



Texas Jewish Historical Society

March 2021 News Magazine

Purim Play at Temple Beth El, Brownsville, Texas, March 1949

by Larry Holtzman

The stage in the social hall of Temple Beth-El, 825 W. St. Francis St., was a busy place. All Jewish holidays were celebrated with a play presented by the religious school students.

Pauline King, the director of the Sunday School, knew little about the Jewish religion but she was masterful in theater. Pauline was the daughter of Snake King (W.A. Leiberman) who came to Brownsville at the turn of the last century to acquire rattlesnakes to sell to carnivals for snake pit shows.

In this Purim play of 1949, I was an eight-year-old Mordechai. As I got older, I was elevated to King or Pharaoh depending on the holiday. Bill Rubinsky remembers that he was once "second Egyptian from the right."

The fourteen children of the religious school occupied the entire stage for "The Feast of Esther." Young teenager, Bernard Braunstein, was King Ahasuerus with a gold cardboard crown. His father owned a downtown hotel. Sitting next to him was Queen Esther, the beautiful

Rachel Greenspan. She would later become a realtor and marry Manuel Perelman.

Pauline King's son, Sammy King, was nine-year-old Haman, "the bad man." He and I were the only Jewish kids in the same year in public school. His photo is not in our Brownsville High School

senior annual because he was away being interviewed for show business. Sammy would travel the world with his ventriloquist act and was often showcased in Las Vegas. He now lives in California teaching ventriloquism.

The seven young members of the chorus had wooden groggers in their hands. They were four-, five- and six-year-old kids who were instructed to shout "boo" and roll the groggers when they heard Haman's name or cheer when Esther was mentioned. Some were carried away with enthusiasm and booed and cheered often.

Those in the chorus included Marcy Whitman, daughter of Bernard and Mildred Whitman. Bernard owned an army-navy store in downtown and was President of Temple Beth-El. Lucy, Mortie and Jerry King were Sammy King's young sister, brother and cousin. Also in the chorus was Bobby Holtzman, my young brother. Sadly, he passed away a few years ago in California.

Sunday school teacher Sarah May Dorfman later married Ralph Frapart. Our congregant, Jules Frapart, is their son. The other teacher, Seinwell Perl, known as Ito, is the son of Sam and Stella Perl. Sam Perl was the lay-rabbi of Temple Beth-El. Ito would later become an engineer for Texas Instruments, and now lives in Dallas. Anita Kowal-

continued on page 11



IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from the President	2	Discovering Texas Jewish History	12
Feinberg Family Legacy	3	by Kathy Hart	
by Susan Goodman Novick		Meet Your Board	14-15
What I Did During the Pandemic	4	Selig Deutschman Redux	16
January 2021 Meeting Review	10	by Vickie Vogel	

Message from the President

by Susan Zack Lewis

January, 2021 found us still isolating. Faces at ZOOM meetings give us but a glimpse of the friends we've made through



years of membership in the Texas Jewish Historical Society. The most interesting fact surrounding ZOOM gatherings is that more of us make time to attend the board meetings and the program presentations. We've learned that even in the future, when we are able to meet in person, we can now provide access to members who might not be able to travel at any given time.

We will soon elect officers, install new board members, and continue the work of the Society. As the museums begin to reopen and our archives

become available for research, we'll begin the process of rebuilding exhibits and preserving history.

I've been amazed at the enthusiasm the Society has maintained for projects and presentations. We still want to learn and have found new ways to obtain information. As we begin another year, I offer my thoughts on what happened in 2020.

AND STILL WE STAND
The virus hit – and still we stand... together.

Suddenly, we knew we would be unable to see and touch our children and their children for many months. That was a profound moment. The fears – the dread – the enormity of the task ahead hit us hard, the silence of the moment, the quiet between lightning and thunder, heavy.

And still we stand...together. Each cancelled plan echoed, bounced, rang out again until, for a while, ran together in one giant moment of doubt.

And still we stand...together. Horror, when it seemed our country would shred into a compost of hate and division.

Spending hours of being afraid to look, afraid to look away.

We were chained to daily questions about what and who and why... and yet, not quite together and not completely apart...we still stand.

Courage, determination, acceptance, all came slowly, dripping into a pool of educated thought.

A moment of joy lapping against the shore of someday knowing that together, we'll stand.

Together we'll move forward...still standing.

The Texas Jewish Historical Society March 2021 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 Editor Davie Lou Solka at 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.



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

If you need TJHS membership applications for an event, program, personal use, etc., please contact Rusty Milstein at hrmilstein@prodigy.net.

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The Sarah and Isadore Feinberg Family Legacy

by Susan Goodman Novick

The story of the Isadore (Izzy) Feinberg family mirrors the stories of countless Jewish immigrants who left their homes in Eastern Europe in search of a better life. The new Americans started families, prospered in their businesses, and left a legacy of hard work, determination, and philanthropy for subsequent generations.

Born Ajzik Sokolak near Bialystok, in the Grodno district of the Russian Empire in 1883, Izzy Feinberg was the third of four brothers who left Bialystok to establish themselves in the United States. His oldest brother, Max, emigrated in 1898, and traveled to Chicago to meet his uncle and sponsor, a Mr. Feinberg; Max subsequently changed his own surname from Sokolak to Feinberg as did his brothers. Max then went to Beaumont, Texas, to work as a clerk in a store, but by 1907, he owned Max Feinberg Co., a general store specializing in clothing, shoes, and men's furnishings. Izzy followed the same path—he left Europe in 1905, worked in Chicago, and moved to Beaumont in 1909 to join Max as a clerk in his store, as did another brother, Solomon. While in Chicago, Izzy met Sarah Kruk, who had emigrated from a nearby town in Russia to live with family in the United States; in 1910, Sarah joined Izzy in Beaumont and they were married in February 1911.

With three brothers living in Beaumont (the fourth lived in Baytown), Izzy thought it might be advantageous to establish his career elsewhere, so he ventured west to El Paso in 1912. In partnership with Max Feinberg and Theodore Ehrenberg from Beaumont, Izzy bought



Sarah & Izzy Feinberg Wedding portrait

the El Paso Bottle and Junk Co. for \$1,200. The following year, the partners changed the name of the business to El Paso Iron & Metal and acquired a horse and wagon to pick up junk. The company prospered in its early years because of the demand for junk, especially metals and iron, during the Mexican Revolution and the expansion of Fort Bliss before and after World War I. Izzy owned an official weighing scale, and customers came from El Paso and across the border to weigh their scrap, produce, and other materials.

Living down the street from the scrapyards, Izzy and Sarah Feinberg began their family. Celia was born in 1912, followed by Milton in 1914, and Doris in 1923. The family joined Congregation Achim Neamonim, a small Orthodox congregation which merged in 1920 with Congregation B'nai Zion, a conservative congrega-

tion founded in 1900. Izzy served on B'nai Zion's building committee, helping to finance the construction of a synagogue on N. Mesa St. north of El Paso's downtown. He later served as president of the congregation for many years, and Sarah participated in the B'nai Zion Sisterhood as well as the National Council of Jewish Women.

The only son of the family, Milton was destined to work with his father in the family business. Milton wrote, "I was involved somewhat in the business from the age of eleven—after school, on Saturdays, holidays, and summer vacations, so I was no stranger to the junk business." Milton attended El Paso High School and his parents thought he should get a university degree

before returning to work in the business. Consequently, Milton attended Northwestern University for one year and transferred to the University of Illinois.

The Depression dealt a blow to the Feinberg interests in Beaumont, and Max Feinberg died after being hit by a freight train in 1933. While Izzy went to Beaumont to attend to the family and his brother's estate, Milton returned briefly to El Paso from the University of Illinois to oversee El Paso Iron & Metal. His cousin, A. Milton Feinberg, moved to El Paso from Beaumont and joined as a junior partner in the business. Milton returned to finish his university studies and received a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1935. Knowing that the junk business had limitations, Izzy and Milton explored branching out into the pipe

continued on page 8

What I Did During the Pandemic

COVID 19 hit—Texas, the United States, and the world—hard and left a “new normal” for everyone. On March 13, 2020, the order came for all Texans to stay home and only those who had “essential jobs” should go to work. Schools, restaurants, stores, offices, bars, movies, barber and beauty shops were closed by order of the governor. Most people have learned to work from home and several home offices, as well as a place for students to do classes, became a staple in many homes. We have learned that staying home, wearing masks and socially distancing is necessary to curb this virus. So TJHS members have been doing their part. Following are some of the ways that our members have found to stay busy while staying home. Your story is welcome—they will be printed in future issues. Send your story to editor@txjhs.org.

by Tumbleweed Smith

I have a new speech title *Outrageous Texas Women of Character* in which I use the voices of these unusual, talented, brilliant and fun women. During the more than fifty years of interviewing Texans for my radio program, *The Sound of Texas*, I interviewed a woman who makes fruitcakes using a cement mixer; another who has a landing pad for UFOS; another who uses a red umbrella to coax oil out of the grounds; one who makes baskets out of armadillos; one who drinks burro milk, and on and on...it's very listenable and Texan to the core.

I'm just waiting to get out and give it somewhere.

HINDSIGHT WAS 20/20 IN 2020 by Van Wallach

Given my lifelong interest in history, I am creating a record of my experiences in the pandemic that hit in mid-March, 2020. My collection of blog posts, open mic performances, and photos starts just before then, on the last weekend in February when I visited my son in the Boston area. On Sunday, March 1, we attended the PAX East video game conference at a convention center. Crowds on the show floor jostled to view the huge display booths promoting games with

ominous titles such as *Partisans*, *Iron Harvest 1920+*, *Disintegration*, and *Destroy all Humans!*

Only later did I learn, that at the same time I was in Boston, a super spreader event happened there at a biotechnology conference on February 26-27. Researchers linked it to 330,000 infections. How close did my son and I come to brushing up against the invisible menace?

After March 1, the days at PAX East tumbled over one another like boulders starting an avalanche. I remember Saturday, March 7, as the last normal day. A sequence of unforgettable moments crowded that day, from morning into night:

- 10:00 am—Shabbat Service at Chabad of Bedford; Parshat Tetzvavah;
- 3:00 pm—Art Exhibit opening at the Katonah Village Library of photography of Sara Bennett showing women in prison and women released from prison;
- 4:00 pm—my open mic gig at the Katonah Village Library, talking about podcasts;
- 8:00 pm—a packed Gala held at a country club in Stamford, Connecticut, honoring friends.

