

Texas Jewish Historical Society

Preserving Jewish Heritage in Texas
Est. 1980



February, 2011

Texas A&M Hillel Breaks Ground for New Building by Jan Hart

After over a decade of planning, ground breaking for a new Hillel building at Texas A&M University in College Station was held on November 21, 2010. The current building, dedicated in 1957 as the Fannie and Ike Sablosky

Building, was cleared and made ready for demolition, which started last December.

On this momentous occasion, approximately two hundred people gathered to recall the history of Texas A&M Hillel, as well as to hear future plans. Speakers included Dr. R. Bowen Loftin, class of '71, president



Left to right: Barry Streusand; Rabbi Peter Tarlow; Nancy Schepps Brand; Don Riser; Dr. R. Bowen Loftin, president of Texas A&M University Systems; Aaron Herstein; and Dr. Mike McKinney, chancellor of Texas A&M University Systems.

of TAMU Systems; Dr. Mike McKinney, chancellor of TAMU Systems; Mayor Nancy Berry, first Jewish mayor of College Station; Barry Streusand, class of '74, president of Texas A&M Hillel Corporation;

Rabbi Peter Tarlow, class of '90, director of Texas A&M Hillel Corporation; Dr. Marvin Noble, class of '56, member of Texas A&M Hillel Corporation Advisory Board; Aaron Herstein, class of '12, president of Texas A&M Hillel; Donald Reiser, class '66, vice

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Message from the President

by Rusty Milstein

Well, Chanukah has come and gone, and still no raise! But what does money matter when one has the opportunity to work with wonderful people? Every time that I have a question, suggestion, or just need general input, my colleagues have



been there for me with graciousness and timely responses - so unlike my "paying job" of yesteryear.

I am proud to say that TJHS is helping Dr. Stuart Rockoff (from

the Institute of Southern Jewish Life) with his web encyclopedia project—the Jewish communities of Texas chapter. In fact, we have actually helped each other by exchanging information about small communities which are no longer in

existence. This has been a wonderful experience for Dr. Rockoff and TJHS.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Candy Gardner

and Abbi Michelson for hosting the San Antonio Winter Board Meeting. In San Antonio, we visited the Institute of Texan Cultures. This is especially significant for TJHS because of our involvement in making the Jewish exhibit there one of the very best in the ITC. If you have never seen it, try to do so on your next visit to San Antonio.

I hope to see everyone at our Annual Gathering in Texarkana on March 25, 26, and 27. And stay tuned for more information about our quarterly board meeting in Houston this summer.

I hope that everyone will have a happy, healthy, and safe New Year.



Rusty Milstein
President, 2010-2011

The Texas Jewish Historical Society February 2011 Quarterly News Magazine

The Texas Jewish Historical Society News Magazine is published four times annually. Stories about Texas Jewish history, oral histories, and requests for assistance with research are welcome, as are photographs and historical documents. Please provide color photocopies or scan at 300 dpi or greater, in .gif, .tif, or .jpg format and send electronically to Assistant Editor Davie Lou Solka at editor@txjhs.org or mail to 3808 Woodbrook Circle, Austin, TX 78759, 512-527-3799. Be sure to include your name and contact information.

Publisher-Editor Alexa Kirk
Assistant Editor Davie Lou Solka
Photographer Marvin Rich

Note: The Texas Jewish Historical Society is unable to guarantee the safe receipt and/or return of documents or photographs. It is strongly recommended that you provide color photocopies of both color and black & white documents. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Visit us on the web at www.txjhs.org.



**The deadline
for the
April, 2011
TJHS News
Magazine is
March 18.**

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president, Texas A&M Hillel Corporation, chairman of the building committee, and son of Dr. & Mrs. Raymond Reiser; Dr. Gary Gross, grandson of Esther Taubenhau, and Nancy Brand, daughter of A.I. (class of '32) and Manet Schepps, for whom the new building will be named.

The Menorah Club at Texas A&M was organized in 1916 with the arrival of the first known Jewish faculty and staff at A&M, Dr. Jacob and Esther Taubenhau. By 1920, the Texas A&M Hillel Club was chartered.

From the beginning, Texas A&M Hillel was a groundbreaking organization. It has the distinction of being the first college Hillel in the nation. When B'nai B'rith National Hillel began in 1923, they had to request permission to use the name "Hillel" from Mrs. Taubenhau (known as Mrs. Tauby). She became the first director of A&M Hillel, and continued to organize services and Sunday morning coffees in her home until 1923. In 1940, with 130 students, the Hillel Club became part of National B'nai B'rith Hillel. Since Hillel had no place to call home, meetings were held in various places—the college library, Memorial Student Center,

and the YMCA, to name a few.

Mrs. Tauby began talking to the leader of B'nai B'rith about the need for a building. In 1951, land was purchased, and with the help of several Jewish philanthropists and Rabbinical support, a building was erected. After the dedication of the building in 1958, Mrs. Tauby retired.

