

Texas Jewish Historical Society



May 2021 News Magazine

Historic 41st Annual Gathering Held via Zoom

by Davie Lou Solka

The 41st Annual Gathering of the Texas Jewish Historical Society was a historical meeting in many ways. It was the first time the meeting was held via Zoom, and the Installation of Officers was held via Zoom with the transfer of gavel and Past President's Pin. Marilyn Lippman installed the Officers for 2021-2022 and the Board of Trustees for 2021-2023, which included her brother, Sheldon Lippman, as President. The election was held electronically, with one hundred eleven members participating. This election was the second time TJHS voted electronically; the first being in 2020 since the 40th Annual Gathering was canceled due to COVID-19.

Susan Zack Lewis, outgoing President, handed the gavel to Sheldon Lippman, incoming President, who in turn, presented Susan with her Past President's Pin. The pin was pinned on Susan by her husband, Bob Lewis. Sheldon then presented his thoughts on the upcoming year with the hope that we would soon be meeting in person.

The weekend began with a Shabbat service prepared by



Shabbat Eve Services led by TJHS Past Presidents

Rabbi Jimmy Kessler, founder and first President of TJHS, with Past Presidents David Beer, Charles Hart, Barbara Rosenberg, Davie Lou Solka, Sally Drayer, Vickie Vogel, and Helen Wilk participating. An Oneg Shabbat followed the service with everyone enjoying the visit. (Bring your own goodies!)

Saturday morning the Board of Trustees held a meeting (see article on page 17 in this issue).

Saturday afternoon, Scott Langston, Instructor in Religion and Native American Studies at Texas Christian University, presented a discussion on "Fundamentalist Christians, Southern Jews, Native Americans, and Horned Frogs: Learning to Listen and Respect." He shared with the group his journey from growing up in a Fundamentalist Christian home with very biased opinions to learning and studying not only Judaism, but other minorities, including Native Americans. He has become educated in Torah, Talmud, and has studied with many rabbis. He recently was appointed to

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— Message from the Outgoing President —

by Susan Zack Lewis

These past two years as president of the Texas Jewish Historical Society have flown by. From being overwhelmed by the task ahead to looking back with a grateful heart, the experience was amazing. I must credit Davie Lou Solka for her time and patience. She spent hours acquainting me with the inner workings of the Society before I actually assumed the position of president. Of course, it didn't end with just one session. She kept a guiding hand on my shoulders every step of the way. I am so grateful. The Society is still together, still moving forward, still gathering via Zoom. Credit modern technology and the determination of members to remember,



preserve and collect Jewish history in Texas.


Our members are active in all aspects of historical preservation. Recently, Dolly Golden was honored with the *Love of a Lifetime* award from the Austin, Texas, chapter of Hadassah. Shelley Kessler serves as President of the Galveston Grand Opera House board of directors. Rabbi Jimmy Kessler published *Ramblings of a Texas Rabbi* last fall. Hollace Weiner spent several years researching her family history and published it during 2020. Vickie Vogel spent many hours crafting programs on obscure and unusual stories from Texas history. She became a bit of a sensation and was able to present them via Zoom to congregations and groups around the state with the assistance of Jan Hart's Speaker's Bureau committee. Sally Drayer sourced the

membership and made our meetings especially interesting with program presentations that may not have been possible before the pandemic. Some of the participants live and work in other states and would not have been able to address the membership in person.

As I remember the ongoing work of our members, I am reminded of those TJHS members we have lost this past year. May their memories become a blessing for their friends and families.

Some of the best moments of the last couple of years came from opening an email from someone who needed help researching various aspects of Jewish life in Texas and being able to point them toward help. Each phone call from a member with a concern touched my heart.

I thank officers Sonny Gerber, Sheldon Lippman, Joan Linares, John Campbell, Amy Milstein, Ben Rosenberg, Sally Drayer and Davie Lou Solka. Big thanks to committee chairs Marc Wormser, Rusty Milstein, Kathy Kravitz, Michael Wolf, Tumbleweed Smith, Jan Hart, Dolly Golden and Vickie Vogel. To all board members: you are the glue of this organization. Your service through years keeps it alive. Any success these last two years I credit to those mentioned above. Thanks for sticking with me and continuing the work of the Society. Without a doubt, I would not be at this point without the love and support of my family. Tumbleweed, you are my reason for everything I do.

As we begin to come through this pandemic, we hope to be able to meet together soon. I look forward to many more years of a special relationship with current and future members of the Texas Jewish Historical Society. 

The Texas Jewish Historical Society May 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. We recommend that you provide photocopies of all documents and photographs. Please provide color photocopies or scans at 300 dpi or greater in gif, tif, or jpg format, and send electronically to editor@txjhs.org or by mail to Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, Texas. Be sure to include your name and contact information.



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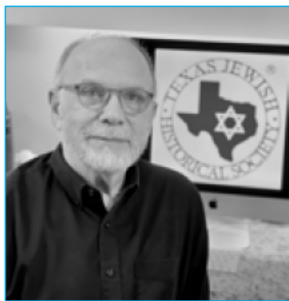
Note: The Texas Jewish Historical Society is unable to guarantee the safe receipt and/or return of documents and photographs. It is strongly recommended that you provide color photocopies of both color and black & white documents. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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

— Message from the Incoming President —

by Sheldon Lippman

In 2011, my sister, Marilyn, gifted me membership in the Texas Jewish



Historical Society when I was still living in Washington, D.C. This was the year my mother, Sarah Lippman, died. She was the last living Jew in Schulenburg, Texas, my hometown. My parents were not members of TJHS, and I knew little about the Society, except there had been a Board Meeting at Temple Israel in Schulenburg when Vickie Vogel was TJHS President.

I also learned from Vickie about the TJHS Collection at the Briscoe Center at UT Austin. My family did not have much in the way of archivable artifacts or documents, but we did have over 300 letters that my father wrote to his father during World War II. This story lives on in an article written by Vickie (TJHS News Magazine, February 2011). My siblings and I gave those letters to the TJHS Collection where they are available for future research.

Having moved back to Texas from Washington, D.C., I was invited by TJHS member Barbara Rosenberg to be on a panel at the 2018 Winter Board Meeting held in

Gonzales to talk about growing up Jewish in a small Texas town. On the panel with me were Samyly Rubin, who grew up in Gonzales; Abbi Glosserman Michelson, who grew up in Lockhart; Bob Gindler, who ran a clothing store in Hallettsville; and Carol Brin, who lived in Dallas but had also grown up in Gonzales. Everyone had an interesting story to tell. Carol Brin, who was in her 90s, sat with me at breakfast the next morning and told me her family name in Gonzales was Lippman, but we could identify no family connection. I learned so much in Gonzales about this microcosm of the Texas Jewish experience just down the road from my hometown. *That's what I like about TJHS.*

I have also traveled to Abilene, Baytown, Brownsville, and Laredo for Board Meetings and to Fort Worth and Houston for Annual Gatherings. I remember the meeting in Laredo for the Friday night services at Temple Agudas Achim where the prayers were sung in Spanish and Hebrew; and for the story of a young woman who grew up in a Christian-Mexican family and learned at college age about her Jewish heritage. We heard stories about the Converso Jews. That meeting presented a multi-faceted Judaism in Texas. *That's what I like about TJHS.*

These meetings reinforced the value of my personal Jewish experi-

ence and how much I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to tell my family's stories. I wanted particularly to tell these stories for my niece, Allison, and nephew, Andrew, and their families. I have written about their maternal great-grandparents immigrating from Lithuania to open a Kosher meat market in Houston (TJHS News Magazine, February 2019) and their second great-grandfather who immigrated from Alsace, France, and became the third mayor of Schulenburg (TJHS News Magazine, March 2021).

