



Legacy

Newsletter of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society

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Henry Grant's Trading Post in Abiquiú

By Gerald Spiro



My uncle, Henry Grant, arrived in the Territory of New Mexico circa 1880, establishing himself in the hamlet of Abiquiú northwest of Santa Fe where he built a large trading post and home. Henry's business grew. It soon included sheep and cattle. In later years the trading post became a general store, with branches in El Rito and Tres Piedras. A Mason and Shriner, Henry Grant became a federal postmaster and was said to have been Democratic Chairman for the Territory of New Mexico in 1896.

His wife, my aunt Sara Spiro, was born in Wloclawek, a city on the Vistula River in northwest Poland, in the 1870s. With the approval of her father, Jacob Spiro, a modern-thinking rabbi, and his wife, Augusta, she served as governess in the household of a wealthy Jewish family in Arnheim, Holland. Sara left Arnheim in 1889, meeting up with her brother, Abraham, in Paris, where he had gone after studying in Heidelberg. They subsequently departed for New York to join their parents,

who had moved there after spending several years in London.

When Jacob and Augusta Spiro first arrived in New York, Augusta's oldest brother, Louis Cowen, helped them get settled. Louis was an army veteran of the Indian Wars in Texas and later the Civil War (he fought on the Confederate side). He left his home in Brownsville, Texas, to install his sister and her family (whom he had never met before) in a large and commodious apartment in the Murray Hill section of New York in the East Thirties. This brotherly gesture spared my grandparents from experiencing the terrible living conditions then existing on the Lower East Side, graphically portrayed by Irving Howe in *World of Our Fathers*.

On a visit to New York, Henry Grant met Sara Spiro. In 1892 they were married in her parents' home. I have a copy of their marriage certificate, certified by my grandfather, Rabbi Jacob Spiro, listed as an official minister by the City of New York. Sara went to live with Henry in Abiquiú. The trading post was situated quite pleasantly amongst some orchards and groves. Times were difficult then, and living conditions were not easy. Many men carried

weapons as a consequence of ongoing feuds between rival groups of cattlemen and Indian raids that continued until 1886 when Geronimo and his Apaches were forced to surrender.



Henry Grant

Interestingly, I recall my aunt Sara's remarking that her children, David, Hylida, Frances, and Joseph, were all delivered by Indian midwives, as there were no medical facilities in this part of the Territory. Ever resourceful, Sara gave basic medical care to her family and the nearby Pueblo Indians. Trained as a teacher, my aunt also provided elementary home schooling for her children.

During what was probably a smallpox epidemic, Sara arranged to telegraph an institution "back East" for help. Subsequently a supply of vaccine arrived by horseback. She inoculated as many of the inhabitants as she could. When the supply ran out she created her own vaccine by breaking existing pustules on those already infected.

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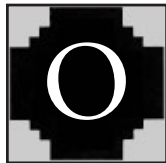
We encourage our readers to submit news, relevant announcements, and stories about New Mexico Jewish history and historical figures, to the above address.

NMJHS membership expires at the end of each calendar year. We hope you have renewed your membership for 2007. If your membership has expired, this is the last issue of *Legacy* that you will receive.

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Message from President Harold Melnick



Our concept of history changes as we age. When we're young, history means those things that happened before we were born. They don't matter to us because there are more urgent things in our lives: we're trying to establish our place in the world – raise a family, work for a promotion, build a business, buy a home. As we do these things, we are becoming part of history, but we don't realize it.

I doubt that the 19th century Jewish immigrants to New Mexico thought that their lives would be of interest in the 21st century. Only as we get older do we begin to realize we are making history and wonder about those who came before us. That's probably why the Society's membership has so few younger people. What could be done to stimulate interest in the lives of our forebears earlier in life and increase our younger membership?

In the Society's office, we've had a change in administrators. Bobbie Jackson, our administrator for the past several years, had to resign because of illness. We miss her, are grateful for the service she rendered to the Society, and wish her improved health.

Our new administrator is Debra Blackerby. Debbie has worked for the Jewish Community Center in Albuquerque for the past five years. She'll continue with that job while also taking on administrative duties for the Society. She's at the Federation most days, and usually in the Society's office after 4 p.m. If you're in the neighborhood, stop by, meet and welcome her.

Our board has undergone some changes. Peter Hess, Durwood Ball, Phil Saltz, Alex Cosby, Sharon Herzog, and Naomi Sandweiss have resigned from the board. We thank them for their service and anticipate that they'll continue to be active in the Society. New board members are Sondra Match, Jeffrey Zammis, and Barbara Baker. We welcome them and their enthusiasm for undertaking the Society's work. You'll be hearing more from them.



Harold Melnick,
NMJHS President

We've also made changes in board organization and duties. Each board member will have responsibility for some aspect of the Society's activities. Other changes under consideration, to be discussed at future board meetings, include the status of board members who cannot attend meetings regularly, and procedures for selecting new board members.

