



RIJHA NEWSLETTER

Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association

WWII PFC Arthur S. Rosen: A Providence soldier's final sacrifice

BY JAIME WALDEN

Among the thousands of American soldiers caught in the German offensive known as the Battle of the Bulge was a young Jewish soldier from Rhode Island: Private First Class Arthur S. Rosen.

Rosen was born on Sept. 11, 1924, in Providence, and was a student at Brown University when he was drafted. He was assigned to the Army's 422nd Infantry Regiment of the 106th Infantry Division, known as the Golden Lions.

By late 1944, the division had arrived in Europe and was stationed in the Ardennes region, along the German-Belgian border.



Arthur Rosen with his parents, Meyer and Frances Rosen, in 1944.

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On Dec 16, 1944, in Hitler's final major attempt to reverse the course of the war in Western Europe, German forces launched the Battle of the Bulge. The 106th Infantry Division was directly in the path of the

massive offensive. Within days, German forces had surrounded the regiment and cut off its avenues of escape.

Facing overwhelming odds and dwindling supplies, the regiment surrendered on Dec. 19, 1944. Thousands of American soldiers became prisoners of war.

Records from the World War II Prisoner of War Data File confirm that Rosen was among those captured and imprisoned at Camp 089, also known as Stalag IX-B, in Bad Orb, Germany. Conditions at the camp were harsh, marked by severe food shortages, exposure to

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winter weather and inadequate medical care.

Rosen's experience in captivity can be partially reconstructed through a surviving Surgeon General's Office Hospital Admission Card. Although brief, the document provides critical information. It records that in March 1945, Rosen was suffering from malnutrition and pneumonia. The card notes that his condition resulted from disease rather than combat wounds, and records the stark notation: "Died in German Prison."

Rosen's death came on March 13, 1945, less than two months before Germany's surrender. He was 20 years old.

His imprisonment at Stalag IX-B also placed him among the Jewish American prisoners protected by the actions of Master Sergeant Roddie Edmonds, who famously refused German orders to identify Jewish soldiers for segregation.

After the war, American Graves Registration personnel recovered the remains of soldiers who had died throughout Europe, including those who perished in captivity. Rosen's remains were eventually laid to rest at the Netherlands American Cemetery, in Margraten.

Interest in Rosen's story was renewed when a Providence Journal article, published on May 24, 2026, highlighted the Dutch families that have cared for American graves at the Netherlands American Cemetery since the end of World War II.

The Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association has been contacted by Rosen's nephew, of Burlington, Massachusetts, and is

FORM APPROVED Budget Bureau No. 33-R012-4			
REGISTRATION CARD (Men born on or after July 1, 1924, and on or before December 31, 1924) (Also for the registration of men as they reach the 18th anniversary of the date of their birth on or after January 1, 1943.)			
SERIAL NUMBER	1. NAME (Print)		ORDER NUMBER
W 46	ARTHUR STANLEY ROSEN		12097
2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) (Number and street) (Town, township, village, or city) (County) (State)			
423 RIVER AVE. PROV. R.I.			
(THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE GIVEN ON LINE 2 ABOVE WILL DETERMINE LOCAL BOARD JURISDICTION; LINE 3 OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE WILL BE IDENTICAL)			
3. MAILING ADDRESS SAME			
4. TELEPHONE PROV.			
5. AGE IN YEARS 18		6. PLACE OF BIRTH PROVIDENCE	
DATE OF BIRTH SEPT. 11 1924		R.I.	
7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS (Number and street or R.F.D. number) (Town, township, village, or city) (County) (State)			
P.S. MEYER ROSEN 423 RIVER AVE. PROV. R.I.			
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS (STUDENT) BROWN UNIVERSITY			
9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS PROV. R.I.			
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.			
DSS FORM 1 (Rev. 11-16-42)		e16-21630-4 (OVER)	



Top: Arthur S. Rosen's draft registration card. This was the sixth draft, for men born between July 1 and Dec. 31, 1924.
Bottom: Rosen's headstone in the Netherlands American Cemetery, in Margraten.

now working to connect Rosen's family with the Dutch family that adopted his grave.

