



Legacy

Newsletter of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society

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Low Wallace's Jewish Connections

by Noel H. Pugach

Civil War general, Territorial Governor of New Mexico, U.S. minister to the Ottoman Empire, Hoosier legislator, Republican politician, and prolific author: Lew Wallace (1827 - 1905) was all of these things and more. In his long and varied career, Lew Wallace developed a number of interesting connections with Jews and Jewish issues.

Although most people do not know that Wallace wrote it, they have at least heard of his best-selling novel, *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, which has been made into a number of films and stage plays. Like his first romantic novel, *The Fair God*, the story of Cortez and Montezuma, Wallace utilized in *Ben-Hur* big, bold themes stressing adventure, bravery, combat, and the clash of civilizations.

The novel tells the story of Judah Ben-Hur, who came from a prominent Jewish merchant family in Roman-ruled Judea in the early first

century, C.E. Judah was wrongfully accused by his former friend



Lew Wallace as portrayed by Noel Pugach at a Chautauqua.

Messala of trying to assassinate the hated procurator; Judah was then enslaved and his mother and sister were arrested.

After many adventures, Judah wins his freedom, becomes a warrior and skilled chariot racer, and returns to Judea during the reign of Pontius Pilate. In due order, Judah defeats his enemy Messala in a chariot race, regains his fortune, rescues his mother and sister, marries a beautiful woman, and accepts Jesus as the Messiah as he is led to his crucifixion.

In no way is *Ben-Hur* an anti-Jewish work. Wallace, indeed, wrote

sympathetically about the plight of the Jews under Rome's oppressive rule. He depicted Jews and, notably, the rabbis in a favorable light. Wallace read extensively about Jewish history, especially during that time period, and made painstaking efforts to learn about the geography, topography, botany, and architecture of the Land of Israel. He spent hundreds of hours in the Library of Congress doing research.

Wallace had done the same thing in writing his first novel. Since he had not visited the Land of Israel, Lew relied on contemporary travel accounts and interviewed people who visited the region. The flaw was that Palestine had undergone great changes since the first century on account of neglect and warfare. Wallace also made a number of factual errors (about Hillel, for example) and misunderstood some aspects of the emerging Rabbinic Judaism. But he tried and had to rely on the limited scholarship of the day.

Ironically for a book that celebrated the coming of Christ, the author was not a church-goer or much of
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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.

The deadline for submitting articles for the December issue of Legacy is November 20.

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Message from President Harold Melnick

The past couple of months have been busy for NMJHS. Our major event was the unique Workshop on Jewish Genetic Diseases in the Hispanic Population of New Mexico, which took place in Albuquerque in early August. The workshop, organized by Stan Hordes, brought together physicians, geneticists, genealogists, and anthropologists for a unique opportunity to exchange information and views.

The significance of this workshop is indicated by the substantial financial support that made it possible, provided by the Genzyme Corp. and the New Mexico Community Foundation. (Genzyme produces the only medication available to treat Gaucher disease, a genetic disorder that occurs in about 1 in 50,000 people worldwide but in about 1 in 450 among Ashkenazi Jews.)

The NMJHS workshop was held immediately before the annual meeting of the Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies, of which Stan is a founding member and active participant. Dr. Nurit Patt and her husband Dr. Yehuda Patt have prepared an article about the genetic diseases workshop that you will find in this issue.

Bob Gale, our new treasurer, has been Hercules cleaning out the stables. While our financial records were in reasonable control, a number of important but complicated govern-

ment reports were needed, and Bob has done a yeoman's job of preparing and submitting the reports, so that the Society is now current with its reporting. He is also looking at ways to streamline and better organize our banking and accounting. Great job, Bob!

The Society has three new Life Members: Claire Grossman, who has been a long-time, active member and past-president of the Society, and Drs. Yehuda and Nurit Patt. Thank you to these members for both their generous financial support of and participation in the Society's activities.

