



RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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Message from the President

“To hold forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained.”

These words, from the Rhode Island Charter, describe our Annual Meeting in April. Professor Cheryl Greenberg gave an informative and provocative presentation about Black/Jewish relations in the United States and even in Rhode Island. The audience was very engaged and questions and comments flowed. This presentation showcased what is most important about history: that we can learn from it and use it to build the future.

I myself brought away two things of import. Dr. Greenberg said that you don't have to agree with every point to support an alliance; if you did agree with everything, it wouldn't be an alliance – it would be you! This is so important on a local, national and international stage. Being willing to understand others and see how you can join with them to strengthen the world is very important – it's the essence of tikkun olam.

Dr. Greenberg's other comment really resonated with me: it's not always about the Jews. Many of us were brought up with the phrase, “is it good for the Jews?” While that lens was given to me at an early age, it's also necessary, again, to keep an eye on the entire picture, and see where things fit together.

Meanwhile, to recap some of the initiatives and we have started: We are indexing the local articles in the Jewish Voice and they will be up on our website. We are still hoping to digitize not only the Voice, going back to the early 20th century, but also other Jewish newspapers that were published in Rhode Island.

The website is currently being redesigned to make it easier to find things. In addition, we will be adding a great deal of content (beside the Voice index): videos of our meetings, many more pictures and other items of interest to the membership.

The redesign is courtesy of a grant of \$2,500 from the Helene and Bertram Bernhardt Foundation.

As the work on the JCC is coming to an end, our new office is beginning to take shape. We will move into the space where the Holocaust Museum used to be. If you enter the JCC through the back door from the parking lot, we will be the first door on the right, just across from the Physical Therapy space. It's a beautiful area, and as soon as it's fixed up, we will have an open house/party! Meanwhile, if you would like to contribute to the move, via a naming opportunity (bookcases, table, etc) or for general purposes, talk with me, David Bazar or Josh Jasper.

As we plan this move, we have also hired a very part-time assistant for Josh, so that he can concentrate on the increased numbers of researchers, archives that have been given to us, and the library. This is part of our reorganization so that we can serve you and the public better. Please stop by and introduce yourself to Kate-Lynne Laroche.

I'd like to bring your attention to the Eleanor Horvitz prize, given in honor of our prolific writer and historian for a research paper by an undergraduate or graduate student on a topic of RI Jewish history. The deadline for submissions is August 1, and the award (\$1,000) will be given at the Fall meeting. A committee will read the submissions. Please help us to get the word out.

If you missed the Spring meeting, there are still two more events planned for the fall. We will be collaborating with the RI Historical Society October 17, 5:30-7pm ; we will be presenting a program with speakers for their Foodways series entitled: Jewish food: Noshing around Rhode Island. In addition, our Fall Meeting at the beginning of November will be in collaboration with the Cranston Public Library and feature our own Shai Afsai.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to make your membership more meaningful; we are here to serve you!

In Our Library and Archive

As always, much has happened since the last newsletter. However I am so excited about all of the changes and events to occur this summer and fall that I will certainly miss some of the many exciting happenings that have already occurred in the library, archives and office over the first half of 2017.

First, of the many researchers that I've helped in 2017 so far, I want to highlight one. Professor Jen Illuzzi, from the History Department in Providence College, and her research assistant spent quite a bit of time in our archives recently researching the history of the North End Jewish community and its relationship to Providence College. She was working with Professor Arthur Urbano of the Theology Department, and this project of theirs has been ongoing for a few years. While their research continues, it culminated in a series of events and exhibit this past Spring semester in Providence College. The "Sons of Providence" talk and exhibit contained significant research done using our archives, assisted by me and Anne Sherman before me. In addition, multiple objects from our archive related to Sons of Zion and Rev. Meyer were lent to the exhibit. The talk was very well attended and the exhibit has been so popular that Providence College has extended it beyond the original end date to the beginning of June.

I also want to thank the two volunteer interns that we had during the winter months. Eli Forstadt, a high school student at the Maimonides School in Brookline, and Angela Detonnacourt, a graduate student with the Library Science program at San Jose State University, were amazingly helpful. (Both are Rhode Islanders, in case you were curious. SJSU is an online program.) They were both here from January to April, and their many small but essential projects were too numerous to list here. Angela largely organized our new Temple Am David and Alice and Sidney Goldstein collections in the archives, as well as began a project on reclassifying the library using the Dewey Decimal System. Eli scanned many issues of the Notes, as well as created a wonderful exhibit/display on local Black-Jewish Relations and

Leaders in Rhode Island using materials from our archives that everyone loved at the recent Annual Meeting.