Pandemic awareness was forcing itself on attendees at the JCC gala. People talked and even nervously joked about it, favoring fist bumps rather than hand shakes or hugs. Still, by today's standards, the Gala felt



Self portrait in Day of Dead mask.

typical. Groups posed for photos with Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal, one of the night's speakers, and sat in tight groups for dinner.

I did not know that COVID-19 was at that very moment spreading fast all-around Stamford. Super spreader events took place in the days before the Gala in the nearby towns of New Rochelle, New York, and Westport, Connecticut, with Westport known as “party zero.”

The week starting March 8 marked the start of pandemic turmoil in the United States. From the first days I knew I was living through a

continued on page 5

historic time and I had to record what I saw and felt. Change began immediately. Train station parking lots immediately became week-end empty as commuters switched to home offices. Businesses closed, several permanently, warning signs went up and supermarkets struggled to keep shelves stocked. The library sealed up its outside return box until further notice. As

a result, I had to keep the last book I checked out, *The Weight of Ink*, by Rachel Kadish, which was about a blind rabbi and his female scribe in 17th century London with a storyline that also involved a plague.

As the pandemic swept along, the Katonah Village Library started a Saturday email with open mic performances taped by contributors. This substituted for the library's on-site monthly open mic. The weekly format energized my creativity and I've had a piece in all thirty-five editions from April through December.

On April 8, I recorded my first pandemic-related open mic, "No Barber, No Problem," on my cell phone as I stood outside my local closed barber shop. I chose that site because I had decided, after eighteen years with a beard, to cut it off, just to see what



Sidewalk drawing by anonymous artist known as the Katonah Chalker.

I looked like; I started growing it back a few days later.

A piece recorded by the sealed-up library return box title, "The Inventory of Last Things." My list records the last time I had experiences that stretched back five years and included my reunion of the Princeton class of 1980 in May, 2015. Our 40th in May, 2020 was cancelled. Another was my 40th reunion in June, 2016,

of the Mission High School Class of 1976 at South Padre Island. In August, 2017, I visited my family in Katy, Texas, which included my brother, Cooper, and his twin grandchildren, who were babies at the time.

The library recordings captured my thoughts at home and also at places Naomi and I visited. In May, I spoke from the Katonah Metro-North Station, reflecting on my twenty-two years of commuting from the suburbs to Grand Central Station in New York and back. On June 13, I spoke at Naomi's daughter's wedding in upstate New York. A later video shows the glorious moment when I could finally return *The Weight of Ink* to the library's reopened drop box, performed with a flourish like dunking a basketball. "Nothing but net!" I exclaimed.

Other recordings covered risk

tolerance, masks as fashion statements, the evolution of office attire from coats and ties all the way down to bathrobes, my family's burial plots in the Jewish cemeteries in Gonzales and Hempstead, and podcasts I listened to during my daily walks around Katonah.

As the pandemic grinds on, the images of documentation project continue to evolve. My camera roll brims with park walks, yard signs from the presidential campaign, scenes of blazing fall sunsets behind bare trees, the inspiring sidewalk drawings of the anonymous artist known as the Katonah Chalker, reopened store, empty train stations with year-old advertising posters, self-portraits with a Day of the Dead mask, anything that catches the unsettled spirit of the time.

Whatever 2021 brings, for good or ill, I'll speak my mind about it, complete with pictures.

Van Wallach is a writer in Katonah, New York. A native of Mission, Texas, he holds an economics degree from Princeton University. He blogs on Jewish topics at the Time of Israel and on other matters at mission2moscow.blogspot.com and <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWuMtB-Cpvg1XMeMufot7c2w/videos>. He has written extensively about his upbringing in Mission, Texas and ongoing connections to the state, such as the Jewish cemetery in Gonzales and his great-great-grandfather, Rabbi Hayymin Schwarz of Hempstead. 🇺🇸

Does TJHS Have Your Current Email Address?

Is your email address current? Has it changed since the 2018 directory was printed? Have you changed email providers? If so, please send an email to c2aggie@gmail.com so your information can be updated. To reduce postage cost 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, send it today! Thank you.

Interview with Patricia Benoit

November 12, 2011

by Jan Hart

Charles and I met Patricia Benoit at the Temple Cemetery Company, Hillcrest Cemetery on North First Street, Temple, Texas to discuss the Jewish presence in Temple and Jewish graves. Patricia offered to tell us the ones she knows about. She offered to show us indirect Jewish ties, as well as locate the Jewish graves. The following is in her own words.

I started as Manager here in July, 2002, and began to document the people buried here. This is a non-profit association and it had fallen into disrepair. No one knew who was buried here or how important they were. For example, Dr. White and Dr. Scott, who founded Scott and White, are buried here.

The problem with Jewish burials

is that many times religion was not mentioned in the obituaries. It is hard to document. Blums and Strauses are buried here, so I assumed since they came from Galveston, where they were prominent in the Jewish congregations, that Charles Blum was Jewish. Charles H. Blum built the Cotton Exchange in downtown Temple in 1892. He did business with the Heidenheimers, so they must be connected. The Blums from Galveston were from Germany. Charles H. Blum and his wife, a Strauss, were from Sweden and were members of a German Lutheran church. I was wrong to assume.

I researched Goodrich Jones in section B. He was Baptist, but his mother was Julia Offenbach, who was the sister of a musical impresario. His grandfather was a cantor in a German temple. They were a very educated and cultured family. Julia married Jones and they moved to New York. Goodrich Jones was born in New York, but goes back to Germany for his education. Coming back to New York, he is sent to Galveston. He married Zollie Luther whose father was a Baptist minister and President of Mary Hardin Baylor. Goodrich Jones converts from Methodist to Baptist. Even though his mother was Jewish, he was

never observant. Goodrich was named after a close family friend in New Orleans who was Jewish.

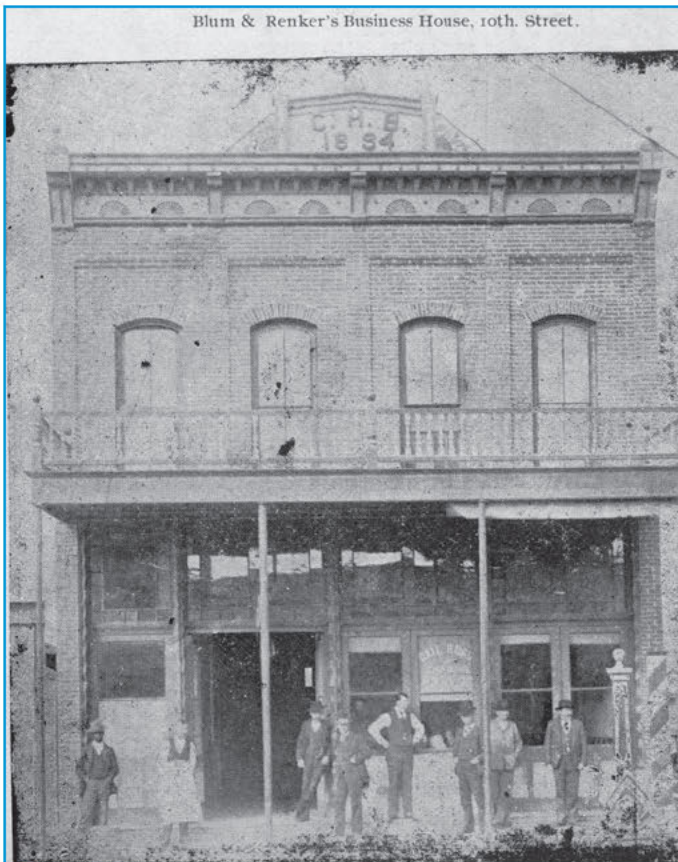
Maurice Oppenheimer was born in Chicago, early jeweler, sang opera, vaudeville performer, attended Tulane University, married Amelia Emily Robertson in Dallas in 1895 and he is buried in Section 4.

Harvey Golding of Austin, bought Maurice's jewelry store. He may be related by marriage to the Losees who are buried next to the Oppenheimers here. One of the Losees sons was buried in Jewish rites in New York. He was a professional photographer.

Henry (Heime) Strasburger, born in Wertenburg, Germany, arrived in Galveston in the 1870s. I found him in the book, "Jews to America", where manifests were listed in the order they boarded the ship, so family groups were listed together. He began working for the Heidenheimers as a "drummer" traveling salesman. Family stories say that Aaron Strasburger was his older brother. There were three brothers that lived together and worked for the Heidenheimers in the 1870s. This was before the railroads came through. The third brother owned a bar in Georgetown, but he died in the 1880s, unmarried. Henry and Aaron settled the estate and sold the bar. They sold salt, tobacco, groceries, coffee. They were the largest importers of salt in the Southwest. They had their own fleet of ships which traveled from Galveston to South America to pick up tobacco, salt, etc. They were one of the biggest importers of salt in the Southwest.

Samuel, Isaac, Jacob and Abraham Heidenheimer arrived in Galveston in the late 1850s just before the Civil War. They were jewelers. After

continued on page 25



Cotton Exchange in Temple Texas, circa 1894.

A Jewish Mayor and His Wife: My Great-Grandparents in Schulenburg

by Sheldon I. Lippman

My father, Leslie Lippman, was an only child. His mother, Selma Levey Lippman, was the youngest daughter of Michael C. (M.C.) and Helena Levey. While my father did relay stories about his grandfather and grandmother over the years, some of the background for this article came from an oral history that my father gave to Judge Norman Krischke, a local historian in Schulenburg, Texas. I respectfully acknowledge the work done by the late Judge Krischke, which added greatly to my own recollections and research of my great-grandparents.

Michael C. Levey was born January 15, 1836, in Strasbourg, Departement du Bas-Rhin, Alsace, France. M.C. was educated in Strasbourg, including attending college. It is unclear what he studied or why at 21 years of age he decided to come to America.

Helena Carolina Pepper was born in Kempen, Germany, on August 14, 1850. It is unclear to me when she came to America. Her family settled in Hallettsville, Texas, where there was a fairly sizable Jewish community.

M.C. arrived in America in 1857 through New York. Between 1858 and 1860, he had spent time in Galveston then made his way to Hallettsville. By 1860, M.C. had started a grocery store in the settlement of Sweet Home, near Hallettsville. In 1861, he became the postmaster of Moulton, Texas. In 1862, at the age of 26, M.C. enlisted in the Confederate Army as a member of Dashiell's Battery of Light Artillery. He served for four years until the end of the war.

