



Photo added by Tom Owen

## Shulamith "Shelley" Davidi Schlesinger

BIRTH	28 Feb 1930
DEATH	24 Jul 2017 (aged 87)
BURIAL	Baron Hirsch Cemetery Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee, USA
PLOT	Section 14
MEMORIAL ID	181898109 · View Source

Shulamith "Shelley" Schlesinger died peacefully on Monday, July 24 at Baptist Memorial Hospital after a short illness. Born in Kovno, Lithuania, in 1930, Mrs. Schlesinger moved with her parents to Eretz Yisrael in 1936 where they were among the founding families of Kfar HaRoeh. As a teenager, she served as a commander in the Haganah in 1947, before the War of Independence. She and her soldiers, who were stationed as guards on the border of the old city of Jaffa (Yafo), were among the first ones to enter the city after the British forces receded. She enjoyed sharing memories of her time in the Haganah, and specifically that joyous occasion, with her four grandchildren, two of whom recently served as commanders in the Israel Defense Force. There was music and dancing in the streets of Yafo as the soldiers and Tel Aviv residents celebrated their entry into the city, she recalled. Mrs. Schlesinger studied in Tel Aviv at the well-known Beit Tzeirot Mizrachi and she earned her teaching degree from Seminar Talpiot. She initially taught kindergarten at Kfar HaRoeh. She met her husband of 63 years, Rabbi Dr. Natan Schlesinger z"tl, while he was a ram (teacher) in the first B'nei Akiva Yeshiva in Kfar HaRoeh. Less than a year after their marriage in 1950, Rabbi and Mrs. Schlesinger went to Manchester to work for the Jewish Agency teaching Hebrew and Judaic studies to young people to prepare them for aliyah to a religious kibbutz. They lived and taught in England for seven years, while Rabbi Schlesinger was pursuing a bachelor's and master's degree at the University of London. From 1957 to 1967 the couple lived in Melbourne then Canberra, Australia, where Rabbi Schlesinger was a professor at the Australian National University. They also volunteered their services as the rabbi and rabbanit to the small Jewish community of Canberra, where their only child, David, was born. In 1967, the Schlesingers

moved to Chapel Hill, N.C. where Rabbi Dr. Schlesinger was a philosophy professor at the University of North Carolina. Mrs. Schlesinger was an expert in the Hebrew language and well-versed in Tanach. She taught Hebrew at the UNC Hillel and in a Sunday school in Durham, NC. She volunteered at the University hospital and was an avid folk dancer. She had a lifelong appreciation for fashion and was a talented seamstress. She made a lot of her own clothes and custom altered almost every article of clothing she bought. She also excelled in and loved arts and crafts and lovingly and meticulously made many creative projects with and for her grandchildren. She loved to cook and bake for her family and enjoyed entertaining Jewish personalities, such as Elie Weisel, who were guest lecturers at UNC. Mrs. Schlesinger and her husband spent many holidays and Shabbatot in Danville Va., the nearest Orthodox community to Chapel Hill. They often took on the roles of temporary rabbi and rabbanit when the community was without a spiritual leader. In 2006, the Schlesingers moved to Memphis to be closer to their children and grandchildren. Mrs. Schlesinger was preceded in death by her husband and two brothers, Yishai and Micha Davidi. She is survived by her son, David (Linda) Schlesinger, two brothers, Nechemiah and Emanuel Davidi, of Israel, and four grandchildren. Contributions in Mrs. Schlesinger's memory may be sent to either Margolin Hebrew Academy/Feinstone Yeshiva of the South (earmark for the Kollel Torah MiTzion), Baron Hirsch Congregation or Young Israel of Memphis. Canale Funeral Directors, Memphis, TN (Obituary published by Canale Funeral Directors)

## Family Members

### Spouse



George Natan  
Schlesinger  
1925–2013

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**Created by:** Carole McCaig

Added: 30 Jul 2017

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