The TJHS News Magazine is more than a benefit of membership. It is a tool for all members who want to write down their family stories, preserve them in the News Magazine that gets archived in the TJHS Collection, and share them broadly on the TJHS website and distribution to TJHS members, libraries, and congregations across the country. *That's what I like about TJHS.*

One day we will be able to have in-person meetings again. We have learned from the past year how Zoom expands the opportunity to engage with more members and we should expect it to become a standard component of future in-person meetings. Yet, I will not forget that in-person meetings enrich my life with new friendships and communities across the whole State of Texas. *That's what I like about TJHS.* 🇺🇸

Does TJHS Have Your Current Email Address?

Is your email address current? Has it changed since the 20120-2022 directory was printed? Have you changed email providers? If so, please send an email to membership@txjhs.org 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.

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.

TEACHING IN A TIME OF COVID

by Amy Milstein

Friday, March 6, 2020, went just like any other Friday before Spring Break. The students were ready for a break, almost as much as the teachers. Some students were absent, having started their breaks early. Prom was scheduled for three weeks later on March 28; most of the girls had purchased their dresses and were talking about hair and nails; groups were discussing dinner, pictures, transportation, and post-prom plans. There had been news about a new flu-like virus coming from a wet market in China, and some cases were popping up in the United States, mostly on the West Coast.

As usual, I had no big plans for Spring Break, except to be lazy and read. There was nothing else on my calendar. Just before Spring Break, my Introduction to Culinary Arts students had made muffins. After Spring Break would be an Herb and Spice Tasting, and then a food lab where the students would season their own cheesy bread, so when I bought ingredients for the muffins, I also purchased the items I'd need for the tasting and the cheesy bread. I was prepared for coming back to school after break.

As the week wore on, more and more cases of this new virus were

discovered. We learned its name: COVID-19. It was spreading fast. Thursday, March 12, we got news from the district. Spring Break would be extended by one week. Excellent! More time to read. We'll all stay home, and this virus will die out. Many school districts across Texas were either about to start their Spring Breaks or had extended them. Stay home, we were warned. I did a quick trip to the grocery store for the week, and did what I was born to do: Stay home and not socialize. This introvert's time to shine had arrived!

Wednesday, March 18, the district had more news for us. District buildings would be closed through April 3, and we would return to school on Monday, April 6. For the next two weeks, we'd teach online. Our school allowed us to sign up for one-hour time slots to get what we needed from our classrooms to teach from home. I also had to put the cheese and bread I bought for the herb and spice tasting and cheesy bread lab in the freezer. I obviously didn't want it to go bad before I could use it in April. On-line teaching was new territory for all of us. Do we take attendance, and if so, how? Do we just load some lessons on a platform like Google Classroom or Schoology, or will we teach in real time, over the internet? How do we get materials to students? What if the students don't have access to the technology and/or internet? Well, it's only



Teacher's truck in the Senior Parade.

for two weeks. We'll muddle through and figure it out like we always do, and then we'll be back in the classrooms.

Tuesday, March 31, we got another directive from the district. Buildings would be closed through May 1. I thought to myself, "Well, at least we'll have a few weeks in May to finish out the year. I can say goodbye to my seniors, they'll get a belated prom, they'll get to walk across the stage and get their diplomas. It'll be weird and different, but, boy, will they have something to tell their kids and grandkids about their senior year!" The district now had to formulate more definitive plans for teaching on-line, since we would be doing this virtual teaching thing for a month. For the secondary grades, we would assign one-two lessons a week, and they'd be graded on a pass/fail basis. If we wanted to meet with our students on a Zoom call or Google Meet, we had

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to get permission from administration, with a definite start and stop time, and all students were invited.

The district worked to get technology to the students who needed it and meals for our reduced- and free-lunch families. We're teachers; we're used to thinking quickly on our feet, pivoting when we need to, and going with the flow. Thanks to social media, I learned how to take a worksheet, make it the background on a Google slide, add textboxes, and voila! Students could now type on the work they'd normally write on. I learned how to make drag-and-drop lessons on a Google slide, so students could match a picture with a type of chef.

We were supposed to have "office hours" at least two hours a day, so I'd open my email for those two hours, in case students had any questions about their assignments, and do something on my list of chores while monitoring my email. Nothing to it; easy-peasy. I worried about my special needs students, some of whom needed one-on-one assistance to perform well. I worried about my emotionally fragile students, who needed the socialization school offered them. I worried about my student who was couch-surfing. I worried about my food-insecure students who relied on the school's breakfasts and lunches. I worried about my



Seniors' cars line up for the parade.

students for whom school was a respite from an unpleasant home life. But I reminded myself this was temporary, and I'd see them all soon enough.

On Friday, April 17, Governor Abbott held a press conference, as he'd been doing periodically since March. All public school buildings in Texas would remain closed for the remainder of their school calendars. I started crying. My seniors, who wouldn't be getting their prom, their walk down their elementary schools' halls, their cap and gown pick-up, their senior parties, their walk across the stage to get their diplomas. I wouldn't be able to say good-bye to them or wish my juniors a good summer and see you next year and reminders to make good choices. My Culinary students had only been able to complete two food labs, and we didn't get to do the tasting of herbs and spices or cheese, one of my absolute favorite lessons. As May dragged on, students drove by the school to drop off textbooks, library books, final projects, uniforms, instruments. They drove by

to pick up their yearbooks and cap and gowns. The senior highs coordinated drive-through celebrations for the seniors, with teachers from their elementary, middle, and high schools lining the way to wish them congratulations.

A makeshift graduation ceremony was planned. Students signed up for a slot, they were allowed five guests, and of course everyone was masked. Each family was let into the gym or the auditorium one group at a time; the students walked across a stage with their family at the other side; and if they chose, one member of their family handed them their diploma. This process was completed over two days, for eight hours each day. We teachers volunteered in shifts, keeping people in line and socially distanced, handing out masks, and guiding the students and their families through the ceremony. It was surreal. I did get to see some of my seniors; some of them I had taught as juniors the previous year when I taught multiple subjects, and then I got to teach them again this school year. If they were okay with it, I gave them hugs, social distancing be damned. These were "my kids," and they had a crappy end to their twelve-year-long educational run.


Teachers were allowed to sign up for one more hour-long slot so we

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Guess This Member

Well, no guesses this time –take another 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! No new clue this time. Good luck!

Email your guess to editor@txjhs.org

txjhs.org any time beginning Monday, May 24. 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. 



— TJHS Presents Awards for Preservation — of Texas Jewish History to Don and Gertrude Teter, z"l and Hollace Weiner

On Saturday, April 10, 2021, the Texas Jewish Historical Society presented two awards for the preservation of Texas Jewish History to Don & Gertrude Teter z"l and Hollace Weiner. The Teters' award was presented posthumously and their daughter, Joan Linares, accepted the award for her parents.

For the first time, on the back of each award was a listing acknowledging the accomplishments of the recipient.

The Teters' award read Book: Texas Jewish Burials; Booklet: *Oil Gevalt*, describing Jewish families of Baytown; initiated travel tours for the Texas Jewish Historical Society, and led bus tours through the Southern U.S.; documented and verified all entries on the Scroll of Jewish Immigration through the Port of Galveston; Don Teter was President of TJHS 1993-1995; and both were outstanding citizens recognized by the city of Baytown.

Hollace Weiner's award listed books she has written: *From Lithuanian to Lorain: A Jewish Journey*, *The First Generation of Goldbergs in America*, privately printed, December, 2020; *River Crest Country Club; The First Hundred Years*, River Crest Country Club, Fort Worth

Texas, May 2012; *Jewish Junior League: The Rise and Demise of the*

Fort Worth Council of Jewish Women, Texas A&M University Press, April, 2008; *Lone Stars of David: The Jews of Texas*, Hollace Ava Weiner, ed, Rabbi Kenneth Roseman, co-ed Brandeis University Press/ University Press of New England/Texas Jewish Historical Society, 2007; *Beth-El Congregation Fort Worth, Centennial, 1902-2002*, Beth El Congregation, 2002; *Jewish Stars in Texas: Rabbis and Their Work*, Texas A&M University Press, 1999.

Multiple chapters to anthologies, journal articles, encyclopedia entries, book reviews in Academic




Back of Hollace Weiner's award.



Back of Teter, z"l, award.