In February, the Society co-sponsored Arthur Kurzweil's genealogy keynote speech at "A Taste of Honey." Upcoming Society events include the Carol Bergé lecture, the annual Las Vegas cemetery cleanup, a conference in August, and one or more film showings. You'll be hearing more about these events. If you have ideas for the Society's work, ideas for programs, would like to be more actively involved, would like to know more about being a board member, I would like to hear from you. Officers and board members are the folks who make these things happen.

Several members of our community have died recently: Sam Ballen, Leona Hurst, Bob

Nordhaus, and Charles Solomon. They now become part of our legacy and our history. We mourn their passing and wish comfort for their families.

In this issue, you'll read about Henry Grant's Trading Post; genealogy articles about Arthur Kurzweil and the U.S. Census; Santa Fe artist Maurice Turetsky's permanent exhibit in Lincoln, New Mexico; and a new feature, The Roundup, by Sondra Match, which summarizes what other Jewish Historical Societies are doing. If you enjoy and appreciate the information you receive in our quarterly newsletter, *Legacy*, and want to continue receiving it, please renew your membership today, if you haven't already done so. ★

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Arthur Kurzweil: One More Link in the Chain

by Dorothy Corner Amsden



Genealogy is more than names and dates on a chart. It is more than sentimental stories about the good old (or bad old) days. It is not an effort to gain status by discovering illustrious ancestors. Nor is it an effort to build walls between people. For me genealogy is a spiritual pilgrimage.” So says Arthur Kurzweil in the Introduction of his seminal book on Jewish genealogical research, the classic best seller *From Generation to Generation*.

Kurzweil has inspired thousands of people to explore their Jewish ancestry since *From Generation to Generation* was first published in 1980. New Mexico fell under his spell as keynote speaker for “A Taste of Honey,” which took place at the Jewish Community Center in Albuquerque on February 11, 2007. The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society sponsored his first visit to New Mexico with three other agencies: the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, the Jewish Community Center, and Solomon Schechter Day School. Following the keynote speech attendees flocked to the table selling the latest edition of his book, though there were not nearly enough copies to satisfy every person in line.

Author, magician, storyteller, and genealogist, Arthur Kurzweil is much in demand as a speaker. His extensive travel schedule requires him to fit his writing schedule around his speaking engagements. On his website, www.arthurkurzweil.com, you will find an amazing amount of information about the man and his interests as well as the books and articles he has written.

During his keynote speech in Albuquerque, Kurzweil talked about genealogy as not only tracing your ancestors back in time but also connecting with their descendants who are alive today. These are people you may not have realized exist –

people whose parents or grandparents miraculously survived the Holocaust and live in Israel, the United States, Canada, Australia, and Latin America.

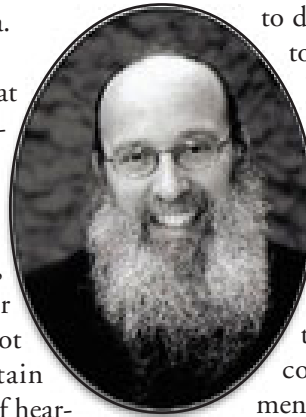
Kurzweil told his audience that he got interested in Jewish genealogy because “I discovered that I had more in common with my dead ancestors than I did with my living relatives, . . . and they are also far easier to get along with.” He is not entirely joking. “At a certain point in my life I was tired of hearing how my ancestors *died* as Jews and I wanted to know how they *lived* as Jews.”

Genealogy gave Arthur Kurzweil a connection to his Jewish roots. He recounts that he grew up in New York without any particular interest in his religion. He trained to be a librarian. He began to notice a man who came into his library daily, researched diligently the whole day long, then left in the evening. After many months, the man came up to him all excited. “I found what I was looking for. I am related to Abraham Lincoln.” Young Arthur Kurzweil was not impressed.

A few years later Kurzweil went to the Jewish Division section of the New York Public Library on Fifth Avenue – the place with the huge stone lions on either side of the entry steps. He knew from his father that the family had come from Dobromil, which used to be part of Austria, then Poland, Russia, and now Ukraine. He checked the card file under “D” just on the off-chance that there might be something on Dobromil in the library. Indeed there was a card for Dobromil. He filled out a form to request the book.

The cover stated *Memorial Book—Dobromil*. It had more than 500 pages of text, photographs, and maps. A whole

book on this insignificant town his family came from! In his excitement, Kurzweil flipped the pages rapidly, too excited to dwell on any one page, eager to see what was on the next. He looked at photographs of the town and relived the stories that his father and grandfather had told him. In a group photograph he recognized his great-grandfather. How was it possible that this book existed? He couldn’t contain his excitement. He ran up to the librarian to share his discovery. He had just found the most amazing book he never knew existed. The librarian just shrugged. The Albuquerque audience erupted in laughter.