In addition, RIJHA has requested Rosen's Individual Deceased Personnel File from the National Archives to learn more about his wartime experience.

While many questions remain unanswered, the surviving evidence paints a powerful picture of a young Providence soldier who left school to answer his nation's call, endured the hardships of combat and captivity, and ultimately gave his life in service to his country.



Letter from the president

Dear members,

It is a great honor to serve as president of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association. As I begin my first year in this role, I am especially mindful of the long history of this remarkable organization and the many dedicated individuals who have helped preserve and share the story of Rhode Island's Jewish community.

My connection to RIJHA began many years ago. When I was about 10 years old, I discovered a copy of "The Notes" on my parents' bookshelf. I remember being fascinated by the stories, photographs and historical accounts that brought Rhode Island's Jewish past to life.

That early introduction sparked an interest that has remained with me throughout my life, and eventually led me to become more involved with RIJHA. It is both humbling and gratifying to now serve as its president.

As we look toward the future, this year marks an important milestone for RIJHA: We are beginning to implement a new strategic plan designed to strengthen our organization and ensure that we continue to fulfill our mission for generations to come.

The plan was developed through the thoughtful work of the Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of Larry Ginsburg, Harold Foster, Robert Kemp and Linda Lotridge Levin. My sincere appreciation to each of them for their dedication and insight.

I would also like to offer special recognition to Linda, our retiring president. Linda had the vision to establish the Strategic Planning Committee, and provided outstanding leadership. Her commitment to preserving

Rhode Island Jewish history and her tireless service have positioned us well for the future. We are deeply grateful for her many contributions.

The strategic plan recognizes that the strength of our organization depends on the strength of our committees. In the coming year, we will focus on enhancing the work of the committees: Programming; Development and Engagement; Digital Strategy and Communications; Publications, including "The Notes" and the newsletter; Archives and Collections; and Governance and Finance. These committees are essential to carrying out RIJHA's mission and expanding our impact on the community.

To achieve our goals, we need the involvement of our members and friends. I encourage everyone who values Rhode Island Jewish history to consider joining one of our committees. Whether your interests lie in research, programming, communications, fundraising, archives or organizational leadership, there is an opportunity for you to make a meaningful contribution.

The Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association has always depended on the energy, talents and commitment of volunteers. Together, we can preserve our rich heritage, share our stories with new audiences, and build an even stronger organization for the future.

I look forward to working with all of you in the year ahead.

David Bazar

President

R.I. historian speaks on the life, times of Judah Touro

BY RUTH BREINDEL

The Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association celebrated its 75th anniversary with an informative talk on Judah Touro and the election of new officers and board members.

The 2026 Annual Meeting was held on April 26 at the Dwares Jewish Community Center, in Providence, and began with a welcome from outgoing RIJHA President Linda Lotridge Levin.

George Goodwin, the longtime editor of RIJHA's annual publication, "The Notes," then introduced Sen. Jack Reed, who read a proclamation honoring the association.

Goodwin then gave a brief history of RIJHA's 75 years, and board member Cynthia Benjamin presented the candidates and cast the vote to accept them.

The officers for the 2026-2027 term are: president, David Bazar; 1st vice president, Larry Ginsberg; 2nd vice president, Lowell Lisker; secretary, Ruth Breindel; treasurer, Harold Foster; and past president, Linda Lotridge Levin.

Board members, term ending in 2028: Alexis Kutenplon, Marilyn Myrow, Mel Topf and Samuel Turco.

Board members, term ending in 2027: Cynthia Benjamin, Deborah Carr, Larry Katz and Bob Kemp.

Levin then introduced the speaker, Rhode Island Historian Laureate Keith Stokes, who presented "Judah Touro: Faith, Family and Freedom: the World that Shaped Judah Touro."

Stokes began by discussing the Dutch view: If you can pay, you can stay! It wasn't that the Dutch particularly liked Jews, but more that



RIJHA past president George Goodwin, left, accepts the proclamation honoring RIJHA from Sen. Jack Reed.

they understood the mercantile mind. Refugees from Spain, Portugal and England found a safe harbor in Holland, and also in the West Indies, in the New World.