Joan Linares with photo of her parents, Gertrude & Don Teter, z"l, and their award.

Journals, speeches and presentation and newspaper writing; Various Organization and Committee Memberships 1999-present; significant archival work, fellowships and grants, awards and special projects. 



Hollace Weiner with her award.

— The Rise of Hate in Texas and Beyond —

by Mel Eichelbaum

It was Saturday evening, on January 30, 2021, at the TJHS Winter meeting I sat down, along with some seventy fellow members, to listen to the excellent program presented by Martin Frost. Martin, who was a U.S. Congressman from Fort Worth for eighteen years, spoke on a wide range of issues and challenges facing the new Biden administration. During the lively Q&A session after his talk, several members asked questions regarding their concerns about the rise of hate and increasing antisemitism. The following morning at the board meeting, Rabbi Jimmy Kessler urged our members to write about the current happenings and how we were dealing with them and to send those stories to Davie Lou Solka for publication in the TJHS *News Magazine*. His comment was that we needed to ensure the preservation of this history for future generations. And so Rabbi Jimmy became my inspiration for writing this article.

In the news article entitled, *Anti-Semitism Did not End with the Second World War*, which was published in the November, 2020 issue of the *Jewish Veteran*, the official news publication of the Jewish War Veterans (JWV), Colonel Nelson I. Mellitz, USAF, Ret., echoed some of the same concerns voiced by some of our members. He cited the American Jewish Committee (AJC) "State of Antisemitism in America" report (October 26, 2020) that indicated eighty-eight percent of American Jews felt that antisemitism remained a significant problem; whereas, there existed a disturbing lack of awareness among the general public about the severity of antisemitism, with twenty-one percent stating that they had never heard the term, nor did they know what it meant. Col. Mellitz continued by stating that antisemitism is a present and growing

threat. He urged JWV members to take an active role in educating the public about it, to identify incidents of it when it happens and to take positive steps to stop it.

Clearly, I was aware of the continued existence of this hatred bubbling beneath the surface in Texas, but, honestly, I had thought things had improved since the early 1950s when my family first moved to the Lone Star State. But, in 2015-2016, it seemed like things began to change. That was the last year my wife and I taught Religious School at Temple Beth-El in San Antonio. During our lesson covering Yom HaShoah, I did a survey as to how many of the students had undergone an anti-Semitic incident. I was surprised when two-thirds of the class raised their hands. These were just second graders who went to good schools, and yet at this young age, a significant number had faced this experience.

I reached out to my contacts at the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). In the spring of 2015, my wife and I had taken a "Civil Rights" trip through the South. This was the fiftieth anniversary of the MLK-led march from Selma to Montgomery. While in Montgomery, not only did we visit the SPLC Civil Rights Museum, but we were treated to a tour of their office headquarters. There we met our docent, Esther Labovitz, and were introduced to Joseph Levin, Jr., Co-Founder of the SPLC, and spoke with many of the dedicated workers there. While I knew the organization was involved in fighting hatred and pursuing equal justice, I was pleased to learn that they had a whole section devoted and dedicated to dealing with antisemitism.

SPLC reported that from 2015-2020, there had been an exponential increase and growth of hate groups.

These not only included the old standbys, such as Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazis, and Racist Skinheads, but also a whole host of White Nationalist and White Supremacist groups having a distinct anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, and of course, an anti-Jewish agenda. Texas ranked third in the nation, showing a marked increase of growth in these groups, right behind the states of California and Florida. Add in potent relative newcomers, such as the Boogaloo Bois and the Proud Boys, and this resulting mixture of hate groups were on the rise and had become more energetic in acting out their hatred. The Anti-Defamation League in the 2020 report confirmed these findings, indicating that the Jewish Community experienced the highest number of anti-Semitic incidents since tracing began in 1979. The Director of the FBI has characterized these hate groups as a "national threat priority" and that not only has this become a terroristic threat to American democracy, but also the danger is on-going and unrelenting. I suppose his words came to fruition, when I, along with many others, witnessed the storming, invasion, and ransacking of our Capitol by a riotous mob in an attempt to delay or stop the peaceful transition of power as a result of our election. Five people died, one-hundred-forty were injured, and damages were estimated at \$500,000. The mob contained many members from a variety of these hate groups, some of which came from Texas.

Before this crescendo event, the warning signs were there. In San Antonio, during the four years between 2016 and 2020, we saw two of our synagogues, Agudas Achim and Rodfei Shalom, vandalized, and Jewish graves at the Fort Sam Houston cemetery were desecrated. Other Texas communities saw anti-Semitic

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incidents, as well. On August 11-12, 2018, at the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlotte, North Carolina. Nazis carrying torches and AR-15-type weapons marched in front of the synagogue there shouting: “Jews will not replace us.” On October 27, 2018, a white supremacist walked into the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and carrying an assault-type weapon began firing, killing eleven Jews and injuring others. On August 3, 2019, a white supremacist entered a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, and armed with an AK-47-type assault rifle opened fire killing twenty-three Mexican-Americans and wounding many more. He specifically targeted Mexican-Americans in his irrational belief and fear that immigration was destroying the white race and culture. So, what did this event have to do with antisemitism?

Investigation into his internet communications indicated a common white supremacist radicalization, and it was clear that he was motivated by the Christchurch shooter, who had targeted and slaughtered Muslims. All these killers had been with the same poisonous white supremacist anti-immigrant insidious mythology, and they all had an intense hatred toward non-whites and non-Christians, be they Muslims or Jews. As pointed out by Col. Mellitz, in his article, the connection is that hate and anti-Semitism harms not just the Jewish people, but all peoples everywhere.

So, what can we do to fight this evil? First, for those who need to gain

a better understanding and historical perspective concerning antisemitism, I would recommend *A Convenient Hatred: the History of Antisemitism*, by Phyllis Goldstein, published in 2012. In a very readable fashion, it traces antisemitism from ancient times to the present. Second, support the groups actively involved in fighting antisemitism, such as the Southern Poverty Law Center, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Anti-Defamation League. Third, become involved in your city’s Jewish Community Relations Council, Holocaust Museum, or other organizations that can spread the word and help educate the public. Fourth, speak up politically. Sometimes major advancements can be achieved even against the greatest of odds.

As an example, several years ago, four San Antonio women set out to accomplish what most considered to be impossible in the State of Texas. Lisa Barry, an elementary school teacher, who for some time had included Holocaust studies in her students’ lessons as a way to counter hate and bullying in school. She got together with Sharon Scharff Greenwald, Varda Ratner, and Ginny Wind, members of the San Antonio Chapter of the National Council for Jewish Women. The four of them, who became affectionately known as “The Four Ladies in the Car,” for their never-ending trips to Austin in lobbying for Texas to make Holocaust education mandatory in the curriculum for all Texas public schools. The ladies were brushed off, turned away


and discouraged a countless number of times, but never gave up. Finally, they connected with State Senator Jose Menendez from San Antonio, who became interested in their cause and agreed to sponsor a bill regarding it. After much work and effort, in 2019, SB1828 was signed into law, establishing Holocaust Remembrance Week in public schools across Texas – a week during which Holocaust lessons will be taught as part of the curriculum at all grade levels in all Texas public schools throughout the state. Holocaust museums in Texas are actively working with teachers throughout the state and the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission in helping create the educational material to be used for this designated week. It is imperative that we teach this history; for as espoused in the epigraph from Santayana quoted in William Shirer’s *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*:

“Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it.”



What I Did During the Pandemic, continued from page 5

could close up our rooms. I cried. There were graded assignments from before Spring Break that I hadn’t been able to hand back to students that I needed to recycle. My desk calendar was still on March. I had to put my little desk tchotchkes away, in case my

room was used over the summer for staff development. “Well,” I thought to myself as I looked around my classroom as my allotted hour was winding down, “what a long, strange trip it’s been, but everything will be back to normal in August.” 