Arthur Kurzweil

Kurzweil said he made photocopies of a few pages and showed them to his father who was excited to see the pictures, identified people in them, and told his son more stories. Dobromil began to come alive for Kurzweil. From a photo of 21 people in Dobromil that he found a few years later among his grandfather’s papers, he learned that 14 were murdered in the Holocaust and that 7 survived because they came to America. Kurzweil’s father had not seen that photo in many years. He identified himself as a 4-year-old, his parents, his father’s two brothers and one sister and their families.

Kurzweil learned that survivors who had come from Dobromil formed an association to buy burial plots and to memorialize their town by writing up what they remembered and pooling old photographs. This *yizkor* book they wrote, which can be found at the New York Public Library, was published in 1963. It is not unique. Many such books exist in the Jewish Division about ancestral towns as they existed before World War II.

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THE ROUNDUP: News from Other Jewish Historical Societies

by Sondra K. Match



What is your definition of a mensch? Each one of us has his/her own. According to former president and latter-day lexicographer, Bill Clinton, a mensch and a bubba are the same. "Bubba is just Southern for Mensch," President Clinton says in a brochure advertising the 31st Annual Southern Jewish Historical Society's conference in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Said Jim Pfeifer, Conference Chair, "President Clinton and the Jewish people of Arkansas have long and strong ties." Highlight of the November 2006 conference was a private tour of the Presidential Museum and Library on the Arkansas River. Arkansas Jews who served in the White House or worked on the campaign led the tour. Keynote speaker was Stuart Eisenstadt, diplomat and advisor to Presidents Carter and Clinton. He discussed U.S. negotiations on Holocaust restitution.

And here's that word again! A column in the CHAIowan, newsletter of the Iowa Jewish Historical Society is titled, Iowa's Honorable Menschen. It contains a lengthy article on Phillip Emmanuel Adler, newspaper editor and publisher in Davenport, Iowa. He was born in 1872 to German immigrant parents. Now lost to history, P.E. Adler is of second-

ary importance to another Jewish family mentioned in the article: the Ferbers of Ottumwa, Iowa, owners of a dry-goods store. Their daughter, Pulitzer prize-winning author, Edna, spent part of her childhood in Ottumwa. (Yes, that Edna Ferber!)

In her book, *A Peculiar Treasure* (Doubleday, Duran, New York, 1939) Ms. Ferber remembers Ottumwa in distinctly unfavorable terms. She experienced derogatory epithets in school and on her walks to her father's store. It was "... a sordid clay and gully Iowa town . . . by the muddy Des Moines River, unpaved, bigoted, anti-semitic, undernourished," she wrote.

Did you know that many Jews from Texas fought in the Civil war – on the Confederate side, of course. According to the Texas Jewish Historical Society's Spring 2006 publication, Gary Whitfield, a former Ft. Worth Texas historian is adding names of Jewish Civil War Veterans to a list compiled in 1895. The current total is 150 and growing!

The Rambler, newsletter of the Southern Jewish Historical Society, winter, 2006 issue contains an article, "Nice Jewish Boy Makes Good." It is about Ben Bernanke, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, who calms the raging stock market with his plain-vanilla speech. Benjamin Shalom Bernanke spent his

teens in Dillon, South Carolina. His parents kept a kosher home. His grandparents had both been physicians in Austria. Because their medical degrees were not recognized in the U.S. they opened a pharmacy. We are told that Chairman Bernanke still practices Orthodox Judaism.

And in news of Western Jews, the Fall 2006 issue of *Western States Jewish History* has an article by the late Rabbi Abraham I. Shinedling, "The Los Alamos Jewish Center, the Earliest Beginning" (May 20, 1955). Listed are the prominent Jews of Los Alamos with awards, honors, and positions held.

The Winter 2006 issue of this self-same publication contains a book review of *Remnants of Crypto-Jews Among Hispanic Americans* by Gloria Golden. Ms. Golden's book is a collection of oral history narratives from over sixty residents of New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. Most are Roman Catholics whose background connects them with Sephardic Jews of the 17th century. One story in the collection describes the death of the grandfather of Consuelo Luz Arostegui, a Santa Fe resident and Ladino balladeer. Carlos Avila Espinoza was Chile's ambassador to the United States from 1927 to 1931. On his deathbed he confessed to Luz's cousin, "somos Judios" (we are Jews).


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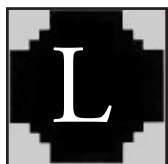
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GENEALOGY CORNER

Getting the Most out of Census Records - Part II

By Nancy W. Greenberg

(This is a continuation of an article that appeared in the December 2006 issue of Legacy.)



ong and hard was the search to find my father's family. I knew that my grandparents had married in July of 1900 (after the U.S. Census had been taken), and my grandfather had died in 1916. There was only one chance to find a record of the family with my grandfather listed as head of the family. That was the 1910 Census. I had no idea what state the family lived in, which made the search even harder.

