

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 10193 • Austin, Texas 78766-0193 • Summer 1991

BOARD MEETING/PROGRAM SET FOR JUNE 8-9

Great times are in the works for those choosing to attend the quarterly open board meeting of the Texas Jewish Historical Society, scheduled for the weekend of June 8 - 9 in San Antonio.

The weekend events will begin on Saturday afternoon with a tour of the Institute of Texan Cultures at Hemisphere Plaza at 2:00pm. After the tour society members will have a session at the institute with representatives of old Jewish families of San Antonio.

Concluding the Saturday program will be a discussion with Richard Santos, a "Cryptic Jew" (one who was forced to deny Judaism as a result of the Inquisition). Mr. Santos will accompany the group to dinner for more coversation.

The actual board meeting will be held on Sunday at the Radisson hotel (611 N.W. Loop 410) beginning at 9:30am. A dutch lunch will be available and those wishing to have lunch will need to make reservations by calling Bill Munter in San Antonio at (512) 492-0210.

The board meeting is expected to conclude around 2:30. Afterwards, a list and map of Jewish historical sights will be available for afternoon exploration.

The Radisson Hotel is adjacent to the San Antonio airport and has offered members of the the Texas Jewish Historical Society a special rate of \$62.00 per night. Those attending will need to make thier own reservations by calling (512) 340 - 6060. Be sure to mention that you are part of the TJHS group to get the special rate.

Jan Siegel Hart Selected as New Executive Secretary

Jan Siegel Hart, author of the new children's book *Hanna*, the *Immigrant*, has been chosen as the new executive secretary for the Texas Jewish Historical Society.

A native of Dublin, Texas, Jan holds an Associate of Arts degree in English/History from Lon Morris Junior College in Jacksonville, Texas.

Jan's interest in Jewish history probably stems from the fact that "as a small child, my grandparents lived only a few blocks away, so I had the joy of being with them frequently."

Hanna, the author's grandmother, emigrated to Texas in 1909. Sixty years later she recorded her story about life in Russia and about her experiences as a newcomer in a strange

continued on p. 6

INFORMATION ON TEXAS JEWISH CEMETERIES SOUGHT

Six years ago, Kay Goldman obtained the locations of over 70 Jewish cemeteries or cemeteries where Jewish people are buried. The Cemetery Committee of the Texas Jewish historical Society is now undertaking a major project to document these sites. Letter and forms have been distributed to people all over Texas. All information collected will be compiled and deposited in the Barker Texas History Center Library in Austin.

There are probably a number of cemeteries that have not been reported. If anyone knows of cemeteries where Jewish persons are buried that are not

on the following list, the should contact Gertrude and Don Teter, 5013 Glenhaven, Baytown, Texas 77521.

Cemeteries have been reported in the following cities: Abilene, Alice, Athens, Austin, Bay City, Beaumont, Big Spring, Bonham. Breckenridge, Brenham, Brownsville, Bryan, Calvert, Cameron, Chappel Hill, Cleburne, Columbus, Corpus Christi, Corsicana, Dallas, Denison, Eagle Pass, El Paso, Ennis and Fort Worth.

Gainsville, Galveston, Giddings, Gonzales, Greenville, Halletsville, Harlingen, Hearne, Hempstead, Henderson, Houston,

Hubbard, Jefferson, Junction, Kilgore, Kingsville, La Grange and Laredo.

Longview, Lubbock, Lufkin, Luling, Marlin, Marshall, McKinney, Mexia, Mineola, Mt. Pleasant, Nascogdoches, Navasota, Odessa, Orange, Palestine, Paris, Pearsoll, Port Arthur, Rusk, San Angelo, San Antonio, San Diego, Sherman, Sweetwater, Texarkana, Tyler, Victoria, Waco, Waxahachie, Wharton and Wichita Falls.

Stories about these cemetery findings and the people who are buried in them will be on forthcoming editions of the newsletter.

News and Notes

Archives Wanted

Don Teter, newly elected archivist, requests that all material for out archives be sent to him at 5013 Glenhaven, Baytown, Tx. 77521. If there are pictures or documents you want returned, please indicate. Do not hesitate to send anything you would like to have archived at the Barker Center in Austin.