Dr. Raymond and Shirley Reiser arrived at A&M in 1940. They became closely affiliated with the Hillel Foundation, and Shirley Reiser became the second director of Hillel after Mrs. Tauby retired. A&M Hillel continued to have the same warm welcoming atmosphere, with a "home away from home" environment. In 1981, Mrs. Reiser brought the wives of two faculty members into the leadership role, as she stepped down as Director. Carol Parzan and Amy Mann served as co-directors for a short time. With the Jewish student population growing, they requested that a trained religious leader be hired. The timing was right.

Rabbi Peter Tarlow, returning from three years as a traveling Rabbi in Chile, announced to the Rabbinic Placement Office that he was looking for a university setting. He became director in 1983. He has provided leadership to the students

as a spiritual guide, a counselor for personal matters, and a teacher for those wanting to deepen their Jewish education. Around 1500 Jewish students currently attend Texas A&M.

Texas A&M is the only university in Texas that excuses Jewish students from classes for all Jewish holidays, provides challah on Fridays for Shabbat, offers an on-campus kosher meal option, and prohibits holding final exams on Saturdays.

The new Hillel building will stand where the old one stood for over fifty years. It will be much larger, and thanks to major donors, the new A.I. and Manet Schepps Hillel Building will house the Abe and Annie Seibel Center for Jewish Campus Life and the Abe and Annie Seibel Center for Crypto-Jewish Studies. It will be a unique facility among university Hillels around the country, featuring a representation of the Western Wall using actual stone from Jerusalem.

After the ground breaking ceremony, guests gathered at Messina Hof Winery in Bryan for a celebration luncheon.

For additional information, visit www.tamuhillel.org.



We need Your Stories!

We are currently looking for stories with ties to Texas Jewish history! Any kind of story about your family history or your Temple's history can fill the pages of our quarterly newsletter. Write your story, and if you have questions or need help, call our Assis-

tant Editor.

Everyone has a story to tell, long or short. Your history is of interest to members across Texas and the nation! And you will be able to see your family's history in print. It is a wonderful keepsake and a valuable piece of genealogy for fu-

ture generations.

So what are you waiting for? Send in your article to our assistant editor, Davie Lou Solka, at editor@txjhs.org, mail it to 3808 Woodbrook Circle, Austin, TX 78759, or call her at 512-527-3799.

TJHS Winter Board Meeting



Abbi Michelson (top) and Candy Gardner, co-chairs for the Winter Board Meeting weekend



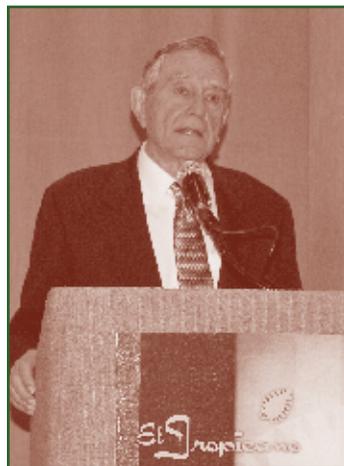
Mitzi Milstein and Max Stool at the registration desk



Marvin and Shirley Rich



Hershel Sheiness speaking on the Jewish War Veterans' project



Arthur Gurwitz, our Saurday morning speaker



Dr. Stuart Rockoff, from the Institute of Southern Jewish Life

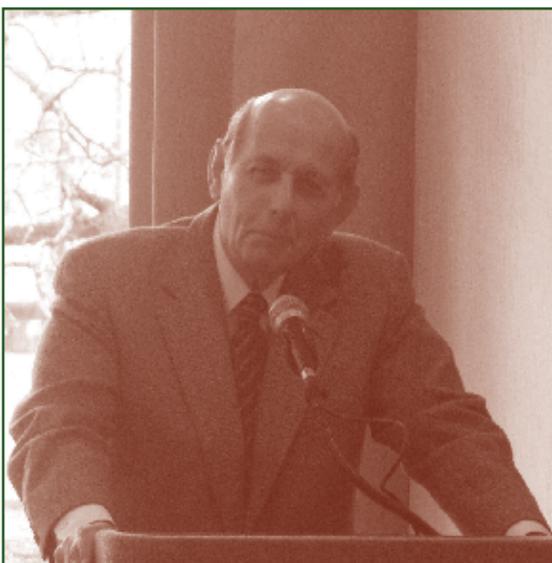
-San Antonio, Texas, January 14-16, 2011-



*Members enjoy the many interesting speakers at the meeting.
Shirley Rich (left) and Bob and Shirley Gindler*



Members who attended the meeting weekend.



