

The Voyage of “Arba Cheruyot” [Four Freedoms]

The vessel was named after the four principles of freedom that President Roosevelt named in a speech in 1941: freedom of speech, freedom of religious belief, freedom from want and freedom from fear. This vessel, originally named Fede, sailed before, in May 1946, under the name of “Dov Hoz”. On this occasion, she sailed on the 23rd August 1946 from the anchorage at Bocca di Magra, Italy, carrying 1,024 Holocaust survivors. The Palyamnikim who accompanied the voyage were Fabi Gaver – the ship commander, Peter Hoffman and the Gideoni - Eli Zohar.

The vessel approached within 30 miles of the Tel Aviv shore, in dire weather conditions, when it was discovered by the British. When the British tried to subdue and take over the vessel they encountered fierce resistance by the Ma’apilim. This was the first time that Ma’apilim had shown resistance to capture at sea. The vessel was towed to Haifa and the Ma’apilim were deported to Cyprus.

(Compiled by Tzvi Ben-Tzur)