I searched in every census index that I knew of – and found nothing using several combinations of his first two names and other spellings of the last name. Then, I finally tried just using my grandfather's last name plus his initials! Behold – there was the family record. It is the only census document that exists with the entire family group that includes my father as a four-year old. Sitting there for a quiet moment, I admit that I was really overcome with emotion. Two of these family members had died before I was born, but the others I knew and loved, and I still miss them.

There is nothing like being able to see an original record that was created when your ancestors were present. It makes the reality of their life and experience come alive like no other part of family research. Gleaning information on your family from an index or published source is often necessary, but when you are able to track down a marriage record, will, land deed, military record, Social Security application, or other original document, it is a genuine thrill.

For many of us, microfilmed census schedules of the United States are our first introduction to original documents that give us direct information about our families. Since 1790, the U.S. government has conducted a complete census of all inhabitants of our country every ten years. Originals are kept by the U.S. National Archives and Records

Administration, but microfilmed copies are available from them and are frequently available in many libraries and genealogy centers. Fortunately these records are also rapidly becoming accessible on the Internet. They remain one of the best tools for even the most experienced genealogist, and continue to send us off in directions for more research on our families.

With the exception of the last two census years, in which forms were mailed, census takers have been assigned to visit every household in a district to gather information on families and individuals living there. In the early years, they often traveled on foot, attempting to sit down with a member of each household (usually the wife) to gather and record the information on that family. The raw data was then transferred to a document and, luckily for us, most of these census documents survive. (The big gap, unfortunately, is the 1890 Census, which burned with only a few county records surviving.)

When you first see a page from a census, it can be confusing and a little intimidating because there are so many rows and columns with headings that are very hard to read. The names are often difficult to read, and many researchers give up at that point. Finding a blank form of the particular census year can be a huge step in figuring out what all the categories are, and you can usually decipher the handwriting with some concentrated effort.

So, how can you get every single possible drop of information out of a census? Tracking families through as many years as possible will ensure the most success, because you can then analyze and combine the information. I shall focus on the census years 1850 to 1930, since those are the years that mostly concern Jewish immigration to the United States. (The most recent census year available to the public is 1930; the 1940 Census

will not be opened to the public until 2012.) Let me summarize some of the information contained in census records.

Location – Each census is organized by state, county, town or city, and enumeration district. Look at the writing along the left side of the page, especially in cities. The name of the street should be recorded there. With the address number, you can determine an exact address of a particular residence. I was certainly surprised when I found that my great-grandmother was living with a daughter's family at one address, but my great-grandfather was living by himself at another. Makes me wonder if they weren't getting along so well, or perhaps she needed extra tending that he couldn't or wouldn't do.

Names, Sex, and Ages – Of course, the major thing to look for are names and ages, especially as they are grouped in family households. There are often surprises as elderly relatives, married children and their families and others might also be in the home, such as boarders, which can provide clues to maiden names, previous marriages,

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Henry Grant's Trading Post in Abiquiú - (continued from p. 1)

After her husband's death in the early 1920s, Sara began to speak and write about her experiences in New Mexico. In 1939, she was appointed by Mrs. Vanderbilt to serve on a welcoming committee for the World's Fair in New York. I might add that I knew my aunt and her children quite well, the latter highly interesting in their own right. I have an old Navajo saddle blanket that my aunt gave me when I was little.

Sara and Henry's sons attained their own renown. David Grant, the first born, practiced law in Santa Fe in the early 1920s and served as an Assistant Attorney General of New Mexico. He later settled in New York working as counsel for Pan American Airlines. His claim to fame was traveling with Lindbergh to South America to secure landing rights and routes for the big Pan American clippers.

Joe, the youngest, served in World War I, then played shortstop for Hollywood in the Pacific Coast League. Later he returned to New Mexico, where he was elected to four terms as State Treasurer. His most satisfying years, he often stated, were those as president of what is now

Northern New Mexico Community College from 1935-1951, serving later as chairman of its Board of Regents. In 1953 he was elected State Chairman of the Democratic Party in New Mexico, following in his father's footsteps.

As a teller of tales, Joe had few equals. I particularly remember a family gathering at the Explorer's Club in New York where Joe held us spellbound with his account of a secretly-witnessed Penitente religious procession, replete with blood rites and flagellations, that took place in a distant mountain village.

As of this writing, Henry Grant's trading post still stands. It is now owned by a Mr. Bode, the son of a man who worked for my uncle. The structure is opposite the Georgia O'Keeffe home on the square.

[Editor's Note: According to the *Rio Grande Sun Historical Edition* of 1995, when Henry Grant came to New Mexico in the late 1870s, Abiquiú was probably the most prominent community in Rio Arriba County. In 1884 its population was 300 – six times that of Española – and it once served as an important Army post

during the Indian troubles in the northern part of the county. Gold fever briefly boosted the population as high as 2,000. Henry Grant was an active advocate for New Mexico statehood, and he lived to see his dream come true. When he died in 1925 he was taken to New York for burial.