After the war, M.C. returned to Hallettsville. During the ensuing years, M.C. met Helena Pepper. They



M.C. and Helena Levey married in 1871.

were married on February 26, 1871, in Hallettsville. Their family began to grow within the first year of their marriage with the birth of Amalia (1871), followed by Mamie (1872), Leopold (1874), Hedwig (1875), and Selma (1878).

In 1879, M.C. was operating a grocery store in Flatonia, Texas; but by 1880 he and his family had moved to Schulenburg. In 1883, M.C. was elected the third mayor of Schulenburg and served three successive terms until 1889.

During M.C.'s terms in office, Schulenburg witnessed a great deal of growth and prosperity: the Baumgarten Cotton-Seed Oil Mill was constructed; the city fire station was erected; and the American Legion Hall (Turner Hall) and St. Rose Catholic Church were built. Many

of the stately mansions that still stand in Schulenburg were built during M.C.'s civic leadership. M.C. entered into local politics once again after his mayoral terms ended, when in 1891 he ran for city alderman in Schulenburg. He lost that race. About the 6 candidates running for the position, *The LaGrange Journal* (April 2, 1891) wrote, "There is nothing at issue between the candidates except personal popularity."

On January 10, 1888, M.C. and Helena closed a deal on the purchase of Lot 34, Block 21, on Main Street in Schulenburg. Between March and June 1890, they saw the completion of the Levey Building in downtown Schulenburg, which would house their grocery store on the ground floor and residence on the second floor. The Levey Building stood across from the railroad depot; M.C. and Helena could watch passengers come and go from their second-floor balcony, and always with an eye for potential customers.

In addition to being a grocer, M.C. was also a notary public and seemed to also dabble in real estate. In the local newspaper, *The Schulenburg Sticker*, it was not uncommon to see ads for his specialty grocery items and his legal aid. One ad from 1902 said it all:

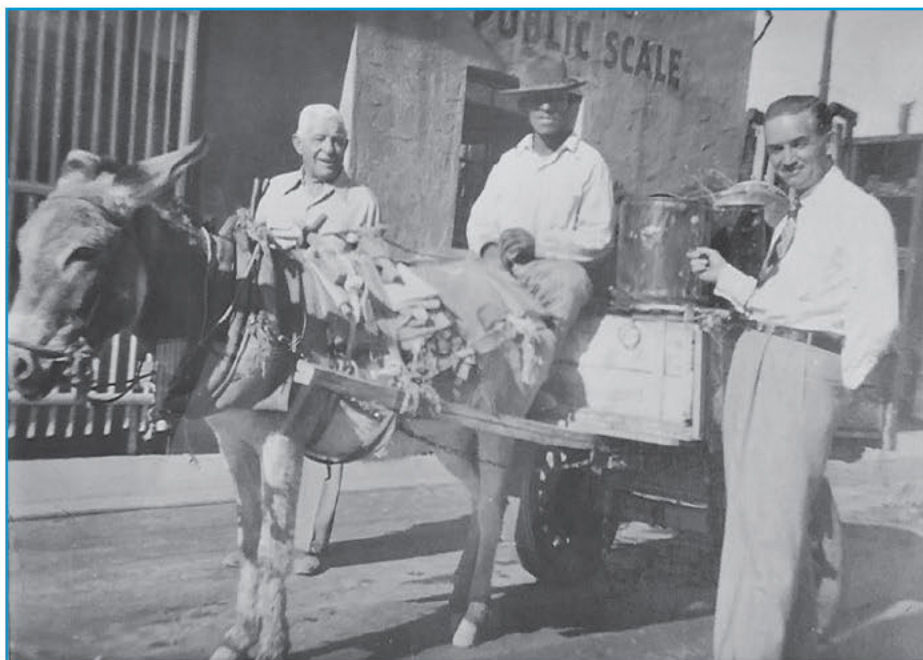
**M.C. Levey's
Notary Public Office
Is on Main Street, just Opposite
Passenger Depot in Schulenburg**

He will promptly write out his Official Certificate and Seal every Legal Document you may present to him. He will also write for you Land Deeds, Releases, Bills of Sale, Powers of Attorney,

continued on page 11

supply business, as there wasn't a company between Dallas and Los Angeles that could supply pipe, fittings, valves, plumbing, and other industrial supplies in the El Paso region. Izzy bought several bankrupt stocks of new pipe, valves, and fittings, leading him to form El Paso Pipe & Supply Co. in 1934. Milton concentrated on its operation and set up the company's first mill and factory connections.

El Paso Pipe & Supply also focused on the liquidation and dismantling of oil refineries, pipelines and mills during the Depression, and Milton spent 1936-1940 in the field, disassembling and wrecking refineries in New Mexico and West Texas. Back in El Paso, A. Milton and Izzy operated El Paso Iron & Metal, which expanded due to the demand for scrap and salvage as the country geared up for World War II. And following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Milton enlisted in the Army Air Corps as a general clerk with the rank of corporal. Because of his education and experience as a purchasing manager, the Army Air Corps decided to have Milton serve stateside in the supply and logistics area. From October 1942 to



Public Scale at El Paso Iron & Metal with Izzy Feinberg on right.

December 31, 1943, he served as a district supply officer at the Military Personnel Division Material Command in Detroit, Michigan, where he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. Although he wasn't physically in El Paso, Milton continued to provide input to Izzy and A. Milton on the company's operations, including the construction of a new warehouse and office building for El Paso Pipe & Supply.

While stationed in Detroit, Milton met Jean Barbara Brody, one of four daughters of Louis and Sarah Kurtz, Russian immigrants. After a brief courtship, Milton and Jean married in June of 1943 at the

Statler Hotel in Detroit. Six months later, Milton and Jean transferred to Chicago, where he continued his work as a captain in the Military Civilian Personnel Division Material Command. The couple's first son, Steve Feinberg, was born in Chicago in October 1944. Shortly afterwards, Milton was transferred to Stinson Field in San Antonio, and Jean and Steve moved to El Paso to stay with Izzy and Sarah until the war ended. Discharged from the Army on February 8, 1946, Milton returned to El Paso and his work at El Paso Pipe & Supply.

During the post-war years, the Feinberg family grew, welcoming a son, Andy, and two daughters, Barbara and Deborah. With all the happiness of a growing family, there was also sadness—Sarah Feinberg died in February 1955. Izzy continued his support of Congregation B'nai Zion, and he gave the congregation a lot behind the synagogue building to erect an education building which served as a center for all cultural and educational activities for the congregation.

continued on page 9



Jean & Milton Feinberg, 1943.

The years after World War II were a boon for the Feinberg's business. Milton wrote, "the whole country was on a binge, so we became very active in new fields such as utilities, municipal supply, new lines in plumbing, heating and air conditioning, and became strong principals in the industrial supply field serving the transmission and distribution industries, contractors in the heavy construction of mines, refineries, power plants, smelters, etc." One major client was El Paso Natural Gas Co., continuing its westward expansion of pipelines to California. Consequently, El Paso Pipe & Supply needed to expand. However, Milton and his

finance. In 1955, he incorporated the operating companies, owned in equal shares between Izzy, Milton, and A. Milton Feinberg. He established Feinberg Realty Co. to consolidate the land ownings around the businesses near El Paso's downtown. With the growth in the business ventures came a growth in the family's assets, and Milton established the Feinberg Foundation to centralize the family's philanthropic efforts in the Jewish and greater El Paso community.

The growth continued in the 1960s with a new building for El Paso Pipe & Supply. Milton oversaw the creation of Border Steel Rolling Mills, which would use scrap as a

sisters and his family were financially secure. Milton created a partnership named Sarador—a blend of Sarah's and Izzy's names—to own real estate to support his family and those of his sisters, the first of many partnerships created to consolidate the family's financial holdings.

In 1967, Steve joined the Feinberg business interests, and after getting experience in an investment banking firm in New York and Houston, returned to El Paso in 1970 to join his father. By 1972, Milton and Steve consolidated all the operating companies into Dorsar Industries—another combination of Izzy's and Sarah's names. Milton served as chairman of the board of Dorsar Industries but ceded more responsibility to Steve. With Milton in semi-retirement and Steve more interested in pursuing real estate investments, Dorsar began the process of selling off its operating companies in the early 1980s. With the sale of the operating companies, Milton focused on his retirement and Steve focused on investing the proceeds into real estate deals and other investments, which soon became Dorsar Investments, which continues to this day, led by Steve Feinberg and his son—Izzy's great-grandson—Bill Feinberg.

Milton inherited his parents' commitment to Jewish causes and community involvement and carried forward the work of Izzy and Sarah. By 1968, Milton had served as a director on the board of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, the Young Women's Christian Association, United Jewish Appeal, United Fund, and the El Paso Jewish Community Center. Jean volunteered with the B'nai Zion Sisterhood, Hadassah, and Providence Hospital. In 1968, Milton chaired the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ) testimonial dinner, and was honored ten



Milton Feinberg at Border Steel Rolling Mills, 1962.

father had different views on borrowing money—Izzy built the business without incurring debt, which helped him get through the Depression, but Milton wanted to expand into new ventures. Steve Feinberg shares, "My father was very independent, and my grandfather was very tough."

But Milton moved forward against his father's wishes. In addition to expanding El Paso Pipe & Supply in the 1950s, Milton focused on real estate, investments, and

raw material to produce reinforcing bars—rebar. Construction on the mill began in May 1960, and the melt shop went into limited operation in 1961. Steve Feinberg recalls, "Border Steel was Milton's baby. He put it all together, he had done the whole thing."

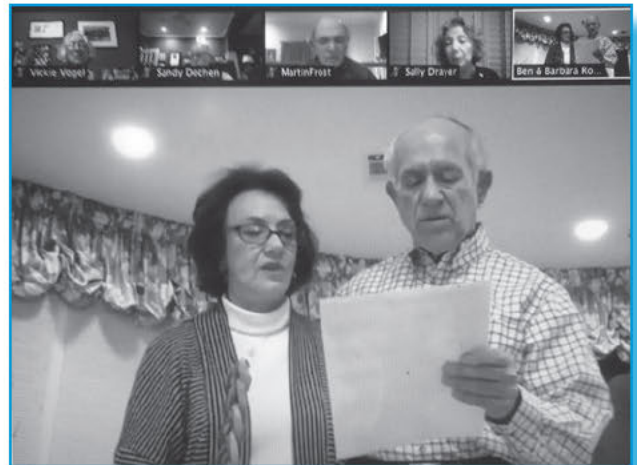
Izzy retired in 1960 and died in November 1962, which was difficult for Milton, as he realized he was the patriarch of the family and had the responsibility to make sure that his

continued on page 24

January 2021 Weekend Review



Saturday night program with Martin Frost



Barbara & Ben Rosenberg lead Havdalah Service.