Save the Date

July 25, 2021

TJHS Summer Board
Meeting via Zoom

October 29-31, 2021

Texas Jewish Historical
Society and New Mexico
Jewish Historical
Society Conference, Las
Cruces, New Mexico
Topic will be “The
Galveston Movement”

October 30, 2021

TJHS Fall Board
Meeting via Zoom

— The Great Fire in Brownsville, 1857 —

by Larry Holtzman

Boom! The explosion in downtown Brownsville of ninety-five barrels of gunpowder in late October, 1857, woke the residents of Brownsville and Matamoros. Within seconds the blast leveled nearby buildings. The ensuing fire consumed almost a block of the central business district. The store nearest the explosion on Elizabeth Street was completely destroyed killing Isaac Alsbach, a Jewish immigrant from Europe, and only twenty-two years old. Isaac's body was found four days later.

Isaac's brother and sister-in-law, John and Aurelia Alsbach, recent immigrants from Prussia, read about the disaster in the New Orleans newspaper. John and his wife caught the next steamship to Brownsville to find out about his brother. After landing at Point (later Port) Isabel, they took the stagecoach to Brownsville. The stagecoach ride into Brownsville brought them into a frontier town with dirt streets and horses hitched in front of the business buildings.

John and Aurelia arrived in Brownsville in early November of 1857 to learn the sad news of his brother's death. Isaac Alsbach had been buried in the Brownsville Cemetery, as the Hebrew Cemetery did not exist. John decided to stay in Brownsville, perhaps to reestablish his brother's business selling merchandise to Mexico. He and Aurelia found a small house to rent near the downtown.

John and Aurelia met the few other Jewish people in the area. Most of them lived in the more civilized city of Matamoros. The couple would cross the border to Matamoros to attend Shabbat services, which were conducted in the parlor of someone's home. The crossing would be by ferryboat, which was really a large

rowboat.

The burned part of downtown Brownsville was in a building boom. The former wooden buildings were being rebuilt with bricks. Many ranches along the Rio Grande had the type of clay that when fired in a mesquite wood oven, would make a good brick, either yellow or red in color. The bricks that were closer to the fire were of a yellow tint. These local bricks were also used in the walls of the Hebrew Cemetery, founded in 1868.

In 1858, the year after their arrival in Brownsville, Aurelia announced to John that she was pregnant. Unfortunately, 1858 was the year Brownsville was hit by a Yellow Fever epidemic. Yellow Fever is a virus that attacks the liver. At the time, there was no known cause or cure of the disease. Some survived after suffering flu-like symptoms. Many others would die within three days. Their skin would turn a yellowish tinge because of the liver infection.

Brownsville had no hospital when the Yellow Fever epidemic hit. Mayor George Dye was empowered to find a building for a city clinic, but reported that he was unable to do so. In September of 1858, during the height of the epidemic, his son, George Dye, Jr., died of Yellow Fever. There were fifty-three burials in thirteen days during this period.

Sadly, John Alsbach, diagnosed with Yellow Fever, came home to Aurelia hoping to recover. He died on October 3, 1858, and was buried in the Brownsville Cemetery. The following month on November 7, 1858, Aurelia Alsbach gave birth to their daughter, Lea.

The Yellow Fever epidemic continued into 1859. On April 5, 1859, five-month-old Lea died of the disease. Aurelia asked if she could

bury Lea in the same grave with John Alsbach, Lea's father, who never knew her. Permission was granted and Little Lea Alsbach was laid to rest with John. The grave of the father and daughter was adorned with a marble covering that was engraved in New Orleans.

Soon after its founding the walls of the Hebrew Cemetery were built. The Hebrew Benevolent Society, which included Bernard Kowalski, Adolph Marks, and Joseph Alexander, were determined to bring Jewish people buried in the Brownsville Cemetery to the new Hebrew Cemetery.

The first Jewish body to be moved was that of Joseph Moses, the one-year-old son of Benjamin and Maria Moses, who died of Yellow Fever on October 12, 1858. Benjamin Moses, a former steamboat captain was honored to be called Judge Moses in the small river community of Clarksville where he and Maria had moved.

The Hebrew Benevolent Society set February 16, 1869, to take up the remains of John and Lea Alsbach to reinter them with Jewish rites in the Hebrew Cemetery. Bad weather and heavy rains delayed the event. For some reason, the location of the Alsbach father and daughter grave was lost. The desire to move them was never far from the minds of the Benevolent Society. Periodically, members would search the City Cemetery for their grave.

Finally, one hundred-forty years later, the grave was found by Ruben Edelstein and his crew. They probed into the ground with iron rods at the possible locations until they found the marble tombstone which covered the grave. John and Lea Alsbach were reburied together in the Hebrew Cemetery in 1995 with a Jewish funeral

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How Jews Got Their Last Names

You may have heard the story of the Jewish immigrant coming to America, and on the boat, a fellow steerage passenger tells him his name sounds too Jewish. He suggests that a new one be chosen before he arrives in New York. But when the Ellis Island clerk asks him his name, the immigrant becomes flustered, and cries out in Yiddish "*Sheyn fergessen!*" ("I already forgot!") And so, he ends up with a new name – Sean Ferguson.

Many Jewish and other immigrant families recall such stories. But sources say that this is not really true. Most people did not have their names changed at Ellis Island, because the process was very mechanical. The registrar searched for names on the ship's manifest which was recorded back in Europe, where officials were familiar with the spelling of Jewish names. Whatever the immigrant said was his name was checked carefully.

However, many Jewish family

names did change when they reached the United States. But these changes were not the result of the incompetence of Ellis Island officials, or an effort to undermine the immigrants. These new names were not invented at Ellis Island, but later as the immigrants progressed to other places and communities. Many changed their name to "fit in" in some of the smaller towns, or to make them sound a little less Jewish.


This is one of the reasons many people have problems tracing their roots – the family name has been changed for one reason or other – and sometimes it was changed in the old country.

Names were derived from a person's occupation – "Rabin" from "rabbi"; Wasserman comes from "water man" or a water carrier in ancient times; Schneider from a tailor; Malamed, a teacher; Eisen, an iron maker.

Last names could also be attributed to the city where the immigrant

came from. Frankforter or Frankford from Germany; Pollock from Poland; and Breslau, to name a few. Names ending in "-ovitch" means "son of." There are many sources to check out the source of your last name, and this might be a good place to start if you are beginning to research your family—or in the process of writing it.

Many celebrities have changed their names—Woody Allen was Allen Stewart Konigsberg, Jerry Lewis was Joseph Levitch, Mel Brooks was Melvin Kaminsky, Tony Curtis was Bernard Schwartz, Jason Alexander was Jay Scott Greenspan, Jon Stewart was Jonathan Stuart Leibowitz, Estee Lauder was Josephine Esther Mentzer, Ralph Lauren was Ralph Lifshitz, and the list could go on and on. Some were criticized for doing it, but they felt it was in their best interests to do so.

This article was excerpted from an article in Moment Magazine, April, 2008, and internet sources. 

Update on Congregation Knesset Israel in Baytown

The Congregation Knesset Israel building in Baytown was completed in 1930. The Byzantine Revival building with its barrel-vaulted roof, its round-headed stained-glass windows, and arched brickwork entry was designated a Texas State Historical landmark in 1962.

Then came Hurricane Harvey in 2017, and caused extensive flooding throughout the synagogue building and adjacent community hall. The damage caused the congregation to meet elsewhere and begin a fund-raising campaign to obtain money to repair the damages. Former members of Congregation Knesset Israel, the Baytown community, and many friends

responded to the request, including the Texas Jewish Historical Society, and the buildings were restored on April 7, 2009. The Texas Jewish Historical Society held the Fall Board Meeting in 2019 in Baytown to see the restored buildings.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Partners for Sacred Places have begun a two-year project to help congregations stay healthy by investing in their buildings. Congregation Knesset Israel is one of nine congregations in Harris, Victoria, and Galveston counties. Each congregation will receive individualized technical assistance to improve the resilience of their historic buildings.

