

# SKYPING WITH HARRY ROLNICK FROM TEL AVIV

Pages 115 to 121 of the Rolnick book were devoted to the Rolnicks of Benton Harbor and especially to Harry Rolnick, son of William, the youngest child of Dov Ber Rolnick.

One day, I received the following email from Jack Keller, a member of Harry Rolnick's synagogue in Benton Harbor (I have edited the communication slightly):

7/12/15 From **SHERMAN JACK KELLER (email address given)**

**to me**

Herschel is now 97 and still going strong. The other day Hershel inquired if I could arrange for him to connect with you. I am comfortable I should be able to even facilitate communication by FaceTime or Skype. You have no idea what this would mean to your second cousin. I await your response and your whereabouts. Jerusalem or the States. Please respond and give good times to connect - we are on NY time. I look forward hearing from you.

*Jack Keller.*

7/13/15 **SHERMAN JACK KELLER <saba10@me.com>**

**to me**

The attached photos were taken last Purim. It followed our trip to Israel, and purchasing for Herschel at the Carmel Shuk in Tel Aviv Pharoh's head gear. You should know your cousin is an admired and loved member of our congregation. He has a heart of gold, and when he wanted to connect with you, I simply wanted to do what I could - because I knew he could not have accomplished what he wanted to do - and sharing the pleasure with you would be wonderful. Herschel still reads Torah every Shabbat - if





necessary the full triennial. Trying to honor Herschel has been a constant challenge - because he does not want to impose any burden on others - despite the fact he constantly does for us, yet he expects nothing in return. I trust the attachments I have shared will exceed your expectations for an update - and provides assurances Herschel is well and still very active.

7/13/15 SHERMAN JACK KELLER <saba10@me.com>

**to me**

Herschel will be pleased to know we have communicated. I made a promise during services the other day I would reach out - and Herschel did express concern both you and he were hard if hearing. Hold tight with whatever plans you have to explore working with Skype. I will shortly let you know if I can come up with a solution. For the moment I need to know if I make arrangements - are you able to go to an address near the center of Jerusalem. If so I have a little work to do. If both you and Herschel can be connected by Skype, hopefully Apple's FaceTime - then the two of you can chat with non verbal communications, scribble your responses and at my end I can repeat what Herschel wants expressed and the same repeated in Israel. We will certainly be able to make the Internet connection very satisfying. To make this process even more effective our congregation has a Rabbi who is extraordinary. He has led our high holiday services - both as Rabbi and Chazzan - for close to fifteen years. Rabbi Katzew and our entire congregation appreciate Herschel as a community treasure. If Rabbi Katzew will be in Jerusalem before he returns to the States I

have a plan that should be rewarding for all concerned. I only need for the moment confirmation you will be able to go to a place yet to be defined - perhaps close to the old and renovated train station. I await your response as I will begin to coordinate a plan that will be rewarding for all involved.

*Jack Keller.* Sent from my iPhone

7/14/15 SHERMAN JACK KELLER <saba10@me.com>

**to Jan, me**

Just maybe with the passage of time we have the perfect solution. Julie's sister Shari Buxbaum lives in Ramat Aviv - 12 Oppenheimer and I know she would very much enjoy hosting the event. Julie communicates almost daily with her sister by face time (the Apple protocol for internet communications and the answer to Skype) and if this works - well we have the perfect solution on many levels. I await your joint responses.

*Jack*

and even later:

7/28/15 Sent from my iPhone

We thoroughly enjoyed making the event happen.

I took a video of your conversation. Unfortunately Herschel wanted to get physically close to you and the monitor and by doing so you could only see his hat. I need to split the video I took in half because the size is too long to send. The video will give you a different perspective and be a warm memory preparatory to your visit to our community. We look forward to see you - and we may see you next February when we make our annual trip to Israel.

And when, a few days ago (7<sup>th</sup> March 2017), I enquired "in trepidation" about Harry's health, I received the following answer:

**SHERMAN JACK KELLER**

No reason for trepidation! Herschel is strong and doing well. Still in charge of reading Torah. He only has one limitation at the present. He cannot drive at night!

In less than a year he will be 100. He remains a model for everyone. To follow will be an effort to send a photograph.

*Jack*

Will you be coming to the States?