

# Texas Jewish Historical Society

Preserving Jewish Heritage in Texas  
Est. 1980



February, 2013 News Magazine

## My Father, Sam Night by Bernice Night Schnurr

In the year 1911, a young man of eighteen ran away from Poland, which later became Austria, because he did not want to join the army after his only brother died in the war. Instead, he wanted to live his dream of becoming a merchant who could own his own business. His parents blessed him, and that man was Samuel Naichtingal, my father.

He arrived in Ellis Island and shortened his name to Samuel Naicht and then Americanized it to Sam Night (always with an "N"). He had several cousins in New York who helped him for a while. He taught himself to read, write, and speak English, and after some time, his sister and brother-in-law, Sadie and Ben Pfeffer, invited him to work for them in their store in Houston, Texas. So he stayed in Houston and worked for a while. Later, he worked in Orange, Texas, and then went to Dallas to work in a store owned by B. Schwartz and his wife Annie Schwartz. They were very nice people who admired the hard working, ambitious Sam Night and invited him to Shabbat dinner one evening. At their house, he saw a picture of a beautiful girl, who was Annie Schwartz's niece and who lived in New York. Annie wrote to her niece and asked her to come to Dallas to meet this ambitious, nice looking man. So she came, and "Sidath" was made. Her name was Sarah Elise Goldstein, and she was my mother. My father took her to Houston and they were married by Rabbi Max Geller.

It wasn't too long before a friend of his, B. Wylde, asked Sam to come to Beaumont, Texas, where the Spin-

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*Sam Night in his store in Beaumont, Texas*

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# Message from the President

by Marc Wormser

The January meeting in San Angelo was a successful meeting with a weekend full of activities and dedication events. Congregation Beth Israel celebrated their 100-year anniversary with a historical marker and a presentation of a flag flown over the state capital by

Representative Drew Darby. He said, "This event is due to the combined efforts of the synagogue members, the Texas Jewish Historical Society, the Tom Green County Historical Commission, the West Texas Collection at ASU, and the Texas Historical Com-



mission."

On behalf of TJHS, I thank Barbara Rosenberg and Suzanne Campbell for hosting a great weekend.

After the new directory was mailed, TJHS was informed of changes of address, deaths, phone numbers, etc. This just shows that as diligent as one might be, a lot of current information falls through the cracks. That

is the reason that in every News Magazine, we continue to ask for your help to keep us apprised of those changes. I certainly realize that this notification is not at the top of your priority list. Please help us maintain a current database as much as we can.

Along similar lines, I am happy to see so many additional members taking advantage of receiving the news magazines and other bits of information via email. It not only saves postage, but it also seems to be a more natural event than reading mail.

The new web site will be up within the next month. I hope that everyone will like our new format. With the new site, one will also be able to use PayPal (accepting any credit card) to pay dues, make donations, make purchases, etc.

One concern that we have is our declining membership. We currently have 631 members. The attrition is due primarily to deaths, which is understandable, but we have also had several resignations of membership due to a variety of personal reasons. At the same time, we have added thirty-three members in 2011 and twenty-four members in 2012. Hopefully, as we go forward, every one of you can help, and we can see a major rise in membership.

The Annual Gathering will be in Houston, April 19 through 21. Hotel accommodations will be at the Marriott Westchase on Westheimer (registration form is included). We hope to see many of you there.

Please note that there are two registration forms for meetings in

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## The Texas Jewish Historical Society February 2013 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 scans at 300 dpi or greater, in .gif, .tif, or .jpg format, and send electronically to Assistant Editor Davie Lou Solka at [editor@txjhs.org](mailto:editor@txjhs.org) or by mail to 3808 Woodbrook Circle, Austin, TX 78759, 512-527-3799. Be sure to include your name and contact information.

**Publisher-Editor** Alexa Kirk

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**Photographers** Marvin Rich and Davie Lou Solka

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](http://www.txjhs.org).*



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dle Top oil boom had begun. He said that all the merchants in Beaumont were doing well. Sam found a store at 479 Crockett, so my parents left Dallas in 1920. My father worked hard and established good relationships with his customers by accommodating them late into the night. Many nights he stayed open until nine or ten—or even midnight—so that they could shop after work when the ships came into the harbor of Neches River port.

Sam did well until the stock market crash in 1929, which forced him to move to a smaller store at the corner of Crockett and Park. By this time he had four children: Harvey, his oldest; Bernice, Geraldine, and Evelyn. He was so proud of his children. He wanted a dozen so my mother had two more. Thank God they were boys—Ralph and S.D. “Donnie”—because he wanted his name to live on. That made a half-dozen and my mother said “that was all.” Today, my three brothers have three sons, and five grandsons. They also have two daughters and four granddaughters. The girls have three sons and three daughters, five granddaughters and three grandsons. As of 2012, there are sixteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Sam managed to keep his store open during the depression and continue to stay open late into the night, hoping for sales. He wrote his creditors to give him time. He would send them money a little at a time and

promised to pay every penny back. His word was his bond. They trusted him and he made it through the hard years. Many of the merchants did not survive the 1929 crash. After the crash, conditions improved and the store began to be fruitful again. My father was able to purchase four tracts of land and moved back to the middle of the block, which was 479 Crockett where he started. His slogan was “Sam Night Back in the Middle of the Block.”

The oil boom was over, so my father began to cater to the rice farmers of the small nearby towns of Nome, China, and Fanette. He was willing to sell them the work clothes that they needed and was willing to trust them to pay after the crops were harvested. Most of the people paid and for those who didn’t, he would drive on Sundays to collect from them in person. My father actually never drove, but my mother was the driver and took him anywhere he wanted to go. She worked at the store and helped him with everything. She sold and loved being the cashier. She was a great help to him. He also catered to the railroad men and all workmen. He sold a lot of khakis, overalls, boots, work shoes, rainwear called “slickers,” trunks, suitcases, and a lot of hats. He had Stetson hats made with his name in them.

When World War II started, his son Harvey joined the Air Force and was sent to the war in the China-Burma Theater. His son Ralph was still young.

Help was hard to find, so he sold the contents of the store to another merchant, rented the new merchant the store, and went to work for him. He worked in the store like it was his very own. The new merchant did extremely well during the war years. On March 25, 1945, my father was in China, Texas, collecting debts that were due from rice farmers when he crossed the highway and was struck by a passing car. He suffered a head injury and died that night. He died working. He was forty-nine.

My brother Harvey came home from the war and asked my mother to re-open the store. The merchant who was renting the store was asked to move and new merchandise was put in. That was in 1948. Harvey built it back up, and as time went on he brought his brothers, Ralph and Donnie, into the business. Ralph is still co-owner. Donnie left and went into commercial real estate. The two brothers worked well together and kept the styles contemporary with the changing world, selling high fashion, western wear, and even the “super-fly” look in the sixties and seventies. They changed the name of the store to “Nights.” They still sold work clothes, boots, shoes, hats, etc.

They soon realized that there was a need for uniforms, so they began to furnish uniforms for post office workers, prison guards, and other law enforcement related groups. They built

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## **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 news magazine. Write your story, and if you have questions or need help, call our

assistant 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 your article to our assistant editor, Davie Lou Solka, at [editor@txjhs.org](mailto:editor@txjhs.org), mail it to 3808 Woodbrook Circle, Austin, TX 78759, or call her at 512-527-3799.



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# MARKUS, PLANTER OF TREES:

## A MEMOIR

by **Elizabeth Meyer Liener**, *Bloomington, Indiana: iUniverse, 2012. 226 pages.*

Review by Linda Blasnick, Librarian,  
Tycher Library Center for Jewish Education, Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas

Meet Markus Rosenberg. Is he the man whose love for family and community took him across the ocean to begin a new life in a new continent? Is he the man who built a school, a business and a shul in Dallas, Texas? Is he the man who made something from nothing? Is he the man who inspires us to do the same? The answers are yes, yes, yes, and you bet!

*Markus, Planter of Trees* is the portrait of a spirited, intelligent young man, Markus, who woke up early every day excited to learn and ready to put that learning to good use. In six short chapters, Liener leads us through his journey. We meet the man who always looked ahead and excelled due to his forethought. To build a Jewish community in Dallas, Texas, he saw the need for children to receive a Jewish education. He found the children and built a school around them. He saw the need for a shul. He found the minyan and built a shul around them. All the while, these institutions grew and Marcus Rosenberg—along with his wife, Ann, and their growing family, put the institutions before personal needs.

