

Dad's Tombstone Setting and Siyum by Julian

Join us for a *Hakamat Matzeva* for _____

WILLY UNGAR



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31
יט טבת תשפ"ד

4:00 PM: At the *kever* on *Har Hamenuhot* (see map)

6:30 PM: *Seuda* in honour of Sabba at Entrecote restaurant, private dining room
קרית המדע 22, הר חוצבים, ירושלים

Will include a siyyum and first screening of Eliyahu Ungar's film about dad.



Dec 31st, 2023



You will notice on the cover of your booklet over the picture of Sabba Willy the words:

שְׁהַשְׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹ

And well may you ask why it is placed there and its connection with Sabba/ Uncle Willy?

My beloved father has been gone from this world some 10 months ago but it feels like a dream. The pictures videos and plethora of images you will see tonight give us the false impression of his ongoing aliveness and only exacerbate the pain of his loss.

Eugene's evocative words on the tombstone, paralleling Mum's in brevity yet capturing in a few lines the essence of Dad was mirrored by his remarks tonight.

Thanks to all our wonderful speakers including the Siyum and divrei brochah from Motty, The Dvar Torah from Reb Refoel Moshe, the poetic lines from Chaim, the superb analysis of Dad by Batya, the poignant message from Vienna from cousin Anthony (Fisher) and above all the presence and blessings from Uncle Eric's viola in response to all of us chanting:

"When I grow up, I want to be like Uncle Eric" in unison!



Who could forget Rochelle's memorial: her unique way of self-deprecation while praising everybody else in their care and love of Dad. She of course, is the unsung heroine of this saga, the hidden angel who was present for every minute of Dad's last years until the last moment, knowing his every need and want, his likes and foibles, taking it on the chin when his mood was not always the best. "Please tell everyone...I am not available...ever!" he quipped....

Indeed the biggest tribute to dad was you! All of you! Showing up tonight to honor his memory.

Each of the four tables representing the four branches that emanated from his vision, each so different in temperament ,character, approach to life and Torah, yet each emanating from the tapestry of dad's personality and he would have approved of each one you tonight with love, humor, sarcasm, and wit.

My hope is we stay together as a family unified in our love for Mum and Dad and in their unconditional love of each and every one of us, that their memory guide us when we meet the hard spots in life and their inspiration of "just get on with it" as expressed here by uncles Eric's message:



eric video dad tombstone setting message.mp4.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMQA4pI3y5M>



<https://www.dropbox.com/t/mivXXWiNAyvVuEIE>



Let me return to the original question:

Its first mention of the term seems to come from a midrash (sorry Dad!) on the very first verse of the Song of Songs:

שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים אֲשֶׁר לְשִׁלְמֹה. שָׁנוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ: "כָּל שְׁלֹמֹה (דְּקָשָׁה
לָהֶם לְמָה לֹא מִיַּחְסוֹ אַחַר אָבִיו כְּמוֹ בְּמִשְׁלֵי וְקִהְלֵת) הָאֲמֹרִים
בְּשִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים קִדָּשׁ, מִלֶּדֶד שֶׁהַשְּׁלוֹם שָׁלוֹ." שִׁיר שֶׁהוּא עַל כָּל
הַשִּׁירִים, אֲשֶׁר נֶאֱמַר לְהַקְדֹּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מֵאֵת עֲדָתוֹ וְעַמּוֹ, כְּנִסְת
יִשְׂרָאֵל. אָמַר רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא: "לֹא הָיָה הָעוֹלָם כְּדָאִי כִּיּוֹם שֶׁנִּתְּנָה בּוֹ שִׁיר

The song of songs which is Shlomo's. Our Rabbis taught, "Every Shlomo (because they were at a loss to explain why [Scripture] did not mention his father, as it did in Mishlei and Koheles) mentioned in

Shir Hashirim is sacred [=refers to God], the King to Whom peace שלום belongs.