[According to Bode descendants, Grant's original trading post in Abiquiú was purchased in 1927 by their father, a German immigrant named Martin Bode, who made it into a residence where he and his wife raised five children. One of Martin's sons continues to live in the house. The road to northern New Mexico used to climb the bluffs to run through the middle of Abiquiú. Today the highway runs to the east of the village, below the bluffs. Bode's General Merchandise, located on that highway, serves area residents and travelers between Española and Tierra Amarilla.]

Gerald Spiro is a retired banker and avid genealogist. During World War II he served in French Morocco and the Italian campaign. At age 91, he lives with his daughter and son-in-law in Hillsdale, New Jersey. ★

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The Danoff Family

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Getting the Most Out of Census Records - (continued from p. 5)

and names of other relatives that can then be researched. Some people might be found in an institution such as a TB sanatorium, mental institution, veteran's home, or prison. (I found a cousin's husband in federal prison. When I looked into it, I discovered that he had been a member of the Chicago Jewish Mafia.) The 1900 Census is really quite useful in that it lists the month and year of birth for each person. This may be the only place you will find that records the birth date of an immigrant ancestor.

Marriage – In 1880, census documents began to record family relationships. (Before that, you had to guess at relationships of the household members.) In subsequent years there were additional questions asked about marital status. The 1900 and 1910 Censuses record the number of years of a person's present marriage. In addition, the mother was asked for the total number of children and then the number of those children still living.

Occupation and Economic Factors – Since the 1850 Census, the occupation of each individual was recorded, and in later census years, whether or not the person worked for wages or "on their own account" was recorded, as well as periods of non-employment. In later census years, the information on the actual place of employment was also recorded. Often, knowing the occupation is a major piece of information that can help identify a person, especially if they have com-

mon names. For example, try searching for a great-grandfather named Jacob Cohen. It can be done, but it isn't easy!



The Sparks Family in Pittsburgh about 1920. Parents Clara Stein and Samuel Sparks are on opposite ends of the second row. Long-time residents of Albuquerque might remember Sophie Sparks Haas (left on bottom row). Photo restoration by Shelah Wilgus.

Origins – Starting in the 1850 Census, the place of birth was recorded for each person, and in 1880 the birthplace for each parent of every individual. Usually only a state was listed if the person was born in the U.S., and a country was listed if the person was foreign born. However, sometimes, the enumerator would write down an actual county, city or foreign province – which would be an enormous help to the researcher. During some census years there were questions asked about the language spoken by individuals – both at the time of the census and the "mother tongue." Noting languages other than English can help pinpoint origins, too.

Immigration – During most census years some question was asked about the foreign birth of a person or parent. However, in the 1900 Census, the year of immigration be-

formation, and so it is sometimes wise not to count on accuracy. However, the answers provide good clues and might help you find a passenger list or other immigration record.

Citizenship – Some of the most significant records that a Jewish researcher can find are naturalization documents (especially after a 1906 law standardized the information). Exact information on the place of birth and the name of the ship that brought the immigrant to these shores might be identified, which could lead the researcher back to the place of origin to find more family information. While citizenship information was usually noted in some form during earlier years, the 1900 Census began to record the status of citizenship. The three most common notations were "AL" (alien status), "PA" (application papers were filed), and "NA" (naturalization complete). In addition, the 1920 Census requested the year of naturalization.

Education – In most census years there were questions about the ability to read and write, as well as whether an individual attended school. The answers to these questions are always interesting because they give us an idea of the degree of integration within the society. It is worthwhile to note that even among native-born Americans, illiteracy was widespread and many children did not attend school.

Other Information – Other categories can be of interest, such as military service and physical or mental impairments. The answers to these questions might also shed a different light on a family's experience and can send you off to search for more records.

Always keep in mind that a census document may contain misinformation, for many reasons. The informant may not have wanted to be truthful (for example, a wife might not want to admit that she was older than her husband). The person might not have known the information or might have forgotten or been confused about it, the census worker might have recorded it incorrectly, or the worker and informant might not

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Lincoln County War on Permanent Exhibit

by Susan Turetsky



You have probably heard of the Lincoln County War that erupted in 1878. A new permanent exhibit at the Lincoln State Monument will bring the story back in all its vivid detail. A photo of Billy the Kid so mesmerized Santa Fe artist Maurice Turetsky that he began an in-depth project called "Billy the Kid and the Principal Characters of the Lincoln County War."

The exhibit includes thirty-one large pastel portraits of the characters who fought that violent war, two bronze sculptures, and three large paintings. Each portrait in the exhibit has a story-board describing each character and what part he played in the war. You can view this exhibit in Lincoln, New Mexico, at the Visitor's Center/Museum at the Lincoln State Monument.

Maurice Turetsky is a painter and sculptor, born and raised in Philadelphia. A graduate of Tyler School of Fine Arts in Philadelphia he worked in the design and health fields in Michigan before moving to Santa Fe in 1995 to work as a full-time artist.