In 2012, Akiba Academy celebrated its 50th anniversary. Rabbi Zev Silver, current Headmaster of Akiba Academy replies to the question of how Dallas would be different if Markus had not built the school. “The continuity of our people is based on Jewish children being educated and nurtured. The Dallas community has been transformed because of Markus

*A Memoir*  
**Markus, Planter of Trees**



By Elizabeth Meyer Liener

*Escaping death during the Holocaust, Marcus Rosenberg emerged as a dynamic, unstoppable businessman and influential philanthropist who greatly enriched Jewish life in Dallas, Texas.*

Rosenberg. And what is unique in how Marcus built the school is that it is one of diversity. Children of all backgrounds come together to learn about their heritage. Congregation Shaare Tefilla just celebrated its 25th anniversary. Rabbi Ari Perl, Senior Rabbi of Congregation Share Tefilla states, “While it’s impossible to know, I think that it’s entirely plausible that without the vision and generosity of Markus Rosenberg, traditional Judaism would not be nearly the vibrant and dynamic force that it is today. In the early to mid-20th century, many communities across the U.S.—and even across the state of Texas—had small groups of immigrant Jews who tried to maintain

the traditional Jewish lifestyle that they knew in Europe. But outside of the orthodox population centers of New York, Chicago, Cleveland, etc., it took visionary leadership to lay the groundwork for a vibrant, traditional community to sustain itself in subsequent generations. For the most part, those communities that were not privileged to be blessed with such leadership could not maintain a vibrant orthodox community, to the detriment, in my opinion, not only of traditional Judaism but of the broader Jewish community in that city as well. Thanks to the visionary leadership of Markus Rosenberg and others, we are privileged to be counted amongst the fortunate ones.” Both institutions are stronger and more embracing than ever before.

Liener expertly and thoughtfully takes us along Markus’s journey. She shines light on his triumphs and leaves his pains in dusky shadows. We see the quiet and strong love that Markus had for his parents, siblings, and friends. We do not see him losing a loved one—holding them only by a last look for the last time. Yet we know that the power of those tragedies propelled Markus forward. His work was never ending. His goals were clear. His obstacles were only opportunities.

While the memoir is told chronologically, is time the thread that holds the work together? It is possible?

*continued on page 5*

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# The Gerrick Family

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by Jack Gerrick

In 1943, George and Evelyn Gerrick moved with their four children from Chicago to a little town in South Texas called Pharr. Pharr had a population of 2,000 people and was located about eight miles from Mexico in the Rio Grande Valley in the heart of the citrus and vegetable growing area.

Living in Pharr at the time were three Jewish families: the Weisfelds, the Goldbergs, and the Tennebaums. Joe and Anna Goldberg owned a dry-goods store and had two children: Billy, who later became the leader of the State Democratic Party, and Rosalie, who became a doctor in Houston. The Tennebaums had two children, and the Weisfelds had four children (Seymour, Harold, Rosie, and Sheldon).

Morris and Pauline were in the citrus business and had a packing plant along with some citrus groves. Pauline was my mother's sister who convinced our family to move to Pharr and helped my dad get started in the valley in the citrus business. At a later date, my dad went into business with Mr. Irving Kunik of McAllen in a citrus packing plant and vegetable


brokerage.

There was very little Jewish culture in McAllen or Pharr inasmuch as there was no synagogue and services were held in individual homes and no Hebrew school until three years later after World War II when some of the soldiers remained in town. There were numerous Jewish families up and down the valley and later synagogues in Mercedes, Harlingen, and Brownsville.

I'd like to point out that my brother Albert contracted polio when he was three years old and a major epidemic hit the valley and nation. He spent some years in an iron lung and endured numerous operations. In a last effort to cure him, my mother took him to Warm Springs, Georgia, where there were some magical waters. While there, she met President Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. Most know that FDR also had polio and was in a wheelchair. After two weeks, there was no change, and my brother lived the rest of his life in braces and crutches.

In 1947, under the direction of an

organization in Houston, my father and a number of other men in the valley spent many days in Mexico buying as many guns and weapons as they could find. They sent them to a ship in Brownsville, which then shipped them to Israel to support statehood. Many other weapons were also sent to Brownsville from South America, and the ship was almost entirely filled with weapons for Israel. We later found out that the ship arrived in Haifa in April right before Statehood and the war for independence.

In 1949, I attended the University of Texas and while there, a major freeze hit the valley and destroyed most of the citrus industry and 80% of the trees. My dad's entire grove froze and all of his trees, which were thirty to forty years old, died. My parents and siblings (Albert, Delores, and Jerry) moved to California, and I was drafted out of school into the Air Force during the Korea conflict. The valley has grown tremendously over the years and there is quite a Jewish presence there now, with many Mexican Nationals moving into the valley. 

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## *Markus, Planter of Trees, continued from page 4*

Scene one shows Markus waking early in the cold so excited by the learning for the day that he could barely sleep. Bava Basra filled his head and imagination. So as not to waken his sleeping brothers, he whispers Modeh Ani, ritually washes his hands, dresses, and packs a sack lunch of bread and butter. He is off to *cheder*.

Fast forward to Dallas, Texas. Markus and his sister Erika arrive, neither speaking more than a few words of English. Within several months, Markus found that the U.S. army was accepting bids for a new black pepper contract. Not knowing that he was competing with McCor-

mick, French's, and Durkee, Markus went to New York City to attend the bidding process. He made a bid and was asked by the Quartermaster officer where his plant's address would be. Without an address but with confidence, Markus promised a building for inspection within one week. "I got the bid! I got the bid!" he told his uncle. He purchased a pepper grinder, and with a little help from his uncle, secured 2815 Main Street in downtown Dallas. Markus explained his story to the inspector and received approval to start working on the pepper contract. He hired Eloisa and Frances Carrasco, two sisters from the Texas Employ-

ment Agency that afternoon, and along with Erika, ground, processed, and packaged pepper in cans. Markus and his employees filled the order on time for the U.S. Army, sneezing all the way. Once more, Markus succeeded due to intelligence and spirit.

Not every moment in Liener's memoir is filled with light. Markus in Auschwitz, famished and volunteering to do hard labor, saw darkness and absorbed pain. A witness to evil, he persevered. Among those liberated and weighing less than 90 pounds, Markus ultimately met his sibling, Erika, who was serving in a soup kitchen. The brother and sister faced the losses of

*continued on page 8*

# TJHS Winter Meeting



*TJHS Board members gather for the board meeting.*



*Welcome sign at Panel Presentations at Angelo State University.*



*Havdalah with Megan and Matthew Mizell.*



*Earlene Gorden, Charles Hart, Gary Whitfield, and Bruce Gordon.*



*Rabbi Marcy Greene gives the blessing at Shabbat dinner.*



# - San Angelo, Texas, January 25-27, 2013 -



*Photo above: Unveiling the historical marker for Congregation Beth Israel was Marc Wormser, Amy Mizzell-Fling, Jeffrey Lisson, Suzanne Campbell, Carol Polunsky, and Barbara Rosenberg.*



*The Kurtz family, who visited from Atlanta, Georgia. Front row: Zachary and Bryce Kurtz, Rachel, Lila and Jonah Turner. Back row: Chris and Carrie Turner, Betty and Ron Kurtz.*



*TJHS members came to commemorate the unveiling.*



*President Marc Wormser spoke at the unveiling of Congregation Beth Israel's historical marker.*



*The panel that spoke about growing up in San Angelo: Peggy Polunsky Jessel, Carol Polunsky, Bob Becker, Sylvia Fine Wilkenfield, Ron Kurtz, Marty Cohen.*

# - San Angelo, Texas, January 25-27, 2013 -



*TJHS at Lawnhaven Cemetery.*

*Suzanne Campbell and Barbara Rosenberg, San Angelo weekend co-chairs.*



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*Markus, planter of trees, continued from page 5*

their mother, father, and young brother Aaron. Markus, Emanuel, and David survived. They were determined to move forward.


Marcus changed the spelling of his name. He changed the places where he lived. Yet, he changed the past by changing the future. With his family in the new world, he began a new family. Children married and had children of their own. Marcus changed his name once more—to Opa. He gave his grandchildren nicknames and always had a secret stash of KitKat or “kitty cat bars” waiting for them at the top of his office closet.