Rabbi Sam Stahl



Rabbi Barry Block during Havdalah service

TJHS Winter Board Meeting



TJHS members during a tour of the Institute of Texan Cultures. Left to right are: Sally Drayer, Jan Hart, Charles Hart, David Leff, Rosalie Weisfeld, David Beer, Barbara Rosenberg, Jack Solka, Davie Lou Solka, and Elaine Albin.



Barbara and Ben Rosenberg



Rusty Milstein, Abbi Michelson, and Jack Solka at the TJHS exhibit at the Institute of Texan Cultures



Anita Feigenbaum (left) and Betty and Neil Gurwitz



Rabbi Sam Stahl and Guy Manaster

From Our Archives

Dear Papa... Lovingly, Leslie

by Vickie Vogel

In May of 1942, young Leslie Lippman went off to war. Beginning with basic training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Leslie faithfully wrote to his father, Ike, back in Schulenburg, Texas. In an age of email, texts, and tweets that are quickly disposed of, we can see what we have lost by no longer being a society that writes letters.¹

Ike and Selma Lippman owned and operated a clothing/dry goods store in Schulenburg called Ike Lippman and Son. They also ran cattle on a small ranch just outside town. Thus, Leslie grew up as a merchant cowboy, and his letters home largely reflect these two interests that he and his father shared. Selma had died in 1936,² so the letters are addressed to his father. The letters, with Leslie's dry wit, read primarily as reassurance to his father that he is safe, warm, and well-fed. The main subjects are the weather, food, the countryside, livestock, the local stores and their merchandise, and the people he meets. They talk about home—his father's health, the farm, stock for the store, family, and local news.

As well as reassuring his father that all is well, the letters are also self-censored to reflect security concerns. Once he ships overseas, Leslie tells what country he is in but little else. References to battle are oblique and must be read between the lines. His son Phil recalls, "He took me to see the movie *Patton* at the Cozy Theater.³ He did tell me of those parts of the war he was in... (the Battle of the Bulge), but that was about it."⁴ His son Sheldon remembers that Leslie suffered frostbite at some point.⁵



Leslie Lippman

Leslie's letters repeat what has been broadcast on the radio, but give no other details of troop movements or actions.

Always happy to receive news and packages from home, Leslie wrote from his posting at Camp McCoy in Wisconsin,

I got a box of cakes (kindluchs) from Mrs Reichman⁶ and they are really delicious... I also got a carton of Lucky Strike cigarettes from Mr. Bullman.⁷ Guess I'll have to start smoking now.

The letters describe the beer wherever he is stationed. With its German and Czech immigrant population, Schulenburg and all of Fayette County are known for their love of good beer, and Leslie was no exception.

...Yesterday, I drank a bottle of beer... It is like the 3.2 beer they have

at Fort Sill. They call it airplane beer. Three bottles and P40.

April 20 was the first night of Passover in 1943, and Leslie was still in Wisconsin. On the 22nd, he attended a service in La Crosse, which was a bit different from the Reform tradition in which he had been reared.

Just a note to thank you for the matzos. I got them this evening & you can imagine how glad I was to get them... Last night I went to a Jewish service at one of the chapels. They had a Rabbi from LaCrosse. They have services every other week, but is rather far to walk in cold weather, so I haven't been going. They gave every soldier there a Passover box prepared by the Philadelphia Passover League... They were put up by the same company that we get our matzos from & of course everything was Kosher. There were two packs of cigarettes, 2 doz. almond macaroons, 2 boxes of cheese, 2 jars of jelly, raisins, pecans, and walnuts...

I made a big bust when I walked into the chapel. I took my cap off as I usually do, then I noticed the Rabbi had a monkey cap on & all the other fellows had their caps on. It takes a while to get used to the Orthodox ways.

In June, Leslie attended services again.

I went to a Jewish service this evening... One of the fellows was so religious he stood in the corner & he looked like he was butting his head against the wall, but imagine he was praying. Everybody laughed like H--- as it did look funny, but guess he felt that he was doing some good.

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A visit to Chicago was the highlight in August, where he met a woman he knew from Hallettsville, Mrs. Rheinstrom, whose son Meyer was also in the service in North Africa. She showed him through Marshall Fields. *"It is some store,"* he wrote. They had a duck dinner at Gimbel's. There were about ten German prisoners on the train as he returned to base. *"They were all young fellows and seemed to be very happy. They got off here at McCoy."*

Leslie sympathized with his father and other merchants having a hard time getting merchandise and often suggested he travel to Houston or San Antonio to see what he could find. On September 23, Leslie writes that he was sorry to hear of his Tanta Levinson's death.

...all that kosher cooking was too rich for her condition. I often wondered when I ate there how she could eat that food all the time. It may taste good, but too much surely couldn't be good for a person.

