

# Massive reservoirs discovered under Mandate-era Nazareth fort

*Huge find uncovered during IDF kitchen remodeling*

By Eli Ashkenazi

The architect, first lieutenant Omer Neeman, spent several minutes running his hands along the massive reinforced concrete wall under the Nazareth fort.

"Look at this finish. This concrete is of extraordinary quality," said Neeman.

He was standing underneath the kitchen of the Israel Defense Forces' Home Front headquarters in Nazareth, where a huge water reservoir recently was discovered.

The base is in the Tegart Fort, one of dozens of similar fortresses the British built as police headquarters in pre-state Israel during the late 1930s. Many were built by the Solel Boneh construction and civil engineering company.

After the establishment of Israel, the huge fort became the IDF's Northern Command headquarters and later the Home Front's northern headquarters.

At the heart of the fort the British built a jail, and the original bars remain on several windows. Over the years the prison area became the base's kitchen.

The forts are named after British police officer and engineer Sir Charles Tegart, who designed them in 1938 based on his experiences in the Indian insurgency.

The huge water reservoir under the Nazareth fort was



An IDF officer standing in the reservoir, discovered under the kitchen in the army's northern Home Front headquarters.

discovered accidentally, during recent kitchen renovations.

The workers were digging through the kitchen floor to lay new sewer pipes when they found a 5.5 meter deep cavity, 15 meters long and 5 meters wide. Two small openings, apparently to let in rainwater, were found in the cavity's upper wall.

Inside, the builders found metal pipes and some of the original pumps. They sawed through the cavity's concrete walls.

"It took them a whole day to cut through 80 centimeters of reinforced concrete," said Neeman.

When the wall was finally opened, they found another, even larger cavity - 30 me-

ters long and 10 meters wide, also with an opening for water. Twelve concrete pillars supported the space from within.

Neeman, the architect in charge of preservation at the IDF's construction center, was notified of the discovery.

"In the past, not knowing any better, interesting findings like these in IDF bases were destroyed," said Neeman.

"Today this has all changed," said Shimon Zafir, of the Council for Restoration and Preservation of Historic Sites in Israel, northern district.

"The army has understood the importance of preserving these sites. The army has an

authorized body to deal with preservation," he said.

Neeman says he is writing a code for preserving structures on military territory. "The structures are in our hands and it is our responsibility to preserve them, for both their historic and their architectural value," he said.

Zafir came with Yossi Feldman, the director general of the preservation council, to check out the reservoirs under the Nazareth fort.

"We were in shock, it's an enormous structure," said Zafir. "It's extraordinary. Neither of us had seen such a thing. I'm intrigued about the reasons for building this monstrous thing. I would consider placing the Command

H.Q. inside this fortified hole during war," he said.

"This could be an atomic shelter," says Neeman jokingly. "It's an unusual investment. Who knows, maybe they meant to stay here forever, or had other plans for this building."

"The British built water reservoirs on the roofs of all the Tegart forts, so I wonder why they made the tremendous effort and investment of building this gigantic underground reservoir. It's a mystery. Maybe future researchers will be able to shed light on it," he said.

The IDF's construction department has decided to open the reservoirs to the public, and have installed a special entrance and lighting.

# B-G Professor: Negev infants three times more likely to die

*Southern Israel also lacking in hospital beds, doctors*

By Yanir Yagna

Infant mortality in the Negev is three times higher than in central Israel, stated Professor Dov Chernichovsky yesterday.

Chernichovsky, from the Department of Health Management at Ben-Gurion University in Be'er Sheva, was speaking at a conference of local authority leaders in Dimona.

The infant mortality rate in the Negev is 1.6 per 1,000 live births, he said.

That's not the only indicator in which the Negev is lagging, he added.

While Tel Aviv has 1.2 physicians per 1,000 residents, and central Israel has 0.9, in the Negev the number is 0.8.

The Negev also has only 0.8 hospital beds per 1,000 residents, compared to 1.1 in central Israel.

Most communities in the south have no doctors available after 7 P.M., and long waits for specialists.

In general, the Negev is not considered an attractive region for the medical profession, Chernichovsky said.

He said access to medical services needs to be improved, as distances play an important part in the gaps between central and southern Israel.

## Situation 'catastrophic'

Conference participants called the situation catastrophic.

"I have no doubt that if there were more doctors stationed at night in Yeruham, Mitzpe Ramon and in Bedouin communities, lives could be saved," said Dimona mayor Meir Cohen.

Cohen also told the conference that he had learned that Clalit Health Services is subcontracting nighttime medi-

cal services, and has different rates in different parts of the country.

"When a patient goes to see a Clalit physician in Jerusalem, the company pays the physician NIS 100 per visit. But when a person visits a doctor working with the same company in Dimona, the doctor only gets NIS 55 per visit," Cohen said. "This affects the quality of the physicians who choose to work in the Negev."

"Can it be that a child from Dimona or Yeruham is worth less than a child from Tel Aviv, or that the life of a Bedouin child from the Negev is worth less than the life of a child from Jerusalem?" Co-

hen asked. "It's a disgrace."

Flora Shoshan, who chairs the Mitzpe Ramon local council, said, "We lack specialists, emergency medicine is non-existent, the lives of Negev residents are abandoned during the night, the health maintenance organizations are breaking laws, the health service quality is low and we, as mayors, have to do something about it."

The participants said they will be appealing to the Supreme Court against what they said were violations of the health and emergency medicine laws.

They also said they will set up a lobbying committee in the Knesset.