Havdalah Service attendees

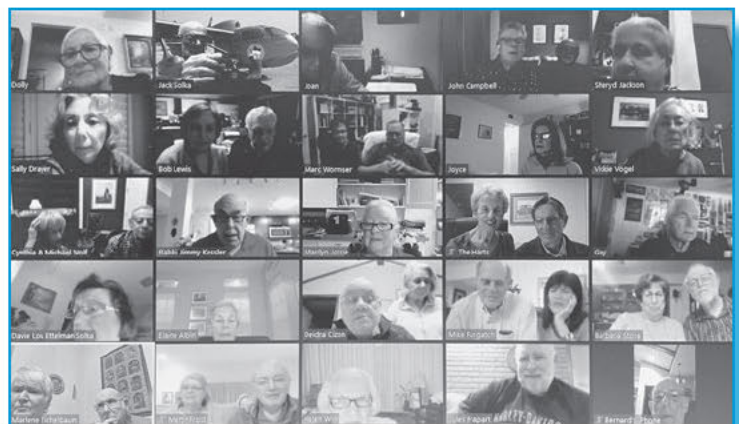


Saturday night program with Martin Frost

The Texas Jewish Historical Society held its Winter Meeting, January 29-31, 2021, via Zoom. A Hospitality Room was opened after individual services Friday night with interesting discussions among members.

Saturday afternoon, Kathy Hart spoke to the group on how to maneuver the Portal to Texas Jewish History on the University of North Texas' web site. She demonstrated how to put a name in the search window and go to the numerous references for that name from current and older issues of newspapers around the state. Kathy earned her Bachelors degree from Texas A&M University and her Masters from LSU in Library and Information Science. She worked for the A&M system before relocating to Rice University. She then moved to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. She has published widely on historic and scientific maps, geographic data, government information, metadata and digital resources.

Former Texas 24th Congressional District Representative, Martin Frost, was the featured speaker for the Saturday night program. He spoke about the



Saturday afternoon presentation by Kathy Hart.

new administration and mentioned some of its priorities, which include getting vaccines for Covid-19, climate change, immigration reform, raising the minimum wage, improving race relations, and increasing unemployment benefits. He said the new administration is strong on support for Israel, and concerning the events of January 6, 2021, at the Capitol, he thinks all the perpe-

continued on page 12

Wills and anything else in that line, in English, German or French. If you have any land, houses or any property to sell, give a description of it—price, locality and so on—to M.C. Levey and he will look up a purchaser for you; or if you want renters, he will hunt them for you; if you want to buy land or other property, go right away and
TELL LEVEY ABOUT IT

And that very same M.C. Levey also runs a store just across from the depot, where he offers for sale

STAPLE AND FANCY GROCERIES

The old fellow is not noisy; he will not pull you in by the coat collar, but if once you buy

of him, you will always do so. He carries as a specialty the most popular brands of Chewing and Smoking Tobaccos, the Best of Coffees, green, roasted or ground. The Choicest Stock of Candies, Fruits, Nuts and Pastes. Also a complete assortment of Notions, Overalls, Jumpers, Socks, etc. Toys, Dolls, and Christmas Goods, Fancy Vases, Fancy Cups and Saucers.

And then if you want anything from New York, Chicago or any other big city, simply leave your order with the man who will attend to it right; his name is

M.C. LEVEY

—1902 ad from *The Schulenburg Sticker*

In December 1912, M.C. and Helena closed their business on Main Street and returned to Hallettsville to live out their life in retirement. *The Schulenburg Sticker* in an issue on the city's founding fathers from April 28, 1898, summed up M. C.'s character and business acumen.

"His business is prosperous, and has ever been so, but he has not accumulated great wealth—he is too conscientious for that—as he has always been more solicitous for the welfare of his fellow-man than for that of himself. But our M.C. possesses that which is dearer to him than great wealth: An unsullied reputation, and the consciousness that he will leave to his worthy descendants the proud heritage of an honored name."

In 1920, M.C. and Helena sold the Levey Building, which still stands on Main Street without the Levey name and having gone through several decades of changing enterprises.

M.C. died February 25, 1923 at 87 years of age. He was buried in the Jewish Cemetery in Hallettsville. His gravestone reads, "A faithful worshipper of God, who loved his fellow men and was, in turn loved by them."

Shortly after M.C.'s death, Helena sold the home in Hallettsville and moved back to Schulenberg to live with her daughter and son-in-law, Selma and Ike, and grandson, Leslie. In September 1924, Helena submitted a Widow's Application for Confederate Pension.

Helena died on August 14, 1930

continued on page 15




Standing: Hedwig (Levey) Frosch, Julius Frosch, Mamie (Levey) Margoliuss, Ike Lippman, Selma (Levey) Lippman, Leopold Levey, Pauline (Silver) Levey. Sitting: M.C. and Helena Levey with grandson Leslie Lippman sitting on ground at Levey home in Hallettsville, 1921.

Purim Play, continued from page 1

ski Colvin was a trained pianist who often participated in Temple events by providing the music. Anita served in WWI and rose to the rank of Captain. She was a public-school teacher in Brownsville.

The "Feast of Esther" ended with a song, enthusiastic parental applause

and food. In charge of the food was Corrine Perl, wife of Sam Perl's brother, Leon. Sam and Leon owned a men's clothing store downtown. My mother, Mrs. Ely (Anne) Holtzman and Helen Edelstein Silverstone assisted with serving the food. Helen was Ruben Edelstein's sister.

Those mentioned who are buried in the Hebrew Cemetery of Brownsville, Texas, are Manuel and Rachel Perelman, Bernard and Mildred Whitman, Ralph and Sarah May Frapart, Leon and Corrine Perl, Anita Kowalski Colvin, Ely and Anne Holtzman and Ruben Edelstein. 

Discovering Texas Jewish History in the Portal to Texas History

by Kathy Hart, MLIS

The Portal to Texas History is a great resource for Jewish Texas history! The Portal, found at <https://texashistory.unt.edu/> is a “gateway to rare, historical, and primary source materials from or about Texas,” includes a wide variety of digitized primary source materials, and is free to use! It is hosted at the University of North Texas Libraries and supported by a variety of federal and state grants, private donations.

The Portal gathers resources from a variety of collections and partners, including libraries, museums, historical societies, personal family archives, and organizations, such as synagogues. The portal began in early 2000, with a focus initially on historic newspapers, and now contains over eight- million newspaper pages. The newspapers represent all areas of the state, and numerous small towns. The newspapers

provide details of family history such as weddings, engagements, activities and events, and family-owned businesses, as well as local history, such as synagogue and temple dedications, lectures and visits from prominent rabbis, and other notifications relating to the local Jewish community. Jewish newspapers include *The Jewish Herald*, *Jewish Herald-Voice*, *The Jewish Monitor* and *The Texas Jewish Post*. Beyond historic newspapers, the portal contains a wealth of photographs, maps, film/video, audio, letters, radio news transcripts, school yearbooks, college newspapers, and more. You will find photos and descriptions of congregations, their bulletins and some committee minutes, youth groups and families celebrating holidays.

Searching is straightforward. A simple search can be conducted on the

home page. Using quotation marks for a phrase is suggested. You also may choose ‘Guided’ or ‘Advanced’ searches from the drop-down tabs found at the bottom of the home page. Filters found on the left column will narrow your search results by resource type, decade/year, serial title, or other

options. Search results are provided in a list or grid, with the most relevant being at the top. You can, however, re-order your search results by date (newest or oldest), title or creator by using the ‘Sort Options’ drop- down tab. Results can be downloaded or shared (emailed). Content is freely available for personal (private) use; however, some content does require permissions to share or reprint. Copyright and intellectual property rights information is found at the bottom of each item page.

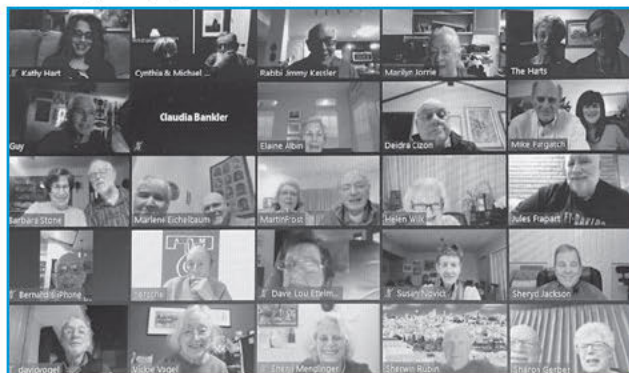
One technical detail that is useful to understand is OCR (optical character recognition). OCR is the method by which the computer reads and converts the scanned image into searchable text. That enables you to search each word of the text of a newspaper or other textual material, and thus retrieve results far beyond the typical subject heading or assigned keyword. Your search results are highlighted at the exact location on the page where your search terms are found. OCR is not perfect, especially when the digitization is based on old microfilm, and in that case, you may notice what appear to be typographical errors in the results.

For more information see “About the Portal” tab at the lower left of the home page. FAQ and Search Guides are at <https://texashistory.unt.edu/help/>. “Resources4 Educators” can be found at <https://education.texashistory.unt.edu/>.

January Board Meeting, continued from page 10

trators should face felony charges and be denied bail pending trial. He spent a great deal of time answering questions from the group.

The Board Meeting Sunday morning was well attended by Board Members and guests. It was announced that the Annual Gathering will be held via Zoom April 9-11, 2021. See Notes from the Board Meeting on page 13. 🇺🇸



Saturday afternoon presentation by Kathy Hart.

TJHS on Facebook

Did you know that TJHS has a Facebook page? Like us at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Texas-Jewish-Historical-Society/187629054741368>.