Transcribers Needed

Transcribers are needed for transcribing tapes of oral histories. All it requires is the ability to listen to audio tapes and either a typwriter or computer word processor. Please give Fa y Brachman a call at (817) 924-9207 if you are willing to do some transcribing.

Correction

The photo on page 5 of the Spring issue of the newsletter contained a misspelled name. Apologies to Mr. Leon Schmidt of Austin. The photo was of his father, Jacob Schmidt, a peddler in the Central Texas area around 1907.

TJHS Board Member Appointed to Commission

Lonnie Schooler, a board member of the Texas Jewish Historical Society, has been appointed to the Harris County Historical Commission for 1991-92. Seventeen new members were appointed to the commission by the Harris County Commissioner's Court.

Al Davis was reappointed chariman and Russell Kendall was appointed vice-chairman. They meet quarterly.

Donations

- Leonard Goldblatt of Abilene has donated ten cassette tapes of the Temple Mizpeh Study Group from the 1970 71 period.
- The Smithsonian Institution has ordered five copies of *Deep in the Heart:* The Lives and Legends of Texas Jews for use as a reference to make a documentary film on the history and culture of Jewish farm families in Iowa. the documentary will be aired during the 1991 Festival of American folklore.

Barker Texas History Center Exhibits Schedule/ Spring '91

"Texas Classics: Music of Texas Singers, Pianists and Composers, Feb 23 through May 31, 1991. Sponsored jointly by the Barker Center, UT Fine Arts Library and the Texas Music Museum, the exhibit highlights the careers of various Texas classical composers and performers. A demonstration of special reproducing piano may be arranged.

"From the Red River to the Rio Grande: The Texas Photographs of John Christian." April 19 - June 15, 1991. The first public exhibition of Texas images by 1976 Paisano Fellow John Christian.

"Texans: Richard Batholomew's Texas Caricatures" June 24 - October 19, 1991. Humorous images of famous Texas past and present by Austin caricaturist Richard Batholomew.

The Barker Texas History Center is located on the campus of the University of Texas in Austin. For more information about these exhibits, contact Lynn Bell, Exhibits Coordinator at the Barker Texas History Center (512) 471-7521. We will be covering the Barker Center in greater detail in an upcoming issue.

Report from the President

by Fay Brachman

The Annual Gathering this year at the Greene Family Camp in Waco was a delight. It was thrilling to hear our own members present scholarly papers on Texas Jewish History.

Our accomplishments are growing and showing.

Our book is published and selling well. Our curriculum guide for seventh graders will be in teacher's hands before the fall term begins. We are beginning our oral history project throughout the state with enthusiasm. The search for old, lost Jewish cemeteries through the state has been re-

sumed with vigor. Our collection of memorabilia at the Barker Library is growing and our membership is at an all-time high.

Isn't it funto be part of a society that is doing things? Let's keep the ball rolling!

Please note the following addresses and phone numbers, as these are the staff people you are encouraged to write or call with questions:

As you know, you can always contact me directly, as well at: 3720 Autumn Drive, Fort Worth, Tx. 76109; (817) 924-9207.

Executive Secretary:

Jan Siegel Hart, 2509 Redwing Dr Temple, Tx. 76502 (817) 778-2676

Staff:

Herbert and Phyllis Kadish, P.O. Box 10193 Austin, Tx. 78766-0193 (512) 451-0051

Newsletter Co-Editors:

Ellen B. Kurtzman, 4801 Willow Run Ct. Fort Worth, Tx. 76132-1518 (817) 292-3491 Elisa Kaplan Miller, Georgia

You're From Where? I Didn't Know There Were Any Jews There!

New Mexico Jews, Jewish

New Mexicans

Excepted from *The Link*, Albequerque, New Mexico by Gordon Bronitsky, PhD

Let me introduce you to Julie Silverman, from the only Jewish family in Hobbs, New Mexico, the heart of the "Little Texas oilpatch" right on the edge of the Texas border. Her grandfather, Morris Antweil, came to Texas from New York in the 1920's during the first grand oil boom of gushers when fortunes were quickly made and lost. He began as an itinerant merchant and soon became a wildcatter, one of a tough breed who prospected for oil as independents.