“At the time of the memoir, Marcus had a legacy of fifteen grandchildren (two of them married) and two great-grandchildren, with hopes of many more to come, God-willing. The



*Rosenberg descendants. Front row: Miles Pulitzer, Ann Rosenberg, David Waks. Middle Row: Elie Rosenberg, Shalva Rosenberg, Tali Rosenberg, Gabriella Grief, Noa Waks, Mina Pulitzer. Back Row: Jake Greif, Daniel Waks.*

institutions he founded, along with those to which he gave generously, continue to advance and thrive.”

Read and enjoy Liener’s memoir. It is the journey of an unstoppable man whose spirit and love inspire today. 



# — An Invitation to a Historical Marker — Dedication Ceremony

*The Members of the Texas Star Chapter  
of The Daughters of the Republic of Texas*

cordially invite you to attend

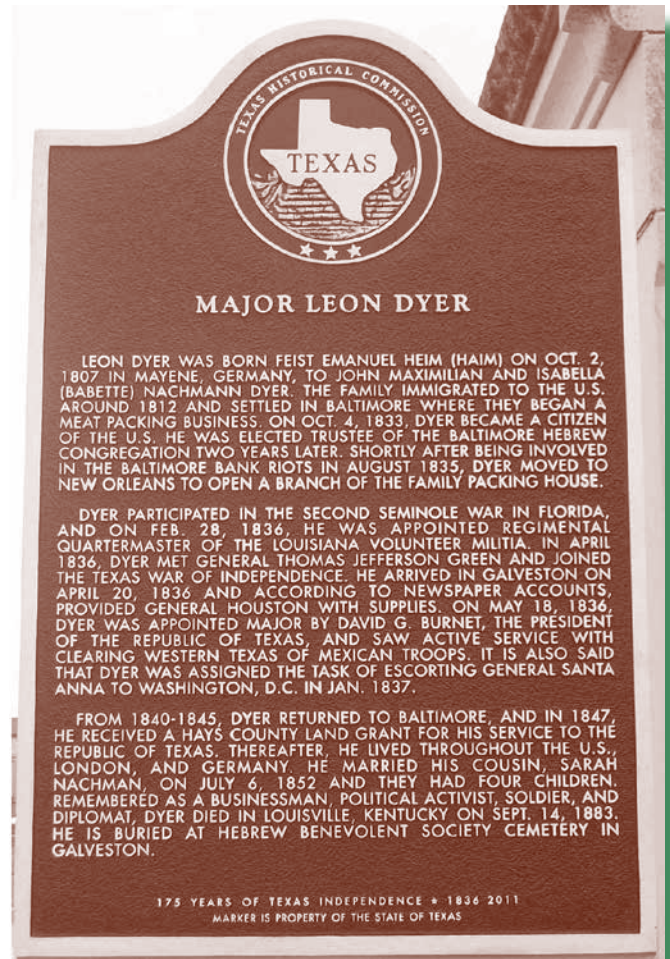
**the Historical Marker Dedication Ceremony  
for Major Leon Dyer,  
Army of the Republic of Texas  
on Sunday, April 28, 2013, at 2:00 PM.**

The ceremony will take place  
at the **Hebrew Benevolent Society Cemetery**  
Broadway and 43rd Street at Avenue K  
in Galveston, Texas

*Light refreshments will follow.  
Please bring your lawn chairs.  
Free street parking will be available.*

In the event of inclement weather,  
the ceremony will take place  
at Congregation B'nai Israel  
3808 Avenue O, Galveston

*A special thanks to the following  
for their donations or support:*  
the Daughters of the Republic of Texas  
Galveston County Historical Commission  
Congregation B'nai Israel in Galveston, Texas  
Texas Jewish Historical Society  
Ralph E. Dittman, M.D., Houston, Texas  
David M. Zwahr, Pasadena, Texas



Chapter website: [www.lksfriday.com/DRT/DRT-013.htm](http://www.lksfriday.com/DRT/DRT-013.htm)

# — A Recent Historical Marker — Dedication Ceremony

Congregation Beth Israel in San Angelo, Texas, unveiled a historical marker Saturday, January 26, 2013, in conjunction with the Board Meeting of the Texas Jewish Historical Society. The unveiling ceremony also celebrated the Congregation's 100th Birthday. It was attended by approximately two hundred people, including TJHS Board members and spouses. Also attending were many descendants of the congregation's

founding fathers, some who came from California, Georgia and Florida, as well as cities in Texas. The week-end was chaired by Barbara Rosenberg and Suzanne Campbell, TJHS members. The Texas Jewish Historical Society, the Tom Green County Historical Commission and the West Texas Collection at Angelo State University worked together to have the marker placed. 🇺🇸



# Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities

*The Texas Jewish Historical Society awarded a grant to the Institute of Southern Jewish Life to research and publish the histories of Jews in Texas towns. These histories are available on the Institute's website and are called "Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities." We will print one of these histories in each issue of our News Magazine. Thanks to Dr. Stuart Rockoff, director of the History Department, for permission to reprint these articles. To see other towns, go to the Institute of Southern Jewish Life website and click on "Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities."*

## Houston's Jewish Congregations

Brothers Augustus and John Allen envisioned building a vibrant city in the new Texas Republic. Their creation, which they named after the hero of the Texas War for Independence, Sam Houston, was soon declared the temporary capital of the fledgling nation. As the seat of government for the Texas Republic, Houston grew from twelve

residents at the start of 1837 to 1,500 people just four months later. After the capital moved to Austin in 1839, Houston turned to the region's leading cash crop, cotton, to fuel its economy. Plantation owners would ship their cotton along with corn and animal hides to Houston, which would then travel by steamboat down the Buffalo Bayou to Galveston, where they would be shipped to major ports in the eastern U.S. and Europe. The construction of railroads in the 1850s and 60s linked Houston to the nation's growing transportation network, and enabled the city to become a major commercial center for the southeast.



*"300 block of Main Street facing north at Preston Avenue." 1883-1884.<sup>1</sup>*

Jews were attracted to Houston early in the city's history. Jacob DeCordova was one of the most prominent citizens in the town. He helped create the Houston Chamber of Commerce in 1840 and later opened a real estate business. During the 1840s he served as an alderman and represented Harris County in the legislature. He moved his land business to Austin in 1852. Lewis and Mary Levy moved to Houston in 1841 and were also involved in real estate business. According to historian, Helena Schlam, seventeen Jewish adults lived in Houston in 1850, and of the eleven adult males, all but DeCordova were

merchants.

Jews continued to settle in Houston and by 1860, there were one-hundred-eight Jews who lived in the Bayou City. All but six of the sixty-eight adults were immigrants. They concentrated in retail trade, owning 15% of the city's stores in 1860. Most achieved economic success rather quickly. Several Houston Jews

became leaders of the local business community. Morris Levy and Henry Fox were both involved in creating a group that sought to connect Houston to the Gulf of Mexico through a ship channel. The eventual success of the project would later transform Houston. Fox served on the first board of directors of the Houston Board of Trade and Cotton Exchange and became president of the Houston National Exchange Bank. John Reichman served as an alderman and was the city secretary and treasurer during the 1870s.

Soon after Jews settled in Houston, they began to pray together. The

*continued on page 11*



first reported minyan took place in 1837. It wasn't until 1854 when they bought land for a cemetery, that Houston Jews began to organize community institutions. In 1855, Levy led the way to creating the Hebrew Benevolent Association, which aimed to serve the cemetery and care for the Jewish needy in the city. The Association was greatly respected in Houston and was invited to take part in the city's July



*Jacob DeCordova, a prominent Jewish Houstonian who helped create the Houston Chamber of Commerce in 1840.*

4th parade in 1856.

In 1859, thirty-two men founded Texas' first Jewish congregation, Beth Israel. At least four of these founders lived in other parts of Texas, in places as far away as Jefferson and Paris. None were Texas natives and only one had been born in the United States. The average age of the founding members was less than twenty-eight. They were established economically and several had amassed significant fortunes. Of this group of twenty-one founders, six owned slaves, though most only owned one as a house servant. The men who created Beth

Israel in 1859 were young immigrants who found economic success in their new home.

Most of these Jews observed traditional Jewish practices. The *Occident* reported in 1860 that most Houston Jews "keep the Sabbath and Festivals strictly and do no business on the sacred days." M. Levy, the first president of Beth Israel, had moved to the city from Charleston, where he had led an Orthodox breakaway group from Beth Elohim Congregation after it adopted Reform Judaism. When Beth Israel bought a wooden building in 1860, it had separate seating for men and women. Members were fined if they entered the synagogue with their heads uncovered. They hired Rev. Zachariah Emmich in 1860 to lead services and act as a schochet, providing kosher meat to the congregation. When Beth Israel's leadership tried to enforce Sabbath observance on its members requiring that they keep their stores closed on Saturday, several members were suspended for violating this rule. In 1864, the men of the congregation took over the religious school that had been founded a year earlier by the women, claiming that they had taught "an objectionable catechism."

