

Stendig-Lindberg-Infeld-Kahane: The Family Story

Gustawa (Gutka) Stendig-Lindberg

Gustawa (Gutka) Stendig-Lindberg was born in Kraków on 12.6.1926. Her parents were Jakub and Felicja (nee Infeld) Stendig.

Jakub Stendig



Jakub was born in Kołomyja (a city located in the western Ukraine) in the 1890s. He was a civil engineer and an architect. His father, Anschel Stendig was a very wealthy man. He owned lands, a brick factory and he was also an authorized construction contractor. Anschel had 8 children and Jakub was the youngest. Jakub graduated from the Technical Academy in Lwow and also from the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. Jakub built many of the Jewish community's public buildings in Kraków prior to the war. Jakub was also considered a legal expert in building issues and was authorized to represent others in court. Jakub had a 'non-profit' occupation – guarding holy Jewish articles, arts and crafts of the Kraków synagogues. Jakub survived for two years in the Kraków ghetto and the Płaszów and Gross-Rosen concentration camps. During his detention in Płaszów, he worked as an engineer and architect for the "Building Office" of that dreadful camp. Many of those who worked for that office were murdered by the camp commander, the notorious Amon Göth.



After the war, he stayed a while in Sweden with his daughter Gustawa and later immigrated to Israel where his son Josef Tsur lived. He designed the Zionist Organization of America (Z.O.A). house in Tel Aviv. (he is second from left in the photo). The cornerstone of the Zionist Organization of America House was laid in the presence of Premier David Ben Gurion, Cabinet

Ministers, members of the Jewish Agency and representatives of many organizations.



Premier Ben Gurion delivered an address stressing that the Z.O.A. House that Jakub Stendig designed, would strengthen the ties

between Israel and United States Jewry. He said the establishment of Israel was not a fulfillment of Zionist aims only. It was an additional step toward gathering in the dispersed Jews.

The Z.O.A. House, Mr. Ben Gurion said, would be a symbol of the link between American Jewry and Israel. He urged that the Jews of the United States raise the required funds and scientific manpower for fulfilling many tasks facing Israel in absorbing the second million Jews as soon as possible. This is the test, he added, for American Jewry. Other speakers included Deniel Frisch, president of the Z.O.A.; U.S. Ambassador James G. McDonald; Joseph Sprinzak, Speaker of the Knesset; and Dr. Abraham Granot, world head of the Jewish National Fund. Jakub died in Israel in 1952.

Felicja Stendig (nee Infeld)





Felicja Stendig (nee Infeld) was born in Kraków in 1895, the eldest of

three children of Salomon Infeld and Esther (nee Kahane), the grand granddaughter of Rabbi Akiva Eger.

Esther (nee Kahane) (the grand granddaughter of Rabbi Akiva Eger.)



Rabbi Akiva Eger



Salomon had a flourishing leather business. After the death of his wife Esther (in the 1930s), Salomon Infeld married again and left Poland with his second wife, and immigrated to Palestine. Salomon died in 1942 and was buried on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

After Felicja had graduated from the Hebrew gymnasium in Kraków, she wanted to study at the Jagielloński University in Kraków, but her father insisted that she study at the Business College in Kraków from which she graduated. Felicja was an autodidact and had a wide education. She took courses as a free listener at Jagielloński University in Krakow and at London University.

Felicja Stendig was an essayist, journalist, literary critic and linguist who mastered eight languages. She was also one of the first women who ever studied Talmud in Poland and a researcher of the social conditions of women in various cultures. Felicja researched for Jewish Press (e.g.

"Chwila", Nowy Dziennik" etc.), remote Jewish communities such as the Ethiopian community and the Yemenite one. She was invited to give a series of lectures by the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO) about the lives of great Jewish personalities.

Felicja at ul. Podzamcze 14 in Kraków



Felicja made the family house (at ul. Podzamcze 14 in Kraków) an intellectual center. Her husband Jakub gave his wife full support in her intellectual activities and took part in them as well. He himself was active in the Jewish community and in the Zionist organizations. He was the founder of the Jewish High School of Industrial Handicrafts in Kraków. Although Jakub and Felicja were modern people, they also kept the Jewish tradition in their home.

Felicja had a sister and a brother. Her sister, Bronia, was born in 1902. She was a teacher and also the founder of the Junior Vocational High School ("Naszą Szkołę") in Kraków (~1938). She was married to Menashe Infeld (a cousin) and they had a son named Roman. They all perished in the Holocaust.