The family lived in Wink, Texas for a while, but Julie's father, Alan Antweil, was born in Fort Worth, since there were no hospitals in Wink. The family moved to Hobbs in 1932 where her grandfather settled into selling oil field supplies, establishing Hobbs Pipe and Supply. Her father went through school in Hobbs and spent a few years at the University of Texas, but quit before graduating to join the family business. Julie's mother, Mary Frances Ginsburg was from Fort Worth, the daughter of Russian immigrants who came to America in 1900. She met Julie's father at the university of Texas.

Even there were no other Jews in Hobbs, or in much of southeastern New Mexico, for that matter, Judaism played an important role in family life. One of Julie's fondest memories is trading matzoh and salami sandwiches (with matzoh sent by bus from Fort Worth) with other children at Pesach.

She mether husband-to-be, Paul Silverman, on two blind dates three years apart while working in Dallas. He, too, came from an "only Jewish family in town," this time from Richland Hills, Texas. They were married by the same rabbi who married her parents.

After their marriage they lived for nine years in Hobbs, because Paul

did not want to live in the big cities like Fort Worth or Dallas. Although they now live in Albuquerque, her parents and one brother still live in Hobbs and their home continues to be the center for the sparse Jewish population in Southeastern New Mexico, a center where Jews passing through can be assured of a warn Jewish home in the oil patch.



Dear Ms. Winegarten,

I appreciate your letter of November 11 and apologize for my delay in responding.

I do not understand your reference to my grandmother as "Alice Stiefel Halff." Her name was Alice Oppenheimer Stiefel. I do believe that she had a sister who married into the Halff family, so maybe that's the problem.

Besides spelling "Stiefel" incorrectly, the caption under my grand mother's picture states "she is shown here in 1902" and that is also an error as she died September 30, 1901 just two weeks before her thirtieth birthday, October 15. I have been informed by many people who should know that she was killed in a horse and buggy accident in San Antonio. Her gravestone in the Beth-El cemetery in San Antonio will validate some of the above dates.

Indicate (on TJHS membership application) that my areas of interest are learning more of my family's history on my father's side. My father, Elmer Julian Stiefel, was Alice Oppenheimer Stiefel and Max Stiefel's son; and he married my mother, Christine Turpin, a gentile. My birthdate is June 5, 1916 and my sister's birthdate is May 10, 1918 and her name is Alice Clair Stiefel Lytle. Our father died on February 11, 1919. We were too young to remember him; also we were raised in the Christian faith and seldom saw any of our father's side of the family.

I know that my grandfather was born in Rauschenberg, Germany - that he immigrated to the U.S. and landed in Galveston — that he married Alice B. Oppenheimer at San Antonio March 8, 1893 and that their son, Elmer, was born in Galveston on March 16, 1894 and their son Daniel Max was born at Galveston August 12, 1896. I do not know what kind of business my grandfather pursued in Galveston, but I was informed years ago by my mother that he was in the wholesale grocery and liquor business in San Antonio.

I would very much appreciate it if I could be put in touch with persons in Galveston and San Antonio who might be able to provide me with information about my grandfather's and father's life and business affairs in those cities. There are not any of my family on either side who could help me, with the possible exception of some distant Oppenheimer cousins.

Ms. Winegarten, I really had no intention of burdening you with the foregoing — this pen seems to have had a mind of its own. So I shall close with my thanks for responding to my call. I would appreciate any assistance you may aim in my direction.

Max Stiefel 406 Via Alegre San Clemente, CA 92672-3616

The Texas Jewish/Political

Connection

Jews in Texas have made in impact in fields as varied as oil to retailing. Some of that impact has been significantly felt in Texas politics. Currently we have a number of Jewish mayors, legislators and and others taking an active role in state policites. Historically, that has also been the case, as illustrated by this list.