I invite you to participate in two upcoming events. One is our annual genealogy workshop coming up in Albuquerque on October 14, organized by Dorothy Amsden. Another is an invitation to participate in a meeting of the Texas Jewish Historical Society in Amarillo, October 5 - 7, for which NMJHS historian Noel Pugach will be guest speaker at the evening banquet. If you enjoy attending the NMJHS fall annual conference, mark your 2008 calendar for a joint conference with the Texas Jewish Historical Society in El Paso on October 24 - 26, 2008.

Lance Bell is seeking films to be shown at NMJHS film events. If

you have ideas for events or activities you would like to see the Society develop, please contact one of our board members; member-involvement is vital for the future of the Society.

A note of apology: because of errors in our membership records, some members received a notice that their membership had expired when in fact it had not. Our apology to those members. I believe

the records are now correct, but if anyone at any time thinks there is an error, please notify our administrator, Debra Blackerby, or me. ☆



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Sonya Loya and the Colors of Joy

by Win Jacobs

Over the past 20 years or so an interesting phenomenon has been taking place here in New Mexico as some Hispanic residents are discovering their crypto-Jewish roots. Their ancestors, who came to the Rio Grande Valley centuries ago to evade the Inquisition, outwardly practiced Catholicism, but secretly kept Jewish ritual, vestiges of which passed down through the generations.

When Hispanos learn that their family has Jewish roots there are many reactions. Some think this is all very interesting and continue to embrace the Catholicism or Protestantism they grew up with. Others have intuitions that they have always been Jewish, but just didn't know it.

Some go through an identity crisis that leads them to return to Judaism, either through an affirmation ceremony or a conversion. Others choose messianic Protestant religions or messianic Judaism. Whatever course they choose to take, this is a challenging journey of self-awareness that can take many years. In the June 2007 issue of Legacy we told the story of Consuelo Luz. In this issue we follow the journey of Sonya Loya.

Jacob honored his beloved youngest son Joseph with a gift of great richness, a coat of many colors. Stories, like coats, are enriched by the weaving together of many variegated strands. Such a story is that of Sonya Loya and the Bat-Tzion Hebrew Learning Center in Ruidoso, New Mexico.

This daughter of Zion grew up in a practicing Catholic home in Ruidoso, married and moved to Dallas. In time she divorced and moved, with her young daughter, back to Ruidoso. There Sonya pursued her glass artistry, taking as her special medium dichroic glass. Developed by NASA, dichroic glass is spun under high pressure with 20 layers of vaporized mineral salts sprayed on with ion guns; by refraction the look and colors change at different angles. How profoundly symbolic her chosen medium was to become: through great pressure, variegated glory.

Ten years ago Sonya opened Hosanna! Gallery, to showcase her own art and that of others, on Ruidoso's Sudderth Street. In March 2003, Bill Radcliffe did the first Torah reading in the Bat-Tzion Hebrew Learning Center, located in the other half of the gallery. Soon thereafter he began coming weekly, and folks came in increasing numbers, drawn chiefly by

word of mouth: "there is this place in Ruidoso...." They came from Alam-



Sonya Loya

ogordo, from Roswell, from Tularosa and Socorro and San Antonio, New Mexico. As many as 78 people congregated to do Shabbat, to learn the prayers and rituals in Hebrew.

From those beginnings came the Bat-Tzion of today, where on first Fridays there is a kabbalat Shabbat dinner, and monthly speakers — such as Harry Ezratty, the Spanish practicing attorney and renowned authority on Sephardic history and the Inquisition (through which his own ancestors passed).

Nor is learning restricted to Sephardic issues; Ashkenazi Jews will find resources pertaining to history, family history (including DNA testing if de-

sired), and general scholarship. The emphasis is upon reclaiming and growing one's Jewish heart and heritage.

How has this come to be, deep in the Sacramento Mountains of New Mexico, home of quarter-horse aficionados, Mescaleros, and native mountain men, and host to legions of Texas tourists?

In the beginning were dreams and an evolving vision. During Sonya's Dallas years, she had what she describes as a "divine encounter." Waking from a frightening dream, "I called out to God, and felt or heard a response: 'Always be guided by truth and truth will be revealed.'" She felt like warm water had washed her clean. "I knew

(continued on p. 7)

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GENEALOGY CORNER: Reconnecting the Rosen and Bell Families

by Helene Rosen

Lance Bell is an active NMJHS member, past president of the Society, and a young family man well-known in Santa Fe. See the article on him in the May 2004 issue, available on the NMJHS web site. Originally Bell was Belicer/Belitzer.