Notes from the Board Meeting

From the January 2021 TJHS meeting:

- The Annual Gathering and Spring Board Meeting will be April 9-11, 2021 via Zoom. At the Annual Gathering Meeting on April 11, Don and Gertrude Teter Z'l and Hollace Weiner will be presented with the TJHS awards for Preservation of Jewish History. Joan Teter Linares will accept the award for her parents.
- Davie Lou Solka, *News Magazine* Editor, is still seeking articles from members whose family came to the U.S. through Galveston during the Galveston Movement years (1907-1914); and articles from members on how they have spent their time in isolation during the COVID-19 Pandemic. These will be ongoing articles; send your articles to editor@txjhs.org.
- The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History located on the UT campus in Austin is still closed to the public. They hope to open in the fall, so plans for hiring an intern and for accepting donations are still on hold. Contact archivist@txjhs.org if you have items you would like to donate or for more information.
- The Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio is still closed to the public, so plans for the updating of the Jewish Exhibit are on hold. They are not accepting items for loan, only for donation. If you have an item you would like to donate, contact editor@txjhs.org for the museum to consider your donation.
- A grant of \$2,000 was awarded to Natalie Ross, doctoral candidate at North Texas University, for her project exploring the influences of Sephardic Jewry on Jewish American and Colonial cooking in Texas.
- The Proposed Slate of Officers for 2021-2022 and Board of Directors for 2021-2023 was presented by Davie Lou Solka, Nominating Committee Chair. Voting will be done electronically prior to the Annual Gathering. See Proposed Slate on page 20.
- Total Membership is now 519.
- The website was viewed 2,160 times, including 990 new site visitors. Vickie Vogel is creating an index for the *News Magazines*, which will be posted on the website.

Guess This Member

Well, no guesses this time—take a good look—you do know this pretty girl and now she is a pretty woman.



This little one has been a faithful TJHS Board Member for many years. If there's a football game on a TJHS weekend, she won't be attending our meeting! Good luck!

Email your guess to editor@txjhs.org any time beginning Monday, March 15. Entries received before that date will not be considered. Family members and previous winners and their families are not eligible to participate. Good luck! If you'd like to try and stump the TJHS membership, please send your photo to editor@txjhs.org.

NOTICE—you will be receiving a ballot to vote on the Officers and Board for 2021-2023 prior to the Annual Gathering meeting April 11, 2021. The ballot will be an email and will be very easy for you to vote. Return the ballot as soon as you can when you receive it.

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

Meet Your Board

Marc Wormser, Past President, lives



in Pearland and is an "Aggie at heart." He has been a traveling sales rep for Levis, C.R. Gibson, gifts, and medical sales. He

owned a recruiting firm and was active in scouting and Optimist Club. He and his wife, Joyce (TJHS Recording Secretary) travel whenever they can. He maintains the database for membership and dues for TJHS.

Joyce Wormser, Pearland was born in



Corpus Christi and is married to Marc, TJHS Membership Chairman. They have two sons and four grandchildren. She worked as

Employee Relations Officer for one thousand employees at the Corpus Christi State school. In 2000 she and Marc moved to Pearland to be closer to their sons and their families.

Michael Thomas Wolf was born in



Williamsport, Pennsylvania, but moved to Brownsville, Texas, with his parents, Raymond and Madeleine Wolf. Michael grew up in

Brownsville, where he became an Eagle Scout and was involved in BBYO. He attended Texas A&M University and was a member of the Corps of Cadets and was commissioned as an Army Officer. He was involved in Hillel, and graduated with a degree in

Finance and he also earned his MBA from Texas Tech. He moved to Beaumont where he served many years as Treasurer of Temple Emanuel until he became President of the congregation. Michael is Past Chair of Greene Family Camp Committee, and has served as president of many community organizations. He has thirty-three years of perfect attendance in the Rotary Club of Beaumont and serves on the Rotary Foundation Board. Michael is a partner in Wolf Bunt and Associates, a financial services company. Michael and his wife, Cynthia (TJHS Board Member) have two children and spouses, and four grandchildren. He is Chair of TJHS Grant Committee.

Charles Hart, TJHS Past President,



is from Temple, but was born and raised in Houston. Charles graduated from the University of Houston with a BS degree and American

University with a MS degree. He served in the U.S. army from 1958-1960 and 1961-1962. He retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture after thirty-four years of civil service, and taught horseback riding at Jewish summer camps for over twenty-five years. He is an Eagle Scout and a long-time member of the Hillel Board at Texas A&M University. He is married to TJHS member, Jan Siegel Hart, and they have three children and six grandchildren. He and Jan have been TJHS members for over thirty years.

Morton L. (Morty) Herman was born and grew up in Fort Worth. He attended the University of Texas as an undergraduate/St. Mary's University Law/George Washington Law.



He has been President and Legal Counsel of Congregation Ahavath Sholom in Fort Worth, as well as a member of Beth-El Congregation.

Morty has worked with the Chevra Kadisha in Fort Worth for thirty years, and has served on boards of various organizations. At the University of Texas, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity and the Texas Cowboys. He served in the US Army as a 1st Lieutenant, and was stationed in Japan and Viet Nam. Morty is a practicing attorney with the law firm of Cantey Hanger LLP, and has three years' service with the office of General Counsel, Federal Communications Commission in Washington, D.C. during the Watergate Era. He is married to Dr. Barbara B. Herman, and they have two adult sons.

Bob Lewis aka Tumbleweed Smith, is



from Big Spring, Texas. He hosts a daily radio show, *Sound of Texas*, that is syndicated throughout Texas. It is a show featuring

Texans talking about their interesting careers and sometimes unusual experiences. He writes a newspaper column, also syndicated in the state, and is co-owner of Multi Media Advertising, Inc. Bob taught communications at UTPB in Odessa for thirty-four years, was District Governor of Rotary International, and has won many awards for audio and video production. One was the Gold Award for Excellence from the Communicator Awards for "Texas Jews go to Cuba," a document-

continued on page 15

tary about the first TJHS humanitarian mission trip to that country. He and his wife, TJHS President, Susan Zack Lewis, have two children and four grandchildren. Bob is Publicity Chair for TJHS.

Helen Wilk is a naturalized Texan having lived in Texas for fifty-four years. She is from Michigan, but now lives in Houston. She is interested in local history, and has conducted oral histories for many Texans for TJHS archives. Helen is a Past President of TJHS and with her husband, Larry (now deceased) have four children and eight grandchildren.



Ruth Nathan served as Treasurer of the Texas Jewish Historical Society for many years. Ruth is the past assistant director of the Jewish Community Center in Houston, and has a MA in Speech Pathology and a MA in Social Work. Ruth teaches a social skills program called "Skills for Success." She is a docent at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.



Marilyn Lippman now lives in Dallas, but has connections to Fayette County. She is the Treasurer of Temple Israel in Schulenberg and a Board Member of the Jewish Cemetery in Hallettsville.



Marilyn is employed with Ericsson, Inc. in Plano, as a Business Operations Manager. In her spare time, she enjoys hot yoga, hiking, and gardening—especially mowing lawns!

Carolyn (Kay) Krause now lives in Dallas, but raised her three children in Brownsville. She participated in many different areas in organizations and was one of three women to help open a Planned Parenthood Center. She is a paralegal and has worked in courtrooms during trials and picking juries.



Gordon Alan Cizon was born in Kansas City, and grew up in Amarillo, Texas. He was the Librarian for the Amarillo High School Band. He attended Oklahoma University in Norman, Oklahoma, and graduated from West Texas State University with an Economics Degree in Business Administration with an emphasis on management and finance. His hobbies are photography, opera, and sailing. He now lives in Dallas and is married to Deidre, who is also a TJHS Board Member.



Dr. Marc Orner lives in Abilene, and leads services when a visiting Rabbi is not in town.



Jeffrey Josephs lives in Austin. He grew up in Corpus Christi.

Jewish Mayor in Schulenberg, continued from page 11

and is buried next to M.C. Her gravestone reads, "Beloved mother and respected neighbor. The ways of Judaism were the paths of her life." Her will showed she was worth \$6,000 at the time of her death, and she bequeathed \$20 to the Jewish Cemetery and the rest to her children to be divided equally.



Standing Mamie (Levey) Margolius, Selma Levey. Sitting: M.C. Levey Helena Levey, Leslie Lippman (in front). At Levey home in Hallettsville, 1920.

Much of what was written in Helena's obituary in *The Schulenburg Sticker* (April 30, 1930) was devoted to her accomplished husband. But, it did say about her, "Deceased was an excellent mother, a kind, friendly neighbor. She was a member of the old school, who considered it a pleasure to labor and make the pathway of life easier for mankind. Her kind of folks are rapidly thinning out and with each passing, the world is truly a poorer place." 🇺🇸

The deadline for the May 2021 TJHS News Magazine is Friday, April 9.

From Our Archives

This column is based on information in the TJHS Collection, housed at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas campus in Austin. It has been supplemented with online research. If you have corrections or additions, please submit them in writing to the TJHS editor at editor@txjhs.org. We want our archives to be as complete as possible.

Selig Deutschman Redux

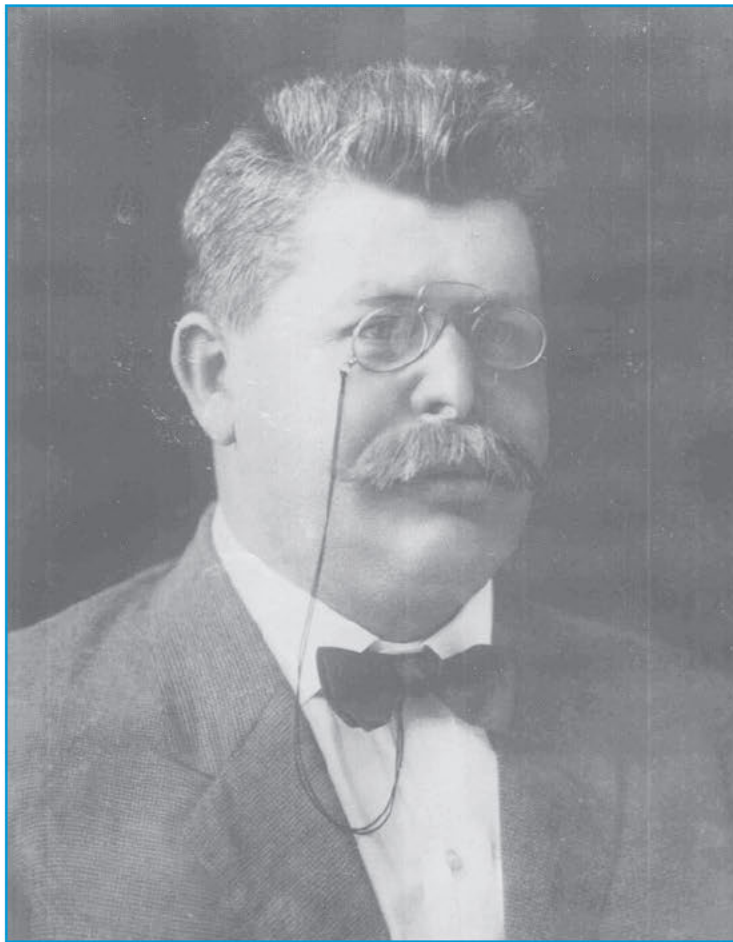
by Vickie Vogel

In the July 2012 TJHS News Magazine, I wrote "The Mystery of Selig Deutschman." I called it a mystery because I couldn't find out much about him, except that he applied for some government post in the Woodrow Wilson Administration.¹ I recently read *The People's Revolt: Texas Populists and the Roots of American Liberalism* by Greg Cantrell, and was pleasantly surprised to find mention of Deutschman.²

We know he was born in 1865 or 1866.³ He came to Texas from Germany in 1879. He worked at many jobs: printer's devil, fruit stand owner, shoestring salesman, shepherd, rubber stamp manufacturer, clerk and newspaper reporter before passing the bar in 1895 and becoming a lawyer.

