



# NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 50501, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78763

SPRING/FALL 1988

## JACOBS RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT

Mrs Ginger Jacobs of Dallas was re-elected President of the Texas Jewish Historical Society at the 1988 Gathering. Selected to serve with her were Doris Glasser of Houston, Vice President/Secretary; Kay Goldman of San Marcos, Treasurer; Ima Joy Gandler of Waco, Acquisitions Secretary; and Allen Mondell of Dallas, Archivist. Other Board Members include Rabbi Jimmy Kessler, who has recently moved from Austin to Alexandria, La. as Rabbi of their Temple, Jane Manaster and Milton Smith of Austin; Cynthia Mondell, Natalie Ornish, A. Robert Beer and Rabbi Kenneth Roseman of Dallas; Fay Brachman, Karen Kaplan, and Barbara Rubin of Ft. Worth; David Lack of Victoria; Selma Weiner and Frances Kallison of San Antonio; Louis and Audrey Kariel of Marshall; and Lonnie Schooler and Marvin Rich of Houston.

## DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

We are most fortunate that Helen Smith, of Austin, is making arrangements for the December 11, 1988 Board meeting in Austin. She and her husband, Milton, plan to host a Saturday evening, December 10th gathering at their home - giving us an opportunity to socialize and discuss items prior to the meeting.

## ESSAY CONTEST

Cathy Schecter, of Austin, is again in charge of our essay contest for students in all Jewish schools in Texas. Cathy, who is an author, has done a superb job in past years as our newsletter editor as well as administer our essay contest. We look forward to being able to print some interesting essays dealing with our Texas Jewish experience.

## 1989 GATHERING IN JEFFERSON

The ninth annual GATHERING of the Texas Jewish Historical Society will be held in historic Jefferson, Texas on March 10 - 12th. The weekend will include Sabbath services in the old Jefferson synagogue. The Gathering dinner will be held at the Excelsior House. Inasmuch as seating is limited, early reservations are recommended.

Featured speaker at the gathering will be Louis Schmier, editor of REFLECTIONS OF SOUTHERN JEWRY: The Letters of Charles Wessolowsky 1878-1879. The weekend is open to the general public, however, spaces for both accommodations and dinners are limited.

For additional information, contact Audrey Kariel at 503 Lansdowns, Marshall, Texas 75670. Or, call her at (214) 935-5387.





## RECENT HAPPENINGS

The Society authorized Lonnie Schooler and Allen Mondell as the designated representatives of the TJHS to the various Jewish Federations. It was later reported that the two representatives had been successful in securing a grant from the Dallas Jewish Federation's Foundation.

\$500.00 was allocated to collect follow-up data on the communities surveyed by the society. The first area to be Schulenberg. The purpose will be to collect materials on the earliest extant Jewish communities.

The Society voted to become a member of the Southern Jewish Historical Society as a statement of support of - and in gratitude to - the SJHS's past president, Mrs Janice Blumberg, the Gathering's speaker.

The Society decided on a change of format for our Newsletters. Members will receive four editions each year. Three will be shorter editions and the fourth will be more extensive and in journal form.

## WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ABBE DREYFUS?

A portrait of this handsome nephew and cousin of the Weisman-Hirsch family still hangs in the home which is now a historic bed and breakfast inn in Marshall. After a notorious stay in Paris, France for many years Dreyfus returned to Marshall. He later vanished somewhere in Texas, and the family never knew where he went.

The portrait was viewed by the board members at their luncheon during the quarterly board meeting.

If you know anyone who can trace Abbe Dreyfus, you may forge another link in the history of Texas Jewry.

## A MOST EXCITING DISCOVERY

A previously unidentified document from the papers of Rabbi Henry Cohen has been translated thanks to the efforts of members of the Texas Jewish Historical Society. The extra bonus surprise was that the document was a poem which was a commentary on the Talmud by Rabbi H Schwartz of Navasota.

During our programmed 1988 'Gathering' visit of the Texas Jewish Historical Society to the Archives at the Barker Library, Don Carleton, the Director, displayed the document written in German, with Rabbi Henry Cohen's papers with the hope that someone would be able to tell him about it.