Maseches Shavuos 35b.

It is a song which transcends above all other songs, which was recited to the Holy One, Blessed Is He, by His assembly and His people, the congregation of Yisroel.

Sabba too was a man of peace. In shul at work in the family he was a peacemaker. As I watched him rise in the ranks of the Federation to become a Vice President it was this precise quality that made him appreciated by all. In his lay chairmanship of the Federation Kashrus he commanded the respect of both the United Synagogue Beth Din as well as the Kedassia sister supervising bodies thereby giving credibility to this fledgling authority to the point that EL AL acquired the Federation kashrus for all their flights out of Heathrow. His respect for the Dayanim on issues of kashrus as well as his ability to interact with secular officials of the airline proved to be the winning combination.

In the tense standoffs in shul during the High Holidays it was Sabba the peacemaker who smoothed over hurt feelings.

My second citation comes from our liturgy :

Every Friday night we welcome the angelic guests to the Shabbes table with the *yehi ratson* that also contains the following phrase:

דְּרַכּוּ. מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ. יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי. עַל כָּל־הַחֶסֶד
אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי. וְאֲשֶׁר אָתָּה עָתִיד לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמִּי. וְעַם כָּל בְּנֵי בֵּיתִי.
וְעַם כָּל־בְּרִיּוֹתֶיךָ בְּנֵי בְרִיתִי. וּבְרוּכִים הֵם מְלֹאכְתֶּךָ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים
וְהַטְּהוֹרִים. שְׁעוֹשִׂים רְצוֹנָךָ: אֲדוֹן הַשְּׁלוֹם. מֶלֶךְ שֶׁהַשְּׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹ. בְּרַכְנִי
בְּשְׁלוֹם. וְתִפְקֵד אוֹתִי וְאֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי בֵּיתִי וְכָל־עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. לְחַיִּים
טוֹבִים וּלְשְׁלוֹם: מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיוֹן עַל־כָּל־צָבָא מְרוֹם. יוֹצְרֵנוּ יוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית.

And we too pray for peace....Oh Almighty King who peace is His, bless me with peace

Sabba was a happy man always optimistic and as Eliyahu recorded...always saw the cup half full. God blessed him with inner peace despite the world at

war despite Hitler...despite his losses and near death experiences...always looked on *the bright side of life* (BTW he hated Monty Python! always favouring the sardonic European sense of humor).

In the last reference I remember weekly when Dayan Braceiner and later Rabbi Zvi Telzner had the custom to invite a layperson the honor to begin the pizmon for Seuda shlishit and Dad always was honored with the following zemirah:

יְצוּהָ צוּר חֶסֶדוֹ קְהֵלוֹתָיו לְקַבֵּץ. מֵאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת עֲדִיו לְהַקְבִּץ. וּבְהֵר
מְרוֹם הָרִים אוֹתָנוּ לְהַרְבִּץ. וְאַתָּנוּ יְשׁוּב נִדְחִים קוֹבֵץ. יְשִׁיב לֹא נֶאֱמַר
כִּי אִם וְשָׁב וְקַבֵּץ: בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר טוֹב גְּמָלָנוּ. כְּרַחֲמֵינוּ
וּכְרוֹב חֶסֶדָיו הַגְּדִיל לָנוּ. אֵלֶּה וְכֹאֵלֶּה יוֹסֵף עֲמָנוּ. לְהַגְדִּיל שָׁמוּ
הַגְּדוֹל הַגְּבוּר וְהַנּוֹרָא שֶׁנִּקְרָא עָלֵינוּ: בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁבְרָאָנוּ
לְכַבוֹדוֹ. לְהַלְלוֹ וּלְשַׁבְּחוֹ וּלְסַפֵּר הוֹדוֹ. מִכָּל אוֹם גָּבַר עָלֵינוּ חֶסֶדוֹ.
לְכֵן בְּכָל לֵב וּבְכָל נֶפֶשׁ וּבְכָל מְאוֹדוֹ. נִמְלִיכּוּ וּנְיַחֲדוּ: שֶׁהַשְּׁלוֹם שָׁלוֹ
יֵשִׁים עָלֵינוּ בְּרַכָּה וְשְׁלוֹם. מִשָּׁמַאֵל וּמִיָּמִין עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁלוֹם. הֶרַחֲמָנוּ
הוּא יְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשְׁלוֹם. וְיִזְכּוּ לְרֵאוֹת בְּנֵים וּבְנֵי בְנֵים עוֹסְקִים
בַּתּוֹרָה וּבַמִּצְוֹת עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁלוֹם. יוֹעֵץ אֵל גְּבוּר אָבִי עַד שֶׁר שְׁלוֹם:

He would then proceed to sing it a la German oberland tune....he must have remembered from Vienna...

May the Possessor of peace grant us blessing and peace—from left (north) and from right (south), peace upon Israel. The merciful One, He will bless His people with peace, and they will merit to see children and grandchildren occupying themselves with Torah and with commandments, [bringing] peace upon Israel. Advisor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of peace (Isaiah 9:5).

His own spirituality was always one of humility...he hated show and imitation piety...

In researching the term the most poignant Torah that encapsulated Sabba Willy's sense of shalom I turn (as always) to the deepest writings of

Rav kook in Orot Hakodesh.



שאיפותיו וחזיונותיו. ויש אשר עוד מזה למעלה ברוחב יתנשא,
עד שמתאחד עם כל היקום כולו, עם כל בריות, ועם כל
העולמים, ועם כולם אומר שירה, זה הוא העוסק בפרק שירה
בכל יום שמובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא. ויש אשר עולה עם
כל השירים הללו ביחד באגודה אחת, וכולם נותנים את

There is one who sings the song of his own life, and in himself he finds everything, his full spiritual satisfaction.

There is another who sings the song of his people. He leaves the circle of his own individual self because he finds it without sufficient breadth, without an idealistic basis. He aspires towards the heights, and he attaches himself with a gentle love to the whole community of Israel. Together with her he

sings her song. He feels grieved in her afflictions and delights in her hopes. He contemplates noble and pure thoughts about her past and her future, and probes with love and wisdom her inner spiritual essence.

There is another who reaches toward more distant realms, and he goes beyond the boundary of Israel to sing the song of humanity. His spirit extends to the wider vistas of the majesty of humanity generally, its noble essence. He aspires toward humanity's general goal and looks forward toward its higher perfection. From this source of life he draws the subjects of his meditation and study, his aspirations, and his visions.

Then there is one who rises toward wider horizons, until he links himself with all existence, with all God's creatures, with all worlds, and he sings his song with all of them. It is of one such as this that tradition has said that whoever sings a portion of the song each day is assured of having a share in the world to come.

And then there is one who rises with all these songs in one ensemble, and they all join their voices. Together they sing their songs with beauty, each one lends vitality and life to the other. They are sounds of joy and gladness, sounds of jubilation and celebration, sounds of ecstasy and holiness.

The song of the self, the song of the people, the song of humanity, the song of the world all merge in him at all times, in every hour. And this full comprehensiveness rises to become the song of holiness, the song of God, the song of Israel, in its full strength and beauty, in its full authenticity and greatness.

The name "Israel" stand for shir el, the song of God.

It is the Song of Songs of Solomon, shlomo, which means peace or wholeness. It is the song of the King who is wholeness.

Rav Kook, "Lights of Holiness", trans. by Ben Zion Bokser (New York: Paulist Press, 1978)

Dad sung his own tune...was merutze...lakol...beloved by all...

He arose beyond all the pettiness to see the bigger whole...
Blown by the winds of war and fate to foreign lands...powerless and at the mercy of others...nonetheless he survived to build anew a family a legacy that reflected his deepest spirit... that of peace.

Dad was a happy man....