After the Civil War, Beth Israel began to move toward Reform Judaism. In 1866, members voted overwhelmingly to adopt Isaac Mayer Wise's Reform prayer book *Minha America*. Later, all of the new prayer books were stolen from the synagogue. The congregation began to discuss adding an organ to worship services, but in 1869 when a vote was taken, it was narrowly defeated. Four years later, Beth Israel's members voted in

favor of the organ. By 1874, Beth Israel had joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, completing its evolution to Reform Judaism.

In 1870 when Beth Israel built a brick synagogue on the corner of Crawford and Franklin Street, it endured continual fights over ritual questions. Since it was the only Jewish congregation in Houston, a group of traditional members left in 1887 to meet for Orthodox services. At that time there were two different orthodox minyans—one Galician and one Russian. In 1891, they joined together and formed Adath Yeshurun. P.S. Nussbaum was the first president. They met in private homes before they bought a small house in 1894.

When Galveston was hit by the 1900 hurricane, Houston emerged as the major port city in the area and eventually became the second busiest port in the United States. Along with the city's growth, the Jewish population reached 11,000 people by 1927.

The Galveston Movement brought hundreds of Jews to Houston between 1907 and 1914. Most of these immigrants were Orthodox Jews who needed to be able to walk to synagogue on the Sabbath. As a result, sixteen men formed Adath Israel congregation in 1905. Initially the new Orthodox congregation held services in the home of its president, H. Wertheimer. In 1910, a building was dedicated with the rabbis of Beth Israel and Adath Yeshurun participating. With sixty members in 1910, Rabbi Jacob Geller was hired to lead the congregation. He led the congregation until his death in 1930.

Another Orthodox congregation, Adath Emeth, was founded in 1910.

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## From Our Archives

# Jewish Pioneers of Corpus Christi

by Vickie Vogel

A number of nineteenth century Jews found Corpus Christi, Texas a likely place to thrive.<sup>1</sup> One of the earliest was Moritz L. Lichtenstein who came to the United States from Germany at the age of 17, arriving in Texas in 1857. He joined the Confederate army, attaching himself to Sibley's brigade in Victoria. Taken prisoner by Union troops in 1862, he was part of a prisoner exchange which enabled him to rejoin his unit. He served in New Mexico and Louisiana until the end of the war.

Moritz opened a clothing store in Goliad, then one in Indianola, and arrived in Corpus Christi in 1874 where he operated Lichtenstein's Department Store until his death thirty years later. He married Selina Egg in 1868 and had three sons (Selig Julius, Abraham Albert and Emil<sup>2</sup>) and one daughter, Selma.

Specially built "hacks" carried goods through brush and hill country. When the road ended, the hack was left with a friendly rancher and the salesman loaded merchandise onto one horse, continuing to remote ranches. Since these salesmen were often the only outside contact for the ranchers and their families, they were warmly welcomed.

Lichtenstein's Department Store<sup>3</sup> was housed in the first two-story brick building in Corpus. The store moved to a three-story building at Chaparral and Schatzel Streets, and moved again



*Julius Henry. Photo courtesy of the Corpus Christi Public Library, Local History Department.*

in 1941. Moritz's sons Albert and Julius, and later grandsons Morris and Abraham Albert Jr.,<sup>4</sup> were well-known in the community because of Lichtenstein's. Julius married Charles and Sara Weil's daughter Carrie<sup>5</sup>. When Julius died in 1923 at the age of 51, the city mourned. He had gone to San Antonio for treatment of a stomach complaint, his wife by his side. The

primary cause of death was listed as "acute indigestion." Born in Indianola in 1871, he had lived in Corpus since the age of two.

Julius' funeral was conducted by Rabbi Terdesche of San Antonio.

All city offices were closed to give employees and heads of departments an opportunity to attend the service. The flag at City Hall was lowered to half mast. The long funeral cortege included almost all city and county officials as well as business and professional men. The district court was recessed so attorneys could pay their respects. The *Corpus Christi Times* of February 21, 1923 reported, "The death of Mr. Lichtenstein has cast a gloom over the business and other elements of Corpus Christi, as he was perhaps the most familiar figure in the commercial life of the city and was active in all affairs concerning the growth and development of Corpus Christi since attaining manhood."

The entire work force of M Lichtenstein and Sons met the body at the train and escorted it to the family home.

On February 22, the headlines read "Many Mourn With Family at Burial: Last Rites for Julius Lichtenstein Witnessed by Large Number of Citizens from All Walks of Life."

After Albert died in 1929, his sons Morris and A. Albert, Jr. became president and vice-president of Lichtenstein's. A. Albert married Annie

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Carol Wolfe in 1939. In 1953, he announced for mayor and promptly left for a sixty-day Mediterranean cruise. Despite his failure to campaign, he won the election.<sup>6</sup> He supported a toll tunnel under the ship channel. When the city council voted to build a high bridge instead, because the state would pay for it, Albert stood up, resigned, and took a seat in the audience.

Another early Jewish pioneer was Emanuel Morris, born in Germany in 1841, who came to the United States at age 18. He became a successful rancher, and owned stores in Corpus Christi, Alice, San Diego, Laredo, and Nuevo Laredo. Morris' import/export business, with offices in New York City, was successful. Morris is said to have shipped the first oleomargarine, produced by Victoria Packery, to Hamburg, Germany. When it was found to be a substitute for butter, however, the cargo was dumped into the harbor!

Emanuel's wife was Carolyn Barthelow, daughter of Thomas Jefferson Barthelow of Virginia. Barthelow came to Victoria with a regiment of General Zachary Taylor, and was the first sheriff of Cameron County. Carolyn was once voted the most beautiful woman in Corpus Christi. Her son Leopold was editor of the *Victoria Advocate*. Emanuel died in 1897 at the age of 56.

Emanuel brought over the Cohn brothers, Herman and Nathan, from Europe and they in turn brought over M. D. Cohn around 1882. M. D. bought the San Diego branch of Lichtenstein's in 1904. Other merchants include Simon Gugenheim, D. Schwartz, and Lawrence Levy. Levy owned a toy store.

A newspaper clipping in our archives cites Julius Henry, born in Posen, Prussia, as the first Jewish settler in Corpus Christi.<sup>7</sup> He sailed to England in 1854, then on an American clipper loaded with iron and glass to New York City. Most of his fellow passengers were Irish. Julius worked

in the Bowery, then in the salt mines of Pennsylvania where he traded salt for coal. He sold potatoes in Schenectady, New York until he earned enough to buy a broom factory. Deciding New York was too cold, he travelled to Key West, and then sailed with "some Negroes and Cubans" to Indianola, arriving in 1858. He was wounded fighting Indians in El Paso.

Continuing his colorful travels, he tried to break the salt blockade when the Civil War broke out, but when he returned to Corpus Christi, he found it occupied by Federal troops. Undeterred, he chartered a boat and went to Ingleside, bought groceries, and brought them to Corpus to open a store in 1865. His first job had been farm work, for which he received \$4 a month. He worked at a bakery to save up the \$500 needed to open his grocery business. He brought over his cousin Bertha Nathan from Europe and married her in 1865. Julius Henry served as an alderman and then as postmaster until his death June 30, 1912.<sup>8</sup>

Charles Weil arrived in Corpus Christi in 1869. He married Sarah Hymans of Gonzales on January 1, 1874. Charles and his brother-in-law Emanuel Frank established the Frank-Weil General Store. Charles and Sarah had eleven children. All their sons entered the mercantile business except Jonas, the oldest, who managed his father's ranch interests. In 1891, Jonas was a member of a rain-making group which fired cannons into the clouds. The popular Jonas was the first Jewish farmer in Corpus, wearing cowboy boots "even in his home." In 1902, Charles' sons Moise and Alex opened a grocery business which operated until 1945.