By October, 1943, the letters were postmarked Ireland.⁸ Some of the correspondence took the form of "V-Mail," whereby large amounts of censored mail were put on microfilm, weighing much less than the original would have. After arrival in the United States, V-Mail would be sent to a receiving station near the recipient and printed on lightweight photo paper at about one quarter of the original size. The miniature mail was then delivered to its final destination.⁹

In December, Ike traveled to Houston to visit family, and perhaps scout for merchandise for the store. Leslie wrote, *"You were lucky you know the conductor, so he could stop the train [in Schulenburg] for you."*

Passover in 1944 began on April 8.

Friday evening I went to Passover services. Had matzos, wine, and a

good supper and services. Had over 300 people there... I got my furlough just in time for the Easter holiday. The people here celebrate for five days...

Later in April, Leslie was transferred to England. On May 11, he reassured his father, *"If you ever happen not to get a letter from me it is because the mail is held up some place."* He enjoyed walking in the countryside and would describe it in his letters.

...Then I felt a little 'frum'¹⁰ and went to the synagogue where they had services and after services they had a social. Gefilte fish, and salads. Had a very nice spread and a large crowd of fellows. Had a very nice time.

On June 6, the Normandy invasion began, but of course there was not a word in the letters about it. On June 8, Leslie wrote that he *"had a dream last night about your watermelon patch,"* and on June 20, *"This is not very much of a letter, but there's not much that we can write about now."* Leslie arrived in France in the wake of the invasion. Still, he talked about the apple orchards, the fat cattle and green pastures (*"The grass will grow on a rock"*) and the people he saw. He also asked if Ike got his radio fixed, and said he didn't want to miss any of the news, *"as it is going to be a big show."*

The French people welcomed the American army warmly.

The other day we passed a group of children and they threw flowers at us. One of the fellows said he had a man come up to him and kiss him. That is another form of their greeting. Believe I'd rather have the flowers...

In mid-July, he cautioned his father:

I had a misery in my leg as Mid-die¹¹ calls it, so I went to the medics to have it looked after and while I was there, two photographers came up and took our picture, me lying on a stretcher and the doctor and medics

around, so if you see the picture in a magazine, don't get frightened, as my leg is almost well, in fact it feels just fine now. Don't know what caused it to start hurting, probably the damp weather we had when we first got here.

Leslie's descriptions of what he saw and did paint a picture of the newly liberated land.

We are at a very pretty part of the country now. Are staying at a farm... They have a large barn and the other night there were seventeen people sleeping in it... There was a lady in the crowd that could talk a little English and she told us her home was in Paris and she left there on D day and just got here three days ago with her little girl. The distance from here to Paris is about the distance from home to Corpus Christi. She... came here to get milk for her little girl. Food in the large cities is very scarce. Her husband has been a prisoner of war for four years and her brother was captured not long ago and her parents live not very far from here, but their home was burned, so that is the condition of hundreds of families over here, but with all of that they seem to be happy in knowing their country was being freed. Every day we see families moving back, with their belongings in a wheel barrow, or a wagon and leading a cow or two...

I wanted to write sooner than this, but things have been rather rushing for the past few days and we have had very little time to ourselves. We have really been putting on a show for the French people. They start coming around to our place early in the morning, and there are still a few around at dark... They stand around the kitchen and watch the cook and then when everybody starts eating you should see them gang around. We had to put ropes around to keep the people out. If

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you go down to the creek to wash, they will even go down and observe every move you make...

(W)hen we go through town...they stand out on the street like the 4th of July celebrations at home and throw flowers and they bring out drinks, cognac, cider and give everyone a drink...They really have some nice looking girls over here...

At first Leslie was able to send home a few souvenirs, such as a Nazi bayonet and belt buckle, ammunition pouches, a German rifle, a compass from a plane, part of a parachute, and a pair of wooden shoes along with a linen scarf his Irish friends had given him.

Guess you wonder what I'll send home next. Well it is not much telling what I'll find.

Later he noted that they could not ship home any more guns or weapons. He continued to describe the towns he went through.

I was in Paris for a short time several days ago, and that is really a city.¹² I was rather surprised to see how modern it was...They are noted there for the cafes and drinking joints—each one has the tables and chairs out on the sidewalk and you can sit around and eat and drink. These French sit and eat and drink there for several hours at a time. We got some good beer... They have some beautiful stores, that is, the fronts are pretty. Most of the people dress real nice and seem to be up to date. You don't see any wooden shoes there.

By October 8, Leslie was in Germany and commented on Rosh Hashanah services in Hallettsville which Ike attended.¹³ He described the aftermath of the Battle of Brest and his impressions of Germany.¹⁴

I am sure you read about the battle of Brest. Well you should have seen the place after all the fighting was over. It was a fairly nice city before,

about 80,000 population and they had some fairly nice modern buildings in the new part of the city, but there isn't a thing left now but a bunch of beat up walls... As you have noticed by the heading of this letter, we are in the 'Fuehrer's' country now, but we haven't received our welcome address from him yet. It makes a person feel good to see him lose all the land that he held and yet he wasn't satisfied and now what is he going to have?...