She-ha'Shalom shelo....

His peace was his..

He embodied peace..

שְׁהַשְׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹ

May his memory be an inspiration to his children and yotzei chalotzov

And his example of peace to klal yisroel.



From Batya:

I've been thinking about Sabba Willy so much these days. One of the things I davened hardest for on Yom Kippur was for Am Yisrael to find some achdus, some unity. It's hard to remember but in that other universe before October 7, the Jews were at each other's throats. And now there is such amazing unity, born of facing true unadulterated evil the likes of which we haven't seen since Sabba experienced it as a boy of 17.

Sabba used to tell us about the early days of the Nazi oppression of the Jews—Eliyahu has a video of it, of course. Sabba said that in the early days in Vienna, the secular Jews would blame the frum Jews. "Why do you have to stand out? Why do you have to look different? Why can't you just blend in? It's because of you they hate us!" and the frum Jews would blame the secular Jews, "Why do you always have to sit in the front row of the opera? Why do you always have to have the tallest hat and the most expensive home? It's because of you trying to blend in that they hate us!" and then Sabba would say, "And of course, when the Nazis were putting Jews on trains, it didn't make a lick of difference if you were frum or secular, they wiped everyone out.

We're seeing a little bit of that in reverse, tears in Jewish society between charedi and secular, diaspora and Israel, right wing, and left wing, they are healing, being sewn up. In the face of such evil, we are becoming one. And in the midst of my grief and my rage of what was done to us, I feel as I am sure we all do a small comfort from this.

It's hard to believe it's been a year since I saw Sabba Willy. Aliza and I were there for what would be Sabba's last birthday. We spent one last beautiful Shabbos with Sabba and Doda Rochelle and Dod Chaim. Sabba Willy was already on his way somewhere else, but periodically he would open his eyes and even smile at us, especially when we sang the Shabbos zemiros.

There was a song of his youth, a song he had forgotten but which came back to him in a dream ("I can only tell stories I can expect someone to believe!" he joked at 99 years old when I prompted him to tell the story yet again at his birthday celebration). The song was based on a portion of the Shabbos morning davening: *Yismach Moshe BeMatnas Chelko...* Moshe rejoiced in the gift that was his portion. I rewrote it about Sabba for his 90th birthday: *Yismach Shlomo BeMatnas Chelko*. Because that was Sabba: rejoicing in his lot. Ever alive to the gift of the present, like Shabbos morning itself.

There is a Netziv on the Parsha we just read, Parshas Vayechi, that reminded me of Sabba this week.

NETZIV ON VAYECHI – READ NETZIV AND HERCHEV DOVOR

Sabba spent most of his life in Galus—and wherever he went, he was an *Or Lagoyim*. Stalwart, honest, a beacon of integrity, he was admired and respected whether it was in a concentration camp in Australia or by the plastic merchants of London. Sabba refused to allow the indignities visited upon him to rob him of his dignity—whether it was the experience of watching Hitler march into Austria in the Anschluss while riding his bike around Vienna to avoid the Nazis coming to his home and taking him or the experience of being locked in the hull of a ship like cargo by British officers who didn't care if he lived or died or locked up in the Australian outback with no women—only the occasional wallaby!

Somehow, Sabba's legendary sense of humor survived through it all.

Sabba stayed away from Israel for as long as he had to, to make his mark, and then he came home, where he always said he could finally wear his yarmulka in public, could finally stop looking over his shoulder for the Nazis come back to finish the job.

We were robbed of so much when they took Sabba's family. But Sabba kept looking forward. He knew that to be a Jew was not to be a thing of the past but a thing of the present, a thing of the future. *Netzach Yisroel Lo Yishaker!* The eternity of Israel does not lie.



The tefillin he shared with the other Dunera prisoners.