Joan Linares, CKI President and TJHS 2nd Vice President, said that it was important for the synagogue to be included in this project. "We're a small Jewish community, and we are looking for ideas on how to sustain our community. The project will be a tremendous source of information in how to maintain our synagogue. The Texas State Historical Commission made the group aware of us, and they came out and assessed our buildings. I am the current President, and one of my grandfathers was one of the founders. There are only a few small-town synagogues remaining in Texas. I'm looking forward to hearing about the

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JCC Tween (12-13) Group, Houston

October 28, 1952.

Photo courtesy of Edward Stone.

Standing: Allan Rosenthal, Armand Shapiro, Ronny Levenson, Barry Karchmer, Sam Sakowitz, Alfred Kahn, Jerry Less, Manny Gale, Advisor.
Front: Jerry "Bubba" Yellen, Marvin Nathan, Bernard Shapiro, Douglas Shapiro, Edward Stone



TJHS on Facebook

TJHS on Facebook: Search *Texas Jewish Historical Society* on your device and "Like" us!



In Memoriam

Jack B. Corman, TJHS member, died on March 8, 2021, in Dallas. He is survived by his wife, Annette Adler Corman, his children, Michael (Kevin Fink), Cathy (Mark) Penzel, Laura Corman; stepsons Jeremy (Anne) Besser, Ethan (Claudia) Besser; four grandchildren and five step-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his first wife, Leah (Drescher).



Marilyn Schwartz, former long-time member TJHS, died on February 25, 2021, in Houston. She was predeceased by her husband, former state senator, A.R. "Babe" Schwartz. She is survived by her sons, Bob (Monya), Dick (Tina), John (Jeanne) Tom (Barb), twelve grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



David Seligman, TJHS member from Edna and Austin, died April 13, 2021 in Houston. He is survived by his children, Paula (Rabbi Mark) Urkowitz, Dan (Karen) Seligman, six grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, and his sister, Celine Kaplan.



May their memories be a blessing.

Fire in Brownsville, continued from page 9

service.

In 1898, Dr. William C. Gorgas discovered that Yellow Fever was spread by mosquitos. Gorgas, who at one time had been stationed at Fort Brown, was assigned to the Panama Canal construction. His efforts to control Yellow Fever and malaria with draining of shallow pools of water and mosquito netting were instrumental in permitting the completion of the Panama Canal. A vaccine was discovered in 1937. 🇺🇸

Update on Congregation Knesset Israel, continued from page 10

challenges the other sacred spaces are having. The collaboration among the other congregations in the study will be advantageous." 🇺🇸

The deadline for the August 2021 TJHS News Magazine is Friday, July 16.

Meet Your Board

Sheldon I. Lippman, President,



grew up in Schulenburg and attended the University of Texas, Austin, where he earned a Bachelor

of Journalism degree. He began his communications career in Washington, D.C., working at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1975-81). He returned to UT/Austin to get a M.A. in TV-Film and was media director for Keep Texas Beautiful (1981-87). He returned to Washington where he worked at the National Academy of Sciences on a PBS science documentary series and for the next thirty years at the World Bank in communications. Sheldon returned to Austin in 2017 in "semi-retirement."

Sonny Gerber, 1st Vice President, is



from Houston. He and his wife, Sharon (TJHS Board Member), have been married thirty-nine years and have six

granddaughters.

Joan Teter Linares is a retired



elementary teacher who taught for thirty-two years at Harlem Elementary School in Baytown Texas. Joan grew

up in Baytown and learned about Texas Jewish Historical Society from her parents, Don, who was a past President, and Gertrude Teter. She is President of Congregation K'Nesseth Israel in Baytown and treasurer of the Baytown Chapter of Hadassah. She and her husband, Ruben, have three daughters, one son, and seven grandchildren. Joan is serving as 2nd Vice-President of TJHS.

Janice Gerber, 3rd Vice-President,



lives in Houston and says "due to World War II, was born in Louisiana," but considers herself a Texan from birth. After World War

II, her family moved back to Houston and she attended schools in Houston. At San Jacinto High School, she was on the rifle team as ROTC sponsor and won All City College competition. Janice attended Sophie Newcombe college, and after her marriage to David, Cornell University. They lived in Heidelberg, Germany, for two years while David served in the Army, and then they moved back to Houston. Janice is active in Hadassah and other Jewish organizations. She has worked as a Jewish community professional and as a political fund raiser. She and David have three children, and ten grandchildren, ranging in age from ten to eighteen.

John P. Campbell, Recording Secretary, lives in Austin. He received a B.A. from Tulane University and a M.P.A from the LBJ School at UT in Austin. From 1984-2004, he lived in Washington, DC, and was on the staff



of Texas Select Committee on Higher Education and a member of the staff of the National Academy of Sciences. In 2005 he

became the Executive Director of the Inter-Academy Council in Amsterdam, Netherlands. He retired from this position in 2014.

Amy Milstein, Corresponding



Secretary, is from Frisco, and grew up in Longview. She graduated from the University of Texas/Austin.

She has been teaching for twenty-two years—English for fifteen and now she teaches Introduction to Culinary Arts. Amy loves to travel and has taken several trips with TJHS. In her spare time, she likes to scrapbook, read, and attend movies. She has been involved with TJHS for many years and is the daughter of Mitzi and Past President Rusty Milstein.

Ben Rosenberg, Treasurer, was born and grew up in El Paso. He attended



the University of Texas/Austin, and graduated with a BBA in Accounting in 1967. After graduation he moved to Houston and joined a CPA

firm until his retirement in 2015. Ben is a Past Chairman of the Houston

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Jewish Community Foundation, and serves on the board of other charitable organizations based in Houston. He is married to Barbara, Past President of TJHS, and they enjoy travelling when they can.

Sally Drayer, Historian-Archivist, is from Dallas, and is a Past President



of TJHS. She grew up in Alice, and has three children and one granddaughter. Sally is a retired teacher and substitutes

in the Richardson Independent School District. She volunteers at the Dallas Museum of Art for the Arts and Letters Live Program; is on the board of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra Guild, and is a CASA advocate. Sally currently serves as Meeting Chair.

Susan Zack Lewis, Parliamentarian, and Immediate Past President, is from Big Spring, and is married to



Bob Lewis, aka Tumbleweed Smith. They have two sons and four grandchildren. Susan is involved

in many civic activities in Big Spring. She and Bob have owned Multi Media Advertising for forty years, where she serves as Technical Director when Tumbleweed has a speaking engagement. She has a degree in Interior Design.

Joyce Davidoff was born in Houston and she lived there until she was eight years old. Due to health reason, the family moved to southern Arizona, and she grew up in a copper mining town near Tucson. The family returned to Texas (El Paso) in the 1960s,



where she graduated from El Paso High School. She graduated from the University of Texas/Austin with a Bachelor's degree

in sociology/social work. She has worked in not-for-profit agencies in Austin, Dallas, New York, and since 1980, El Paso. In 1984, she earned a Master of Public Administration from UTEP, and currently works as Grants and External Affairs Coordinator for a large social impact agency serving El Paso and far West Texas. She has three sons, one grandbaby nephew, and with her husband of a year-and-a-half, has fifteen grandchildren.

Eric H. Nelson was born and raised in Corpus Christi. He currently lives in Houston. He attended the University of Texas/Austin for his undergraduate work, and



law school at the University of Houston. He practices labor law. Eric and his wife, Carol, have two sons and five grandchildren.

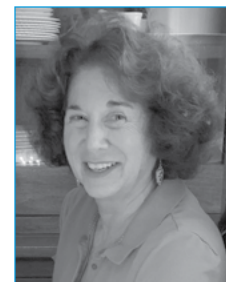
Alan Selzer was born and raised in Houston. He graduated from Stephen F. Austin and has had a fifty-year career in the plumbing supply and manufacturing business. He is presently serving as



a manufacturer representative with Alliance Manufacturer Representatives. He has been married to Laurie Pink Selzer (also a TJHS Board

Member) for forty-four years, and they have three children and five grandchildren. Alan enjoys volunteer work and staying active playing with his family, golfing, fishing and being outdoors.

