's body. There was a hole at bottom's end which emptied into a birch bark potty.

"It's yours," said the old woman.

Ruth carried Marfa's cradle back to New York and sixteen years later rocked her own children, Celia and David, in it, who passed the revered tradition along to Ruth's grandchildren, Michael and Lucy, her daughter's children, Joel and Lila, her son's.

An unconventional spirit, Ruth Gruber married Philip H. Michaels at the age of 40 in 1951. He is the father of her children. Her second marriage to Dr. Henry J. Rosner in 1974, occurred after her first husband's death.

Ruth Gruber is the author of 19 books about the worlds she has traveled and the history she has witnessed. She was honored in 2010 by the International Center of Photography with a major exhibition of a lifetime of her photographic work. She

is the subject of a searching and acclaimed. 2010 documentary portrait entitled, "Ahead of Time: The Extraordinary Journey of Ruth Gruber."

Ruth Gruber, one of the great humanitarians of the 20th century, a renowned photojournalist of immense poignancy and power, fearless. There is in Ruth a deeply felt sense of self as a Jew, as a woman, and as a human being. She was a feminist pioneer of immense courage, her life consumed by rescue, sanctuary and liberation of the victimized, the hunted, her dedication to the fate of those she covered profound.

Her great hurt, she would tell the New York Times in February of 2001, is that the United States of America did not act to give refuge to the desperate, top officials of the State Department deliberately, delaying the visas of Jews, the visas of thousands of people who ultimately perished in Nazi concentration camps, a tacit acquiescence by the United States government to the annihilation of Jews.

"They knew what was going on. They knew about the death camps. They could have saved hundreds of thousands.

"The indifference haunts me, it haunts me every day."

Thoughts Down Under

Continued from Page 4

'standover' or 'punting' meant, you would be lost.

Then there was one hilarious quote of an elected official who referred to a colleague he had differences with, as a "Gormless git." Gormless, of course, means one who is stupid, and who is not the sharpest knife in the cupboard. The quote made headlines all across Victoria, as it was about land rights for Aborigines the two elected officials had clashed over. The word Gormless may be a far cry from the Yiddish word "Shumuck," but both words do pack a punch.

What also packs a punch is the striking similarity between what one reads in American publications, and in newspapers on these shores, regarding the recent Occupy Wall Street protest events. Paul Krugman, the economic columnist for the New York Times, referred to commentary by critics as widely spread over the political spectrum from, say, NPR, to CNBC to the Fox News Cable Network. Krugman referred to what he called, "a weary cynicism, a belief that justice will never get served, (that it) has taken over much of our political debate."

Much could be said about critics of the Occupy Wall Street spin-offs on these shores, like, Chris Berg, the widely respected voice of reason found in The Age newspaper in Melbourne. Or, in contrast, by the Australian Rush Limbaugh wannabe, Andrew Bolt, whose shrill commentary that there is an absence of specific demands by the protesters should translate into not taking them seriously. Yet, reaction to that stance from both pundits has brought a surprising storm of criticism from both readers of the newspapers that carry their critiques, and the broadcast organs that air their views.

The Rupert Murdoch-owned Herald Sun screamed with the headline, MADNESS, as the Occupy Melbourne sit-ins reached a head with the arrest of 95 people. New York Daily News-like photos of the skirmish dominated the first seven pages of the paper. Mounted police on horses had surged through the crowd of roughly 500 Melbournians, accompanied by attack dogs, pepper spray, and batons. The more sedate AGE placed the story on page three, with few photos, and little commentary. While the national newspaper, THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN, quite sur-

Tabloid Sensation

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Dawn came up through the big windows of the Daily News Building. It was now the morning of August 11th. The thunderous presses downstairs were still running. Then, suddenly, we were told to stop. "Hold your notes," someone yelled. From unionized drivers came word that at 7 a.m. their night was finished. With their stranglehold on delivery, there was no other way to distribute the paper. Many drivers also worked shifts at Murdoch's Post, an evening paper.

The Son of Sam edition flew off the newsstands. The Daily News had been selling fewer than 2 million copies a day since the mid-1970s, down from the highs of its halcyon days. But it's a safe guess the paper sold more than 2 million copies on Aug. 11, 1977. No one doubted we could have sold more if the drivers stayed on the job.

In the end, Americans saw a paunchy, nerdy-looking man with a disturbing smile who had set off the greatest manhunt in city history. Berkowitz admitted to some of the crimes, but not all. He claimed members of a satanic cult were involved. While some experts put credence in his

prisingly, had no coverage of the dramatic events that took place in Melbourne's central business district, at all.