In 1996, on a trip to Tombstone, Arizona, one photograph captured the attention and

curiosity of Maurice Turetsky. It is the only authenticated photograph of "The Kid." Before his capture, Billy gave the photo to Dan Dedrich, one of his outlaw friends, who kept the image of his pal. That photo was handed down within Dedrich's family and found its way into the Lincoln Trust, in Lincoln, New Mexico, in approximately 1984.

Subsequently, the photo was taken back by the heirs. It now rests in a vault in Albuquerque, New Mexico. There are many reproductions of this photograph, with which most of you are familiar. It is this mesmerizing photograph that led Maurice to undertake this project.

For 8 years, Turetsky researched and explored young Billy and the many people who participated in the sudden and fierce outbreak of war on the main street in Lincoln in 1878. It all began when a young Englishman, John Tunstall, found his way to Lincoln. Tunstall was the son of a wealthy businessman and wanted to prove himself to his family. He was intent on striking it rich in business.

Wandering into Lincoln, New Mexico, Tunstall found himself up against Murphy and Dolan who were already running a successful

store—supplying the needs of all of the townspeople, including surrounding farmers and local Indians. They monopolized the area.

Tunstall opened a competitive store in partnership with Alexander McSween. Murphy and Dolan took this amiss. Tunstall was murdered not long after he came to town. At that time, Billy the Kid was employed by Tunstall as a ranch-hand. He was very fond of John Tunstall and wanted revenge for his murder.

In short order, it was The House of Murphy against The Regulators – those loyal to Tunstall and McSween. The Lincoln County War erupted, taking the life of McSween and many others. In the exhibit is a portrait of McSween's widow, Susan, with a beautiful lace collar and a red rose at her throat. She went on to live a long life and became the leading female cattle baron in New Mexico.

Says Maurice Turetsky, "This exhibit is the culmination of a long, well-researched project. I am thrilled that the State has installed it on a permanent basis in the place where this all happened about 130 years ago! It is a little piece of New Mexico's history that I was able to record visually." ♦

WANTED

Volunteer to serve as
Treasurer

Duties: review records of NMJHS expenses and revenues kept by Administrator; serve as paymaster for Administrator; create annual budget; prepare tax returns. Contact Harold Melnick at 505-466-2376 or harold.melnick@comcast.net.

The NMJHS is soliciting historical papers and photographs for inclusion in its archival collection at the New Mexico Records Center and Archives. For more information, contact NMJHS at (505) 348-4471 or nmjhs@jewishnewmexico.org.



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IN MEMORIAM

NMJHS mourns the passing of four outstanding New Mexicans

Sam Ballen

by Lance Bell



is incredible journey of life continues,” Marta Ballen says about her beloved father, Sam Ballen, a colorful and spiritual person who passed away on February 4, 2007. Ballen, a year 2000 Santa Fe Living Treasure, was best known for his loyalty, generosity, kindness, sense of humor and entrepreneurial spirit—buying and renovating La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe.

He was born Schmucl ben Mordecai in 1922 to Russian/Polish Jewish immigrants who ran a corner grocery in Harlem, New York City. As a young man, he delivered groceries to the Cotton Club, where he met jazz greats Cab Calloway, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker.

Ballen attended City College of New York, where he was self-admittedly an unexceptional student. His “most significant achievement” there was meeting the love of his life, Ethel. After graduation in 1942, he worked briefly for an investment firm, then enlisted in the Army, which sent him to Europe. Fol-

lowing service in World War II, Ballen returned to New York to marry Ethel, worked on Wall Street and became involved in the booming post-war petroleum industry.

In the 1950s, Ballen’s petroleum interests took him to the Southwest. The Ballens and their growing family finally settled in Dallas, Texas. They began vacationing in Santa Fe. These visits taught the Ballens to love Santa Fe, with its Hispanic and Native American cultures. In 1967 the family voted to move to Santa Fe. Soon after moving, Ballen learned that La Fonda was for sale.

In 1997 Ballen published his autobiography, *Without Reservations*, where the reader learns of a journey that began in Harlem and led to the end of the Santa Fe Trail. It was 1968 when Ballen bought La Fonda—a former Harvey Hotel—from the Santa Fe Railroad. Over the last 39 years, La Fonda has become one of North America’s most unique hotels. La Fonda is synonymous with Santa Fe: it is known for its classic pueblo-deco Santa Fe style and its slogan, “the world has walked through our lobby.”

Rabbi Leonard Helman said, “Sam’s greatest love was Ethel, his wife, his lifelong companion. They were inseparable in life and, I believe, united in death.” Hiking was their passion. Sam even attempted the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro after turning 80! “Sam and Ethel were blessed with five wonderful daughters and fine grandchildren. They have the same spirit of serving society as Sam and Ethel had.” Ethel passed away on February 5, 2006, and Sam was never quite the same after her death.