Lance Bell and I are cousins. But we don't know how we are related. That information was known a generation ago, but now it is lost. As the family genealogist I want to figure it out again. Lance's family moved to New Mexico in 1915 and eventually established Bell's Department Store on San Francisco Street. My family moved to California in 1935 from Pittsburgh after a cold winter.

Our families came from Merkine, Lithuania, a small shtetl near Vilna. Lance learned this vital piece of information from his grandfather Morris Bell. In the year 1900, the Jewish population in Merkine was 1900. My grandmother Mary Rosen, her mother Sarah, and two of Mary's sisters left in 1899. They traveled by ship to Baltimore. One of my grandmother's sisters remembered seeing soldiers returning from the Spanish-American War when they arrived. From Baltimore they

traveled to Pittsburgh where they met up with my great grandfather Louis Rosen and two of his children who had emigrated earlier at different times.

I have two 90+ year-old twin cousins, still alive, Irma and Myrna, who remember visiting their New Mexico relatives during the 1930s. They corresponded with Marcia Hertzmark Freed of Albuquerque (now deceased) until the 1990s, but they too have forgotten what the relationship is. They do recall that it was this cousin who informed the family that Merkine had been wiped out by the Nazis and that no one was left. They suspect that a cousin of Sarah's is the link to the New Mexico group.

Now I enter the picture. I have always been interested in genealogy. I developed a family tree containing over 850 names. Then I let it rest for a while before renewing my interest two years ago. Using the Internet, I was able to

add over 300 more names to my tree. But Lance's family is not added. I don't know how to connect them.

Recently I made a major discovery. The one thing I wanted to know most had been the most elusive. I wanted to find my grandmother Mary's steamship record from that journey to Baltimore. I had thoroughly searched Ancestry.com to no avail. I spent hours looking for Mary Rosen, her mother Sarah, and the two sisters. I tried different years, different ports even though I knew it had to have been Baltimore, anything I could think of . . . I just didn't know what else to do.

This past July I attended the IAJGS (International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies) Conference in Salt Lake City. It was a week full of fascinating speakers, movies, and special events. That conference location *(continued on p. 8)*



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Lew Wallace's Jewish Connections - (continued from p. 1)

a Christian, as he admitted. Wallace vaguely accepted the divinity of Jesus, and he was enamored by the story of the Three Kings bearing gifts for Jesus (as told in the Gospel of Matthew, 2). In fact, Wallace originally intended to spin a good yarn about Judah Ben-Hur and the conflict with the Romans, and only as an afterthought did he add the story of the Three Kings in a long introduction.

I have not come across any criticism of Wallace by rabbis or Jewish leaders at the time of *Ben-Hur*'s publication. In writing the novel, Wallace was actually more concerned about the reaction from Christians because *Ben-Hur* was the first novel to depict Jesus as a character. But Wallace handled him delicately and respectfully. After a slow start, sales increased dramatically; it probably sold more copies in nineteenth century America than even *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Wallace finished writing *Ben-Hur* in the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, where he served as territorial governor of New Mexico (1878 - 1881). Wallace's term as governor was filled with crises, difficulties, and controversy: the violent Lincoln County War and the escapades of Billy the Kid, the bloody Apache attacks led by Victorio, battles with the recalcitrant, bickering, and parsimonious legislature, and the political and business activities of the notorious Santa Fe Ring.

Under these circumstances, Wallace buried himself in his novel and for relief sought the company of the tiny, educated, and sophisticated Anglo elite in Santa Fe. These included the Archbishop Jean Lamy, Adolph Bandler, and leading Jewish merchant families, notably the Spiegelbergs and the Staabs. Although the coming of the railroad to New Mexico would begin Santa Fe's commercial decline (it bypassed the capital city), these

years were still the heyday of early Jewish merchant princes.

