

Jewish Resettlement in the North Shore

Yearly rallies in support of Soviet Jews were held throughout the North Shore during the 1970s. Some community members traveled to the Soviet Union to meet refuseniks on trips sponsored by Action for Soviet Jewry, while others wrote letters to refuseniks and petitioned elected officials. In 1979, George Freedman, the president of the Jewish Federation of the North Shore (JFNS), and David Colten, the director of Jewish Family Service (JFS), coordinated an agreement with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) to accept Soviet refugees in the North Shore.



The Russian Resettlement Committee: (standing, left to right) George Freedman, Ernie Weiss, Audrey Weinstein, Cliff Garber, Bertil Wolf, and Edward Nizhnikov; (seated, left to right) Bernice Kazis, Sylvia Disenhof, Linda Lane, Irena Karasik, and Galina Nizhnikov.

Courtesy of the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at NEHGS

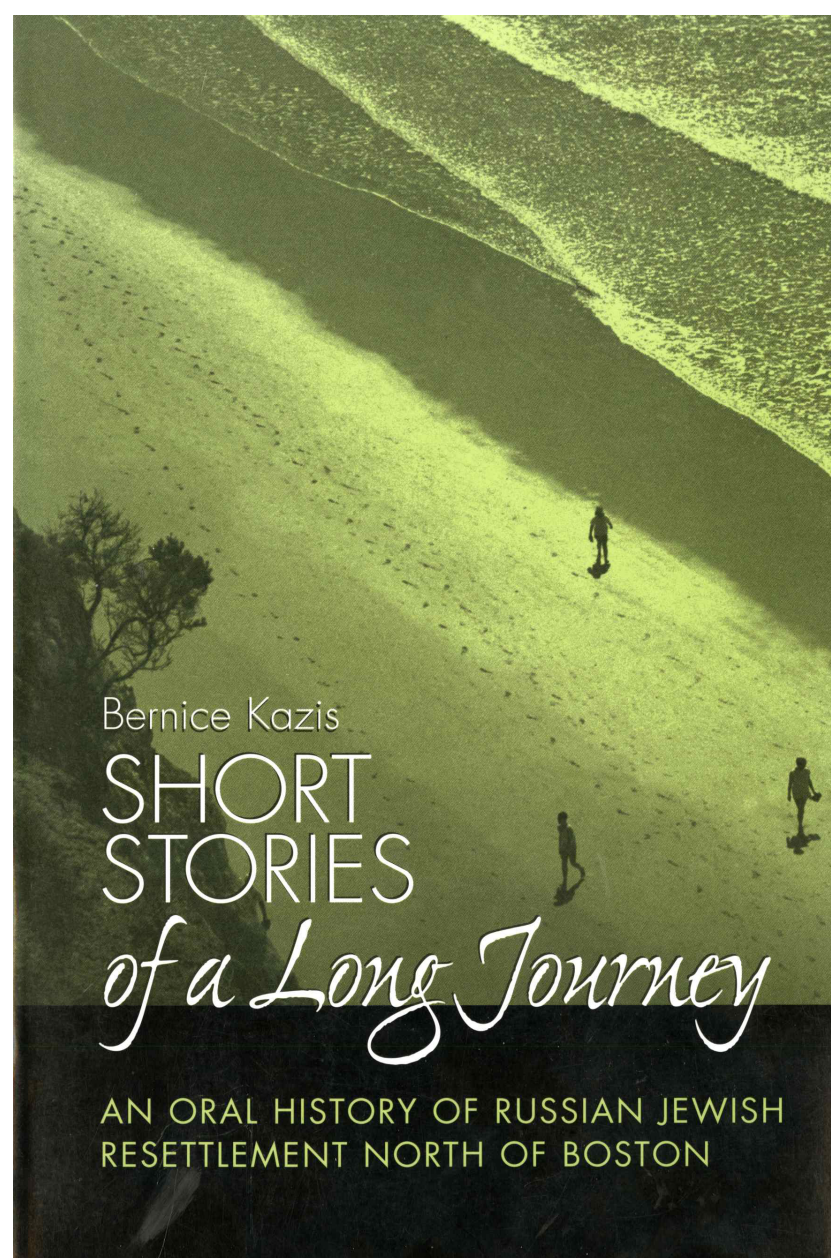


Alla Brikman teaching a citizenship class for New Americans in the North Shore, no date.

Courtesy of the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at NEHGS.

Initially, a small group of dedicated JFS professionals welcomed the refugees. But as the number of Soviet émigrés grew, additional community members volunteered to support Jewish immigrants. They prepared apartments for new arrivals and welcomed them at Logan Airport. They also helped register refugees in government programs and drove them to interviews and medical appointments. Once these New Americans, as they came to be known, adjusted to life in the United States, many also became volunteers themselves.