The Ballens’ generosity went well beyond the Jewish community. They supported many important causes. Yet Sam and Ethel will be remembered best for their beautiful family that continues the Ballen legacy and for the loyal employees of La Fonda, always considered part of the Ballen family.

Without Reservations concludes with a maxim that both Sam and Ethel embraced: “While you live, live!” Both set a fine example, making these words part of each and every day. ★

Charles Solomon

by Lance Bell

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society mourns the loss of Charles “Chuck” Solomon who passed away on January 28, 2007. Born in the Bronx, New York in 1919 he overcame polio and worked to support himself selling newspapers and magazines; he also ushered at Loew’s Paradise Theater. After World War II, he followed friends to Las Vegas, New Mexico, where he attended Highlands University. There he met and married Laura Thorne, and the two continued their life-long journey together. Their first jobs were as teachers in El Rito, New Mexico.

A turning point in Solomon’s life was when he decided to become a lawyer. He

received degrees at George Washington University School of Law and from the law school at the University of New Mexico. He was admitted to the New Mexico bar in 1958. Chuck specialized in real estate, estate planning, land grants and school law. He was one of the original members of the Santa Fe chapter of B’nai Brith, Temple Beth Shalom, and Congregation Beit Tikva. He will be remembered as a stalwart of the Santa Fe Jewish community, a

loyal husband to his late wife of 54 years, a loving father, and a champion of good causes. ★

(IN MEMORIAM continued on p. 10)

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IN MEMORIAM - (continued from p. 9)

Leona Hurst

by Stan Hordes and Claire Grossman

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society suffered a tremendous loss with the passing of long-time member Leona Hurst on January 21, at age 89. A native of Denver, Leona and her husband, Dr. Allan Hurst, moved to Santa Fe in 1983, where Allan served as one of the founders of the NMJHS in 1986. With Allan's death in 1989, Leona took his seat on the Society's Board of Directors, and played an active role in the organization for the next decade. Among her other duties, she served on the committee to select the recipient of the Dr. Allan Hurst Award, given annually to

people or organizations who have contributed to New Mexico Jewish history, culture, and community over a substantial period of time.

Leona graciously offered her lovely home to host many board meetings and also the annual Membership Meetings for many years. She devoted countless hours to ensure the success of Society programs and especially to add her creative talents to help make the refreshment table look stunning at the annual Archives Reception at the State Records Center and Archives. In addition to her contributions

to the Society, Leona was an avid collector of antiques and volunteered with the Wheelwright Museum and the Santa Fe Opera.

The Society appreciates Leona's long dedication to New Mexico Jewish history and to the Society. Those who had the privilege of working closely with her will miss her very, very much. To honor Leona's memory, the Society is accepting donations, which will be earmarked for the annual event during which the Dr. Allan Hurst Award is presented. ★

Robert J. Nordhaus

by Henry Tobias

On February 22, 2007, Robert J. Nordhaus, a descendant of one of the best known pioneer Jewish families in New Mexico passed away in Albuquerque. Blessed with the resources to do remarkable things, he fulfilled the promise visited upon him.

Robert was born in 1909 in Las Vegas, New Mexico, the son of Max and Bertha Staab Nordhaus. The family moved to Albuquerque in 1911 when that city became the central locale for the Charles Ilfeld Company under the leadership of Max Nordhaus. Charles Ilfeld was Max Nordhaus's brother-in-law, having married Adele Nordhaus, Max's sister.

Robert attended Albuquerque schools. Upon completion of his early education, he was sent East to Phillips Andover Academy and to Yale University to complete an undergraduate degree in economics. He then took a law degree at Yale in 1935 and devoted his occupational life to lawyering in

New Mexico. For some years he served as an attorney in the family business, then established his own independent law firm.

While at college, Robert developed an interest in skiing, which he transferred to the mountains of New Mexico. He was a key figure in the creation of the Sandia Peak Ski and Tram Basin in the early sixties and also advised the Santa Fe developers in their effort to develop a ski run there. New Mexico recognized his work, admitting him to the state's Tourism Hall of Fame in 1998.

Robert also labored diligently on behalf of the Apache Indians, representing some 40 communities in their legal struggles. The tribe showed its appreciation for his labors by making him an honorary member.

Robert belonged to the Reform wing of Judaism and for many years was a member of

Temple Albert, just as his ancestors had been members of Congregation Montefiore in Las Vegas.

Robert was active in many civic functions. He served on the Albuquerque Planning Commission and the Albuquerque Community Development Service. He was also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Albuquerque Academy. He supported the work of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society with interviews that enriched our knowledge of his family and, thereby, our Jewish history in New Mexico.