Lew was a frequent guest at their homes, especially after his temperamental and opinionated wife, Susan, returned home to Indiana for the remainder of Lew's tenure. Susan disliked New Mexico intensely, its dust, food, outlaws, the raw frontier, and Santa Fe's mud houses. Flora, Willi Spiegelberg's cultured, French-speaking, and talented wife, reputedly set the finest table in Santa Fe, though the Staabs might dispute that loudly. Wallace and the famous archbishop welcomed Flora's invitations.

Flora tells this tale, almost certainly apocryphal, about her bid to help Wallace publish *Ben-Hur* and profit from it. One day, Flora passed by the Palace of the Governors and saw Lew at his desk. Through an open window, he told her that he had just completed *Ben-Hur*. Flora then offered to pay the postage for the bulky manuscript in return for a share of the royalties. Lew politely (and wisely) declined. Soon afterwards Lew traveled to New York to deliver the manuscript in person to his publisher, Harper & Bros.

Flora had a fertile and creative mind, and she wrote and published numerous stories that were based on a tiny reed of fact. There may be more substance to the story that before Wallace left Santa Fe for his new position as U.S. minister to the Ottoman Empire, Willi Spiegelberg asked him not to forget the Jewish people, who struggled against persecution and discrimination for centuries.

Soon after he was installed in his post in Constantinople, Wallace remembered the modern-day Children of Israel and came to their rescue in his own small way. Jewish refugees from the terrible pogroms of the early 1880s fled from Russia and Romania. While many fled to

the west and America, some, especially the poorest, made their way overland to Syria and Palestine. The declining Ottoman regime did not welcome Christians or Jews settling in its realm, especially paupers who had no papers and came from its great enemy, Russia. The Jews were illegal immigrants and the Ottoman authorities ordered their expulsion.

Minister Wallace, using his close personal ties to the Sultan, intervened. He succeeded in obtaining a reprieve for the Jews and assisted in getting relief supplies to the starving refugees. Wallace also sympathized with the early efforts to purchase the land for Jewish colonization, but thought it impractical at the time. The rabbis in Jerusalem again called upon Wallace to stop the dismissal of Joseph Krieger, who had been named Governmental Secretary for Palestine.

There is no evidence that Wallace intervened in this case. Nevertheless Wallace was presented with a beautiful hand-made scroll, thanking him for his good deeds and proclaiming him "as the champion of the oppressed and persecuted." The inscription assured him that "the name Wallace will always be pronounced in profoundest veneration by the Jews and the memory of your kindness will be perpetuated with them."

Lew Wallace therefore was a student of Jewish history and current affairs. In time of need, he proved to be a valuable friend of the Jews.

Noel Pugach is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of New Mexico. In his retirement he continues to study Jewish pioneer families in the Southwest. For 25 years he has been presenting Chautauqua performances. Currently he portrays Harry Truman, Lew Wallace, John Steinbeck, and Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise. ☆

Jewish Genetic Diseases in Southwest U.S. Hispanic Populations – Workshop Retrospective

by Nurit & Yehuda Patt

Jewish heritage may be manifested in various manners. These may include overt membership and participation in traditional Jewish life or subtle expressions of having had a Jewish ancestry, maintained in family traditions, family legends, and obscure, little-understood family customs passed on from generation to generation, not infrequently in a secretive manner. Another manifestation of possession of a Jewish heritage may be completely unknown to individuals, as their only link may be through their genes.

On August 5, 2007, the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society held an interdisciplinary workshop at the Albuquerque Doubletree Hotel entitled “Jewish Genetic Diseases and Their Presence among Hispanic Populations in the U.S. Southwest.”

The meeting featured prominent experts from the fields of history, anthropology, medicine, genetics, and genetic counseling. The speakers were Stan Hordes, PhD; Angela Scheurle, MD; Paul Duncan, MD; Kristine Bordenave, MD; Seth Kunin, PhD; Sharon Graw, PhD; and Teresa Castellano, MS.

A historical perspective, presented by Professor Stan Hordes, dealt with monumental events that are inextricably linked to the conquest of Spain by the Christian monarchs. These events include the subsequent expulsions and/or forced conversions of the Jews in the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the 15th century (1492 in Spain and 1498 in Portugal) and the travails of the Conversos in these countries and in Nueva España (Mexico) in subsequent centuries.