David Hirsch, also in wholesale and retail dry goods and groceries among other interests, was another early pioneer in Corpus Christi, arriving in 1868. Coming to New Orleans in 1848, Hirsch began making trips

to Texas and heard stories of the booming little settlement on Corpus Christi Bay. He bought and sold wool hides and skins, having worked in his father's warehouse marking wool bags. In 1875, he joined the committee to plan the Corpus Christi, San Diego, and Rio Grande narrow gauge railroad. He served as vice president of the Corpus Christi Fire and Ladder Department, and was elected president of the Corpus Christi National Bank in 1890. Hirsch was the first president of the Corpus Christi Independent School District and served until his death in 1902. An elementary school is named for him. His first wife was Jeanette Weil, sister of Charles Weil. She died in 1873, and five years later, David married Olivia Benedict of Covington, Louisiana.

When Jeanette died, Captain Richard King's son-in-law would not allow her to be buried in Corpus Christi. David took her body in a covered wagon to Gonzales for burial, a distance of almost 150 miles. When Captain King returned from out of town, he was so outraged by his son-in-law's actions that he donated land to the Jewish community for Hebrew Rest Cemetery. Emanuel Morris and David Hirsch were named trustees.<sup>9</sup>

By 1875, according to a letter to the editor of the *American Israelite*, "...within this body of Christ there lives no less than forty-five Jews and Jewesses...a goodly number for an out-of-the-way town on the Texas frontier."

Ed Grossman arrived in Corpus Christi in 1911. He was noted as the only one in those days who subscribed

*continued on page 18*

**If you need TJHS membership applications for an event, program, personal use, etc., please contact Rusty Milstein at [hrmilstein@prodigy.net](mailto:hrmilstein@prodigy.net).**

This group, led by Chazzan and schochet, Meyer Epstein, rented a small house to hold services. They held joint High Holiday services with Adath Yeshurun, and in 1918 they bought a small house on the corner of Houston and Washington Avenue. Three years later, this house was replaced with a synagogue building. It burned in 1923 and was quickly replaced with a new building.

As the Orthodox congregations were establishing, Beth Israel was also growing. The congregation dedicated a Romanesque synagogue on the corner of Crawford and Lamar Streets, but soon outgrew this building. Another Greek-revival temple was built at Austin and Houston Streets in 1920. While Beth Israel had fourteen different rabbis between 1860 and 1900, long-term stability was established when Rabbi Henry Barnstein was hired in 1900. He was a lover of high culture and helped found the Houston Museum of Fine Arts and the Houston Symphony Society. He also served on the board of the Houston Public Library for twenty years, and later changed the spelling of his name to Barnston. Beth Israel members were pleased that their rabbi was such a respected community leader and supported his interfaith work.

Adath Yeshurun, the Orthodox congregation, grew quickly and had one-hundred-sixty-five members by 1910. Rabbi S. Glaser was their first Rabbi and in 1905, a new building was built. However, it was sold two years later and in 1908, the congregation built a new home on the corner of Jackson Street and Walker Avenue, with Rabbi Wolf Willner leading the congregation at this time. He served from 1907 to 1924. Rubin Kaplan was the congregation's cantor from 1912 to 1924.

During Rabbi Willner's tenure, the members squabbled over matters of ritual and finance to the point that

eventually a disgruntled faction sued the congregation in 1911. Mediation was held, but it was unsuccessful. The case went to trial in 1914, and the judge worked out a compromise in which both factions would have equal representation on the board. This did not work as a group tried to force Rabbi Willner out, barring him from entering the sanctuary. He led a group of his supporters down the street to the Knights of Columbus Hall, where they held services as Congregation Beth Shalom. However, this did not last long, and in 1916, the two congregations merged and Rabbi Willner became Adath Yeshurun's rabbi once again. That year Adath Yeshurun was the largest congregation in the city with two-hundred-sixty members.

Zionism was at the heart of a bitter dispute that split Houston's only Reform congregation in the early 1940s. Leaders of Beth Israel were concerned about the growing size of the congregation. Some of the new members were from Orthodox backgrounds and the leadership was concerned that they might push the classical Reform congregation in a more traditional direction. When Rabbi Barnston retired in 1943, the congregation hired Rabbi Judah Schachtel as the senior Rabbi, passing over Associate Rabbi Robert Kahn who was serving overseas as a military chaplain in World War II. Rabbi Schachtel was a member of the strongly anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism, while Rabbi Kahn supported the Zionist cause. The Board created the "Basic Principles," a statement of beliefs that each new member would have to ascribe to in order to receive voting rights in the congregation. These principles, which were a restatement of the classical Reform tenets issued in the 1865 Pittsburgh Platform was in opposition to a Jewish homeland. At an extremely contentious congregational meeting, the members of Beth Israel voted

to accept the "Basic Principles" as a requirement for full membership. In response, 142 people, including Rabbi Kahn, left Beth Israel, and in 1944 established Congregation Emanu-El. Rabbi Kahn was hired to be their Rabbi. After Israel was founded in 1948, Rabbi Schachtel renounced his membership in the Council of American Judaism and supported the Jewish state. The "Basic Principles" were revoked in the 1960s, though they had long since fallen into disuse.

This was not the first split within Houston's Jewish congregations. In 1924, members of Adath Yeshurun who wanted to move away from strict



*Rabbi William Malev, who served Beth Yeshurun from 1946 to 1973.*

orthodoxy broke off to form Temple Beth El, a Conservative congregation. By 1926, Beth El had 210 members and was led by Rabbi Nathan Blechman. Beth El bought Beth Israel's old building in 1925 and remained there for twenty years. This split did not last, and in 1942, Beth El and Adath Yeshurun formed a joint religious school. Four years later, the two congregations merged to form Beth Yeshurun. While the new congregation would be Conservative, there were

*continued on page 15*



daily Orthodox minyans in the chapel to accommodate the more traditional members, and these minyans continue today. After the merger, Beth Yeshurun had almost 1,000 members. Rabbi William Malev, a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary, came to Beth Yeshurun in 1946, and led the congregation until 1973.

As the Houston Jewish community moved south, the Orthodox synagogues also began to move. In 1939, Adath Israel built a new building in the Washington Terrace neighborhood, and in 1937, Beth Jacob, a new orthodox congregation, built a building at Cleburne and Hamilton. In 1948, Adath Emeth built a new synagogue at Cleburne and Ennis Streets. After the merger, Beth Yeshurun built a new synagogue in the neighborhood in 1950. As their members again began to move, Beth Yeshurun built a new building on Beechnut Street in Meyerland, which was completed in 1962. Adath Emeth moved to a new synagogue on North Braeswood Boulevard in 1960, and Beth Jacob moved that same year. Beth Israel moved once

more in 1967 to a large new temple on North Braeswood.

As Houston's Jewish community grew in the postwar years, new congregations were established. In 1955, Brith Shalom, a Conservative congregation formed. In 1957, Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism began and by 1962, they had bought a small building.

Rabbi Jack Segal succeeded Rabbi Malev at Beth Yeshurun in 1973 and served for twenty-three years. Since 1996, Rabbi David Rosen has led the congregation. Beth Yeshurun had 2,170 families in 2011, making it the largest Conservative congregation in the United States. By 1971, Beth Israel had 1,235 members and when Rabbi Schachtel retired in 1975, he was followed by Rabbi Samuel Karff, who led the congregation for the next twenty-four years. Since 2004, Rabbi David Lyon has been the senior Rabbi and the congregation had 1,700 member families in 2011.

Temple Emanu-El grew quickly, and for its first five years met at Central Presbyterian Church, with the reli-

gious school meeting at a local public elementary school. In 1949, they dedicated their first and only building across from Rice University. Rabbi Robert Kahn led Emanu-El from 1945 until he retired in 1978. He was an outspoken voice for social justice and civil rights in Houston. When Rabbi Kahn retired, Rabbi Roy Walter, who had been an assistant Rabbi at Emanu-El since 1970, became the senior rabbi. He retired in 2011 after forty-one years. Rabbi Scott Hausman-Weiss became senior rabbi in 2012.

With approximately 45,000 Jews living in the Houston area, there were twenty-three different congregations in Houston in 2011. Forty years earlier there were six. Houston remains a vibrant, flourishing community with a wide array of Jewish resources.

Editor's note: There will be more about the Houston Jewish community in future issues.

#### **References:**

- <sup>1</sup> Online Image. University of Houston Digital Library. 24 January 2013.  
<<http://digital.lib.uh.edu/u/?> 

## **Mazel Tov**

**to the following**

### **Texas Jewish Historical Society Members**

**Jane and Guy Manaster**, on the birth of their grandson, Jude Saul Manaster. He was born November 7, 2012 to Rex and Mika Manaster and is little brother to Sadie.

