

## Garden of healing at Jerusalem hospital

April 14 marked the official opening of a healing garden at the St. Louis French Hospital, a chronic, geriatric and palliative care hospital at the seam of the Old and New Cities of Jerusalem. The garden was made possible by a gift in memory of Lawrence native Randie Malinsky, a scion of the supermarket titans Waldbaum family and a noted philanthropist and supporter of Jewish causes, by her husband Aaron Malinsky and their children Carolyn, Ben, Rebecca and David.

The hospital offers concrete testimony of what can be achieved when people representing the multitude of ethnic groups, cultures and faiths in the city work together for the common good. The staff and patients are Jewish, Christian and Muslim; wealthy and poor; born in Israel and abroad; tourists and even political refugees, all of whom manage to transcend mistrust and outright hostility to collaborate, support

world with a *kashrut* certificate,” beams Sister Monika Duellmann, hospital director.

Another unusual feature is the high staff-to-patient ratio. Young European (mainly German) students volunteer each year to feed,

affirm it is about life, cooperation, peace and life!”

Kashouvot is an organization that provides chaplaincy services at the French Hospital as well as several other hospitals, nursing homes and day centers throughout Israel. The

years ago. Chaplaincy, a mainstay of American medical services, is still a curiosity in Israel, not recognized as a profession, not funded and often scorned. Kashouvot’s chaplains, who span the spectrum of Jewish denominations, strive to

duced to the hospital by Kashouvot,” says Malinsky, a real estate developer in New York. He says his late wife Randie “would have been proud of [the organization’s] pioneering work as its female clergy pave the way for a new profession in Israel, and she would have loved the setting where old meets new, where past meets future, and where physical beauty inspires the soul.”

The garden, which was designed pro bono by Israel’s Rachele Wiener-Steinberg landscape architects, incorporates French elements in its furniture, pathways, flowers and herbs. The fragrant plants will grow to wheelchair level, and patients will repair to the healing garden for prayer, contemplation as well as conversation, and for viewing the stirring Jerusalem cityscape beyond.

“We want the patients to feel part of the city,” says Stessin. “They can see the light rail, people walking by, taxis and an occasional camel. [And] they can see the flowers growing. It will be a focus of hope and renewal



Photos: Sharon Altshul, thearea.jerusalemstreets



(Left, r-l): Aaron Malinsky and his daughter Carolyn with Sister Monika Duellmann, director of the St. Louis French Hospital in Jerusalem (pictured at right).



each other and shatter stereotypes, all in the service of helping those who suffer the effects of chronic or terminal illness.

Dedicated by the French Count Piellat in the 1880s, the hospital is run by the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition, who ensure that the festivals and customs of Muslim, Christian and Jewish patients are all respected.

“We are the only convent in the

bathe and take care of patients, many Jewish and some Holocaust survivors. As Duellmann said at the opening ceremony, “many people think this place is a dead end, the last station, depressing. We

organization’s founders, Rabbi Miriam Berkowitz and Rabbi Valerie Stessin, have a special relationship with the French Hospital, the first such institution to welcome them as pastoral caregivers four

change this image, one hospital and one conversation at a time.

Patients, families and staff will now be able to renew their energies and refresh their spirit in the new healing garden. “We were intro-

in a place that sees too much decline and suffering.”

The opening ceremony for the new healing garden featured music, poetry readings and words of Torah, and an homage to the passion, generosity and hands-on approach to philanthropy exemplified by Randie Malinsky. Visitors, patients and staff all enjoyed refreshments in the garden, a living testimony to her spirit.

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### REMEMBERING RANDIE

Prior to her untimely death from lung cancer in 2014, Randie Malinsky, in whose memory her family endowed the healing garden at the St. Louis French Hospital in Jerusalem, was a dedicated supporter of Jewish learning and other philanthropic causes.

Last year, in her capacity as Religious Leadership Advisory Board Chairman at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, she and her husband Aaron

endowed an annual \$5,000 living stipend to first-year JTS rabbinical and cantorial students.

The late Mrs. Malinsky’s other philanthropic endeavors included serving on the advisory boards of the Children’s Aid Society, the Jewish Lens and the acquisitions committee of The Jewish Museum.

She worked for many years as merchandiser and marketer for Waldbaum’s, the supermarket chain founded by her family in 1904,

which in 1986 became a subsidiary of A&P. Prior to his involvement in the real estate industry, Aaron Malinsky served as president and vice chairman of Waldbaum’s.

*The Malinsky-Waldbaum family at the dedication of their plaque on the JTS “Kotel haKavod,” representative of their lifetime philanthropy to JTS of \$1 million, Oct. 1, 2013. (L-r): Cantor Nancy Abramson, director of the H.L. Miller Cantorial School; Ben Malinsky; Carolyn Malinsky; Bernice Waldbaum; Randie Malinsky; Aaron Malinsky; David Malinsky; Rebecca Malinsky; and Rabbi Daniel Nevins, Pearl Resnick Dean of The Rabbinical School and dean of the Division of Religious Leadership.*