Sabba used to say that when it comes to a good meal, “Always end on something sweet.” And the end of his life in Jerusalem was sweet, thanks to the endlessly loving care of his daughter, Doda Rochelle, with grandchildren popping in to see him, to play Scrabble or chess, with Genady making sure he stayed strong, and his pretty art teacher making sure he stayed... Sabba Willy ☺

I feel so unbelievably lucky to have gotten so many years with Sabba and Safta. Their strength and their dignity were awe inspiring, their love and commitment to each other the stuff of legend.

I hope to one day live up to the example Sabba set—dignified yet impish; legendary yet joyous; a Jew in every fiber of his being—yet an enviable example of honesty and truth for the non-Jews he encountered.

May we be *zocheh* to keep Sabba’s memory alive for as long as we live.



From Naftali

**" Sagt der Sheikh zum Emir: Jetzt zahlen wir und dann gehen wir.
Sagt der Emir zum Sheikh: Zahlen wir nicht, und gehen wir gleich! "**

Ever since Sabba Willy discovered that I speak German, I could not meet him without hearing this 'joke', often multiple times over the course of a visit. I must admit I never found it particularly funny - but the polarity of loyalty to duty on the one hand and transgressive playfulness on the other, personifies something very Sabba-like. Even my earliest memories of him in London contain this dynamic: the gravitas and demanding seriousness he embodied in Finchley Central Synagogue, countered by his impish charm when we got back to 6 Claremont Park.

When we stayed there as children, we used to love waking up and jumping into bed with Sabba and Savta. As soon as Sabba had his teeth in - we all got turns of Hoppa Hoppa Reiter, while Savta read the newspaper and cuddled

us. These morning rituals were full of tenderness and play - as though for a brief period, in the twilight between sleeping and waking, and never exceeding the sacred parameters of the bed: joy was permitted.

After my 'transformation' - I showed up one day in Israel, wearing yoga pants and sporting wild curly hair. Sabba pointed at me and said: "Look at this Struwwelpeter in his bagga hagga hoogies" - and my nickname was born. For over a decade thereafter, he referred to me primarily as "Struwwelpeter" (the delinquent child of 19th century German storybooks) - a title I bore with no small measure of pride. Even during my last visits, when speech became difficult for Sabba, the announcement of the Struwwelpeter would more often than not elicit a smile.

Sabba would always call me out on my Chutzpah - even mentioning it to all my friends and family in the speech he delivered at my Bar Mitzvah. But I also felt the kinship behind his mocking. I used to reply: 'I inherited it from you Sabba', and this always got a chuckle out of him. Nor was this the only quality I inherited: Humour, pedantry, vanity, fastidiousness, diplomacy, loyalty, economic caution - are all qualities of Sabba Willy that, for better or worse, I recognize in myself.

Sabba had a pedagogic flare - and seemed to take great pleasure in the dispensation and sharing of knowledge. From hikes in the Lake District, to lessons in chess, to storytelling round the fireplace in Boston, all the way up to his hundredth year - when Batya, Doda Rochelle and I took him to the Biblical Zoo in Jerusalem, he never stopped sharing his wisdom. Whether academically acquired or osmotically accrued from the peregrinations of a life bearing the stamp of history - he definitely lived up to the motto: The Learning Never Stops.

One memory that stands out in my mind visually is: Sabba getting jiggy with it. On a vacation in the Golan Heights, we were standing in the shallows of the hotel pool. Some loud music suddenly came on the sound system - and Sabba started getting down. It was the first time I saw him dance spontaneously (outside of the liturgical shuffle, so common in shul). With his index fingers pointing out in all directions, hips thrusting mechanically, and a coquettish look in the eyes, he was a sight to behold. This joyous, unbridled expression of self, though rarely exhibited with such aplomb, was nevertheless maintained as a twinkle in the eye throughout the committed consistency of Sabba's life - as he danced his dance - between tragedy and humour,

surrendered obedience and transgressive optimism, between paying your debts, and knowing when to make a run for it.

I miss you, Sabba.

with love

Naftali (aka Struwwelpeter)