In a quote right out of former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuiani's playbook, Melbourne's Lord Mayor, Robert Doyle, called the protesters "disruptive," and that the original group of occupiers had been taken over by "professional protesters who were likely to cause trouble in the City Square." He defended the tough tactics by the state-run Victorian police in clearing the City Square, tactics that have been widely criticized in the public arena.

Also in the public arena is the sharp criticism of public gambling, or punting. But again, here is the use of the word that will make an American reader look twice. From elected officials to the clergy to public analysts, they all criticize the proliferation of the 'pokie' machines across Australia. Pokie machines are what Americans know as the 'one armed bandit,' found in the gambling halls in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, and in Yonkers, New York, close to the race track. Gambling is big in Australia. So much so, that even the Australian Football League (AFL) has a hand in the pokie machine business. One could not imagine the NFL, NBA or Major League Baseball in the U.S. having a hand in such business.

This is not a criticism; I am just noting the differences here between the two countries in the matter of sport and gambling. There was no such event here, like the 1929 World Series, where members of the Chicago White Sox team had cheated, and thrown that championship contest intentionally, to benefit bookies, and organized crime.

AFL clubs in Victoria control about 2,500 out of the more than 30,000 pokie machines in this Australian state. Public records indicate that Victorian clubs, such as Collingwood, the Western Bulldogs, and Hawthorn earn up to \$30 million dollars each in annual pokie revenue. New laws to restrict the amount punters can gamble are on the table, and owners of some of the AFL teams are not happy about it. This proposal, supported by Prime Minister Julia Gillard, has caused a crisis, and threatens to bring down her office.

What is clear to this observer is that language, politics, the media, and public officials mimic each other in similar ways. They may say it in different ways, and use different words, but the result in public policy and message is the same.

claims, no other persons have ever been charged. He contended he got his orders to kill from neighbor Sam Carr's black Labrador retriever—hence his Son of Sam moniker. Reputed to be a model prisoner, Berkowitz is serving life in prison.

A postscript. Dreary news stories exploring Berkowitz's upbringing, drug use and demons ran for days without relief. Then, six days after his capture, on August 16, 1977, Elvis Presley died. The relief in the office was palpable. The King's death brought a new cycle of stories, while Berkowitz's saga, though not his murder spree, drifted into history.

New Members

Jon Anderson
Writer, Columnist, Chicago Tribune, Contributing Editor based in New York, Time & Life magazines, Montreal Bureau Chief, Correspondent, Reporter and Columnist, Chicago Sun Times, Chicago Daily News, currently, independent writer.

Joseph Berger
Reporter, Columnist, Editor, New York Times, Reporter, Newsday, Reporter, New York Post. Author of three books, Silurian Peter Kihss Award winner 2011.

Elliot Brown
Entertainment Lawyer, Reporter, UPI -New York, Reporter, Chicago Tribune, Chicago American, Pocano Daily Record, Harrisburg Evening News and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Roberta Hershenson
Freelance writer, Arts/Culture, Columnist, "Footlights," The New York Times, Contributing Writer to the Times, Opera News, The New York Sun, Classical Singer and others. Contributing photojournalist, The New York Times.

Carol Lawson
Adjunct Instructor, Writing, New York University, Reporter, New York Times

Jane Weston Linsky
New York Times Staffer, Sunday Magazine, Culture Department, Arts & Leisure Section, Editor, Sunday Television magazine

Bill Madden
Sports Columnist, New York Daily News, Sports Reporter, UPI

Kate McLeod
Board of Governor, Overseas Press Club Foundation, Reporter specializing in Automobile industry: Contributor, The Houston Chronicle, Chief Executive and Motion magazines, and online news websites ForbesAuto.com, TheCarConnection.com and Autobytel.com. Columnist, Girl Driver USA, syndicated in newspapers and online.

Robin Reising
Lecturer, Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, Reporter, Washington Post, Village Voice, The American Lawyer magazine and the Southern Courier. Contributing writer "News of the Week in Review," "Book Review" and "Travel" sections, The New York Times, Copy Editor, and Editor Feature Page and Opinion Sections, Newsday and New York Newsday.

Richard Stern
Senior Editor, Forbes magazine, Columnist at the Daily News, Editor, Institutional Investor. Director, Stern & Co., a media communications business.

In Memoriam

William Alexander

Gloria Clyne

George N. DeGregorio

Sidney J. Frigand

Bill Gallo

George Kimball

Marvin Smlon

Joseph Wershba

Society of the Silurians

PO Box 1195,
Madison Square Station
New York, NY 10159
212.532.0887
www.silurians.org