

Persons celebrating an Anniversary in February 2008

Otto Hutter from Augsburg is for the first time represented in our column, he celebrated his 45th birthday on February 7th. Some of us have already met this enthusiastic collector in [Forchheim 2004](#) who develops special activities in board work both in his club and at regional level: he is not only the secretary of the Chess Society Augsburg 1873 but also the 1st organizer of the Regional Chess Association Swabia. On his [club homepage](#) he has started a loose series of contributions to a club chronicle which hopefully will still find some continuations.

Yuri L. Averbakh however has been a regular "guest" in our birthday greetings, only one day later he could look back on 86 years. A short time ago only he has once again proved his robust constitution when he enriched the programme in Kórnik 2007 by a chess historical lecture. Anyone who wants to learn more about him should look up our former greetings ([2004](#), [2005](#), [2006](#), [2007](#)).

Carlo Alberto Pagni now follows in our birthday list, our correspondence chess expert from Milan celebrated his 77th birthday on February 13th. We already presented last year the essential dates and facts about him and his extensive complete works on chess, therefore we gladly refer once more to this [entry](#). Will we meet him again this May in Venice?

The doyen of our association comes from the US state New York, more exactly from Bedford, he completed full nine decades on February 16th: **Benjamin ("Billy") F. Levene**. Those who attended our last year's New York meeting will easily recall him and his wife Hope, both have been included several times in the galleries of our photo report ([gallery 1](#) and [gallery 2](#)).



Li, B. F. Levene, Jr., M.D., was arriving in country, coming over on a special plane. But he gave us him here as a fine example of the men who are not only playing, but serving of the war.

Li, Levene learned chess from Joseph Cramer, Champion of France, during a stay in Switzerland. Cramer invited him to play with him in a full match at the time with him and Pavesi. On his return, Levene was the President of the Chess Club of the New York City Chess Club, and the President of the Chess Club of the New York City Chess Club. He began chess in 1900, and a chess player, was ranked well into class A, with an extensive record of successful matches.

Shortly after he had entered the Navy, he wrote: "At present I am serving as dental officer aboard an aircraft carrier and cannot continue correspondence chess while in the navy because both of my hands are busy with the gun." He says he learned to play chess from his grandfather.

Today Benjamin Levene is above all known as a collector of chess men and sets, but in his younger years he was also an active player and he was particularly enthusiastic about postal chess which is outlined in the short contribution opposite from *Chess Review* 1944 (please click on the preview picture). There as well as in Christopher West Davis' article from *The New York Times* 2003 [[First, There's One. Then Another, and Another ... – Closing In on Chess](#)] you will learn how everything had begun in 1930 in a Swiss sanatorium, the twelve-year-old Billy was coached there by another famous patient – no less a person than André Chéron! Moreover the *NYT* article lights up the extensive collecting activity of Billy Levene.

After all Benjamin Levene himself has given a short overview of his family's history and their over hundred years of devotion to dentistry in 2005 – please read his illuminating "Portrait of a Dentist" in *NYSDA News* – you will find it on p.16 of this [online publication](#) (pdf-file).

We still wish our American friend many happy years in his retirement which he will hopely enjoy in the best of health!

Congratulations!

PS: You will find all previous birthday greetings in our [archives](#)!