Susan Septimus was born in Houston, and graduated from Bellaire High School, the University of Houston, and South Texas College of Law. She and her husband, Dr. Ed Septimus have two sons, Dr. Joshua (Ali) Septimus




and Rabbi Daniel (Amanda) Septimus. Susan enjoys any and all kinds of dance—much to the embarrassment of her four grandchildren,

along with birdwatching. She cultivates Monarch butterflies from caterpillars to release-ready butterflies in her home. Susan does "Jewish Genealogy on a professional and personal basis," and has compiled personal histories for more than sixty Jewish families in Texas.

Barbara Green Stone is a fourth generation Texan, who was born in Dallas



and grew up in Lafayette, Louisiana, and Dallas. She earned a B.S. in Medical Technology from the University of Texas/Austin, where she met her Houston-born

husband, Edward. They have two sons and one granddaughter. Barbara is a longtime volunteer with Temple Emanuel Women of Reform Judaism in Dallas. Her hobbies include photography, crocheting for donation, reading, travel, and genealogy (including prior to the internet). Her son, Dr. Bryan Stone is a past TJHS Board Member. 

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.

Order in the Court

by Vickie Vogel

The Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, which contains our archives, is still closed, so I searched through my files to see what ideas for articles I had put aside for later. I had noted that Box 3A168 contains papers on eight judges. The Briscoe is doing its best to accommodate researchers while closed, and they kindly scanned and emailed me a link to the folder, so our next few archive stories will be about Texas Jewish judges.¹

Norman William Black was born in 1931 in Houston to David "Dave" Isadore (1903-1960) and Minnie Nathan Black (1904-1993).² Dave was born in Dallas, and Minnie in Kiev, Ukraine. They both died and are buried in Houston.³ Dave's father was Moritz Aaron Black (1868-1940) and his mother was Ethel Black (1872-1943).⁴ Moritz and Ethel had six children. Dave was the fourth son. Moritz and Ethel are buried in Shearith Israel Memorial Park in Dallas.⁵

Norman's maternal grandparents were Israel (1872-1965) and Sarah Fox Nathan (1872-1954). They were born in Kiev and died in Houston.^{6,7} Norman's mother, Minnie, married Edward Feldman in 1971, some ten years after his father's death.^{8,9}

After graduating from San Jacinto High School, Norman received a BBA from UT Austin in 1953 and a law degree there in 1955. He served as president of his fraternity, Alpha Epsilon Pi and was a member of the

varsity debate squad and the Texas Cowboys service fraternity. In law school, he was president of the Honor Council, a member of the national legal fraternity Phi Delta Phi and student assistant to Dean Keeton. Black was skilled at debate, earning first place in the Hildebrand Moot Court Competition and becoming a quarter finalist in the National Moot Court competition.

Black served in the US Army Military Police from 1955-1957 and then clerked for Judge Ben Clarkson Connally of the Southern District of Texas.¹⁰ From 1958-1960, Black was an Assistant United States Attorney, licensed to practice in Texas, U.S. District Court, and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Norman married Berne Rose Efron (1932-2019) in 1959. She was born in New Orleans to Dr. Bernard G. and Rose Shushan Efron. Berne was a city tennis champion in New Orleans, and attended Skidmore College in New York, LSU, and Sophie Newcomb College of Tulane University, earning a teaching degree before moving to Houston where she met Norman.



*Judge Norman W. Black.
Photo courtesy of Heather
Kushnerick, Archivist,
South Texas College
of Law Houston*

Berne taught third and fourth grade at Gary L. Herod Elementary School and tutored at Lovett Elementary, for which she won community service awards. She was a major supporter of Norman's career and considered his court and staff her "other family." The Blacks were members of Congregation Beth Israel, and Berne was very active in CBI Sisterhood.

The Blacks had two daughters, Elizabeth and Diane. Elizabeth had two daughters, Claire and Nora with her first husband, J. Richard Berry. She later married Dolph B. Simon. Diane married William E. "Bill" Smith II. Berne liked to say the best thing she ever did was marry Norman and have her daughters.¹¹

The Blacks were members of TJHS, and Norman served on the TJHS Legal Committee at our founding in 1980.¹²

After his stint as Assistant US Attorney in Houston, Black returned to private practice in 1960. In 1976 he became a US Magistrate Judge for the Southern District of Texas, serving until 1979. He also taught law courses at the University of Houston

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(1970-1975) and South Texas College of Law (1975-1997) where he won two awards for teaching excellence.¹³ He lectured at law conferences and seminars all over the United States. He was a president (1982-1983) of the Houston Philosophical Society, and a member of the Garland R. Walker Inn of Court and the Houston Bar Association.

In 1979, President Jimmy Carter nominated Black for the US District Court for the Southern District of Texas and the Senate confirmed him. He also was a Judge in residence at the University of Cincinnati in 1989 and Chief Judge from 1992-1996, assuming senior status in 1996 until his death. Senior status is a form of semi-retirement for federal judges who are at least 65 and whose years of service added to age equals at least 80.¹⁴

As judge, Black received frequent press coverage because he assessed high-dollar sanctions against both attorneys and plaintiffs. His most famous case is *Exxon v. Lubrizol*, a patent infringement case, in which he awarded \$18 million in attorney fees and doubled the actual damages. He criticized the defense attorney's aggressive tactics. The case was reversed on appeal.¹⁵

Black was also known for two opinions in which he summarily dismissed claims of school districts' and officials' responsibility for peer-on-peer sexual harassment. This ruling helped thwart a trend to enlarge the school's duty to protect schoolchildren. In the second case, he dismissed eight children's claims of physical and verbal abuse by a teacher.

Perhaps the most controversial decision of Black's career was his summary dismissal of an employee's claims of discrimination when the employer reduced health coverage upon learning the employee had AIDS.¹⁶

Black received a Citation of Merit



Norman W. Black, senior photo at San Jacinto High, 1949.

Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas, asked Black to serve on an advisory committee on professionalism, and he accepted. Black replied, "I am very proud of you and the Court for taking this dramatic step to highlight what is becoming the premier problem facing our profession. Two of my most recent trials were classic examples of how lawyers are letting zealous advocacy overcome the basic tenets of professionalism so this subject is fresh on my mind."¹⁸

Judge Black was the federal judiciary's liaison to the State Bar Board of Directors, and he criticized the board when on October 4, 1996 it denied the initial creation of the proposed Gay and Lesbian Issues Section.¹⁹ "I've always learned a lot about my fellow members from these meetings. . . . Today's the first time I wasn't real proud." Later, the Judge Black Award was created, and is given by the LGBT Law Section of the State Bar of Texas in memory of his significant contribution to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender legal issues. Judge Black's family gave the Section permission to name the award for him. It was first given in 2000.

In 1997, Judge Black was recognized with a plaque as an outspoken guardian of human rights at a Bar Association for Human Rights of Greater Houston annual meeting, as "his deep personal commitment to human rights was kindled during his youth as a Jew growing up in segregated Houston."²⁰

(1983-4) and Distinguished Faculty recognition for Continuing Legal Education from the Houston Bar Foundation.¹⁷

In 1989, Eugene A. Cook, Jus-

Norman W. Black died in 1997 in Silverthorne, Colorado of heart failure while vacationing there with his wife. The Norman W. Black Papers, a gift of Mrs. Norman Black, are in the Tarlton Law Library, Jamail Center for Legal Research at UT. These 45 boxes are separate from the papers in the TJHS Collection.