But, as I mentioned at the very start, I am most excited for all of the changes soon to come. Early in May, we hired a new Office Manager, Kate-Lynne Laroche. She is highly qualified, very friendly, and excited to meet everyone. With all of the work that the interns, Kate-Lynne, the entire Executive Committee, and I have already done, I feel that the RIJHA is well-prepared for the big move this summer. I am confident and excited about the move.

As we speak, our new location within the Dwares JCC Building is being prepared. It will be right next to the new back entrance to the building, where the Bornstein Holocaust Museum used to be located. Much like our previous location (before our move to the old BJE Library about three years ago), it will be a small room for the office/library/display area and a larger room for the archive. If you recall the old Holocaust Museum, some of our walls will be beautiful granite. The Jewish Alliance has graciously offered to donate most, but not all, of the construction costs towards our new space. There are still naming opportunities for the new location for those who are interested in donating. However, I encourage everyone to donate what they can to our Capital Campaign towards this project. The Capital Campaign is led by our Treasurer, David Bazar. Please contact him or the office for more details.

In addition, when the construction is completed, we will begin the moving process. We will be using a highly experienced and highly recommended moving company, but there will be some materials that need to be moved by us in order to reduce costs and let the movers focus on our most valuable, fragile, and/or heavy objects. I am looking for a few men and women that are able and willing to volunteer to help with moving those few materials. If you are interested, please let me know.

With the inexact timing of our move, and the flurry of activity that the move entails, there are two very important messages I want to tell our members. First, once the construction is over and the flurry of moving begins, there may be short periods of time where Kate-Lynne and I will be unavailable to handle the normal day-to-day office

activities. At these times, perhaps at short notice, the office and archives will be closed to both members and researchers. I want to apologize beforehand for any inconvenience, and I urge everyone during those times to leave email or phone messages as we will do our best to reply as soon as we can. Second, after we've settled into our new location, we're going to throw a big party for the entire membership and larger community to show off our new space and honor the Capital Campaign donors! The date has not been set, as it will largely be based on the unknown pace of construction. But expect an invitation once the dust settles. Until then, I hope to be updating our Facebook page with pictures and news of the progress of construction. Feel free to contact the office for the latest construction news.

In case that's not enough change, we have just signed the contract with Mary Codd at ACME New Media Services to redesign our website using a very generous grant from the Helene and Bertram Bernhardt Foundation. Mary mentioned that a website should get a good redesign every five years, and ours has not been significantly changed since 2012; I'd say that it's about time for a major facelift. We looked at various website designers, but eventually we chose Mary Codd -- as the current maintainer of our website, she will be able to do the best job at the lowest cost as she already knows our current website front and back.

Last but not least, I would be remiss if I did not mention our upcoming scheduled events. Regardless of construction, the RIJHA is having the somewhat unprecedented (at least in the recent past) situation of **two** events in the Fall. We are collaborating with the Rhode Island Historical Society on a program called "Jewish food: Noshing around Rhode Island." It will be at the Aldrich House on College Hill, on Wednesday, October 17th from 5:30 to 7 pm; it will feature a few select local Rhode Islanders telling their story on the importance of Jewish food to their lives and livelihoods. Then, just one month later on Sunday, November 5th, our member Shai Afsai will be speaking at our Fall Meeting on Rhode Islanders that have made *Aliyah* to Israel. If you recall his excellent article in the most recent *Notes*, you're not going to want to miss his presentation. It will be held at the main branch

of the Cranston Public Library, which is cosponsoring the event. Both are exciting events, and not to be missed.

As always, my door is open to anyone that wants to talk with me further on these developments, aspects of RI Jewish History, or simply need help on a family tree research question using our archives. It is certainly an exciting and eventful time for the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association.

Until then,

Josh Jasper

Librarian/Archivist and
Executive Director



In our Office:
Welcome to our new Office Manager!

The Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association would like to welcome Kate-Lynne Laroche as their newly hired Office Manager. Kate-Lynne is a Rhode Island native who has her bachelor's degree in Renaissance and Reformation History from Rhode Island College, with a minor in Art History and Certification in Public History. Her interests include, but are not limited to: travel, building her personal library, and exploring new places in and around Rhode Island. Kate-Lynne looks forward to using her expertise in organization, customer service, and avid enthusiasm for all things his-

Don't forget to put two events this Fall into your calendars:

- Wednesday, October 17th at the Aldrich House: "Jewish Food: Noshing Around Rhode Island"
- Sunday, November 5th at the Cranston Library: The Fall Meeting featuring Shai Afsai as speaker

Neither event is to be missed!