Don't know if I can write much of a letter now, because there is a raid blaring out loud, but shall try and scribble a few lines anyway... Heard Amos and Andy the other night. .. Of course Hitler has the propaganda programs on and according to them they have already won the war. It really is a joke to hear them... P.S. The leaflet enclosed was dropped over France by the Allied planes...

They really have some beautiful forests here. Mostly all large pines... It really is easy to get lost, especially at night, as you can't see your hand in front, it is so dark.

Leslie arrived in Belgium on October 18, 1944. Eager for the war to end, he wrote, "When we were back in France, it looked like it would all be over by November, but November must have come just a little quick."

We are in Belgium now as you will notice by the heading of this letter... Most of the people speak German, and some French. I can get along with them fairly well when they speak German. I haven't spoken it in quite a while, but the words come back to me when I start 'jabbering'...I told you... that there are some people here from Russia. The town they come from is Poltawa. I asked them about the place where you came from and they know where it is but have never been here...

We have a big keg of German beer. It is some of the 'P40' stuff. It is dark and sweet, a lot like root beer. If

you drink it with the idea that it is root beer instead of regular beer, it taste fairly good...

That Lone Star label looked mighty good. I think we are getting a keg of beer tomorrow, so I'll paste it on a beer mug and just imagine it is Lone Star... Not much excitement going on now, just a Buzz Bomb coming over now and then...¹⁵ It has really been raining here today. The mud doesn't have any bottom to it now...

They listened to German radio stations.

They go in a lot for the 'goose step' march, then... their 'Bruno and his swinging tigers'¹⁶ play a couple of popular numbers. It really is a joke.

Still in Belgium on January 16, he wrote about his visit on a pass to Verviers, a city of some 700,000 at the time.

There are some beautiful stores, one of the nicest is the Grand Bazar and it is as nice as any of the Dept. stores in the states. It has four floors and elevators and beautiful fixtures... Most all of the places have either a music box, or some sort of orchestra, and they play all American numbers. 'S. A. Rose' was one of the main ones and they really sound good...The people are good business people. They know what the Americans want and do they get a price for everything. They don't have too much stock, but they have pretty nice things whatever they have.

The next day, the Germans broke through and "got part of their equipment back." Leslie's group of soldiers were forced to leave their radio behind, but were happy about the news from the Russian front.

In today's paper it stated the Russians were 135 miles from Berlin and all the people were leaving as they were afraid of the Russians. We expect Joe Stalin to drive up to see us any

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Honor or Memorialize a Friend or a Loved One With a Donation to the TJHS Endowment Fund

When you honor or memorialize a friend or a loved one with a donation to the Texas Jewish Historical Society's Endowment Fund, you help support important programs. Send the honoree's full name, type of honor (memorial, congratulations, and occasion—birthday, anniversary, award, new child or grandchild, etc.) and your name, along with a check in the amount of your choice to:

The Texas Jewish Historical Society
P. O. Box 10193
Austin, TX 78766-0193

Your support of Texas Jewish Historical Society's programs is greatly appreciated and will be recognized in an issue of the quarterly news magazine. Thank you.

The Texas Jewish Historical Society gratefully acknowledges your gift to its Endowment Fund in the amount of

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Your gift will further the efforts to record, preserve, and disseminate historic information about Texas Jewish culture.

Dear Papa, continued from page 9

day now because he is really covering the country.

This letter is from January 28:

We usually try and keep a fire going all night, so we can wake up in a warm place, but we have one of Hitler's stoves and can't always depend on it. We have a large tent that we live in, eight of us, and there is usually enough B.S. floating around that should keep us warm, but we probably need a little something stronger than that...

Some of them went back to the house where they left their radio and the house was leveled. It's unclear how much of the fighting in early February Leslie was involved in, as he is careful not to say.

We noticed in the papers where cotton materials will be very scarce this year on account of them needing so much in the Pacific, so they will probably release a little more wool-

ens. Over here in the stores most all the materials are of wool and they have beautiful pieces. I saw some in one of the stores the other day and all they asked for it was \$7.00 a yard....

The rate of their advance accelerated in March and Leslie wrote,

Our mail has been delayed for a few days, as we have been moving so much and we haven't been able to do any letter writings... Some of the towns that we went through you can see Heinie¹⁷ soldiers walking along the streets; everything is going so fast they miss a few here and there... For a few days we were at one of Hitler's schools... beautiful... the soldiers going through try and tear up as much as they can. We sailed plates and dishes through the halls and found a lot of champagne glasses and threw them against the wall, just to listen to them splatter. The more property a person can ruin over here the longer it

will take them to rebuild and get ready for another war... The place where we are staying now is an old German flying field. We are living in their barracks and when we moved in there were spuds cooking on the stove, so that shows you how fast they take off. It is really a race...