He married Marie Antoinette Rodriguez (1881-1907)⁴ and they had two daughters, Ruth and Hannah. Ruth died in October, 1918 at the age of 17, a victim of the Spanish Flu.⁵ More can be learned about Selig Deutschman in the 2012 article.

The new information I found in Cantrell's book is a fascinating



Selig Deutschman. Photo courtesy of Allan Glazerman, Executive Director, Congregation Agudas Achim, San Antonio.

political tale which requires some background. In 1894, one did not have to be a US citizen to vote. Texas law merely required a form to be signed before a county clerk swearing an intention to become a citizen, and the applicant was granted suffrage. There was no time limit for when final papers for citizenship needed to be filed. Very few applicants filed for

final papers.

This system was ripe for abuse, as Mexican citizens could be paid to cross the border on or immediately before election day, file the intent paper, and vote. The practice was widely used, and Populists were trying to find ways to stop it. In the 1890s, the Populist Party was becoming strong enough to be concerning for the dominant Democratic Party.

Many Democrats were also opposed to the ruse. In 1894, a Democratic legislator proposed a state constitutional amendment to end alien suffrage. All the Populists and sixty Democrats voted for it, but it failed to reach the needed two-thirds majority. They managed to pass a compromise bill requiring foreigners to file their intention papers six months before voting.

San Antonio Populist and lawyer Theodore J. McMinn thought he had found a way to overcome this half-way measure. Federal immigration law prohibited the naturalization of all but whites and blacks.⁶ Blacks had been added upon passage of the 14th Amendment granting citizenship to

continued on page 17

former slaves. McMinn suggested that dark-skinned Mexican immigrants (as opposed to native-born Tejanos) might be ineligible for American citizenship because of their Indian racial heritage. He asked the San Antonio Young Men's Reform Club to pass a resolution calling for a legal test case, but they refused.

A test case, however, was filed in 1896 by Ricardo Rodriguez, who had lived in Texas since 1883. McMinn challenged on the grounds he was not a white man and was ineligible for citizenship under US immigration laws.⁷ The action ignited a political firestorm.⁸

This is where Selig Deutschman comes in. He, as a Populist leader, and the local party distanced themselves from McMinn's action and disavowed responsibility. Deutschman, "with his walrus mustache and pince-nez glasses bore more than a passing resemblance to Theodore Roosevelt, was a German-born Jew who probably knew a thing or two about bigotry."⁹

Deutschman said, "Individually, I have always been opposed to anything that is calculated to arouse prejudice between the different races, as well as the different religions. It is a question that ought not to enter in any political discussion."¹⁰

Deutschman criticized the border practices on election day, and felt the solution was a law to make five-year residence necessary before a person could vote. He decried the idea of "wholesale disfranchising of good citizens." The Populist Party itself did not endorse the five-year proposal, but the newspaper *El Regidor*¹¹ praised Deutschman as a learned lawyer and a defender of the right of Mexicans not to be denied US citizenship.

When the Populist Party held its Bexar County Convention in San Antonio, Deutschman submitted a resolution:

"Whereas, the democrats are circulating a report to the effect that the populist party is endeavoring to disfranchise the Mexican citizens; therefore, be

Resolved, By the people's party in mass meeting assembled that the above report is wholly untrue.

Resolved, Further, that the people's party is opposed to disfranchisement of anyone by reason of their race, color or religion."¹²

The resolution was seen as inflammatory and was not brought to the floor. A substitute resolution passed calling simply for "fair and honest" elections.¹³ Despite this defeat, Deutschman was still elected to be a delegate to the 1896 Populist Party State Convention.¹⁴

Deutschman did not give up. He introduced the resolution the following week at a joint meeting of the Independent American Labor Club and the San Pedro International Club, adding a clause that the resolution had been unfairly quashed at the county convention. This time, the resolution passed.

Rodriguez received a favorable ruling from the court in 1897, which said McMinn was correct that his application for citizenship violated the letter of the law, but the judge believed it was within the spirit of the law. Not only was McMinn's political career severely damaged by his lawsuit, the Populist Party itself was blamed for his actions. In 1896, the Party divided over tactics, the economy improved, and the Democratic Party became more sympathetic to populist ideas. By 1900, the party's political effectiveness was over.¹⁵

Deutschman and other Populist leaders truly wanted to build reform coalitions by reaching across racial, ethnic, and class lines and were ahead

of their time in this regard. After the Populist Party's decline, he continued to defend Tejano rights and fight for progressive civic causes, such as establishing public libraries, adopting the commission plan for city government, and founding San Antonio's first free kindergarten.¹⁶

Selig Deutschman died September 5, 1922 and is buried in Congregation Agudas Achim Cemetery in San Antonio.

Endnotes

- ¹ Vickie Vogel, "The Mystery of Selig Deutschman," TJHS News Magazine, July 2012.
- ² <https://txjhs.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/2012-July.pdf>
- ³ Article from Box 3A190, Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. All information is from this file/article unless otherwise noted.
- ⁴ Greg Cantrell, *The People's Revolt: Texas Populists and the Roots of American Liberalism*, Yale University Press, 2020, pp 332-342, 500. The background of this article is almost entirely from these pages.
- ⁵ His tombstone says 1866, but it misspells his name, so perhaps Cantrell's date of 1865 is correct. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35621045/selig-ben-deutschman>
- ⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35621046/marie-antoinette-deutschman>
- ⁷ TJHS News Magazine, July 2012, p. 12 <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35621047/ruth-deutschman>
- ⁸ <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/7th-congress/session-1/c7s1ch28.pdf>, Chap. 28. "...That any alien, being a free white person, may be admitted to become a citizen of the United States ..."
- ⁹ In re Rodriguez <https://cite.case.law/f/81/337/>; see also footnote 6 above

continued on page 24

The Galveston Movement

In 1907, European Jews began coming to the United States via Galveston, Texas. They were routed from locations along the East Coast to relieve crowding in overpopulated cities and prevent a public wave of anti-Semitism, which could lead to immigration restrictions. This immigration continued until 1914 and became known as the Galveston Movement.

The Sam and Rachel Wilk Family

by Sheila Wilk Rosenberg

As the proud granddaughter of four immigrant grandparents, I am equally proud that I am also the descendant of people who were part of the Galveston Movement.

My grandfather, Schmuel/Sam Wilk left Selwa, Russia (now Poland), arriving in Galveston in 1910. In Selwa he worked as a blacksmith and dairy farmer. He settled in Houston and worked as a blacksmith for railroads including Pacific Railroad. According to family lore he frequently lost jobs due to not wanting to work on Shabbat and other Jewish Holy days. After working and saving he sent for his wife, twenty-six-year-old Rochel/Rachel Saperstein Wilk. She arrived in Galveston on June 21, 1912. Along with Rochel, Sam brought her sister, Rosa Saperstein and brother, Onus Saperstein. Rosa/Rose married Ben Proler in 1912 and settled in Houston. Ben started City Junk Company which in turn became Proler Industries. Jonus changed his name to Johnny Stein and married Sarah Kravchick. Johnny and Sarah settled in Houston where he began Triple S Steel. Rachel also arrived with two young children. Ben Wilk was about three and Wolf Wilk was a little over a year old. Sadly, Wolf died in August of 1912.

An extra bit of trivia...when Sam came to Galveston, he had skin lesions all over his body. He was fortunate the authorities did not send him back on the next boat—which was common. Instead, they sent him to San Antonio to partake of the healing



*Back: Morris, Louie, and Ben.
Front: Sophie, Rachel,
Sam, Esther, and Joe*

mineral waters at Hot Wells Baths. In San Antonio, Sam lived with Joe and Goldie Shapiro. Joe Shapiro was also a Blacksmith and that is how Sam learned English -- working side-by-side with Mr. Shapiro. After he was cured, Sam moved back to Houston to begin his new life. Years later, in an interesting twist, Joe Shapiro's daughter Leah (Maze) went to work as a Secretary and Bookkeeper for Sam's sons, Ben and Joe, at Wilk Surplus and Supply.

Sam then worked as a dairy farmer and moved the family to the Fifth Ward area of Houston. The other children who joined the family were Morris (born 1913), Louie (born 1915), Joe, (born 1917), Sophie (born 1920) and Esther, (born 1922).

According to records found at the Dolph Briscoe Center in Austin, Sam was active in Congregation Adath Israel and the local B'nai B'rith. I have found records of minutes stating Sam was concerned for the children not

having access to a Talmud Torah education and he and Ben Proler gathered money to hire a teacher.

When the laws for pasteurization came about, Sam left dairy farming and bought land and owned apartments. He passed away in Houston, December 1960 at the age of seventy-seven. Rachel passed away in 1968 in Houston at the age of eighty-three.