By the 1990s, the North Shore was home to the third-largest community of Russian-speaking Jews in the United States.



In 2000, Bernice Kazis, Director of Russian Resettlement for JFS of the North Shore from 1978 to 1993, and Zelda Kaplan conducted oral interviews with community volunteers and Soviet émigrés. Excerpts from these interviews were published in *Short Stories of a Long Journey: An Oral History of Russian Jewish Resettlement North of Boston* (2002).



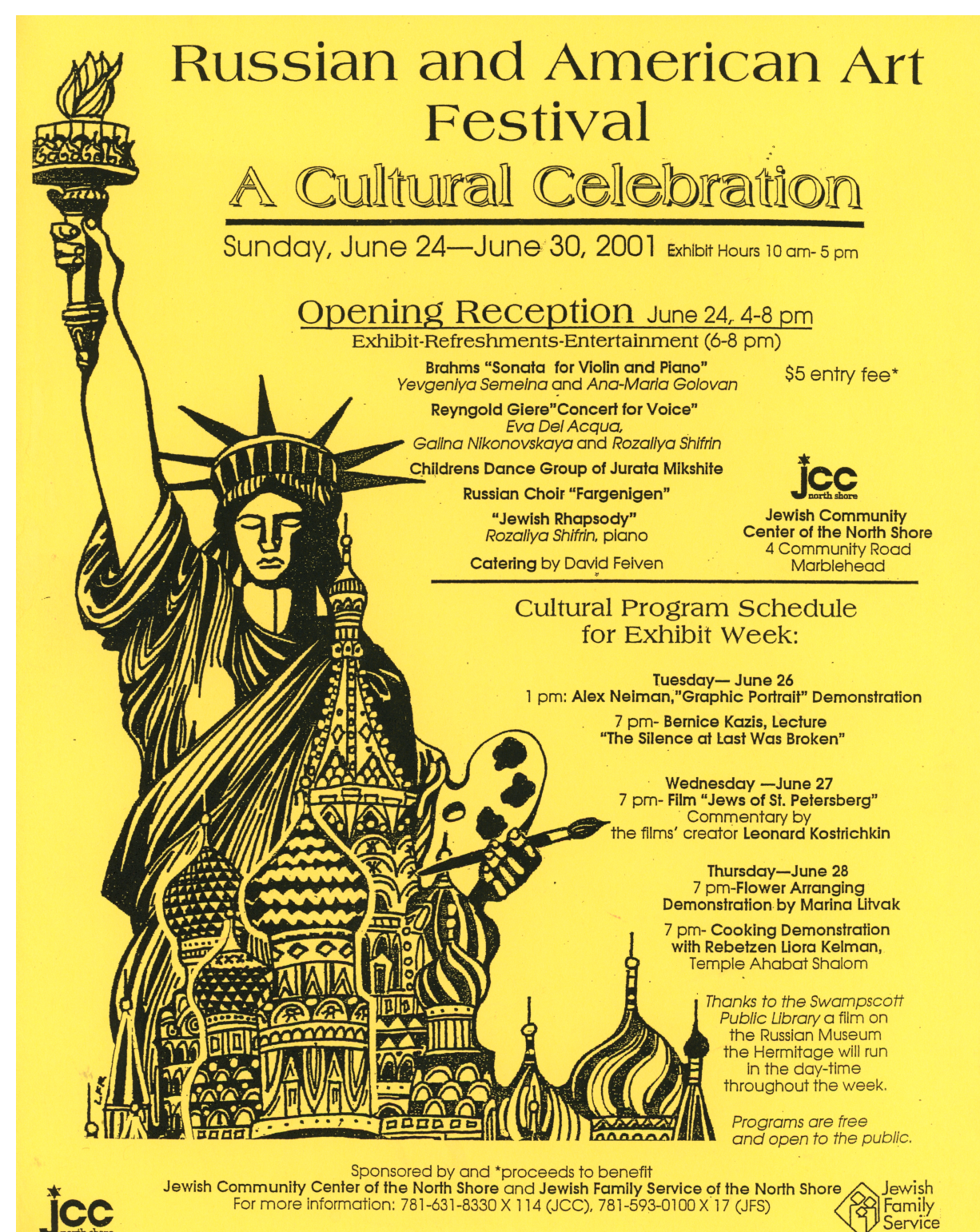
Purim celebrations, no date.

Courtesy of the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at NEHGS.



New Americans Alla Kravchinsky, Tanya Gorlin (standing), and Ella Kagan, calling Moscow.

Courtesy of the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at NEHGS.



A flyer announcing a festival celebrating the culture and contributions of Russian-speaking Jews in the North Shore.

Courtesy of the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at NEHGS.



Vera and Arnold Joffe celebrating their U.S. citizenship.

Courtesy of the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at NEHGS.