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1847-1852	Adolphus Sterne	Nacogdoches
1876-1877	Moritz Kopperl	Galveston
1895-1986	Morris Lasky	Galveston
1903-1911	Chas Brachfield	Henderson
1919-1922	Harry Hertzberg	San Antonio
1961-1982	A.R. "Babe" Schwartz	Galveston

Jews in the House

1847-1849	Tarah da Cardava	Harris County
1047-1049	Jacob de Cordova	Harris County
1951-1955	Edgar Berlin	Port Neches
1955-1959	A.R. "Babe" Schwartz	Galveston
1969-1972	Joe Golman	Dallas
1975-1976	Abraham Ribak	San Antonio
1077-1078	tt tt	££

Other Legislative Positions

1862-1864	Phineas de Cordova	
	Secretary of Senate	
	Civil War	The state of the s
1919-1922	Harry Hertzberg	Bexar County
	Pres Pro Tempore	
	Ad interim 1919-1920	

Mayors

1828	Adolphus Sterne	Nacogdoches
1853	Michael Seeligson	Galveston
1880s-90s	Adolph Solomon, Adolph Krakauer	El Paso
1919	I.H. Kempner	Galveston
1930s	Louis Kariel	Marshall
	Adrian Levv	Galveston

Were They Jewish?

Are any of the following men who served in the Texas House of Representatives Jewish?

J.W. Rose	Victoria
Theo Hertzberg	Menard (Bexar)
A.L. Kessler	New Braunfels
Max Meissner	Bellville (Austin)
A.J. Rosenthal	LaGrange (Fayette)
	Longview
	Giddings
	J.W. Rose Theo Hertzberg A.L. Kessler

Selene Gorel, a descendant of the Sakowitz family of Houston (5802 Willowbend Blvd., Houston, Texas 77096) has sent us her family history about the Zipineucks of the Nathan family, and her grandparents, Mendel Nathan and Rebecca "Rivke" Rosen Nathan. She obtained the information from conversations, written documents, city directories, death records, the National Archives and the Peabody Museum in Salem, Mass. The family history is in the Texas Jewish Historical Society's collection at the Barker History Center under "Nathan Family File."

...Like most poor Jewish families of Russia, the Zipineuck and Kropevsky (Karpinski) families lived in Shtetls...during the 1800s and early 1900s. Wealthier Jews lived in the cities, but our ancestors were from the villages...they lived within a couple of hours by horse and buggy from one another and although their hardships were many, they were a very close and loving family.

In Russia, very few Jewish children were allowed to attend school. Only children of very wealthy parents; however, even if they qualified it usually involved a "bribe" to the Mayor and Principal of the school...the Zipineucks' children were schooled at home. Although the town was too small to support a synagogue, religious services were conducted at the houses of different Jewish people on a rotation basis...Meyer Zipineuck and his family worked six days a week, but never labored on the Sabbath.

There was a small factory in Korotishev (owned by a Jew) which processed leather from the skins of cattle and this is where Meyer and his sons worked. Life was unbelievably hard and...during the extreme cold winters the temperature could plummet to 65 below zero for months at a time...Diet consisted mainly of potatoes, bread, cabbage, tea and once in awhile, the "luxury" of a little herring.

Page 4 NEWSLETTER

FROM RUSSIA, WITH LOVE

Children began work at approximately eight years of age and earned about 60 cents per week...even though there were Jewish owners of the factory, all of the employees were paid nearly starvation wages. Everyone in the family started working early.

When Meyer Zipineuck died, Bessie lived with Newton and his wife, Mamie Sarah Michlarsk (Mimi Yochevad). Mendel and Israel and their families moved to a larger city, Radomisle, a few miles away. Leah, who married Label Sakowitz (the name was different in Russia), left for America with her husband and children (Simon, Tobe and Becky)...they went to Galveston and opened a little tailor shop (this was the forerunner of the Sakowitz stores in Houston).

Leah sent for her nephews, as they were about to be conscripted into the Russian army. In Russia, the boys worked in the factory processing hides saddles...the smell from the drying skins was especially foul. Max H. Nathan (by this time the offspring of Newton, Mendel and Israel who lived in the U.S. had changed the name to Nathan) worked in Galveston with his Uncle Label and his sons, Tobe and Simon.