We are living in some of the Heinions' homes now. They are fairly nice and we enjoy sleeping in their beds... There are from five to ten families in some of the houses here. They make them double up like that so we can have a place to stay. They don't like to do that very much, but this is war and they brought it on themselves.

Referring to the Germans as "mamsers,"¹⁸ he describes running across a cognac brewery and a factory.

They have guards around the place now and they ration it out. We had some of it yesterday. It's strong

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Dear Papa, continued from page 10

enough to knock a mule out. I don't care for it much... You should see the soldiers going through these places and tearing up everything they come to. I guess when we get home, we will forget ourselves and do the same thing.

By April, 1945, it was obvious the end was near.

The German soldiers are giving up by the hundreds... Yesterday morning about seven o'clock four German soldiers walked up to... the kitchen and asked the cook to take them as prisoners, so he said he didn't have time to fool with them, as he had to fix breakfast, so he searched them and told them to wait until someone got up...

Today we went into a town that the Heinies just left yesterday and we went into one of their supply rooms and all the equipment they left could supply a couple thousand men. They left their guns, a lot of them were still cased the way they came from the factory and plenty of shoes. I know you could have sold every pair that was there...

We have really covered a lot of Germany in the past few days... We have been meeting a lot of Polish and Russians that have been in Germany as forced laborers and they are certainly happy now to be free. Yesterday we saw three drunk Russians on a motorcycle and talk about a show, well they were really putting one on.

President Franklin Roosevelt, who had led the country throughout the war, died on April 12. Leslie learned of the death on the 13th and wrote home on the 14th.

We heard of the President's death yesterday morning and are surely sorry that he couldn't have lived to see this war end... When we first heard of the President's death, we wondered if it really was true, as the German propaganda stations put out reports like that every once in a while, but we

heard it again over one of the allied stations, then we knew it was true...

Leslie never mentions concentration camps or death camps. For a couple of days, they were close to a labor camp with people from Russia, Poland, France, and Italy. They worked in the factories until six days before Leslie's arrival when the Americans came in and closed all the factories. While traveling past an airport,

(S)ome Frenchmen drove up in a German car and put a 50 gallon drum of Heinie gas in the car and took off for Paris. That would be about seven hundred miles if they made it.¹⁹

In the meantime, daily concerns of food and shelter are described. On April 17, they had venison for dinner.

They have real small deer over here, look like rabbits. We heard today there were some soldiers out hunting rabbits and about thirty Heinie soldiers came running out of the woods to surrender. They had a pretty good hunt...

We are living in a real nice home now. It is a three story building, hot and cold running water, electric lights... But you should hear the people that own the house they are mad at us, they had really like to have the Heinie soldiers there but we told they're lucky the Russians didn't come through their sector, because the Russians don't have pity on anybody...

... the Americans and Russians have linked up...and you should see how worried these people are. They are wondering if the Russians will come here and occupy this part of Germany. The lady who owns the house where we are staying comes over every day... to see where the Russians are. I asked her why they didn't boot Hitler out when he first started all of this mess, and she said if the people would do or say anything they would either get hung or locked up... To hear these people talk and feel sorry for themselves is a regular

joke... because... they... let a man like Hitler come in and tear up everything.

By May, Leslie was in Czechoslovakia, where he must have felt more at home, since his hometown was settled largely by Czechs, as well as Germans.

Where we are, the people all speak German, but they all seem very friendly and glad that we are here... The news sounds very good now, with Hitler dead. This thing is ending fast... We have three Heinie radios and we keep one hot all the time just waiting for the news.

On May 12, Leslie wrote the best news of all.

Well the war is over... and we have been having a nice time since we have been here. These people have been wonderful to us. They can't do enough for the Americans...all kinds of sausage and meats, bread, beer, cognac, cigars and cigarettes... We are staying in a beautiful apartment... and they keep the place spotless. Every morning a man comes in our apartment and cleans the bath room and asks us if he can do anything else for us... Every night they have a big singing jamboree and dance and do they raise the roof. They are enjoying themselves now for the first time in six years...

More descriptions followed in the next few days.

We got to see some of the Russian soldiers a couple of days ago. They were camping about a block from us, so we went over to see them. They are really some big boys and plenty rough looking... The civilians here in town had beer for the Russians, so we went over to help them drink it... They are having a dance for us tonight, so will have to take it in. I can't remember the last time I was at a dance...

On May 22, Leslie wrote about his visit to the famous beer city, Pilsner, and lamented that "you can't get very much beer now."

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When we first got here we found big kegs of Cognac, but it was so strong it would eat the lining out of your mouth. I didn't like that at all... In the apartment where we are staying, the lady made us some kolaches and they were real good... They haven't much sugar and milk, so we managed to get her some.