Donations and New Members from November 15, 2016 to May 15, 2017

New Members

Lauren Motola-Davis & Kenneth Davis, Inception Tech Inc/
EIS Ipswich, Joshua & Jessi Jasper, Alan & Varda Jasper,
Marcia Indianer Meyers & Arthur Meyers, Richard &
Martha Sholes, UCLA

General Donations

Rosalie Beloff, Susan Leach DeBlasio, Kathryn & Cornelis
DeBoer, Barry Wald Fain, Carl Feldman, Bob & Wini Galkin
Fund, Ira S. & Anna Galkin Family Fund, George & Betsey
Goodwin, Dorothy & Edwin Gozonsky, Helen Grossman,
Arnold Herman & Sandra Gandsman, Mr. & Mrs. Arnold
Kaufman, Rabbi Alvan & Marcia Kaunfer, Estelle Klemer,
Bruce Leach, Dorothy Licht, Ruth & Samuel Markoff Fund,
Mr. & Mrs. Milton Nachbar, Simon Nemzow, Lawrence &
Ruth Page, Warren & Susette Rabinowitz, Jay & Judith
Rosenstein, Jerrold A. Salmanson Foundation, Ellen &
Harold Schein, Anne & Gerald Sherman, Selma Stanzler,
David Talan, Eugene Weinberg, Howard & Elaine Weiss (2),
Joel Wolowelsky, Melvin Zurier, Anonymous

Are you interested in learning about our ongoing Capital Campaign to fund the construction and move? General donations and naming opportunities are still available.

Contact the Treasurer (David Bazar), the President (Ruth Breindel) or the RIJHA Office for more details.

From

Betty Kotlen
David A. Cohen
Gene Weinberg
Betty Kotlen
David & Corinne Basok
Patti Kaplan
Lois Cohen and family
Jack and Linda Winkleman
Kenneth K. Resnick
Beverly Goldberg
Joseph Zendlovitz
Beverly Goldberg
Erwin Summer
Bridget and James Gershman
Joseph Zendlovitz
Robert and Beverly Goldblatt
Andrea Losben
Mr. and Mrs. James Gershman
Sandra F. Abrams
Anne and Gerald Sherman
Joseph Zendlovitz
Lillian Schwartz
Jack and Linda Winkleman
David and Laurie Sholes
Kenneth K. Resnick
Judith Spindell
Judith Spindell
Janie and Harold Gadon
Allan Wolf
Marcia Woolf Hicks and Bob
Hicks
Sandra F. Abrams

In Memory of

Joel Cerel
Patricia R. Cohen
Martin Dittleman
Joseph Ephraim
Joseph Ephraim
Jack and Mitzi Feiner
Martin B. Fishman
Martin B. Fishman
Janet Fradin
Maxine Asher Goldberg
Ed Goldin
Richard Greenberg
Harry Katzman
Harry Katzman
Morris Levin
Marvin Levine
Dr. Stephen Jay Losben
Leonard C. Mandell
Ida Paster
Annette Preblud
Marc Rand
Harold Schwartz
Bea Schwartz
Leonard J. Sholes
Leonard J. Sholes
Dr. Edward Spindell
Dr. Edward Spindell
Harold Winsten
Rochelle Wolf
Hayvis, Lillian and
Meryl Woolf
Mark Younger

From

Joan Slafsky
Rosalea Cohn

Eugene Weinberg

Harold & Janice Gadon
Jill and James Tobak
Norman Shack
Norman Shack
Marcia Woolf Hicks and Bob Hicks
Larry and Shelley Parness
Barbara and Farrel Klein
Marcia Woolf Hicks and Bob Hicks
David, Laurie, and Joshua Sholes
Eugene Weinberg

In Honor of

Dr. Aaron T. Beck and the Temkin family
Geraldine Foster

Warren and Robert Galkin for honorary doctorates from NE Tech and RI Heritage Hall of Fame induction
Warren and Robert Galkin for honorary doctorates from NE Tech and RI Heritage Hall of Fame induction
George Goodwin
George Goodwin
George Goodwin
Goldie Greene
the new Jewish Museum of RI at Sons of Jacob
the good work done this summer by Joshua Jasper and Jacob Klein
Honey Pomerantz
Leonard J. Sholes on his 102nd birthday
Ruth Steinberg's special birthday