He is survived by his wife Marjorie, his children, stepchildren, and nine grandchildren. He is an example of the value that prominent families conferred upon the whole Jewish Community, and his passing leaves memories we all can cherish and admire. ★

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Arthur Kurzweil - (continued from p. 3)

Kurzweil admits from that point on he was hooked. He told his rapt audience that he was able to locate the passenger list for the *Vaderland*, the ship that brought his grandmother to America. "This is my Mayflower," he proclaimed, holding a copy of the document for the audience to see.

During his many years of research he has been able to go back in history to the 1700s on his father's side of the family and to the 1500s on his mother's side, which includes some prominent rabbis. He also is finding living relations of those ancestors and has personally made contact with some 840 cousins alive today. A cardinal rule of family history research is to share your findings, Kurzweil says, which he does with his new-found ex-

tended family. He shares photographs, stories, and the history of his ancestors.

We learn Jewish history by learning what happened to our own ancestors. "We are the result of Jewish history, says Arthur Kurzweil. "We are one more link in the chain."

Besides genealogy, Kurzweil is passionate about magic and Talmud. He combined those interests in a workshop later that afternoon called "Searching for God in a Magic Shop." The audience learned that the most famous phrase in stage magic – abracadabra – has Jewish roots. Kurzweil told the audience that the most famous magician of all, Harry Houdini, was born Eric Weiss, a rabbi's son.

While Jewish tradition frowns on magic and wizardry, rabbinic law permits sleight of hand as long as the entertainer makes no claim to have special power. In Kurzweil's mind both magic and Judaism require a faith in the unknown and an inquisitive and open mind. He invited members of the audience to help him perform tricks with a deck of cards, numbers, and postage stamps, tying each into a story about a concept in Torah, Talmud, or Jewish history.

Arthur Kurzweil will return to New Mexico this summer to participate in Aleph Kallah, a biennial convocation of the Jewish Renewal Movement, from July 2-8 on the campus of the University of New Mexico. ★

Getting the Most Out of Census Records - (continued from p. 7)

have spoken the same language. Then there is always the problem of ink splashes spilled on vital pieces of information, water and mold destruction of the paper, fading ink – just some of the additional frustrations encountered when you consult these documents. But all of that being said, census documents are still sources of important information.

Accessing the U.S. Census is not that difficult. You will find repositories on the Internet, in Family History Centers of the Mormon Church, the Special Collections Center in Albuquerque, local genealogy societies, and other libraries. Seek out advice from someone in your area who has some experience. Spending the time to find census records about your family is well worth the effort, and you will no doubt be pleased with your results.

Nancy Greenberg is an amateur genealogist in Albuquerque. She became involved in researching her family history after retirement from a professional nursing career. She is active in local genealogy societies and is often called upon to teach on topics related to family history. She became involved in this pursuit after an NMJHS trip to Salt Lake City in 1998. ★

Mission Statement

The mission of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society is to promote greater understanding and knowledge of New Mexico's Jewish history. The Society's programs examine the state's Jewish heritage in all its diversity and strive to present this heritage within a broad cultural context. The Society is a secular organization and solicits the membership and participation of all interested people, regardless of religious affiliation.

Roundup - (continued from p. 4)

And to the victors belong the spoils! The well-endowed Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington, D.C.'s grant proposal was chosen out of hundreds of submissions to the National Endowment for the Humanities. They will receive \$40,000.

The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan is sponsoring a Jewish Heritage Tour of New Mexico from April 26 - May 2, 2007. Members will visit Santa Fe, Taos, and Albuquerque to experience the "remarkable Jewish history and multi-cultural heritage." New Mexico Jewish Historical Society members will host the Michigan contingent. ★

W A N T E D

Volunteer to serve as
Public Relations Officer

Duties: create and disseminate publicity to appropriate media for NMJHS events, design posters, rewrite Society brochure, and create materials to attract new members to the organization. Contact Harold Melnick at 505-466-2376 or harold.melnick@comcast.net.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Sunday, April 29, 10:15 a.m., "A Star Hidden in the Backlands," Brazilian documentary, The Film Center at Cinemacafe, 1616 St. Michael's Drive, Santa Fe, St. Michael's Village West Shopping Center. Film commentary will be provided by Judieth Fein, travel journalist, performer, and film-maker. Box office opens at 9:30. Ticket price includes lunch: \$12 NMJHS members, \$15 nonmembers, \$10 full-time students. Reservations with check or credit card to NMJHS, 5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109, leave telephone message at 505-348-4471.

Sunday, May 6, 10 a.m., Montefiore Cemetery Annual Cleanup, Las Vegas, New Mexico. Caravan departing from Temple Beth Shalom, 205 Barcelona Road, Santa Fe at 8:45 a.m. For further information, call Gunther Aron at 505-438-0738.

Wednesday, May 2, 5:30 p.m., Literary memorial for author and poet Carol Bergé, Fray Angélico Chávez History Library, 120 Washington Avenue, Santa Fe. Readings from *Antics*, a book about antique dealers in Santa Fe. Limited seating. Reservations: phone Shirley Jacobson, 505-989-8966.

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