

Everything was in place: flights booked
Friday afternoon, flew to Orlando
Saturday, funeral Sunday, flew back
Tuesday, home Wednesday morning.

Here are the words I said at Marvin's
levuya:

As some of you know Rebecca and I had a wonderful relationship with Marvin and Shelly which we regard as extra special. This was particularly true when we had a home here in Orlando, but even since, we talked regularly. In particular over the last three months I have been talking to Shelly and, I hope, helping her during the most difficult time she has faced. We were both, as indeed we all are here, deeply saddened by Marvin's passing. I remember Shelly's email to me three months ago from Marvin's email address which simply said, 'call me'. That was the start of the difficult road which Shelly, together with her family, have been through.

Marvin and I regularly played chess and cards when Rebecca and I were living in the US. We were very evenly matched, but that only served to strengthen our friendship and possibly annoy Shelly, who saw our bickering over who was better as 'men being boys' – to say nothing of Marvin taking the mickey because he pretended not to understand my Queen's English!

Many, many meals and many, many hours in each other's company made me fly across what is known as the pond, linking the US and the UK. I am deeply honoured to be able to be here at this very sad and difficult time.

Update on the Pacov Synagogue

Karen Koblitz

Karen Koblitz is an American who is involved with the restoration of the Pacov Synagogue (from where our Czech scroll originates). While researching her family history, she found that some of her family originated from Pacov and through this became involved in the restoration project. She attended a meeting on the future of the Pacov Synagogue in Pacov in August and sent this report.

The Pacov Synagogue Symposium in the Czech Republic was a great success. We had over 25 people attend and a list of interesting guest speakers.

The first speaker was a student of Jewish Studies at Charles University. Tobias Smolik spoke about his research on how Jewish Museums present Jewish history. Local Czech historian Karel Vosta has researched and written about the Jewish community in Pacov and the surrounding communities and gave an in depth lecture on this history. Michal Arend, from a Jewish family in nearby Cernovice, has cared for the Jewish Cemetery and the sponsored public art piece at the Cernovice Cemetery near Pacov <<https://jewish-heritage-europe.eu/2018/07/08/on-the-road-in-cz-a-holocaust-memorial/>>. He spoke about his involvement in the Cernovice project. My partner in the Pacov Synagogue restoration, Pavel Tychtl, gave a lecture on the leading Jewish families of Pacov. Out of the 99 Pacov Jews taken to Terezin and on to death camps, only 7 survived.



The highlight was the ability to enter the Pacov Synagogue and for the first time look at its interior. The interior shows a series of columns in the middle of the room. This was a recent addition to the building as the last owner lowered the ceiling to create a second floor for storage. This will be removed, except for a small area that was originally the women's gallery. The synagogue's original windows go from the lower portion of the wall to just below the roof, so the second floor must be removed to bring light into the building. We also have to take up a false floor throughout the building. We will have an expert survey the state of the roof and the walls to make sure that they are strong enough to keep the building standing.



The following Sunday, August 11th, was a day throughout the Czech Republic when many Jewish Monuments and buildings were open to the public without fees. We opened up the synagogue for this event and there were at least 50 people from Pacov who visited the synagogue. They were interested in the history of the Jews and wanted to know what we would be doing in restoring the building.

Members of the synagogue board met on Tuesday, August 13th, with the mayor of Pacov, who agreed to help in getting the synagogue on the Czech National Historical Registry and as we draw up plans for the restoration, to receive a building permit. Once these are achieved, we will begin the process of applying for grants. We have a few European grants in mind and there is a contractor who lives next to the property and has agreed to work on the restoration. I am excited to see the process moving forward. We have a very optimistic target date to open the synagogue in 2023, to celebrate its 200th anniversary.

