The year 2009 saw Ada Yonath become the first Jewish woman to win the Nobel Prize in Chemistry as well as becoming the first Israeli woman to win a Nobel Prize. The 2010 souvenir sheet from the Congo depicts Yonath and her two co-winners, Venkatraman Ramakrishnan and Thomas Seitz, in the lower row. The Israeli scientist received the award for her breakthrough studies on the structure and function of ribosomes and their interaction with antibiotics. Ribosomes are the cellular organelles where protein synthesis takes place.

Also in 2009, Elinor Ostrom became the first Jewish woman and, in fact, the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in Economics. Her father was Jewish and her mother was Protestant. The second souvenir sheet from the Congo pictures Ostrom and co-winner Oliver Williams along with President Barack Obama, the Nobel Peace Prize recipient, in the lower row. Ostrom won the award for her “Analysis of Economic Governance.”

The previous Jewish women who have won the Nobel Prize, Gerty Cori (1947), Rosalyn Yalow (1977), Rita Levi-Montalcini (1986) and Gertrude Belle Elion (1988), were all in Physiology or Medicine.

— Gene Eisen
http://women.js.emory.edu/BLUMENTHAL/Philately.html
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ada_Yonath

Wishing all all Society Members and their families a Chag Sameah!
Chiune Sugihara was a Japanese diplomat stationed in Kovno Lithuania during WWII. Many Jews had fled from all parts of Europe to seek refuge in Lithuania, but when the Germans began to occupy Kovno, they knew what was coming next. Sugihara defied orders from his superiors and spent a period of several days writing Visas from dawn to dusk, to enable the Jews to go to other distant countries, thus escaping the fate of their less fortunate brethren who remained after he was transferred to another post. Large numbers of remaining Jews were later slaughtered at the Ninth Fort. Sugihara eventually was forced to retire from the diplomatic service in disgrace. The story of his heroic efforts only became known towards the end of his life. In 1985, Israel honored him as Righteous Among the Nations for his actions.

— Harriet Epstein

JUDAICA STAMP on STAMP

Many thanks to member David Cohen Parairan who calls our attention to the recent Austrian commemorative celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Verband Österreichischer Philatelistenvereine, which also includes that country’s 2010 Gustav Mahler issue in the stamp design.

NEW HANUKKAH STAMPS FROM CANADA POST

Canada’s first self-adhesive Hanukkah stamps were designed and produced using Canada Post Picture Postage. Companion stamps celebrating Eid and Divali were released at the same time. There was no official day of issue or FDC.

Although rumours of this issue were circulating in the philatelic press, collectors were formally introduced to the Ethnic Festival series in the Fall/Winter edition of Canada Post’s quarterly publication, Collections of Canada.

The stamps have a faux perforation and must be purchased in sheets of 21 for a cost of $17.90. This includes a souvenir enlargement of the stamp in the bottom left corner.

In response to Alan Benjamin’s question in our October newsletter, I collect many Judaica items besides stamps. The list includes coins, ceremonial objects such as dreidels, Chanukiot, seder plates, books, Jewish dolls (usually made to look like Jewish celebrities), paintings and statues, etc. There is almost no end to the Judaica specialty items that can be collected.

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The Great Brazilian Novelist and the “Angel of Hamburg”

On June 27, 2008, Brazil issued a stamp (Scott 3053) commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of João Guimarães Rosa (1908-1967), one of Brazil’s greatest novelists, an accomplished linguist, physician and career diplomat. One may ask what his connection is to the topic of Judaica stamps.

The connection began when Rosa decided to leave his medical career in favor of becoming a diplomat and novelist. Soon after divorcing his first wife, he was appointed the deputy consul at the Brazilian Consulate in Hamburg, Germany in 1938. There he met Aracy de Carvalho, a member of the Consul’s staff.