The speakers tried to identify what are “Jewish Diseases” and whether the genetic mutations that are specifically linked to a specific disease could be tracked down.

Since the major difference between Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews stems from their respective residences under Christendom or Islam, a serious question was raised as to whether there could be genetic differences that could be associated with diseases in one group or the other. Several diseases have a higher prevalence among Jews, including Tay-Sachs and Gaucher’s disease, mostly among Jews of Ashkenazic descent.

Several genetic mutations that result in the emergence of “cancer genes” (BRCA I and BRCA II), are also more prevalent among Jews. Another example is a skin disease named Pemphigus Vulgaris that has a prevalence of 0.5 per 100,000 in the general population and prevalence four to eight times higher among Jews.

Some of these ailments may be traced back to the relocation of Conversos who were persecuted by the “Holy Inquisition” in Mexico and their flight to Northern New Mexico. Dr. Sharon Graw from the Eleanor Roosevelt In-

stitute in Colorado is tracking cancer genes such as the BRCA causing breast and ovarian cancers among Hispanics in the San Luis Valley in Colorado.

Knowing a person’s heritage helps in identifying individuals at increased risk of developing cancer and in employing early-detection techniques to treat and resect the tumor at an early stage.

The audience participated in lively discussions during a Q & A session following the presentations. It became evident that further research was needed to answer additional questions.

The workshop was funded by grants from Genzyme, The Kaiserman Family Foundation, and Connie Robinson through the New Mexico Community Foundation.

Drs. Nurit and Yehuda Patt are both physicians, a psychiatrist and an oncologist, respectively. Originally from Israel, they moved to Houston, Texas, 33 years ago, where they raised three sons and a daughter and led a very active Jewish life. Three years ago they moved to New Mexico, where Yehuda Patt heads the Gastro-Intestinal oncology research program at the UNM Cancer Research and Treatment Center. Nurit continues to work as a psychiatrist in Texas and New Mexico. ☆

Correction

The article on the Montefiore Cemetery cleanup in the June 2007 issue of *Legacy* stated that Marvin Taichert passed away in 2001. The correct year is 2002.

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Sonya Loya - (continued from p. 3)

I needed to find my own truth.” Nor was this so strange to this woman who remembers clearly that, as a child of three or four, she would go outside to swing and talk to God.

Sonya was married to a “very Christian” man and feeling restricted, less and less comfortable in her social life, in herself, nowhere at home, everywhere strange. Back home in Ruidoso, having left that Dallas life, she began dreaming. Awake, she wrote down passages from the dreams, searched for sources — and found them in Torah and Tanach.

For years, many of Sonya’s acquaintances had been Jewish. She remembers from the age of 18 feeling drawn to Judaism — but she was a practicing Catholic, ill-at-ease but anchored by habit. Now, as an independent adult, she grew more active in her search. She attended her first Jewish conference in Glorieta, New Mexico, and “it felt like coming home.” The conference was of the messianic Jewish movement; it was the Hebrew language, the sense of community that spoke to her, and she wanted more and more.

Dr. Danny ben Gigi became a mentor. In turn, ben Gigi introduced her to Bill Radcliffe who became another, closer mentor. Sonya had also become engaged to Damon, a deep

and thoughtful man, a multi-linguist whose favorite language was Hebrew. Together, in October 2002, they filed the paperwork establishing a learning center — despite Damon’s suffering for the past three years from cancer.

Sonya affirms that she and her fiancé had found their “instructions” in Isaiah 58, especially verses 12 and 14:

Those from among you shall build the old vast places;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
and you shall be called “Repairer of the Breach,
the Restorer of Streets to dwell in.”

Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord;
and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth,
and feed you with the heritage of Jacob,
your father.
The mouth of the Lord hath spoke.

In October 2002, Sonya and Damon filed the paperwork to establish the learning center. Damon died in December 2002.

One year later, the day after Damon’s memorial service, Sonya and her parents had THE conversation. The Loyas were longtime Ruidoso residents, well known and very involved in the community as business people, as Catholics. Sonya needed them to know where she was heading.