Ben Wilk moved to San Antonio with his wife, Bessie Caplan. He started Wilk Surplus & Supply scrap metal. He and Bessie had two sons, Leslie and Edward. Leslie became an award-winning fashion designer and later, served as the Resident Director of Texas Women's University's Southwest Institute of Design in the department of Fashion and Textiles. Edward joined Ben at Wilk Surplus and Supply. Bessie passed away in 1955, and Ben married Ruth Foreman. They had two children, Benita (from Ruth's first marriage) married Alan Ross, and Lisa married Lee Durham.

Morris married Fannie Atlas. He worked for the U.S. Post Office and then owned Wilk Furniture for many years. They had no children.

Louie married Henrietta Siegel, and was in the scrap business in Lubbock. They had two children, Michael and Sandra (Levy). Michael retired as a partner in the law firm of Hirsch & Westheimer. Sandra worked in real estate for many years.

Joe, a member of Sig Frucht's Houston Ramblers, moved to San

continued on page 20



The TJHS is Accepting Nominations for Two Outstanding Recognition Awards for the Preservation of Texas Jewish History

Texas Jewish Historical Society (TJHS), founded in 1980, is seeking nominations for Outstanding Recognition Awards in two areas: (1) Significant Historic Site Preservation (awarded first to Leon and Mimi Toubin for the restoration of the Orthodox Synagogue originally in Brenham and moved to Austin, in order to continue as a sacred place for Jewish worship services) and (2) Extraordinary Historic Project (awarded first to Rabbi Jimmy Kessler for the 1980 founding of the Texas Jewish Historical Society, which continues to educate, to preserve stories, and to archive Texas Jewish History).

TJHS now seeks your help to identify and honor those individuals who have made a significant and lasting impact on the preservation of Texas Jewish History. Only one award per year can be given in each category; but it is not mandated to be given yearly, only when an outstanding accomplishment merits the award. Recognitions as determined by TJHS Award Committee will be presented at TJHS Spring Annual Gathering. Applications must be received by July 15, 2021 and mailed to Award Chair, Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193 or awardchair@txjhts.org.

Application Form

Date of Submission: _____

Name and Contact Information of Nominee(s): _____

Name and Contact Information of Person(s) Recommending Nominee(s) for Consideration: _____

Category of nomination:

☐ Significant Historic Preservation

☐ Major Historic Project

In the packet that you will return with this sheet as your cover page, please include the following:

- Complete description of the accomplishment
- Reasons that you are submitting this nomination and how you became aware of this accomplishment
- Pictures and other documentation
- Impact of this accomplishment and how it has and will continue to make a difference now and in the future on the ongoing story of the Jews of Texas
- Short bio of nominee(s)

Thank you for helping us recognize deserving individuals!

*Send applications to: Award Chair, Texas Jewish Historical Society,
P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193 or awardchair@txjhts.org.*

Proposed Slate of Officers Texas Jewish Historical Society, 2019-2020

President

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Cynthia Wolf (Beaumont)

One-Year Term 2020-2022

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*Nominating Committee: Davie Lou Solka, Chair;
Marilyn Albert, Marlene Eichelbaum,
Joan Katz, and Barbara Rosenberg*

Strangers in the Box by Pamela A. Harazim

*The following poem was sent to the Editor from
Vickie Vogel. It certainly gives us all something to
think about when we put away our photos.*

Come look with me inside this drawer,
In this box I've often seen,
At the pictures, black and white,
Faces proud, still, serene.

I wish I knew the people,
These strangers in the box,
Their names and all their memories
Are lost among my socks.

I wonder what their lives were like.
How did they spend their days?
What about their special times?
I'll never know their ways.

If only someone had taken time
To tell who, what, where, when,
These faces of my heritage
Would come to life again.

Could this become the fate
Of the pictures we take today?
The faces and the memories
Someday to be tossed away?

Make time to save your pictures,
Seize the opportunity when it knocks,
Or someday you and yours could be
The strangers in the box.

Galveston Movement, continued from page 18

Antonio to join Ben in the scrap business. He married Sylvia Leavitt and had three children, Andy, Sheri (Barenblat) and Sheila (Rosenberg). Andy was in the scrap business.

Sophie married Albert Worth and had three children, Robert, Larry and Marvin. Albert owned a furniture store which was then bought by Morris. Robert is a doctor, Larry is a dentist and Marvin owned and operated Wilk Furniture for many years.

Esther was married to Maurice Levit. They had two children, Ann (Plantowsky) and Jack. They divorced and she worked in Real Estate as well as had her own Mandelbrot business. Ann had two children, Scott (Joy) and Todd (Mary).

Ben passed away in 1983 at the age of seventy-four, Morris

continued on page 26



The Texas Jewish Historical Society Grant Application

The mission of the Texas Jewish Historical Society is to expand and enhance the knowledge and understanding of the Jewish presence in Texas and the history of Jews from their first arrival in the State to the present.

We solicit applications for research projects that are in this spirit.
Deadlines for submission are March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1.

Application Form

The Texas Jewish Historical Society will consider applications from individuals and non-profit organizations in any written or visual media. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

Contact Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ Cell: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Title and Description of project.

Briefly outline personal and professional background information that support this application.

What is the anticipated budget for the project? Are you seeking additional support from elsewhere?

Please detail the timeline of your project.

Completed project must acknowledge TJHS support. A copy or account of the completed project should be submitted to the Society's archive at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin.

Send applications to: TJHS Grant Committee: P.O. Box 10193, Austin TX 78766-0193, or email to grantchair@txjhs.org.

Jewish War Veterans Grant Application

You can apply for the Neil and Maxine Goldman Academic Grant from the Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Department of Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma (TALO).


If you meet the following eligibility requirements and are interested in applying, please contact Herschel Sheiness, jsheines@swbell.net for additional information. No Grant will be larger than \$2,000.

- Applicants must graduate high school between December 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021. Applicants must have a letter from their accredited college, university, or technical trade school or hospital

school of nursing showing acceptance for admission for the fall 2021 school year. If an applicant is taking a gap year, they must have a letter of acceptance for the spring or fall 2021 school year.

- Applicant must be a direct descendant (child, grandchild, great-grandchild) of a member "In Good Standing" (dues paid member) of the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) of the United States of America or the Jewish War Veterans Ladies Auxiliary (JWVA) residing within the Department of TALO.
- If an applicant's relative is de-

ceased, the member who at time of death must have resided within TALO and was a member In Good Standing. If the JWV/JWVA member is deceased, contact Herschel Sheiness for assistance.

- Sponsor must have been an active (dues current) member for at least 18 months prior to the June TALO convention in June 2021.
- All members (including Posthumous) must have joined or been members of JWV/ JWVA before January 2020.
- Applicants who are descendants of Honorary Members and Patrons are not eligible. 

Contributions

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

In Honor of

Dolly Golden, on her Love of a Lifetime Award from the Austin Chapter of Hadassah

Louis Katz, on his 2nd Bar Mitzvah

Vickie Vogel, on her presentation

From

Jan & Charles Hart

Davie Lou and Jack Solka

Empty Nesters, Congregation Beth Israel, Austin

In Memory of

Doris Katten

Abbi Michelson

From

Steve Katten

Howard & Mitzi Milstein

Jill Gain, Howard & Barbara Glick

Deborah Glosserman, Brian & Dayna Goldstein

Brad & Jennifer Ivers, Mr. & Mrs. Brad Klein

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Regina Rogers, Lionel & Marsha Schooler

Dr. & Mrs. William Selman, Jill, Nico, Wes and Brittany

A Gift Membership for

Dr. Howard & Melanie Rubin

Dr. Jay & Jeanne Rubin

Dr. Paul & Staci Rubin


Jonathan & Nina Train

From

Samylu Rubin

L. A. & Rona Train

Grant Awarded

Natalie Ross, doctoral candidate at North Texas University, was awarded a \$2,000 grant from the Texas Jewish Historical Society. Her project is to explore the influences of Sephardic Jewry on Jewish American and colonial cooking in Texas. Ms. Ross will use a portion of the grant to purchase cookbooks to add to the ones she already has that show this influence. The cookbooks will be donated to UNT's Jewish Cookbook Collection. In addition, she will interview individuals around the state to obtain their stories and recipes. 

Save the Date

April 9-11, 2021

Zoom Annual Gathering
and Board Meeting

— New Book Tracks Down Identity of — “Rope Walker”

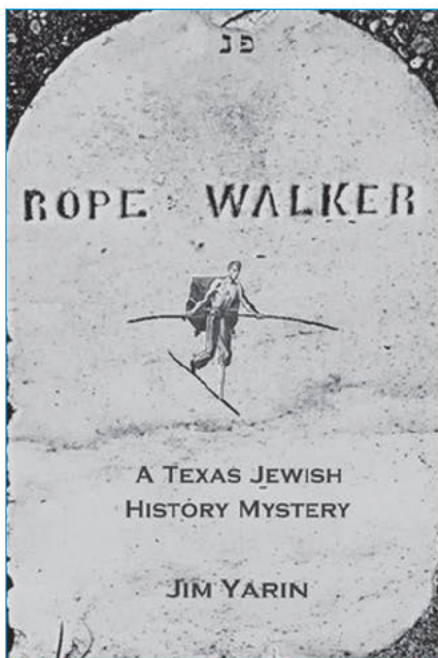
Jewish Performer who fell to his death in 1880s Corsicana

by **Hollace Ava Weiner**

A “history mystery” that has bedeviled researchers the past 135 years is at last resolved in *Rope Walker*, a 378-page paperback about the peg-legged aerialist who fell to his death from thirty feet above a Corsicana intersection. No one knew his name.

Buried in the city’s Hebrew Cemetery beneath a tombstone inscribed “Rope Walker 1884,” the anonymous acrobat has come to symbolize the precarious balance of Jewish lives. He captured the curiosity of Jim Yarin, a Massachusetts genealogist and paralegal, who spent the past decade digging for clues in digitized newspapers, census tables, Civil War pension papers, and Navarro County archives. With the precision and wit of Sherlock Holmes, he takes readers along on his inquest.

One reason that previous sleuths hit a roadblock is because the date of the acrobats’ fall was 1883—a year earlier than the date on his gravestone.



Another reason is that the Rope Walker performed across the country under two stage names.

His *noms de guerre* were spelled—or misspelled—differently in various 19th century news columns. According to articles reprinted in the book, the tightrope walker performed above the streets of Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Galveston, Waco, Carson City, Chicago, Cincinnati, Grand Rapids, Milwaukee, New Orleans, New York, Pittsburgh, Wheeling, and Charleston (SC).