Roman Infeld



Leopold Infeld



Leopold Infeld, Felicja's brother, was born on August 20, 1898 in Kraków. He collaborated with Albert Einstein at Princeton University (1936–1938). The two scientists jointly formulated the equation describing star movements as well as concurrently writing the book *The Evolution of Physics*.

(see photo). He was a Rockefeller fellow at Cambridge University (1933–1934) and a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Leopold was interested in the theory of relativity. He was awarded a doctorate at the Jagiellonian University(1921), worked as an assistant and a docent at the University of Lwów(1930–1933) and then as a professor at the University of Toronto between 1939 and 1950.



After the first use of nuclear weapons in 1945, Infeld, like Einstein, became a peace activist. Because of his activities, he was unjustly accused of having communist sympathies. In 1950 he left Canada and returned to communist Poland. He felt he had an obligation to help science in Poland recover

from the ravages of the Second World War. He served as President of the Polish Physical Society between 1955 and 1957. In the staunchly anti-communist climate of the time, many in the Canadian government and media feared that working in a communist country; he would betray nuclear weapons secrets. He was stripped of his Canadian citizenship and was widely denounced as a traitor. In actuality, Infeld's field was the theory of relativity—not directly linked to nuclear weapons research. After Infeld's return to Poland, he requested a leave of absence from the University of Toronto. His request was denied, and Infeld resigned his post. In 1995 the University of Toronto made amends and granted Infeld the posthumous title of professor emeritus. Upon his return to Poland, Infeld became a professor at the University of Warsaw, a post he held until his death.



The Born–Infeld model was named after Max Born and Leopold Infeld, who first proposed it. The Infeld-Hull Factorization Method describing general sets of solutions to the Schrödinger equation.

Infeld was one of the 11 signatories to the Russell–Einstein Manifesto in 1955 and is the only signatory never to receive a Nobel Prize.

In 1964 he was one of the signatories of the so-called Letter of 34 to Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz regarding freedom of culture.

Infeld is the author of Quest: "An Autobiography" and the biography "Whom the Gods Love: The Story of Évariste Galois."

In 1939 he married Helen Schlauch, an American mathematician.

Upon his return to Poland in 1950, Infeld became a professor at the



University of Warsaw, a post he held until his death. He passed away on January 15, 1968, in Warsaw. (photo is with his wife, Helen Schlauch, an American mathematician, and son Eryk)

Felicja Infeld and Jakub Stendig



Felicja Infeld and Jakub Stendig got married in ~1920. They had a son Josef (born in 1921, later Tsur) and a daughter Gustawa (Gutka, born in 1926, later Stendig-Lindberg).

Josef, Felicja, Jakub and Gustawa (Gutka) Stendig



Josef Stendig



Josef fled eastward at the outbreak of the war. In Russia, he joined the Anders Army and reached Palestine with it. He later joined the British Army in order to fight Nazi Germany. After the war he became an engineer and married Tova (nee Hochman) who was a lawyer. They had 2 daughters, Na'ama (Eldan) who is a social worker and Varda (Gross-Tsur) who is a pediatric neurologist. The extended family lives in Israel. Josef passed away in 1999, and Tova in 2008.

Gustawa (Gutka) Stendig-Lindberg

As a child Gustawa, saw her parents concentrating on their intellectual and creative work at home. Her father Jakub, who was an architect, worked at his drawing table and her mother, as a journalist and a researcher, sat near her typewriter. Gustawa was inspired by both of them.

Gustawa was attracted to poetry. She started to write poems at the age of 8. She continued to write during the years she was detained with her family in the Kraków ghetto and in Płaszów concentration camp. Only during the period from September 1944 to April 1945, being imprisoned in Auschwitz and in Bergen-Belsen, she ceased writing, yet kept composing poems in her mind. After the war Gustawa wrote more poetry and in 1984 she published her first collection of poems in Polish, "Dokumenty", an anthology of works from 1941 ~1947. Three additional collections followed in Swedish, English and Hebrew. To honor the memory of her daughter, a poet who died at the age of eighteen, she established the *Miriam Felicia Lindberg Memorial Foundation* in 1976 which grants bi-annually the "Miriam Lindberg Israel Poetry for Peace Prize".

1939. The Kraków Ghetto was established on March 3, 1941 in the Podgórze district, and was surrounded by walls that kept it separated from the rest of the city. The ghetto was liquidated two years later, in

March 1943. The Stendig family spent two years in the ghetto and was moved with thousands of others to Płaszów concentration camp on March 13, 1943. There, Felicja and Gustawa were separated from Jakub and sent to the women's camp. They both worked in German workshops. Felicja worked in a Madritch factory, where German Army combat uniforms were manufactured, and Gustawa in a printing house. They survived the horrors of Płaszów and in early September 1944 Felicja and Gustawa were transferred to Auschwitz. In October 1944 upon the approach of the Soviet army, they were again transferred; this time to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany (they arrived on 1.11.1944). The living conditions in Bergen-Belsen were extremely harsh. Starvation and poor hygiene caused diseases from which many of the inmates died. The British Army liberated the camp on 15 April 1945 but Felicja did not survive. She died of hunger, exhaustion and typhoid on the 2nd of May 1945, 18 days after the liberation of Bergen-Belsen, at 49 years of age.

