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Exploits of Jewish American Flyers Featured in 2nd Season of Indianapolis Jewish Film Festival

Air Crews Ripped Off American Planes for Israel's
1948 War for Independence

INDIANAPOLIS – April, 2015 – The first major feature-length documentary about the foreign airmen in the 1948 Israeli War for Independence, [Above and Beyond](#), brings together new interviews and stunning aerial footage to present a fascinating, little-known tale filled with heart, heroism and high-flying chutzpah. Above and Beyond will be screened [Wednesday, April 29, 7:30 p.m. at the Indianapolis History Center, 450 W. Ohio St.](#)

Above and Beyond is one of the nine films featured in the 2nd Season of the [Indianapolis Jewish Film Festival](#) which present topics that raise significant issues, touch the heart and demonstrate true heroism. The Festival begins April 23 and concludes May 3. The feature-length films will be shown in five locations.

In 1948, just three years after the liberation of Nazi death camps, a group of Jewish American pilots answered a call for help. In secret and at great personal risk, they smuggled planes out of the U.S., trained behind the Iron Curtain in Czechoslovakia and flew for Israel in its War of Independence. This ragtag band of brothers not only turned the tide of the war; they also embarked on personal journeys of discovery, sacrifice and renewed Jewish pride.

Filmed in the U.S., Israel and the United Kingdom, Above and Beyond is produced by Nancy Spielberg (Elusive Justice), Steven Spielberg's sister, and directed by Roberta Grossman (Blessed Is the Match), with cinematography by Harris Done (The

Last Days), special effects by Industrial Light and Magic and an original score from Hans Zimmer's Studio.

Spielberg will join the Festival in person to tell the story of the making of the film.

"Last year's premiere of the Festival was truly rewarding," said executive producer and founder of the Festival, Indianapolis community leader and attorney Robert Epstein. "We knew we had great films and good locations, but you never know what the response will be," Epstein said. He said the last year's first Festival drew more than 1,000 film lovers of all faiths and traditions. The Indianapolis Jewish Film Festival is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

Epstein said Jews have a long history in theater starting off-Broadway, and then producing on the Great White Way, and eventually moving to Hollywood. Familiar Jewish Hollywood names include Stanley Kubrick, Stephen Spielberg, Douglas Fairbanks, Billy Wilder, Carl Reiner, the Coen brothers (Fargo, the Big Lebowski, O Brother Where Art Thou, and others,) the Weinstein brothers (The King's Speech, Philomena, Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom,) and many more.

"Our committee, made up of members of our congregation and non-Jews, selected films that are entertaining and thought provoking. All of the films offer new insights into the human condition and especially the Jewish heritage and living in the Mideast," Epstein said. The Indianapolis Jewish Film Festival joins about 60 other Jewish film festivals in the US.

To review the entire film schedule go to www.indianapolisjewishfilmfestival.com.

"In the selection process we worked to illustrate the human condition but particularly the challenges Jews and Israel face in a modern world," said Temple Beth Shalom President Cindy Springer. The Temple offers Tot Shabbats (Sabbath services for toddlers), Bar and Bat mitzvah training and Hebrew training for young congregants.

Congregation Beth Shalom holds services at 6:30 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month at University School.