The main topic of conversation from May 23 on is when he would be able to come home.

Well I guess one of the main subjects of discussions are the points... [E]veryone is talking about the points he wished he had so he could go home... So the only thing we can do now is wait and see what will happen... This morning we saw about thirty German trucks full of Heinie soldiers coming out of the woods. All their communications were disrupted... and they didn't hear the war was over until now... The other day when I was in town I saw a Czech policeman driving a Heinie soldier up the street and the soldier must have gotten smart with the policeman because he hit him across the head with a rifle. They surely don't fool with them...

They are starting to open some of the stores in the towns around here, and they have almost nothing for sale. The food stores have bread, salt meal and a few things like that. I went into a drygoods store in Pilsin the other day and all they had in the store was six mattress covers... They have most of the street cars running in Pilsin now, a lot of the tracks were bombed out and they have the German prisoners doing the heavy work, getting the debris cleared away and the holes filled...

We went to see our butcher friend the other night and you should have seen the spread he put out for us... We stayed there until after one o'clock in the morning, then when he left he gave us a long link of sausage, so we ate it

the next day with eggs. Last night we boiled 4 dozen eggs and four of us ate about three dozen of them hard-boiled. We have really been eating the eggs...

Well we are still sweating out our turn to go to the States. The days can't pass fast enough now...

We are still eating eggs. Last night we boiled seventy of them and eight of us ate all of them and a loaf of rye bread. We can get a five lb loaf of bread for 10 cents... They are supplying the Czech Army with all the arms they can possibly get.

The final letter is from Sommesous, France.²⁰

Dear Papa,

...We are back in France now, had a nice trip going through Germany although it was hot and dusty. Saw some very pretty country, the poppies are in full bloom in France now, and they really look beautiful... We don't know how long we will be here. Last night we were near Nancy, France. We stayed at a very nice camp run by Heinie prisoners. They do all the cooking and keep up the whole camp. They are putting them to some good use, in fact they are working them all over this country, cleaning up the debris from the war and also exploding the mines... This is about all for today. Hope you are feeling fine. Tell everybody hello.

Lovingly, Leslie

References

- ¹Leslie's letters are not yet in our Archives, so consider this a "sneak preview." At some point, the letters were transcribed and typewritten. I worked from these typewritten copies.
- ²Her father Michael Levey (1836-1923) served as the first Jewish mayor of Schulenburg.
- ³The Cozy Theater in Schulenburg has been in operation since 1927 as part of the historic Von Minden Hotel. <http://www.texasescapes.com/>

FEATURES/Schulenberg's_Haunted_Von_Minden_Hotel/Von_minden_hotel_I_haunted.htm.

⁴Email Phil Lippman, December 9, 2010. Leslie Lippman died in 1996.

⁵Email Sheldon Lippman, December 9, 2010.

⁶This is probably Celia Reichman of Hallettsville, as she was Sheldon Lippman's godmother. Email Sheldon Lippman, December 17, 2010.

⁷Probably Abe C. Bullman (1883-1962) who is buried in Hallettsville, 17 miles from Schulenburg. His son Abe Edward Bullman was apparently in the service as well.

⁸Although Leslie writes that he "had a very nice trip," at the end of the war he notes what a rough passage they had in the North Atlantic on the way to Ireland.

⁹<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V-mail>

¹⁰Yiddish for "pious." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frum>.

¹¹Middie Lee was Ike's longtime housekeeper. Email Sheldon Lippman December 17, 2010.

¹²Paris was liberated August 25, 1944. Leslie was there in late September.

¹³For an account of 1944 services in Aachen after liberation, see <http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local-beat/On-Rosh-Hashana-65th-Anniversary-of-Special-Moment-Nears-59683152.html>.

¹⁴Brest fell September 19, 1944. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_for_Brest.

¹⁵The V-1 Buzz Bomb used by the Germans in the Battle of Britain was redeployed after October, 1944 towards Antwerp and other targets in Belgium. The attacks continued until March 29, 1945. V-1 attacks killed almost 23,000 people, mostly civilians. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V-1_\(flying_bomb\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V-1_(flying_bomb)).

¹⁶<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Char>

continued on page 13

Dear Papa, continued from page 12 —

lie_and_his_Orchestra for a fascinating account of Bruno's band.

¹⁷"Heinie" is a derogatory term for German soldiers which originated in World War I, short for Heinrich. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinie>.

¹⁸A Yiddish word denoting illegitimate birth. <http://jbuff.com/c060106.htm>.

¹⁹Paris to Berlin is 545 miles. We cannot tell where Leslie was at this time.

²⁰A small town in northeastern France. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sommesous>. 🇫🇷

Does TJHS Have Your Current Email Address?