A Civil War veteran who fought with the Kansas Cavalry, he presented himself as a Union veteran when rope walking in the North and a Rebel when performing in the South. As a “wounded warrior,” he elicited sympathy and coins from crowds convinced that he’d lost his left leg at the Battle of Middleburg in Tennessee. Yarin, however, suspects that the leg was amputated after the war following an aerial accident. “He had a penchant for falling,” the skeptical author writes.

The book concludes that the Rope Walker’s legal name was Moses Berg, an immigrant from Alsace,



born around 1842, who petitioned for U.S. citizenship in 1880. The census, which misspelled his last name as “Burke,” described him as a “Crippled . . . Acrobat.” In 1881 he married Sarah Hochster at a small Manhattan synagogue. Following his death on March 13, 1883, his widow applied for his veteran’s pension of \$24 a month. Among the documents she filed with the U.S. Pension Office are two from the Navarro County clerk’s office—certification of his death and an affidavit from an attending physician.

Rope Walker: A Texas Jewish History Mystery was underwritten with a grant from the Texas Jewish Historical Society, funds from Kickstarter, and the author’s personal savings. A scholarly, footnoted book, it delves into the history of Corsicana’s Jewish community and is an important addition to the Texana shelf. Priced at \$20, the book is available from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

See articles on Rope Walker in *TJHS News Magazine* January, 1989; November, 2013; February, 2017. 

In Memoriam



John F. Benjamin, TJHS member, died April 20, 2020, in Glencoe IL. He is survived by his wife, Esther Rosenthal Benjamin, his children Jack (Karen), Sally (Shep) Young, Alan (Amy); eight grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.



Royal Brin, Dallas, TJHS member, died November 6, 2020. He is survived by his daughter, Janice, many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Doris Quicksilver Katten, Dallas/Waco, TJHS member, died December 7, 2020. She is survived by husband, Edwin (former TJHS Board Member), children, Steven, Sue (Chuck) Tilis, and Noni (Max) Smith, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.



Daniel Krause, former TJHS Board Member, died December 23, 2020, in Dallas. He is survived by his wife, Kay Frapart Krause, (former THS Board Member), his children Scot (Michelle) Krause, Elizabeth Krause, Jill Krause, and two grandchildren.



Evelyn Gertz Muntz, Houston/Tyler, TJHS member, died December 3, 2020. She is survived by her children, David (Barbara) Muntz, Dr. James (Anne) Muntz, Julie Muntz (Peter) Johnson, Ellen Muntz (Alan) Muskin, William Muntz, nine grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren.

Miriam "Mimi" Toubin, Brenham, TJHS member, died December 28, 2020. She is survived by her husband, Leon; children, Robin (Brad) Stein, Andrew (Rachel) Toubin, Dr. Jeffery (Fran) Toubin; six grandchildren; and brother Michael (Maxine) Pasternak. Mimi and Leon were devoted caretakers of the Historic B'nai Abraham Synagogue in Brenham and were instrumental in moving the Synagogue to Austin.



May their memories be a blessing.

Feinberg Family, continued from page 9

years later by the NCCJ with the National Award for Community Leadership. In the early 1980s, he served as honorary chairman of the New Building Committee at Congregation B'nai Zion, and he and Jean made a significant contribution to honor Sarah and Izzy by naming the synagogue's sanctuary after them. Milton Feinberg died in March 1995 and Jean in January 1997, but their contributions to the El Paso community continue through their children and grandchildren through the Feinberg Foundation.

Milton Feinberg wrote in 1970, "This alertness and foresight and some daring have brought our interests to their present level. New things and areas must be explored. Past operations must be examined. Unless we go forward, we automatically go backward." The success of Dorsar Investments continues through to the third and fourth generation of the Feinberg family, as does the transference of the philanthropic values begun by Izzy and Sarah Feinberg. 🇺🇸

Redux, continued from page 17

⁸ Cantrell, op cit

⁹ Ibid pp. 335-336.

¹⁰ Ibid. p 336, *El Regidor*, July 16, 1896, p. 1

¹¹ *El Regidor* was a weekly newspaper and one of the few Spanish language newspapers in San Antonio during the late 19th century. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/explore/collections/ERGDR/>

¹² Cantrell, op cit pp 337-338

¹³ There is no record that the resolution was brought up at the state convention. Cantrell, p. 340.

¹⁴ Cantrell, op cit. *San Antonio Express* May 20 1915

¹⁵ <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/peoples-party>

¹⁶ "San Antonio Politician and Charity Worker Dies," *San Antonio Express*, Sept. 6, 1922, p. 20, cited by Cantrell. 🇺🇸

the war, the jewelry business was gone. Abraham and Samuel were the brains of the family and began to sell apples on street corners. They found that food sold better to Union troops than jewelry. That was the start of the grocery business. Abraham went back to New York after the war, made contacts in the North East, came back to Galveston and started the grocery business. They saw great opportunity to sell food after Reconstruction. They set up a team of “drummers” and carved out the Southwest into districts. Henry and Aaron Strasburger had the middle part of the state, from south of Austin to Dallas. On horseback, they made stops in every little town, in every little bar and establishment, to tell them they could get them coffee, tobacco, whatever they wanted. All these records are in the Center for American History in Austin. For example, invoices from Aaron are documented: case of brandy, 10 lbs coffee, 25 lbs salt, mailed cash or bill the store owners. People living in the interior had sophisticated palates. They sold olives and olive oil from Italy, French brandy, tobacco from South America and Cuba, tinned meats from Chicago, tinned oysters from Louisiana. The Heidenheimers were major movers and shakers in the railroad business.

Henry Strasburger left Heidenheimer and partnered with Peregoy in Waco in late 1870s. They operated a bar named Strasburger and Peregoy. By 1881 Temple started to boom. They had fiduciary interest in many bars. That is where the money was. Many times they helped finance the opening of saloons in towns. Since the Heidenheimers were major stockholders in the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe, this helped them speed their commerce and trade. This helped them get their groceries into the center part of the state. Henry and Aaron Strasburger went back to New York and lived in the same block as the Heidenheimers.

One of the Heidenheimer uncles married a Strasburger. The New York Strasburgers were all jewelers.

By 1884 Henry comes to Temple with Peregoy in the beginning. Eventually he owns or co-owns several bars with interesting names, such as The Jerusalem Exchange and The Moss Rose Saloon. By 1915 Henry gets out of the bar business because Temple and Bell County have pretty much gone dry. He then moved into the café business. The Moss Rose Café was known as the best eatery in town for many years. He also goes into the grocery business, with several butcher shops and grocery shops. He did very well and invested in real estate. His son Roy takes over his businesses and becomes mayor of Temple. Roy married Alene Smith. She was the daughter of a Santa Fe Railway engineer, an Irish immigrant. They were very devout Episcopalian. Roy converted.

By the 1890's Aaron is burned out. He moves to Temple where Henry already resides. He works several other drummer jobs, is a professional gambler at some point. His first wife died in childbirth. He married a second time. He buys a house on South 5th Street across from the old Scott and White Sanitarium. He begins a cigar company in a workshop in back of his home, and sells to the doctors and patients. Aaron has financial troubles. His brother, Henry, bails him out several times. Aaron dies quite suddenly of a heart attack.

They are smart businessmen and can reinvent themselves when things get rough. Roy Strasburger bought a lot of cheap “worthless” land that is now worth millions. Roy is one of the best mayors we have had in the twentieth century. He created the planning and zoning commission in the early 1960's. His son, Tommy Strasburger, now owns six sections of land (640 acres in a section) and is one of the largest land owners in Bell County.


Tommy has four children, Susan, Sharon, Roy and Greg. Tommy's brother is an Episcopal priest.

Aaron had two wives, the first, Esther, died in childbirth. The child also died. He married a second time to a Protestant. They had two children. Their progeny are scattered across the Northwestern U.S. Some have the last name of Hinson.

Henry, Jr. became a lawyer. His prominent firm still carried the Strasburger name. He had two children, his son was killed in WWII and a daughter. He had no religious affiliation. He died with Masonic rights.

Augustus Lewey was also a mayor. He had three daughters. One of the daughters made it out of Germany in 1940 and was living in San Antonio. She changed her name to Lewis. His run for the state legislature turned nasty with anti-Semitic slurs.

Old man Giesler came to Temple with the railroad in the 1880s-1890s. Several Giesler family groups are buried here. Several years ago one of the Giesler daughters died in California. She was cremated and came to Temple to bury the ashes. She was close to 100 years old. They were all Jewish. They had the Jewish service for her in California. Jenna Rubin is her daughter.

William Newman died a few years ago. I was contacted by a social worker for the nursing home, who said he had no family. He was raised Orthodox from New York. He wanted to make arrangements. I visited with him several times and told him we don't have consecrated ground here. He couldn't afford to go to the Jewish cemeteries in Austin or Waco. I helped the social worker make contact with the Rabbi at the Conservative congregation in Waco. We made all the arrangements. Since he was a veteran, he got a free stone. He chose a space next to other WWII veterans. The Star of David is on the stone. 



Dr. Hildy (Edelman) Dinkins



Bonnie (Lazar) Flamer



Samuel Gruber



John S. Harris



If you have any changes in your information, please send them to membership@txjhs.org


David & Sherd Jackson



Dr. Howard (Melanie (Lurie) Rubin



Galveston Movement, continued from page 20

passed away in 2017 at the age of 101, Louie passed away in 1987 at the age of seventy-four, Joe passed away in 2009 at the age of ninety-two, Sophie passed away in 1975 at the age of fifty-five, and Esther passed away in 2020 at the age of ninety-seven. Much more can be written about Sam and Rachel's children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-children! I apologize if I left anyone out, but if I listed every family member, this could go on for pages and pages! 



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TJHS Traveling Exhibit

The Texas Jewish Historical Society has three museum quality photo exhibits, with explanations depicting early Jewish life and contributions.

The exhibits highlight the lives of Jews in Texas since the early part of the century.

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



freight via UPS in waterproof boxes to your location. There will be the expense of prepaid freight back to the shipper 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 txjhs_exhibits@txjhs.org.

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☐ YES! Count me in! My dues are enclosed.

☐ Please **update** my information.

Check the Appropriate Box(es)

☐ New Member

☐ Renewing Member

☐ Special interests, professional background, talents _____

Who suggested TJHS to you?

Name: _____

Membership Category

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☐ \$1,000 Patron

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