**Cynthia Salzman and Allen Mondell**, on the birth of their grandson, Juan Jose Santos Mondell. He was born October 24, 2012 to Fonya Naomi Mondell and Juan Jose Santos, Jr.


**Cynthia Salzman Mondell**, on receiving the Lois Weber Award from the Grand Prairie Public Library for body of work and impact on the Texas Motion Picture Industry. This is the first time a filmmaker has received this award.

*Please send information for this column to  
Davie Lou Solka at [editor@txjhs.org](mailto:editor@txjhs.org).*

### *Sam Night, continued from page 3*

up a great uniform business and changed the name to "Nights Uniforms Company." Their customers are very loyal and the brothers are just as giving, helping, loyal, and enjoying of them as my father was in his day.

My sister Geraldine Night Rich is from St. Louis and I live in Houston, Texas. We are both very proud of our father, and are also proud of our brothers, Harvey and Ralph Night. My sister Evelyn Night Schackman and my brother Donnie Night have passed on, but we were very proud of them also. It was quite an era from 1920 to 2012.

As I write this article, my brothers are selling the merchandise and will close the store in 2013. It was a wonderful adventure for my father, Sam Night, and a second-generation adventure for my brothers, Harvey and Ralph Night. They are the last of the small merchants from Beaumont, Texas in the 1920s. 

# R. D. Moses

by Lynell Moses Bond

R.D. Moses always loved model trains. There is no particular rhyme or reason of what in each of our lives determines the hobbies which we tend to enjoy and gravitate towards. Some people collect stamps, others like to fish, enjoy sports, photography, knitting, reading, or woodworking; R.D. liked model trains. He built his first small railroad layout in the early 1950s on a 4x8 sheet of plywood, but with a growing family amid limited space and funds he soon had to give that up. He tended to his family and business but was without his treasured pastime. Then in the early

1970s, while his five kids were mostly grown, R.D. had a mild stroke and the doctor told him he needed to slow down and find a hobby. That was just the right prescription he was looking for to renew his dormant fascination with model trains. R.D. and his wife Beverley never moved from their modest brick home where there was little room for his rekindled interest to be built. So he purchased a 12x16 outdoor storage shed and had it placed in the backyard. That plan worked well for about ten years where he continually added to the layout until it was nearly tight against the walls. Know-

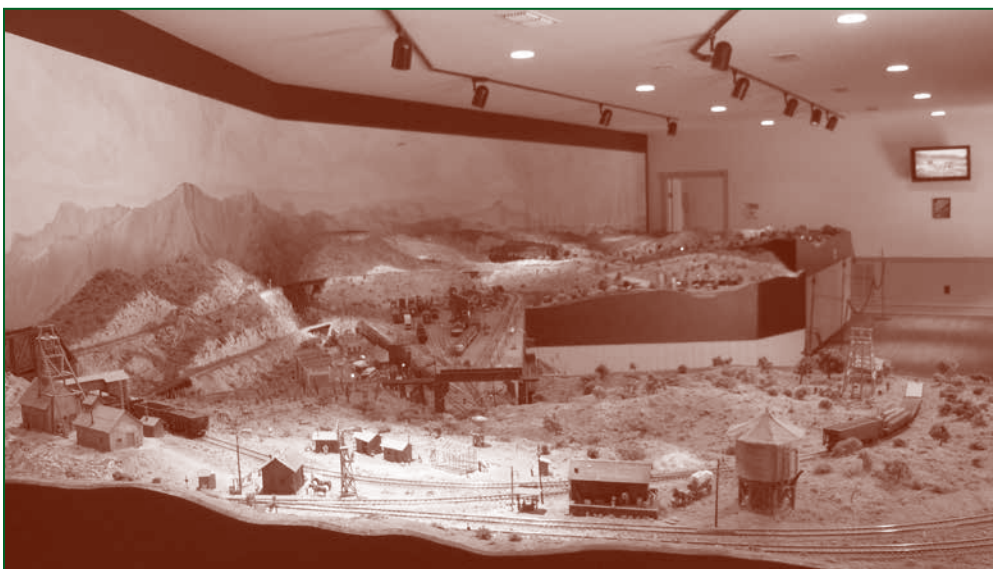
ing he was “land-locked,” he removed what he could from the layout for future use and then demolished everything else



along with the building itself. He then had built what he believed would be plenty of space for his grand plans—a building about 14x24. That, too, worked only for so long, and he once again had his “train shed” enlarged for the final time, to 50 feet long. With that addition, and under Beverley’s stern eyes, he sheepishly named the little town built on the new side as “Broken Promise” because he broke his promise to her that he would not make the building any larger.

He spent countless hours building his train layout. This was his true passion. People look in awe that he built it by hand. He formed the mountains with plaster of paris over screen wire, the rock embankments were solid cast plaster. Then he took an exacto knife and hand sculpted every individual stone. He made each tree from twisted wire and modeling fern

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material. He painted and textured everything: the scenery, the buildings, the rail cars, and the hundreds of little people. He loved showcasing little dioramas of daily life just happening. He beamed with pride as he showed it whenever visitors would come.

He was featured in several newspapers and national train



TX, 75657, [www.Jefersonmuseum.com](http://www.Jefersonmuseum.com). The town of Jefferson built a special building so the setting could be completely shown as it was originally created. R.D.'s dream of having his hobby enjoyed forever has come true. 

appropriate location. Finally Arthur found the perfect match in Jefferson Texas. There were several obstacles to be overcome, the greatest of which was that the only way to remove the layout from the backyard was to have it cut in half, crated, and then lifted out over the house by a large crane; it was the family's honor to fulfill his wishes.



magazines for his realistic layout.

R.D. hoped that after he passed away, his trains and their settings would be donated to a museum where they could be enjoyed by many people for years. After his death in 2009, his son, Arthur, searched for an

Outside of his family, nothing else gave him as much pleasure as his trains.

The R.D. Moses T & P Model Railroad can be seen as part of the Jefferson Society and Historical Museum, 233 W. Austin St., Jefferson,

## Save the Date

**April 19-21, 2013**

Annual Gathering  
in Houston, Texas

**June 7-9, 2013**

Summer Meeting  
Corsicana, Texas

**October 4-6, 2013**

Fall Meeting  
in East Texas

**The deadline for  
the May 2013 TJHS  
News Magazine is  
Saturday,  
April 13.**

## Does TJHS Have Your Current Email Address?

Is your email address current? Has it changed since the 2012-2014 directory was printed? Have you changed email providers? If so, please send Marc Wormser an email at [marc.wormser@att.net](mailto:marc.wormser@att.net) so that he can update your information in the database. To reduce postage costs and printing delays, we are going to



be electronically sending as much mail as possible, so don't be left out or behind—send your current information today!

Please put "email change" in the subject line and with your name in the text of your message, and send it today! Thank you.

to a Yiddish newspaper, the Tageblatt. His wife, Sadie, was a much beloved figure in Corpus Christi Jewish history. Born in Russia in 1892, she settled with her family in Boston as one of nine children. Her first humanitarian efforts were at the age of 14 when she raised money for victims of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Sadie and Ed had six children. They opened their home for social and fundraising events, and for hospitality to Jewish servicemen in the Corpus area. One serviceman even celebrated his wedding in their home.

Temple Beth El<sup>10</sup> Sisterhood (1928-1932), and was chair of the local branch of ORT.<sup>11</sup> She was instrumental in bringing the first combined convention of Hadassah and the Zionist Organization of America to Corpus Christi in 1933.

At the Golden Anniversary Donor Dinner in 1976, Hadassah honored Sadie Grossman as an organizer and named her "Woman of the Year Emeritus" for her history of service and "deep commitment to her religion, to Israel, and to humanity."

One interesting document in our

archive file on Corpus Christi is a copy of the affidavit of support that Max Strauss of New York signed in 1938 on behalf of Louis, Liesel, Siebert and Kurt Hirsch, all relatives of his wife Lea, to get them out of Germany. The occupation for all the Hirsch relatives is stated as "horse dealer." These Hirsches settled in Waco.<sup>12</sup>

The Jewish Community has continued to be active in civic affairs in Corpus Christi. The

Corpus Christi Caller Times carried a photo of a jubilant Helen Wilk, TJHS Past President, in its January 20, 1991 issue. Helen was treasurer of Citizens United for Charter Integrity, a group

formed to fight a proposed amendment to the city charter stating that human life begins at conception. The proposal was defeated 63% to 36%, and Helen was encouraged to run for mayor, but she declined.<sup>13</sup>

Not all was smooth sailing for Jews in Corpus Christi, according to Frank Wagner who participated in a TJHS panel at the Texas State Historical Association in March of 1988. Wagner was an educator, historian and retired chemist who was called "the smartest man I ever knew" by District Judge Mike Westergren.<sup>14</sup> Wagner believed one cause of anti-Semitism in Corpus Christi was the Jews' rational approach to the fight against the boll weevil.<sup>15</sup> The fundamentalist Christian approach blamed the boll weevil on the will of God. When a Mr. Goldman paid five cents for each boll weevil brought in, he was called an agent of the devil.

