The Sheila and Yossi Carmel Fund

The Sheila Carmel Fund was established in 1987 by her late husband, Colonel (Res.) Yossi Carmel, one of the founders of the Tel Aviv University and Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors for many years, to commemorate his wife, Sheila Carmel.

Sheila Carmel was born in 1927 in London, grew up in England as a Zionist, and graduated the University of London in Psychology. Following her graduation she fulfilled her personal dream of coming to live in Israel in 1951, shortly following the establishment of the State of Israel.

In Israel Sheila taught English to many government officials, members of Parliament, government ministers, members of the Israeli Defense Forces as well as many pupils and students. Sheila cherished English literature, was a lover of books, the written word and English theatre. She was known and admired for her British manners, quiet speech, modesty and soft conduct.

Sheila passed away in 1985, at the early age of 57. Her husband Yossi and her only son, Shai, decided to commemorate her by establishing a series of annual lectures in English literature at the Tel Aviv University. The Fund was made possible by the generosity and donations of the many good friends of Sheila and Yossi Carmel in Israel and abroad.

The Fund was established with a specific aim of bringing to Israel distinguished scholars and writers in the field of English literature from all over the world to deliver an annual lecture as well as meet and participate in workshops with English literature students at the Tel Aviv University.

The initial lecture took place in 1988. Over the last 20 years it has become a well known, universal prestigious podium for exploring the boundaries of poetic, disciplinary, national, ethical and cultural issues. To date two volumes of the lectures delivered between 1988 and 2004 were published by the Tel Aviv University and funded by the Carmel family.

Yossi Carmel was born in 1925 in Odessa, Russia and was 3 months old when his family set foot in Israel. The family was received in Israel by one of its uncles, the well known national poet of Israel, Haim Nachman Bialik. Yossi grew up in Jerusalem under the British Mandate. As a youngster he joined the ranks of the "Hagana" underground movement and when the State of
Israel was born joined the Israeli Defense Forces. At the early age of 33 he was already a Colonel in the army and served for 11 years as the Military Attaché to Itzchak Ben Zvi the second President of the State of Israel and Zalman Shazar, Israel's third President. With both Presidents he traveled the world to establish and maintain the links between the newly born State of Israel and the Jewish Diaspora as well as taking part in official State meetings with various world leaders. Following his retirement form the army he joined the Tel Aviv University, was one of its founders and was the Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors. Over 25 years of working at the University he was responsible for introducing the University to numerous Jewish and international donors. Many of the buildings, projects and research faculties were made possible by donations made as a result of his work, charm and personal charisma.

Yossi loved the University and when Sheila passed away it was important to him that her memory will be cherished at the University and in the field of English literature she so loved.

In 2004, following the passing away of Yossi Carmel, their son Shai decided to rename the lecture series after both his parents and the lectures are now know as the Sheila and Yossi Carmel lectures in English literature.

The lectures take place every May and are followed by a cocktail at the Sheila and Yossi Carmel Garden at the Tel Aviv University.