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# ASKABIGAIL

*Newsletter*

## THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF MOSHE KRAUS

Dear friends,

In the autumn of 2015, I had the privilege of presenting my first-ever documentary, "[Yiddish: A Tale of Survival](#)," at a fundraiser organized by the Emunah Women's Chapter in Ottawa. The warm hospitality of Rivka and Moshe Kraus made the event memorable, an experience that had a profound impact on me.

During breakfast at their home, which overlooked the serene Rideau Canal, I was captivated by their collection of artwork. A particularly striking black-and-white photograph caught my attention, which was proudly on display. They explained that the distinguished gentleman and the young boy by his side, both dressed identically, were none other than Moshe Kraus and his father. Adjacent to the frame stood a smaller picture of his paternal grandfather, Reb Shayele of Keresztur.



My mother, Edith Esther Zoldan, originally from Tokay, Hungary, often shared captivating stories of Reb Shayele from her childhood memories. He was revered as the local "csoda Rebbe," a figure of wonder and spiritual guidance.

She fondly recounted how, as dusk settled on the Sabbath, the Jewish men of Tokay would eagerly gather for an all-night "melave malka" gathering at Reb Shaye's court, hitching rides in open horse-drawn wagons. Here I was, in the company of the living grandson of this legendary figure.

Meeting Moshe and Rivka proved to be a catalyst for unexpected journeys and experiences. Together, we travelled to Winnipeg, Antwerp, and Israel. Additionally, I embarked on a solo pilgrimage to Hungary, Poland, and Ukraine, retracing Moshe's roots in Uzhorod and Munkacs. I spent reflective days in Tokay and experienced a reverent Shabbat in Keresztur, where every place is steeped in history.



The entrance to Reb Shaye's house is in Tokay.

My journey led me to Israel, where I had the opportunity to study under the guidance of Yehudis Golshevsky. Through her teachings, I gained a profound understanding of the areas where my Jewish education was lacking. This realization spurred me to adjust my plans and dedicate six enriching months to intensive learning in Israel. During this time, I delved deeply into various texts, Hassidic teachings, history, halacha, and the vibrant traditions of our faith. You can read more about my experience as a Shiviti Student by [clicking here](#).



The class met at the old Jerusalem House five mornings a week.



In January 2020, I attended the European Cantors Convention in Hannover, Germany. This event showcased the vibrant tapestry of hazzanut, spanning various cultures and traditions. I was captivated by the performances and sense of community, leading me to capture and share the Moscow Male Jewish Cappella's powerful rendition on my [Vimeo page](#).

Our sojourn in Hanover also included a poignant visit to the Bergen-Belsen Memorial, a sombre testament to the atrocities of the Holocaust. It was a humbling experience that made us realize the depth of humanity's capacity for darkness and the strength of the human spirit. One of the remarkable resources they have is extensive footage of Moshe Kraus' witness and testimony.



Bergen-Belsen Memorial commemorates the thousands buried here in mass graves after the war.

My journey continued in Israel, where I participated in a special Shabbat and engaged with the creative minds behind 'Hidden Face,' a poignant film chronicling the life of the Klausenberger Rebbe, a beacon of hope amidst unspeakable loss and suffering during the Holocaust. His unwavering faith and resilience inspired Moshe and countless others to reclaim their faith after the devastation of the war.

Moshe Kraus' story is a testament to the indomitable human spirit and the power of perseverance in the face of overwhelming challenges. His journey inspires us to confront adversity with courage and determination, reminding us that hope and resilience can light the way forward, even during the darkest times.



In an article, '[Jewish Resistance During The Holocaust](#),' published by CIRJ, I delve into a less-explored form of resistance that is often overlooked and not well-documented. Despite this, it serves as a testament to the strength and perseverance of those who resisted.

As we move into autumn, I hope you find inspiration in the stories of resilience that continue to shape our collective memory.

Abigail