# Swine flu kills two more, including healthy young man

*Swine flu has claimed two more lives in the past three days, including that of an otherwise healthy 31-year-old.*

A total of 45 people in Israel have died from the pandemic. A senior health official says there are plans to vaccinate the entire population against the disease.

The man died at Petah Tikva's Rabin Medical Center yesterday after developing a secondary pneumonia infection.

He was hospitalized in Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital about a month ago with cough and a high fever, but no other diseases, and diagnosed with swine flu.

He was transferred to Rabin Medical Center but his condition did not improve.

Professor Dan Engelhard, chairman of the advisory committee on pediatric infectious diseases that advises the Health Ministry, said figures from the United States and Canada show that about 15 percent of H1N1 fatalities are healthy young people with no known risk factors.

"It is intolerable that a 31-year-old should die of flu, so we're planning to gradually inoculate the entire population," he said.

A 56-year-old woman from Tira died at Kfar Sava's Meir Medical Center on Saturday after being diagnosed with swine flu.

She had other health issues before contracting swine flu. (Dan Even)

# Haifa Theater director threatens to quit if not given raise, overseas trips

By Zipi Shohat

The director general of the Haifa Theater, Dror Garber, recently asked theater chairman Danny Nishlis for improved conditions. In an official letter dated Oct. 19, Garber told Nishlis if his employment conditions are not upgraded within two weeks, he would resign.

Today, 10 days after the ultimatum ran out, they both are refusing to say anything about the matter - but Garber is still in his job.

"If you are interested in continuing to employ me, here is a list of the required changes to the agreement," wrote Garber. Garber asked for approval in advance of

three overseas trips a year and expenses of up to NIS 3,500 a month. The benefits seem to be greater than what other theater directors in Israel receive.

Garber's main demand was for an immediate and significant raise, even though he has been in his position for less than two years. He wants his salary to be the same as the city's director general, despite the theater's deficit of NIS 17 million.

Theater director salaries are based on the size of the theater, as set out in the Ministry of Culture and Sport's 2004 Nizani report on theater directors' salaries.

The salary of the head of a large theater such as Tel

Aviv's Cameri of Beit Lessin is supposed to be much higher than that for the director of a small theater such as Haifa. The ministry is also supposed to fine a theater five times what it spends on wages exceeding these limits.

Garber was appointed in March 2008, even though he had never managed a cultural institution before. He had owned a ticket office in Haifa, which had also sold theater tickets and subscriptions.

He took the post during a huge crisis period for the theater, which had debts of over NIS 20 million. While the deficit may have fallen since then, the ministry par-

tially attributes this to the reduced operations of the theater last year. Therefore, the ministry reclassified the Haifa Theater as a small theater and not a medium-sized one this year.

Garber refused to comment, saying it was an internal matter between him and the board. Nishlis said the letter was personal and had been leaked. He said some of the demands had been accepted and other rejected, but they require approval from the ministry and the treasury.

The head of the ministry's Culture Administration said he had not received any official request on the changes yet.

# REHAVIA

Continued from page 1

will have only one apartment per floor, as opposed to the old standard of two to four apartments. "A building with nine apartments becomes a building with four apartments," said Sharon.

The new flats are listed for \$960,000 to \$1.8 million, a local real estate agent said.

But the changes are more than just interior: Although Rehavia was originally conceived as a garden neighborhood, its gardens are also being overtaken by the new projects. Some are being turned into parking lots, while others are being paved over and concealed behind walls.

"Who would hire a gardener if they stay here only on holidays, anyway?" said Ramon.

Another local activist, Yigal Tzur, said that half the flats in his building were bought by foreign residents and stand empty most of the year, along with three entire buildings on his street. Members of the neighborhood committee said entire streets in Rehavia are completely dark for months.

The new municipal master plan regulating construction permits in the neighborhood has not yet been submitted



The Netzach Yisrael yeshiva in Jerusalem's Rehavia neighborhood.

to the municipal planning committee, and is therefore not open to objections, but residents are saying it's already being implemented on the ground. The master plan divides Rehavia into three zones with varying construction standards. In some places, buildings as tall as six stories are allowed.

The municipality said in a statement: "City Hall recognizes the importance of conservation in such a historical

city, and we are already implementing unprecedented reforms in the field."

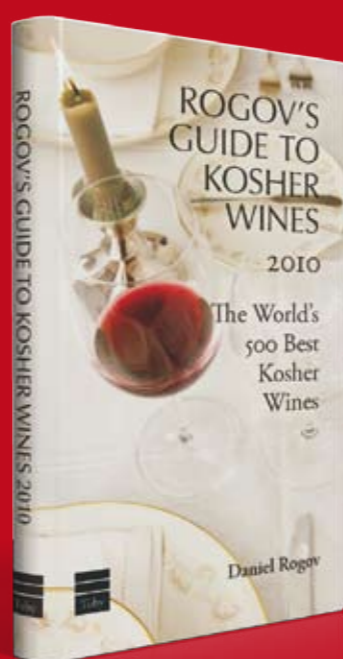
"It should be noted that not a single building in Rehavia was demolished since the mayor took office. The takeover of Rehavia by luxury construction and foreign buyers has been going on for nearly a decade. The municipality is taking steps to make affordable accommodation available for young people and students in Rehavia. As of 2010, a special

department in City Hall will develop practical tools to plan and market affordable housing throughout the city."

Shmuel Feingold, who represents the synagogue, said it was breaking no laws and the expansions were necessary due to the growth of the observant population in the neighborhood.

"Some people don't want a synagogue here and are exploiting the conservation issue to attack us," he said.

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