Endnotes

- ¹ Box 3A168, Folder: Judges, Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection, Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.
- ² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/175461118/norman-william-black>. The entry says birthplace was Dallas, but all other sources say Houston. Dave was born in Dallas.
- ³ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/158824852/dave-isadore-black>; <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/158825030/minnie-feldman>
- ⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/112141259/moritz-aaron-black>
- ⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/112141302/ethel-black>
- ⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/124524364/israel-nathan>
- ⁷ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/124524480/sarah-nathan>
- ⁸ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/158825030/minnie-feldman>
- ⁹ Sarah's daughter Frieda Ratner died in 1978 at home from cardiac arrhythmia (arteriosclerotic heart disease). She was also born in Russia 1900. https://images.findagrave.com/photos/2016/61/158826081_1456952655.jpg. Sarah's son Meyer Nathan was an oil operator who had lived in Dallas since 1945. He died in Midland. He owned and operated the Nathan Pipe and Supply Company in Rusk County. He was a member of the Elks Club in Tyler. Meyer was married to Sonia Bunin Nathan (1898-1927). <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/124524607/meyer-nathan>

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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.*

Notes from the Board Meeting

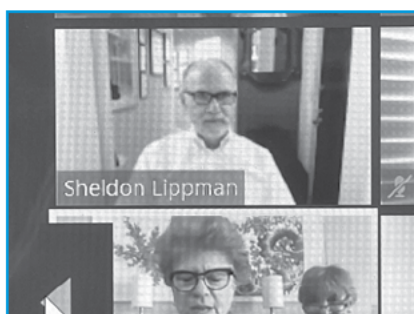
- Sally Drayer reported that scrapbooks and newsletters from the Jewish War Veterans Post in San Antonio will be given to our Collection at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History/UT by Hershel Sheiness.
- Total membership is now 515.
- TJHS Awards were presented to Gertrude and Don Teter, z"l, and Hollace Weiner for their work in preserving Texas Jewish History at the Annual Gathering. Joan Linares accepted the award on behalf of her parents.
- Marilyn Lippman, announced that a designation from the Texas Historical Commission for the Jewish Cemetery in Hallettsville had been received. The next step is to apply for a historical marker for the cemetery.



Saturday evening Awards program.

funds become available, the Grant Committee would like to help with additional funds in the future for this project.

- Willie Braudaway, Chair of the Texas State History Association Awards, announced that there were several candidates for our Awards. The essays are being read and the winner will be announced on April 27, 2021.
- Sheldon Lippman, Web Master Co-Chair, announced that the index for *News Magazines* from 1980-2000 is now available on the web site. There are 119 *News Magazines* in the collection.
- The next Board Meeting will be held via Zoom on July 25, 2021.

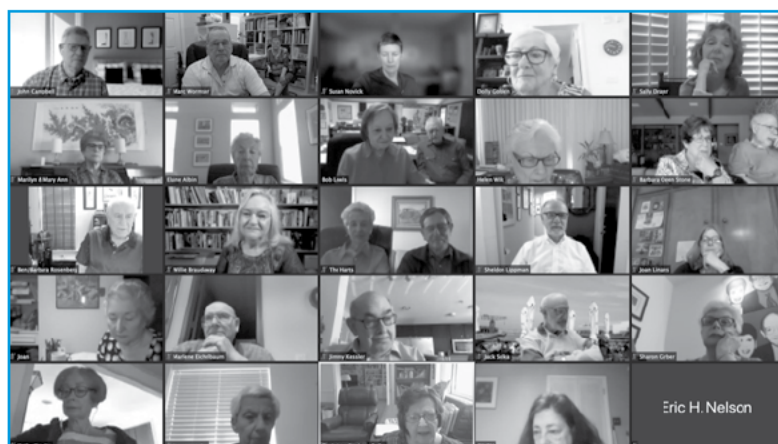


Marilyn Lippman installs her brother, Sheldon Lippman and the 2021-2022, 2021-2023 Officers and Board.

Israel, Congregation Beth Yeshurin, Temple Emanu El, and United Orthodox Synagogues. This amount will allow the group to set eighteen (Chai) headstones. As



Susan Zack Lewis receives her Past President's Pin from her husband, Bob Lewis.



Members watch Installation Ceremony.

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Committee Chairs 2021-2022

<i>Archivist/Historian</i>	Sally Drayer
<i>Audio/Video</i>	Bob Lewis
<i>Award Committee</i>	Cynthia Wolf
<i>By Laws Committee</i>	Davie Lou Solka
<i>Cemetery Committee</i>	Rusty Milstein
<i>Cemetery Photos</i>	Kathy Kravitz
<i>Dolph Briscoe Center for American History/Austin</i>	Davie Lou Solka
<i>Finance Committee</i>	Ben Rosenberg
<i>Grant Committee</i>	Michael Wolf
<i>Historical Texas Cemetery Designation Committee</i>	Doug Braudaway
<i>Institute of Texan Culture</i>	Davie Lou Solka
<i>Legal Committee</i>	Lonnie Schooler
<i>Meetings Committee</i>	Sally Drayer
<i>Membership Committee</i>	Marc Wormser
<i>Nominating Committee</i>	Susan Zack Lewis
<i>Publications Committee</i>	Davie Lou Solka
<i>Publicity Committee</i>	Bob Lewis
<i>Speakers Bureau</i>	Gayle Cannon, Jan Hart
<i>Texas History Day Committee</i>	Willie Braudaway
<i>Texas Jewish History Adult Writing Contest Committee</i>	Willie Braudaway
<i>Travel Committee</i>	Vickie Vogel
<i>Traveling Exhibit Committee</i>	Dolly Golden
<i>Website/Tech Committee</i>	John Campbell


Please Note:

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

Grant Awarded

The Texas Jewish Historical Society awarded a grant of \$5,940 to the Houston Order of David Lodge Galil for their Gravestone Project. This project by the Lodge identifies graves in the Jewish cemeteries of Congregation Beth Israel, Congregation Beth Yeshurun, Temple Emanuel, and United Orthodox Synagogues in Houston that do not have gravestones. A gravestone will be placed at each of the graves. The TJHS grant will fund eighteen (Chai) stones at \$330 each. The committee recommended that this project be considered again in the future for further funding. 

Order in the Court, continued from page 15

- ¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_William_Black
- ¹¹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/199256410/berne-rose-black> ; <https://jhwonline.com/berne-rose-efron-black-p26032-124.htm>
- ¹² TJHS newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 1, August, 1980, <https://txjhs.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/1980-1.pdf>
- ¹³ <http://www.stcl.edu/library/archive-images/federal-district-judge-norman-w-black/>
- ¹⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org> op cit.
- ¹⁵ Exxon v. Lubrizol, 30 USPQ2d 1813 (S.D. Tex. 1994)
- ¹⁶ McGann v. H & H Music Co., 742 F. Supp. 392 (S.D. Tex. 1990)
- ¹⁷ <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utlaw/00013/law-00013.html>
- ¹⁸ <https://www.legalethicstexas.com/Downloads/Texas-Lawyers-Creed/Letter-Accepting-Appointment-Judge-Norman-Black.aspx>
- ¹⁹ See Tex.Law Oct 14, 1996.
- ²⁰ <https://lgbtlawtx.com/judge-black-award/> 



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.

— Letters to the Editor —

Notes from the Board Meeting,
continued from page 17

I received my March, 2021, issue of the TJHS *News Magazine*, and saw Hollace Weiner's article about Rope Walker. I grew up in Corsicana. My Dad told me about Rope Walker, and I saw Rope's tombstone every time I visited our cemetery there.

After I married Louis and moved to Marshall, our Temple in Marshall merged with Longview when we sold our building. We started taking our children to Sunday School and attending services there. I recall that one of the members in Longview approached me and said he heard I was from Corsicana and wondered if I

knew about Rope Walker. He thought he knew who he was, but wanted to check with family in the north to make sure he had the correct person. As fate would have it, this man got sick and passed away before he could tell me. So, Hollace's article in the *News Magazine* solved the mystery for me.

Thank for getting the word out that the mystery of Rope Walker has been solved. Hollace and the TJHS *News Magazine* enrich our lives. *Audrey Kariel, Former Resident of Corsicana and Marshall, Current Resident of Dallas* 🇺🇸

- Sheldon Lippman, Web Site Co-Chair, announced that there had been over 6,000 log-ins to our web site.



Sheldon Lippman presents his Incoming President's remarks.

- Marilyn Lippman presented a lovely Installation of Officers for 2021-2022 and Board of Trustees for 2021-2023. The exchange of gavel from Susan Zack Lewis to Sheldon Lippman was made, and Sheldon presented Susan with her Past President's Pin, which was pinned on by her husband, Bob Lewis.