In a letter to Ruthe Winegarten, Wagner told the story of Judge J. Williamson Moses of Aransas and Duval Counties. A gang of Texas Rangers decided to hang him for being a Jew. They did a poor job of it, and a friend cut him down before he died. Moses took his family to Mexico for an extended visit.

"The practice of Judaism was a risky business in South Texas during the latter part of the 19th century," Wagner wrote in June, 1988. "A news item in the Corpus Christi paper ...in reference to David Hirsch's observance of Friday evening and Saturdays was said to 'affront' the community. Captain King stood alone. Most of the people in the community were antagonistic towards Jews and made no bones about it. Sabbath and Holy Day observances were regarded as examples of the Jews going out of their way to annoy the community."

Be that as it may, the Jewish community continues to thrive in Corpus Christi.

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*David Hirsch. Photo courtesy of the Corpus Christi Public Library, Local History Department.*

Often recognized for her community service, Sadie Grossman was the first president of the Pioneer Women (Zionist), was active in Hadassah, served as the first president of the



# 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, or 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 the 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.*

## *Jewish Pioneers, continued from page 15*

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Box 3A170, Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. All information is from this box unless otherwise stated. Temple Beth El provided a history "Old Families and Early Settlers" in 1957, which Helen Wilk updated for the 50th Anniversary in 1983. Various newspaper clippings from the Corpus Christi Times, Nueces County News, the American Israelite, etc. and other writings are in this box.

<sup>2</sup> Emil went to the Naval Academy and reached the rank of Commodore in the U.S. Navy. His son Morris Spitz Lichtenstein later joined the department store as secretary-treasurer. [http://abt-unk.blogspot.com/2012\\_07\\_01\\_archive.html](http://abt-unk.blogspot.com/2012_07_01_archive.html)

<sup>3</sup> The store was sold in 1972 and renamed Frost Brothers in 1977. *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Albert was born February 15, 1910. His first vivid memory was when the family home was destroyed in the 1919 hurricane.

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.cclibraries.com/local\\_history/mondayclub/lichtensteinc.htm](http://www.cclibraries.com/local_history/mondayclub/lichtensteinc.htm)

<sup>6</sup> The City Manager, W. B. Collier, resigned when Lichtenstein was elected, saying he wouldn't serve with him "for all the tea in China." <http://abt-unk.blogspot.com/2012/07/sentimental-sunday-kin-to-corpus.html>

<sup>7</sup> Corpus Christi was founded in 1839. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corpus\\_Christi,\\_Texas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corpus_Christi,_Texas)

<sup>8</sup> Bertha Nathan's sister married Ferdinand Wormser of Laredo.

<sup>9</sup> Burials in Hebrew Rest can be found at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txnueces/hebrew%20rest%20cemetery.html>

<sup>10</sup> TJHS Vice President Davie Lou Sol-


ka was the first woman President of Temple Beth El, 1980-1982. Email from Solka to the author December 6, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> ORT is an acronym of Russian words meaning "The Society for Trades and Agricultural Labor." ORT is the world's largest Jewish education and vocational training non-governmental organization. <http://www.ort.org/about-us/about/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://obit.wilkirsonhatch-bailey.com/obitdisplay.html?task=Print&id=542920>

<sup>13</sup> Email Helen Wilk to author November 29, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Wagner died in 2006. <http://www.caller.com/news/2006/jul/15/frank-wagner-chemist-dies-at-80/?print=1>

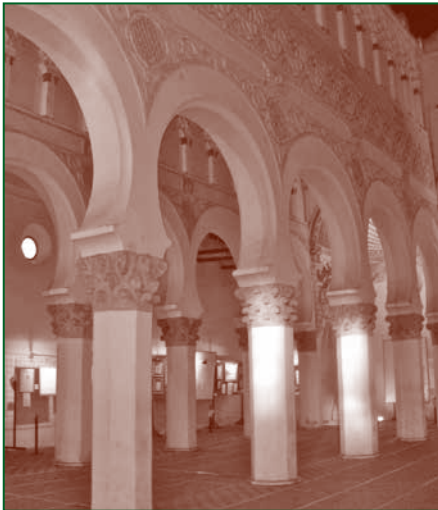
<sup>15</sup> The boll weevil in Texas was announced by a Corpus Christi drug-gist, Charles W. DeRyee in 1894. <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/teb01>. 

# Jewish Sites in Spain, Morocco, and Portugal

In December, a group of fourteen, plus the tour director, enjoyed a trip to Portugal, Spain, and Morocco, an area rich in Jewish history. TJHS

members will join tours in other parts of the world. Let us know where *you* want to go by contacting Travel and Adventure Chair Vickie Vogel (see

your directory for contact information). 



*Santa Maria La Blanca, 12th century synagogue in Toledo, Spain.*



*Vickie Vogel at Hanukkah in Lisbon, Portugal park.*



*Vickie Vogel with sculpture of Maimonides in the old Jewish quarter of Cordoba, Spain.*

## Identifying the Graves of Texas Veterans

by Herschel L. Sheiness

The Texas Jewish Historical Society, in conjunction with the National Jewish War Veterans (JWV) Cemetery Committee, is expanding a project initiated by San Antonio Jewish War Veterans Post to identify the graves of all Jewish military veterans buried in any Texas cemetery, Jewish and non-Jewish. This does not include Jewish veterans buried in National Veterans

Administration and Texas State cemeteries, since they have already been identified—their headstones have a Star of David. If you know of Jewish veterans buried in National and State cemeteries who do not have the Star of David on their tombstones, we would like to know about them too.

If you know of a Jewish military veteran, male or female, combat veteran or not, buried in any Texas Jewish or non-Jewish cemetery, or a VA or Texas State cemetery and does not have a Star of David on the headstone, please forward as much of the following information as you know about the individual to the address in the last paragraph:

- Full Name of deceased veteran
- Date of birth (please spell out the

name of the month)

- Date of Death (please spell out the name of the month)
- Place of birth
- Name of cemetery
- City/town of cemetery
- Grave plot number
- Branch of service (Army, Navy, Air Force, etc.)
- Dates of service
- Campaigns in which veteran served (WW1, WW2, Korea, Vietnam, etc.),
- If killed in action, name of theater
- awards and decorations
- What the veteran did while on active duty (pilot, infantry, physician, etc.)
- Identification of military unit(s) in which he/she served

*continued on page 21*





# In Memoriam



**Reva Cohen,** TJHS member, died on October 7, 2012, in Houston. She is survived by her daughter and

son-in-law Diana and Mark Phillips, her son and daughter-in-law Lawry and Patricia Cohen, four grandchildren, and many in-laws, nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews.



**Elaine Utay Greenberg,** TJHS member, died on December 18, 2012, in Houston. She

is survived by her daughters and sons-in-law Elena and Joel Dinkin and Sandy and Mike Reckles, her daughter Sherry Leva, seven grandchildren, her brothers, her sister-in-law, and numerous nieces, nephews and other family members.

**Jacqueline Reed Zarefsky,** TJHS member, died on June 2, 2012, in San Francisco, California. She is survived by her husband, Paul Zarefsky, and her son, Jacob.

**John Perel,** TJHS member, died on November 28, 2012, in Houston. He is survived by Janice Crane, Eli Crane, Will Crane, his brothers and sisters-in-law, Stephen and Frances Perel and Bobby and Linda Chew Perel, one niece, one nephew, an aunt, and several cousins.



**Evelyn G. Maltz,** TJHS member, died on December 3, 2012, in Corpus Christi. She is survived by her sons and daughters-in-law, Larry and Patti Maltz and Mike and Rosalyn Maltz, her son

Kenneth Maltz, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.



**Aaron Wechter,** TJHS member, died on July 19 2012, in El Paso. He is survived by his wife Sylvia, his daughter Dana, his sons and daughters-in-law, Randy

and Janet and Keven and Jamie, and seven grandchildren.