Shirley Schuster, from Fort Worth, decided to take a copy back to Fort Worth where her friend, Alix Magnus (being fluent in German) did indeed translate it. The document was apparently sent to Rabbi Cohen by Rabbi H. Schwartz from Navasota. It turned out to be a commentary on Talmud written as poetry. Ruthe Winegarten, during a visit with Barbara Rubin realized that its author, Rabbi Schwartz, was Cathy Schecter's 'poet grandfather'. She took a copy of the translation to Cathy. Cathy, who had heard that her grandfather was a poet, had never seen his work! Now, thanks to our members Barbara, Shirley, Alix and Ruthe, Cathy has a copy of this treasured document in her possession.

## EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

The Annual Gathering adopted the Executive Board's recommendation that an Executive Vice President be sought to handle the daily activities of the Society. We are in need of a volunteer for this position. Cynthia Mondell and Lonnie Schooler will write a job description for a statewide advertisement for this position.



## EARLY TEXAS FEATURED IN HISTORICAL BOOK

The Jewish communities of east, southeast, south and central Texas as they were in 1879 are described in a book REFLECTIONS OF SOUTHERN JEWRY now available from the Texas Jewish Historical Society.

In 1878 - 79 Charles Wessolowsky toured the South and Southwest as a representative of the Jewish South newspaper and B'nai B'rith. He began his odyssey in Alabama and Georgia in March of 1878 traveling through the deep South through July of that year. He began again in March of 1879, spent five months visiting the Jewish communities of 25 Texas cities and towns, and described the people he met there. The letters conclude in October 1879 from St. Louis.

These letters were Wessolowsky's reports to his senior editor in Atlanta. The letters offer a glimpse of a number of Jewish communities whose history has been mostly forgotten. The book is edited by Louis Schmier, who will be the keynote speaker for the Annual Gathering of the Texas Jewish Historical Society, March 10 - 12, 1989 in Jefferson, Texas.

The book is available ONLY from the Texas Jewish Historical Society, P O Box 1508, San Marcos, Texas 78666. Price is \$10.00 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling (per copy).



## PUBLICITY

We are delighted that Barbara Rubin of Fort Worth, who is very experienced and actively involved in marketing, is now our Publicity chairperson. She is the former program director of the Dan Danciger Jewish Community Center of Fort Worth, and was General Chairman of the Fort Worth Jewish Community Sesquicentennial Committee.

## APPLAUSE

Ruthe Winegarten of Austin, as a member of the TJHS, was invited to participate in the 75th anniversary celebration of Shearith Israel Congregation in Wharton, Texas during the Labor Day weekend. Ruthe, a known and published author, is now writing a book about Texas Jews under the auspices of the TJHS.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Texas Jewish Historical Society has launched a membership campaign as a major undertaking. The committee is being chaired by Fay Brachman. Pearl Pink and Ethel Farris of Dallas and Frieda Fischer of San Antonio will assist. Nat Rosenbloom of Dallas serves as consultant to the committee.

In order to preserve your family heritage and Texas Jewish History the Society invites you to make our services available and solicit new members. For more information, contact Fay Brachman, 3720 Autumn Drive, Fort Worth, Texas 76109. Telephone: 817) 924-9207.




## ARCHIVES SOLICITS NEW MATERIALS

You do not have to be famous to contribute to the Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection. Located in the Barker Texas History Center, the University of Texas Archives serves the membership of several historical societies as well as the University of Texas System.

Those who attended the 1988 Gathering had an opportunity to see some of the collection and to hear how important the new additions are to the Archives. Dr. Don Carleton, Director, made a request that we actively solicit new materials.

The Archives is interested in papers, photos, correspondence, business records...most any document relating to the Texas experience. They do not have to be famous - they only have to relate to Texas or Texans.

If you have any materials, contact either Dr. Don Carleton or Kate Adams at the Barker Texas History Center, Sid Richardson Hall 2.101, UT Austin, Texas 78713.



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**Texas Jewish Historical Society**

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