Is your email address current? Has it changed since the 2010-2011 directory was printed? Have you changed email providers? If so, please send Marc Wormser an email at marc.wormser@att.net to update your information in the database. We are going to be sending as much mail as possible electronically to reduce postage costs and printing delays, so don't be left out or behind—send your current information today!

Please put "email change" in subject area along with your name in the message area of the email and send today! Thank you.

Visit us on the web at www.txjhs.org.
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In Memoriam



Betty Jean Farb, TJHS member, died on November 2, 2010 in McAllen, Texas. She is survived by her daughters, Jo Ann Braun and Susan Farb.



Florence Kunik Kroman, TJHS member, died on August 7, 2010, in McAllen, Texas. She is survived by her children,

Lawrence and Debbie Kroman and Susie Kroman, her brother and sister-in-law, Burton and Mary Kunik, and five grandchildren.

Franceska Tillman, TJHS member, of Sherman, Texas.



Walter Fein, TJHS member, died in San Antonio. He is survived by his wife, Hortense Lyman Fein; children, Marshall A. and

Debra Fein, Ellen Jackofsky, and Randall J. and Deborah Fein; Hortense's children, Herb and Jeannie Lyman, and Hilary and Neil Kavy; and six grandchildren, including their spouses.

Leonard Nisenson, TJHS member, formerly of Corpus Christi, Texas, died in San Antonio, Texas on January 2, 2011. He is survived by his children, Judy and Hank Goldstein of San Antonio, Barbara and Carl Lee of Dallas, Ellen and Gary Soula of St. Louis, Missouri, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.



Edward Meyer Winkler, TJHS member, died December 29, 2010, in Ft. Stock-

ton, Texas. He is survived by his wife, Selma; son and daughter-in-law, Martin and Janet Winkler of Las Cruces, New Mexico; and son-in-law, Robert Rhoades.



Stanley Plettman, TJHS member, of Beaumont, Texas. He is survived by his wife, Maurine.

May their memories be a blessing.

— Are Any of Your Relatives Veterans? —

by Herschel Sheiness

At the 2011 Winter Board Meeting, I gave a short presentation about a project I have been working on to identify the grave sites of Jewish veterans. This included those in San Antonio cemeteries, as well as Veteran Administration Cemeteries (to include State Veteran cemeteries) in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas.

After I finished, several members asked me about identifying the gravesites of relatives who are Jewish veterans, but buried in other cemeteries, both Jewish and non-sectarian. Although the identification of these burial sites is beyond the scope of my project, the National Jewish War Veterans Cem-

etry Committee would be interested in including them in their records.

If you would like to have your relatives included in the National Jewish War Veteran records, send me as much of the following information as you know about the veteran, and I will forward it to the NJWV Cemetery Committee Coordinator.

Full Name

Name of Cemetery, City and State

Place of Birth

Date of Birth

Branch of Service

Date of Death (*Please indicate if Killed in Action*)

Highest military rank achieved

Medals and/or commendations

Theater(s) of service if applicable.
e.g. WWI, WW2 (Europe, Pacific), Korea, Vietnam

Any other information about the person's military service.

You may mail this information to:

Herschel L. Sheiness

718 Mello Oak

San Antonio, TX 78258

Email: jsheines@swbell.net 

Save the Date

March 25-27, 2011

Annual Gathering in
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Date TBD

Summer Board Meeting in
Houston

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Gainsville

January, 2012

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Del Rio

April, 2012

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Angelo

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Would you like to save paper and instead receive this newsletter by email? You would be able to read the latest TJHS news in your inbox days before it would be scheduled to arrive in your mail box. Please send an email to alexa.kirk@gmail.com indicating that you would like to be on the email list. (The usual size of the newsletter is 2 MB.)

Contributions

The following donations have been received by the Texas Jewish Historical Society

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Mr. & Mrs. Phil Albin and Ginger & Mike Jacobs

In Honor of Christy & Howard Cave From

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If you are sending a check to the Texas Jewish Historical Society, please indicate the purpose of the check—dues, gift, contribution, etc.



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TJHS Traveling Exhibit

The Texas Jewish Historical Society has compiled two museum quality photo exhibits with explanations depicting early Jewish life and contributions. Both exhibits highlight the lives of Jews in Texas since the early part of the century.

Each exhibit is comprised of approximately thirty-six photographs that can either be self-standing with an easel back or hung on a wall. There is no charge for the exhibits and they will be shipped prepaid freight via UPS in waterproof boxes

to your location. The only expense to the borrower will be the shipping of the exhibit back via UPS ground.

The exhibits have been displayed in various locations in Texas and other parts of the United States, including Rhode Island and California. They are an excellent program for schools, congregations and other organizations. To schedule the exhibits, please contact Jack Gerrick at 817-927-8765 or email him at texbed@aol.com.

Welcome New Members!

Roger Simon

3720 Murray Court
Fort Worth, TX 76107-6845
rogerfsimon@hotmail.com

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