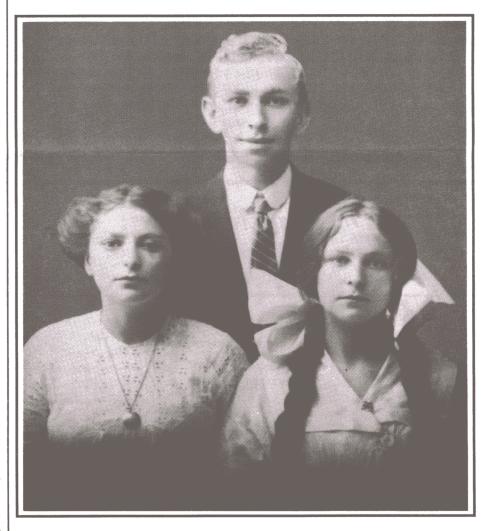
Newton and his family bribed an organization of Russian smugglers to help them cross the border. Upon their arrival in Galveston, they were greeted by sister, Leah, and her family; son, Max; daughter, Sheindel and her family; and son, Seymour. (Newton worked on the docks and then as a fruit peddler. Mimi provided board to HIAS immigrants.) Max had married his cousin, Becky Sakowitz (around 1908) and was helping his parents...the children were earning about \$2.50 or \$3.00 a week.

...Mendel (who had remarried in 1908) arrived in Galveston and was taken to Aunt Leah Sakowitz's house...In Texas City, Grandpa bought

some cattle and began a little business... the 1915 storm hit Galveston and Texas City...they were totally wiped out. The family then moved to Houston. ...Many years later, Newton's youngest son, David, became Mayor of Houston.

My remembrances of my grandparents were vivid and many. They spoiled me rotten and were always trying to feed me...What a warm, loving, noisy family we were. Mammo(sic) told me her father never failed to bring those less fortunate home to eat and sleep and Grandma always managed to stretch her meager budget to accommodate them. Although he had very little, he always shared and when he died his only piece of jewelry was a pocket watch Mammo had purchased at the five and dime for one dollar.

Many times I have admonished myself for not being a more inquisitive daughter or granddaughter...thinking only of the present...or perhaps feeling that my family was immortal.



c. 1915, Galveston. Rosie Nathan, Philip Rich and Minnie Greenberg. Philip is Marvin's father. Rosie and Minnie are Philip's sisters.

SUMMER 1991 Page 5

Executive Board and Staff of the Texas Jewish Historical Society for 1991



(R - L) Top Row: Jan Siegel Hart, Executive Secretary, Temple; Herbert Kadish, staff, Austin; Judy Munter and Bill Munter, Treasurer, San Antonio; Fay Brachman, President, Fort Worth; Don Teter, Archivist, Baytown; Barbara Rosenberg, Vice-president, Sugarland; Milton Smith, Past President, Austin; Phyllis Kadish, staff, Austin; (seated) HelenWilk, Membership Chair, Corpus Christi; and Nell Hall, Secretary, Fort Worth.

Deep in the Heart:

The Lives & Legends of Texas Jews A Photographic History

3 Books for \$75

(special price includes sales tax, shipping)

Number of copies @ \$25.00 each Texas residents add 8% sales tax (\$2.00 each copy) Shipping

\$3.00

TOTAL

Check or money order enclosed \$

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Jan Hart named **Executive Secretary**

continued from p. 1

land. Jan transcribed these tapes and created the book Hanna, the Immigrant from them.

Jan has been very active in volunteer organizations such as the PTA, Girl Scouts, Homemakers Club, Temple Civic Chorus, Chisholm Trail Chorus of Sweet Adelines, and the Temple Civic Theater. She was also the charter president of the Uvalde **Jaycettes.**

Married to Charles B. Hart in 1961, Jan is a Texan through and through. She and her husband have three grown children and they reside in Temple.

The Texas Jewish Historical Society is looking forward to having Jan Siegel Hart as executive secretary. You can reach her by writing or calling: 2509 Redwing Drive, Temple, Texas 76502, (817) 778-2676.