That conversation with her parents proved a touchstone. Her father “had known ‘since [he was] five or six’ that he was Jewish.” Hard to say whose jaw dropped

further, Sonya’s or her mother’s. Why had he never said anything? The child had been fiercely sworn to secrecy, and the grown man had maintained it until now. Sonya and her strong, supportive mother began doing shabbat together.

Bat-Tzion’s door opened in January 2003. Not only did Bill Radcliffe begin that March to do Torah services but he also mentored Sonya’s individual study. Sonya remembers somewhat ruefully the abrupt drop in attendance — from a high of 78 to “maybe 5 or 6” that followed her honest answer: she and the Center were Jews, but not for Jesus. Whether hidden from others or from themselves, making possible the return of crypto-Jews would be Bat-Tzion’s mission.

Radcliffe soon introduced her to Rabbi Leon, of Congregation B’nai Zion in El Paso, and Rabbi Leon introduced her to Dr. Stanley Hordes; both men are well known for their work with and their scholarship concerning the hidden Jews, particularly in the Southwest. The growing outreach of Bat-Tzion has been nurtured by the close association of these three individuals.

In spring of 2007, Bat-Tzion Hebrew Learning Center held a special shabbaton, with guest Cantor Buzzy Gordon of Los Angeles who came “to help us celebrate, study, and prepare for the upcoming Jewish holidays and observances over the summer.” August 10 - 12, 2007, the Learning Center sponsored, in conjunction with Congregation B’nai Zion, the 4th annual Sephardic Anusim* Conference, in El Paso. August 14 - 15, “Paradising Our Lives” was the theme of another (continued on p. 9)

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GENEALOGY CORNER - (continued from p. 4)

had been selected because of the superb Mormon research facility for genealogists called the Family History Library.

Before I left for the conference, I learned that the Jewish records from Merkine had been microfilmed and were indeed at the library. The problem was that they were in 100+ year-old Russian handwriting. I looked at them anyway and even with indices in the Latin alphabet, I was unable to find the Rosen family that I was looking for.

One attendee at the conference was the renowned Stephen P. Morse, whose website www.stevemorse.org is an enormous help because it allows you to search for records in "one step". I had not tried using his site before, and upon returning home I decided to give it a shot.

So I entered all my known information and up popped what I had been looking for all these years! But there was a catch that explained why I had never been able to find the records before. When the father and then the two older children had traveled a few years earlier they had used the last name Rosen, the only name I knew for the family. When my grandmother and her party traveled, they used a name that I was totally unfamiliar with.

The records were located with this search because the Steve Morse site linked my inquiry to the name Louis Rosen, the person they were meeting in Pittsburgh, at an address that I was already familiar with. Age and sex matched for all four female travelers. It was a match without a doubt.

I couldn't believe that I had found, at last, what I had been searching for.

So now I know the original family name, Paretzki. There had always been some question

about the name the family went by in Europe. It was thought that it might not have been Rosen. It might have been something else that no one remembered. This turned out to be correct. And now I know the original first names of all four travelers. I had only known my grandmother as Mary. Now I know her original name had been Mascha. Upon telling my nonagenarian cousin Irma of the discovery, she said yes, that sounds right, sounds familiar.

Armed with this information, perhaps I can go back to those records from Merkine. Now I know what to look for. Perhaps I can find someone who reads Russian to help me find the Paretzki family. Perhaps I can find Sarah and her cousin, the one who may be a Bell family ancestor. Perhaps we can reconnect our families again.

Helene Rosen says that Rosen is both her maiden name and married name. She is related to Lance Bell through her female line. When she is not doing genealogy, Helene is a departmental coordinator for a large security company. She lives in Agoura Hills, California, and is the mother of three fine young men. She belongs to two Jewish genealogy societies, one in Los Angeles, the other in the Conejo Valley where she serves as membership vice president. In her spare time, you can find her playing mah jongg or pan. ☆



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Sonya Loya - (continued from p. 7)

conference, at the Learning Center. At both, workshop leaders were leaders in scholarship and spirituality.