Aracy de Carvalho was born to a German mother and a Portuguese father in Rio Negro, Paraná, Brazil in 1908. She divorced her first husband after an unhappy marriage. In 1936, she traveled with her five-year-old son, Eduardo, to Hamburg where she had an aunt. Because Aracy de Carvalho was fluent in German, English and French, she landed a position in the visa sector of the Brazilian Consulate. At the time, the president of Brazil, Getulio Vargas, was known to be sympathetic to the Nazis and had issued explicit orders forbidding the issuance of visas to Jews. Meanwhile, the urgency for Jews to leave Germany was becoming desperate, culminating in the infamous Kristallnacht of November 9, 1938 when synagogues and Jewish homes and businesses throughout Germany and Austria were destroyed. Aracy de Carvalho decided to ignore the Brazilian president’s order and began to issue visas for Brazil to many Jews. She was able to obtain false documents for residency for those Jews who came from other cities in Germany. She also sheltered Jews in her home and personally assisted their safe departure from Germany to Brazil by passenger ship. Monica Raisa Schpun (2011) has documented the close friendship that developed after the war between Aracy de Carvalho and Margarethe Levy, one of the Jews she rescued along with her husband, by supplying them with immigration visas.

João Guimarães Rosa was aware of and supported Aracy de Carvalho’s efforts to assist the Jews of Hamburg. The couple fell in love and were married in 1940. They stayed at their posts until August 1942, when a German submarine torpedoed a Brazilian ship. On Aug. 31, 1942, Brazil declared war against Germany because of this incident. Brazilian diplomats, including Guimarães Rosa and de Carvalho, were remanded to the custody of the German government for four months until exchanged for German diplomats.

Upon her return to Brazil, de Carvalho kept a low profile about her heroic exploits in Germany. Her granddaughter, Vera Tess, noted that only as an adult had she become aware of the details of her grandmother’s heroic efforts because of the programs presented in her honor by the São Paulo Jewish community. When de Carvalho’s son, Eduardo, was asked about his mother’s reticence in speaking about her rescue efforts, he said that it was a part of her personality. She didn’t consider herself a heroine.

Tragically, João Guimarães Rosa died of a heart attack at the age of 59 in 1967, shortly after being elected to the Brazilian Academy of Letters.

On July 8, 1982, Arcy de Carvalho, now called the “Angel of Hamburg” by the Sao Palo Jewish community, became one of the two Brazilians honored by Yad Vashem with a Righteous Among the Nations Award, together with Luis Martins de Souza Dantas. She is only one of two women in the diplomatic category that have been so honored, the other being Nina Langlet of Sweden. She died at the age of 102 on February 28, 2011.

— Gene Eisen

I am grateful to Stanley Serxner for the translation from the Portuguese of two pertinent articles on the web about Aracy de Carvalho.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jo%CA%81o_Guimarães_Rosa/
**Fiddler on the Roof**

This musical was first produced in New York in 1964 and has become much loved ever since, having many professional and amateur presentations across the world with many favourite songs and tunes such as *If I Were a Rich Man*. It is the thirteenth longest running show in the history of Broadway and winner of nine TONY awards. Its music was created by Jerry Bock with lyrics by Sheldon Harnick. The original book by Joseph Stein was based on *Tevye and his Daughters* by Sholem Aleichem, the amusing and welcoming nom de plume of Yiddish author Solomon Naumovich Rabinovich (1859-1916) who was born in the Ukraine.

Within the plot of the musical Tevye a poor milkman with five daughters attempts to keep traditional family order against the strong willed attempts of his maturing children to breach the accepted ways and rules.

Reb Tevye has been played by many leading Jewish actors. In this 1997 Antigua Barbuda issue, we see Zero Mostel’s interpretation of the character. Samuel Joel Mostel (1915-77) first starred as Tevye on September 22, 1964. His particular adaptation of the character has been the standard all actors performing this role have followed.

Rabinovitch as Sholem Aleichem has had philatelic tributes issued by Israel as well as Roumania and the former USSR. All three stamps were issued in 1959 to mark the centenary of the Jewish author and playwright’s birth.

— Jeff Dugdale