The Touro family fled prosecution in Spain for Portugal, then immigrated to Holland in the early 16th century.

At the beginning of the next century, Moses Touro, using an alias, got permission to work in England. The family prospered as merchants not only in England, but also in the Indies, for the next 150 years.

The Touro family were not among the early Jewish settlers in Newport. Among the first settlers were a group of Jewish immigrants who arrived in 1658, after migrating from Barbados. In 1677, they acquired land on the outskirts of town and established a burial ground.

In 1684, the General Assembly of Rhode Island responded to a formal petition from the Jews of Newport, affirming their right as non-Christians to settle in the colony. Over the next 100 years, Jews arrived in the City by the Sea from around the world.

Religious freedom was certainly part of the equation, but, as Stokes emphasized several

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times, these people were merchants, and were looking for a place to set up shop. Newport, with its harbor, and Rhode Island, with Roger Williams' charter, was a perfect place for Jews to settle. These early merchants established many profitable businesses, including Castile Soap (James Lucena) and Spermaceti Candles (Jacob Rodriquez Rivera).

Judah Touro was born on June 16, 1775, in Newport, as a first-generation Jewish American. He served his country during the War of 1812 and later became one of America's first great philanthropists. His family helped build the city's now historic Touro Synagogue.

"On Dec. 2, 1763, 13 years before the Declaration of Independence was signed, Rev. Isaac De Abraham Touro led a momentous dedication ceremony for what would become Touro Synagogue," Stokes said. "Clergy and civic leaders from Newport participated in this event, marking a significant milestone in the history of early American freedom of worship.

"Today, this historic building proudly stands as the oldest existing Jewish house of worship in America, a testament to resilience and hope."

The Hayes family, of Boston, were well-known and wealthy traders who would marry into the Touro family. As a young man, Judah lived with them. In 1801, he moved to New Orleans, and lived there until he died, in 1854.

In 1824, his sister, Rebecca, petitioned the Rhode Island General Assembly on behalf of preserving the synagogue, making her the first woman preservationist!

In his will, Judah Touro left \$10,000 to the state of Rhode Island and the city of Newport for the upkeep of the Touro Synagogue, which would become a National Historic Site.

He also left enormous sums of money for



Keith Stokes gives his presentation on Judah Touro to more than 60 RIJHA members and friends on April 26.

charities both in America and in the "Holy Land." In New Orleans, the Touro Infirmary was endowed in 1852 and remains a hospital today. In 1840, he gave \$10,000 to complete the Bunker Hill Monument.

Throughout his life, Judah Touro maintained a strong commitment to Judaism and to Jewish life, Stokes said, as well as setting the standard for Jewish American philanthropy.

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Please email questions, comments and suggestions to:
Jaime Walden, office@rijha.org

Publication team:

Executive Editor Jaime Walden
Copy Editor Cynthia Benjamin

Adviser:

Lowell Lisker

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Hahn project readies for fall tour

“A Memorial Legacy: The Hahns of Providence” project continues to make excellent progress and is on schedule for completion in August. The LEGO model, the centerpiece of the traveling exhibit scheduled for the fall, has now been completed and is ready for public display.

Development of the interactive component is also progressing smoothly, with most of the historical animations now complete. Trivium, RIJHA and the National Park Service’s project technology partner, is currently developing the software platform that will power these animations and interactive features in libraries, museums and other educational venues.

Once completed, the interactive experience will use an innovative blend of physical and digital storytelling to allow visitors to engage more deeply with the Hahn family’s story and their lasting contributions to Rhode Island’s Jewish history.



A detail of the LEGO model of the Hahn Memorial.

In the 1930s, Judge Jerome Hahn purchased and donated the land and well that is now called the Roger Williams Spring Park and Hahn Memorial, in the Roger Williams National Memorial, in Providence. Hahn was the second Jew in Rhode Island to pass the bar examination, in 1891. He went on to serve on the state Supreme Court from 1931 to 1935.

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