HANNA, THE IMMIGRANT by Jan Siegel Hart

Hanna was a ten-year-old Jewish girl in Czarist Russia at the turn of the century. Even though she grew up in a loving family, she realized life was becoming more and more difficult for Jews all the time. At the age of 17, Hanna became part of the Galveston movement.

You can read and share her story with your family and friends. The book, HANNA, THE IMMIGRANT, is available for \$12.95 (Texas residents add \$1.07 sales tax) plus \$2.00 shipping and handling from: Jan Siegel Hart, 2509 Redwing Drive, Temple, Texas 76502. Please let Ms. Hart know if you want a personal inscription

SPRING GATHERING OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR PRESENTATIONS, ELECT OFFICERS, AND LEARN A LITTLE ABOUT ORAL HISTORIES

The Texas Jewish Historical Society met at the Greene Family Camp near Bruceville, Texas the first weekend in March for the Annual Spring Gathering.

Those in attendance had the opportunity to participate in workshops, elect officers and hear wonderful reports and presentations about various aspects of Texas Jewish History.

The new 1991-92 Officers and board are listed in the box on this page. Fay Brachman was elected President and, according the *Jewish Herald Voice of Houston*, she is a "mover and a shaker...she has a zestful attitude as a leader in the Jewish Historical Society."

TJHS members presented a number of very fine reports including a report on Oleander Odyssey by Harold M. Hyman presented by outgoing president, Milton Smith; tales from her new children's book Hanna, the Immigrant by Jan Siegel Hart; a report on History of the Jews of the Texas' Middle Corridor by William Munter; a warm remembrance of Rabbi Sidney Wolf, of Corpus Christi, a Man for All Seasons delivered by Helen Wilk and a scholarly report "Remnants of Israel in the Life of Jacob de Cordova, 1780-1868 by Juliet George Dees. All of these quality papers, presented by TJHS members, are an indication of the devotion and interest in this subject.

Evelyn Hoffman, a Waco television personality, presented two videotapes: Ellis Island which gave a real insiders guide to the work on refurbishing this historical landmark; and Interview with Jewish Wacoans of Immigrant Heritage, Both of these tapes were from Ms. Hoffman's weekly television series, Better With Age.

Ginger Jacobs of Dallas along with Ruthe Winegarten of Austin presented a two-part workshop on gathering oral histories. TJHS is encouraging people all over the state to become

a part of this project. The primary purpose of TJHS is to collect and preserve material recording the lives of Jewish people in Texas. The Society collects material and oral histories which are preserved in the Barker Texas Historical Center, University of Texas Library System. Anyone wishing additional information about the TJHS may contact Fay Brachman (817) 924-9207 or Membership Chairman, Helen Wilk at 260 Cape Aron, Corpus Christi, Texas 78412 (512) 853-0237.

In addition to electing new officers, the chairs for the various committees were announced: Handbook of Texas: Ruthe Winegarten, Austin; Endowment Fund, Milton Smith, Austin; Touring, Ann Kleiman, Fort Worth; Cemetery, Mr. and Mrs. Don Teter, Baytown; Programs, Barbara Rosenberg, Sugarland; Oral Histories, Karen Kaplan, Fort Worth and Ginger Jacobs, Dallas; Curriculum Guide, Rabbi Jimmy Kessler, Galveston and Doris Glasser, Houston; Long Range Planing, Rabbi Lawrence Jackofsky, Dallas; Essay Contest, Ellen Mack, Fort Worth and By-laws Revision, Jimmy Alexander, Dallas.

1991-1992 Officers and Board Members

President: Fay Brachman, Fort Worth
First Vice President: Rabbi Lawrence Jackofsky, Dallas
Second Vice President: Herbert Given, El Paso
Third Vice President: Barbara Rosenberg, Sugarland
Secretary: Nell Hall, Fort Worth
Treasurer: Bill Munter, San Antonio
Archivist: Don Teter, Baytown

Executive Board Members

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TEXAS JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

I am enclosing my contribution of \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 to the Texas Jewish Historical Society for the 1991 membership year.

Classification of membership: \$25 - Annual Member; \$50 - Supporting Member; \$100 - Sponsor and Organization; \$250 - Sustaining member; \$500 - Benefactor; \$1,000 - Patron

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