**Max Stool,** a longtime TJHS member and former board members, died on November 1 2012, in San Antonio. He is survived by his sons and daughters-

in-law, Samuel Ethan and Patti Stool and Benjamin Laurence and Michele Ritter Stool, his daughter and son-in-law, Elizabeth and David Friedman, six grandchildren, one great-granchild, and numerous nieces and nephews.

**Hilda Atlas Rich,** TJHS member,



died on January 4, 2013, in Houston. She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Renie Rich Carniol and Paul Carniol,

her daughters Sharon Rich and Nancy Red, six grandchildren, her brothers and sisters-in-law nieces, nephews, and her special daughter and son-in-law, Mary and David Klein and their children.

**May their memories be a blessing.**

*Graves, continued from page 20*

Please send the information to Herschel Sheiness, at 718 Mello Oak, San Antonio, TX 78258 or jsheines@swbell.net. If submitting by e-mail, please enter something like "Identifying a Jewish veteran" in the subject line.

Thank you for your support of this project to recognize deceased Jewish veterans buried in Texas. 

## Contributions

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


### A Gift to the Endowment Fund:

**In Memory of Allen Feinstein,** From Enid Klass

**In Memory of Frances Kallison,** From Bobbi Kallison Raviez

**In Memory of Max Stool,** From Susan and Bob Lewis; Mina Pashkoff and Perry Vann; Vickie and David Vogel; Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence Wilk

*President's Message, continued from page 2*

this issue. One is for the Annual Gathering and the other for the Summer Board meeting that will be held in Corsicana early in June. We were concerned that the next issue of the News Magazine would not reach you in time to register for the Summer Board meeting, so we are sending the registration form for that meeting in two issues. 

## Welcome New Members!

**Ann (Trugman) Ackerman**

7 Bartemus Tr., #306  
Nashua, NH 03063-7606  
aackerman@river.edu

**Liz (Meyer) Liener**

6444 Willow Ln.  
Dallas, TX 75230  
972-980-0011  
lizliener@sbcglobal.net

## Directory Changes

### Add:

**David and Elka (Rich) Poor**

Box 47; Moshaw Ramot  
Naftali-Upper Galilee  
Israel 13830  
011-972-77-200-7080  
poorich@012.net-il

### Change of Address:

**Judy Myers**

3121 Buffalo Speedway,  
#4301  
Houston, TX 77098  
jamyers42@gmail.com

### Change of email:

**Mark & Patricia Hutman**

in El Paso,  
mshutman@hotmail.com

### Change of listing:

Please change Marc &  
Miriam Risking Isenberg to  
Marc Isenberg and Miriam  
Riskind

## Has Your Address Changed?

If you have any changes  
in your information, please  
send them  
to **Marc Wormser** at  
**1601 S. Riviera Ct.,**  
**Pearland, TX 77581,**  
**832-288-3494, or**  
**marc.wormser@att.net.**

## Proposed Slate of Officers, TJHS 2013-2014

### Officers

<i>President</i>	Marc Wormser (Pearland)
<i>1st Vice-President</i>	Scott Langston (Weatherford)
<i>2nd Vice-President</i>	David Beer (Dallas)
<i>3rd Vice-President</i>	Davie Lou Solka (Austin)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Ruth Nathan (Houston)
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	
<i>Corresponding</i>	Susan Lewis (Big Spring)
<i>Secretary</i>	Samylu Rubin (Dallas)
<i>Historian</i>	Sally Drayer (Dallas)
<i>Archivist</i>	Claire Brooks (Houston)
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	Vickie Vogel (La Grange)

## Board Members 2013-2015

Elaine Albin (Rockport)  
Douglas Braudaway (Del Rio)  
Suzanne Campbell (San Angelo)  
Roy Elsner (Dallas)  
Brad Greenblum (Austin)  
Jan Hart (Temple)  
Harold "Pacey" Laves (Austin)  
Marilyn Lippman (Dallas)  
Amy Manuel (Denton)  
Abbi Michelson (Lockhart)  
Amy Milstein (Frisco)  
Allen Mondell (Dallas)  
Shirley Rich (Houston)  
Dr. Stuart Rockoff (Jackson, MS)  
William "Bill" Rosenberg (Belton)  
Dr. Bryan Stone (Corpus Christi)  
Bobbie Wells (Plano)  
Rosalie Weisfeld (McAllen)  
Gary Whitfield (Fort Worth)  
Rotating Member (Varies)

*Nominating Committee: Howard "Rusty"  
Milstein, Chair, Sally Drayer, Nancy Hoffman,  
Audrey Kariel, Vickie Vogel*


## Can You Guess This Member?

In the last  
issue of the News  
Magazine, we ran  
the photo below.  
There was not a  
correct answer, so  
we are going to  
give you a second  
chance to Guess  
this Member! Re-  
member, previous  
winners and family  
members are not  
eligible to partici-  
pate.



the second time  
around--- This  
person is number 1  
in our book.

The first person  
to correctly iden-  
tify this person will  
receive a year's  
membership to  
TJHS. Email your  
guess to Davie Lou  
Solka at editor@  
txjhs.org any time  
after February 28,

2013. Entries received before that  
date will not be considered. The  
winner will be announced in the  
next issue. 

The picture is of a current  
Board Member of TJHS. We'll  
give you a clue since this is





# TJHS Board of Directors 2012-2014

## Officers

### *President*

Marc Wormser (Pearland)

### *1st Vice-President*

Scott Langston (Weatherford)

### *2nd Vice-President*

David Beer (Dallas)

### *3rd Vice-President*

Davie Lou Solka (Austin)

### *Treasurer*

Ruth Nathan (Houston)

### *Recording Secretary*

Susan Lewis (Big Spring)

### *Corresponding Secretary*

Samylu Rubin (Dallas)

### *Historian*

Sally Drayer (Dallas)

### *Archivist*

Claire Brooks (Houston)

### *Parliamentarian*

Vickie Vogel (La Grange)

### *Immediate Past President*

Rusty Milstein (Longview)

## Board of Trustees 2012-2014

Rabbi Murray Berger (Dallas)

Gordon Cizon (Dallas)

Bette Jean Cohen (Dallas)

Anita Feigenbaum (College Station)

Sonny Gerber (Houston)

Bob Gindler (Sugar Land)

Dr. Neil Gurwitz (Bastrop)

Marilyn Jorrie (Boulder, CO)

Joan Katz (Houston)

Louis Katz (Houston)

Jane Manaster (Dallas)

Selma Mantel (Houston)

Greg Meyer (San Antonio)

Mitzi Milstein (Longview)

Bernard Rabinowitz (San Antonio)

Jack Solka (Austin)

David Vogel (La Grange)

Debra Winegarten (Austin)

Hollace Weiner (Fort Worth)

Sherry Zander (Dallas)

## Board of Trustees 2011-2013

Dr. Robert Abzug (Austin)

Douglas Braudaway (Del Rio)

Dick Brooks (Houston)

Suzanne Campbell (San Angelo)

Roy Elsner (Dallas)

Dr. Kay Goldman (College Station)

Brad Greenblum (Austin)

Dorothy Harelik (Hamilton)

David Leff (Houston)

Joan Linares (Baytown)

Abbi Michelson (Lockhart)

Amy Milstein (Frisco)

Allen Mondell (Dallas)

Shirley Rich (Houston)

Dr. Bryan Stone (Corpus Christi)

Rosalie Weisfeld (McAllen)

Gary Whitfield (Fort Worth)

Rotating Member (Various)

## 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 be either 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@charter.net](mailto:texbed@charter.net).



# Texas Jewish Historical Society

P.O. Box 10193  
Austin, Texas 78766-0193

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## Texas Jewish Historical Society New Membership and Information Update Form

Join the Texas Jewish Historical Society today! Or use this form to update your contact information. Complete each section below. Clip out and mail this form with your check made payable to the Texas Jewish Historical Society, P.O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193. **Please PRINT.**

☐ **YES!** Count me in! My dues are enclosed. ☐ Please **update** my information

### Check the Appropriate Box(es)

☐ New Member ☐ Donor: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Renewing Member Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ **Updated Information Only** Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Occasion: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Category

☐ \$35 Annual Member ☐ \$18 Student Member ☐ \$500 Benefactor  
☐ \$50 Supporting Member ☐ \$100 Sponsor ☐ \$250 Sustaining Member ☐ \$1,000 Patron

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address(es): \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

*Contributions to the Texas Jewish Historical Society are tax deductible within the limits of the law.*