After the liberation, Gustawa with other orphan survivors was sent to Sweden (Malmö) for recuperation. She later worked there in a chocolate factory until she moved to the British Isles in June 1946. Her father Jakub, who also survived, came to Sweden to meet her and helped her to contact the British branch of the family.

Gustawa moved to England because she wanted to study medicine and her relatives in England were ready to support her financially. Her motivation to study medicine originated from her deep ambition to help human beings and she also wanted to study and research the human mind, to understand how the Holocaust could have happened.

Gustawa in Dublin, Ireland





Gustawa studied medicine at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Dublin, Ireland where she received her medical degree along with Honors in Psychology and a Prize in Medicine. (In the photo, she is sitted third from the left) .



Gustawa was registered as a qualified medical doctor in the Irish and British Medical Register in 1952 and practiced in London General Hospitals in Departments of Medicine and Surgery. (In the photo, she is first on the left)

Gustawa and Per-Ola Lindberg





In 1953 Gustawa returned to Sweden and married Per-Ola Lindberg (born in 1930) who was a piano teacher. In 1957, their daughter Miriam-Felicia was born and on 28.11.1960 they had their second daughter, Eva-Ariela.

Initially, Gustawa was permitted only *locum tenens* posts, due to restrictions of Swedish medical laws. In 1958 she began nostrification in all clinical subjects at the Karolinska Institute of Stockholm where she graduated *cum laude* and was awarded a medical degree and qualified as a Registered Swedish medical doctor in 1961. Gustawa devoted her professional time to Psychiatry, research of "magnesium" and of the rehabilitation of the back.



In 1962, Gustawa and Per-Ola divorced. In 1975 she decided to leave Sweden and to immigrate to Israel. She arrived in Israel, January 1976 as a Research Fellow of Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden at Tel Aviv University, where she became a Visiting Professor in 1977 and was an Associate Visiting Professor at the Dept. of Physiology & Pharmacology from 1982.



Dr. Gustawa Stendig-Lindberg was the Chief Physician of the Pain Clinic at Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv, and in 1979 she became a Consultant in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation of that clinic for many years. In 1987 she founded and directed the Back Rehabilitation Clinic, also at Ichilov Hospital, a position she held until 1996. During this period she continued her "research of magnesium" as an Independent Scientist.

Professor Gustawa Stendig-Lindberg was awarded the following titles:

- **Fellow of the Swedish Society of Medicine**
- **Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine**
- **Member of the New York Academy of Sciences**
- **Member of the American Academy of Rehabilitation & Physical Medicine**
- **Member of the Scientific Committee for the International Symposia on Magnesium**
- **Member of the Irish, British, Israeli & Swedish Medical Associations**



Gustawa lived her last years in a senior residents home in Kfar Shmaryahu. She passed away on 17 Mar. 2008. Per-Ola Lindberg passed away on 3 Jan. 2004.

Miriam Felicia Lindberg



Miriam Felicia Lindberg was born in 1957 in Stockholm and buried in Jerusalem in 1975, she was eighteen at the time of her death. She was known for her fight against nuclear weapons, her involvement in youth communities, rich creative gifts and intensive work, in spite of her youth, for the cause of Peace in the Middle East and for Israel's right of existence; for a safe, peaceful world for all of humanity. Miriam Felicia wrote poems, beginning at age 8 in Hebrew, and later poems in Swedish, English and in French. A book of her poems was published under the name of "The Song of Miriam".

Eva-Ariela Lindberg



Eva-Ariela Lindberg studied architecture and art in the *Bezalel Academy of Art and Design*, Jerusalem which is Israel's national school of art from which she graduated in 1986. (The photo is with her father in 1967). Eva married in 1985 and moved with her husband, who was an American citizen, to California, USA. Eva received a Master degree in Leadership and Humanities from the New College University in San Francisco USA (1997).



Eva has a Healing Center (the "Tulip Center") for individuals and communities in Woodacre, California. Eva divorced her husband in 1995 and later returned to Israel in 2004. She currently lives part of the time in California

running her Healing Center there. The photo is with her mother Gutka in 2007.