TJHS Award presented to Hollace Weiner.



TJHS Award presented to Gertrude & Don Teter, z"l.

We Need Your Stories!

We are earnestly looking for stories with ties to Texas Jewish history! To submit your story, contact Davie Lou Solka at editor@txjhs.org or 512-527-3799.

Contributions

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

In Honor of

Louis Katz, on his 2nd Bar Mitzvah Laurie & Alan Selzer
Susan Zack Lewis for her exemplary Joan & Reuben Linares
service as TJHS President

With thanks, love, and affection for the TJHS Dolly Golden
Extraordinary Preservation of Texas Jewish
History Award given posthumously to Gertrude and Don
Teter

In Memory of

Evelyn G. Muntz Sheldon Lippman
Dr. Abram Charles "Charlie" Rabinowitz Sally Drayer

A Gift Membership for

Andrew Lippman, Irvin Lippman, Sheldon Lippman
and Phil & Jenny Lippman
Harry & Nancy Eneman Samuel & Sheryl Mendlinger

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

Scott Langston's Recommended Readings on Native Americans

by Sally Drayer

Scott Langston, TJHS member, and Texas Christian University's Native American Nations and Communities Liaison, spoke to the TJHS membership on Saturday afternoon, April 10, 2021. His topic, "Fundamentalist Christians, Southern Jews, Native Americans & Horned Frogs: Learning to Listen and Respect" was both interesting and insightful.

Scott spoke about his background and how he became interested in both Judaism and Native Americans. He has published in a variety of historical and religious topics. While teaching American history, he became interested in the Native American perspective on American history. This led him to seek out and learn from various Native American communities. He is currently working with a north Texas school district and members of Native American communities in Texas to develop a high school level Native American studies course.

Members requested reading material on Native American studies and Scott appreciated the interest everyone showed and the many good questions following his presentation. He compiled a list of books that covers some of the tribes who have connections to

Texas, that he's found "especially compelling." Scott noted... "When reading about Native Americans, there is a lot of false and misleading information out there. You have to be careful. I find it best to trust the tribes themselves. They know their histories and cultures better than anyone else. There are also some non-Native scholars who are respectful and careful in their work. This list reflects sources I trust. I hope it is helpful."

- *Caddo Indians: Where We Come From*, Cecile Carter: 1995.
- *From Dominance to Disappearance: The Indians of Texas and the Near Southwest, 1786-1859*, F. Todd Smith, 2008.
- *The Comanche Empire*, Pekka Hamalainen, 2008.
- *Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask*, Anton Treuer, 2012.
- *The Caddos, the Wichitas, and the United States, 1846-1901*, F. Todd Smith, 2000.
- *The Wichita Indians: Traders of Texas and the Southern Plains, 1540-1845*, F. Todd Smith, 2000.
- *The Conquest of Texas: Ethnic Cleansing in the Promised Land, 1820-1875*, Gary Clayton Anderson, 2005.
- *The Indians of Texas from Pre-historic to Modern Times*, W.W. Newcomb, Jr. 2015.
- *Do All Americans Live in Tipis? Questions & Answers from the*



Scott Langston, Instructor in Religion & North American Indian Studies and Liaison for Native American Nations and Communities at Texas Christian University.

National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 2007.

- *In the Courts of the Conqueror: The 10 Worst Indian Law Cases Ever Decided*, Walter R. Echo-Hawk, 2010.
- *Neither Wolf nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads With an Indian Elder*, Kent Nerburn.
- *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*, Andres Resendez, 2016.
- *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants*, Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013.
- *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science*, Kim Tallbear, 2013.
- *This Land is Their Land: the Wampanoag Indians, Plymouth Colony, and the Troubled History of Thanksgiving*, David J. Silverman, 2019.

Some of Scott's favorite poets and fiction writers are: Joy Harjo, Luci Tapahonso, Louise Erdrich and N. Scott Momaday.

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



Members listening to Native American Indians program Saturday afternoon.

Welcome New Members!

Harry & Nancy Eneman



Richard & Sharon Kammerman



Paul Keeper



Jennifer Lava



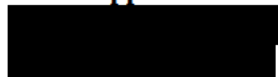
Cindy Lindauer



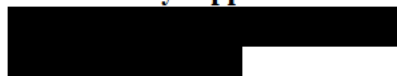
Andrew Lippman



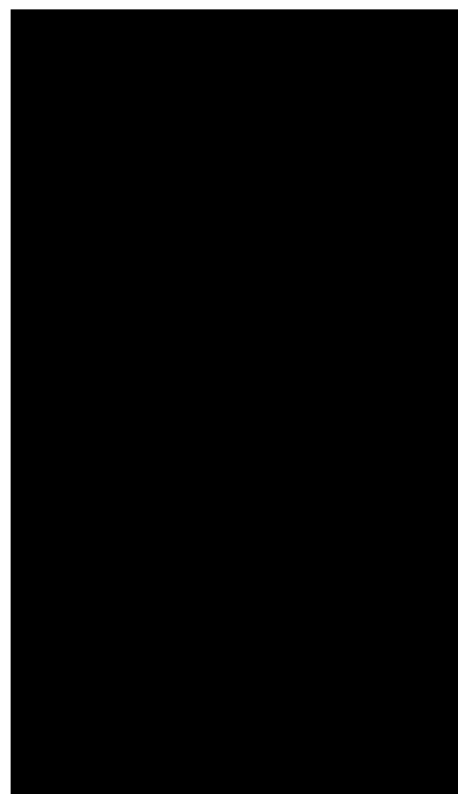
Irvin Lippman



Phil & Jenny Lippman



Mary Ann O'Loughlin



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

41st Annual Gathering, continued from page 1

a newly created three-year position as liaison for Native American Nations and Communities at TCU. Scott presentation was informative and the group became more aware of Native American community. Scott has prepared a list of recommended reading on some of the tribes who have connections to Texas. (See article on page 21 of this issue.)


Saturday evening Susan Zack Lewis



*Sally Drayer lighting
Shabbat candles*

presented her Outgoing President's remarks and thanked the Society for the cooperation and help during these Pandemic meetings. In spite of—or because of—COVID, TJHS remains stronger than ever and there has been more participation from members all over the country, thanks to Zoom.

Also, Saturday evening, TJHS recognized Don and Gertrude Teter z"l and Hollace Weiner for their achievements in preserving Texas Jewish History. Barbara Rosenberg presented the Award posthumously to the Teters' daughter, Joan Linares, and Helen Wilk made the presentation to Hollace Weiner. (See article on Awards on page 6 of this issue.)

The Annual Gathering Meeting was held with reports for the past two years from committee chairs. As stated earlier, Marilyn Lippman installed the Officers for 2021-2022 and the Board of Trustees for 2021-2023. Sheldon Lippman, newly elected President, thanked the Society for electing him and presented his goals for the coming administration. 



TJHS Board of Directors

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1st Vice President

Sonny Gerber (Houston)

2nd Vice President

Joan Linares (Baytown)

3rd Vice President

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Past Presidents

*(Living Past Presidents are
members of the Board of Trustees,
per our By-Laws.)*

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Sally Drayer (Dallas)

Charles B. Hart (Temple)

Rabbi Jimmy Kessler (Galveston)

Susan Zack Lewis (Big Spring)

Howard "Rusty" Milstein (Longview)

Barbara Rosenberg (Sugar Land)

Lionel Schooler (Houston)

Davie Lou Solka (Austin)

Vickie Vogel (Austin)

Helen Wilk (Houston)

Marc Wormser (Pearland)

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.

Texas Jewish
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The 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.
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

☐ Renewing Member

☐ Special interests, professional background, talents _____

Who suggested TJHS to you?

Name: _____

Membership Category

☐ \$35 Annual Member

☐ \$50 Supporting Member

☐ \$18 Student Member

☐ \$100 Sponsor

☐ \$250 Sustaining Member

☐ \$500 Benefactor

☐ \$1,000 Patron

Name(s): _____

Maiden Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____ Website: _____

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