

Memories of the Sarkins

Gallia Chud

I am so fortunate to have known Sarah and Sidney Sarkin since we came to Vancouver in 1945 to open the Peretz School.

The connection actually began in Montreal when my husband Ben's family lived in an upstairs suite owned by the Sarkins. Their move to Vancouver was necessitated by the fact that Sidney could not endure the Montreal weather due to his artificial legs and inability to cope with the snow.

Sidney at that time was a well-known, popular union organizer, in fact arrested and jailed for his union activity. Both Sarah and Sidney came from elite families. Sarah attended the world famous school in Paris, the Sorbonne. Their only child June suffered from many challenges and I remember visiting June regularly here in Vancouver where she lived in assisted living on Commercial Drive in the east end.

I found it hard to reconcile that the child of such brilliant parents was so severely challenged.

However, what Sarah could not give to her only daughter, she imparted and instilled in hundreds of children whom she taught in preschool and Kindergarten over the years at Peretz.

Sidney worked as a machine operator for Lounge Fashions but was always considered an intellectual "guru" who was consulted often by many politician and trade union organizers who valued his advice.

Together, their love for Yiddish and everything the Peretz Centre valued was paramount to their continuing activity here and we honour them for their everlasting contribution.