Always the intent is to offer the Center as resource and gathering place for any and all seeking understanding through Torah. Sonya herself is drawn to Kabbalah, feeling the intersections on her path so far have been so non-random. From the 11th century to the Edict of Expulsion, Kabbalists were of the Sephardic tradition, and she wonders if the connection may be genetic. Books on dreams and other subjects mystical rest on the Center's shelves side by side with Hannukah gelt and coloring books and biographies.

In the gallery, display cases hold lovely jewelry. Breeze-blown mobile creations are hung in the windows that front on Sudderth Street. The visitor must go outside in the sunlight to appreciate the multi-colored, many-compressed layered fluidity of design in the dichroic glass of Sonya's art. Like her art, her life and the Bat-Tzion Hebrew Learning Center, with its offered resources of stuff and study, are indeed analagous to Joseph's coat of many colors — gorgeous to behold, rich to the touch, protective of body and soul.

* Anusim is the Hebrew term for forced Jewish converts in Spain and Portugal.

Win Jacobs is a free-lance writer and editor who moved to Las Cruces in 1994. She taught English in community colleges in New York and Virginia; started an office products business, which she ran with her late husband for 23 years; and served as editor of the Dona Ana County Historical Society's newsletter, the Southern New Mexico Historical Review. She is a member of Temple Beth El, serving a term on the Board where she focused on social action. She has published in SNMHR and in Serape, an anthology sponsored by New Mexico State University. ☆

In Memory of Rabbi Abraham Klausner

Rabbi Abraham Klausner died at his home in Santa Fe on June 28 at the age of 92. As a U.S. Army chaplain, he was the first Jewish rabbi to enter liberated concentration camps during World War II. Known for his activism with Holocaust survivors, he authored a book on the subject

called *A Letter to My Children*. He was featured in an Academy Award-winning documentary, *The Long Way Home*.

Born on April 27, 1915, Rabbi Klausner graduated from the University of Denver in 1938 and from Hebrew

Union College in 1941. For 25 years he led the Temple Emanu-El in Yonkers, New York. The rabbi and his wife Judith retired to Santa Fe a number of years ago, where they were active in the Jewish community. He is survived by his wife, four children, and two grandchildren.

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society and the Texas Jewish Historical Society are planning a joint meeting in El Paso on October 24 - 26, 2008. Details will be worked out over the summer.

Meanwhile, the Texas Jewish Historical Society invites NMJHS members to attend its semi-annual meeting in Amarillo, October 5-7. Noel Pugach will deliver a paper at the banquet on the Loewenstern family that began in Nara Vista, New Mexico, and moved to Amarillo in 1929. Noel has interviewed descendants of the family in Amarillo. For further information, contact Robert and Jo Ann Holt, datatek@arn.net, 806-355-2287.

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October Genealogy Workshop

by Dorothy Corner Amsden

Back in February, New Mexico had the privilege of hosting Arthur Kurzweil as keynote speaker for the annual event "A Taste of Honey." He told his spellbound audience that "genealogy is more than names and dates on a chart . . . Each person who is doing Jewish genealogical research, whether or not he or she acknowledges it, is responding to an inner yearning for a connection to our heritage." When we research our ancestors we end up learning more than just names and dates, we come to see the bigger picture of the towns they lived in and the history, geography, and culture that shaped their lives.

Once a year NMJHS offers a workshop in exploring your Jewish roots. Whether your roots lie in northern and eastern Europe, the Mediterranean region, or the Middle East, this workshop is for you, whatever your level of experience. Beginners will learn how to start their search. Experienced genealogists will have the opportunity to meet with one another and form a support network.

This year's workshop will be in Albuquerque on October 14 at the Jewish Community Center. Two experienced genealogists, Barry Gaines and Stan Hordes, will welcome a combined session and then break up into two groups, one with interests in Ashkena-

zic genealogy, the other in Sephardic genealogy.

Professor Barry Gaines plans to focus on accessing records for Ashkenazic, or eastern European Jews. His father and his grandparents are all from what is now Ukraine. He has done genealogical research at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, the Library of Congress, the British Library, and in Ukraine. In 1994 he visited his father's and grandparents' birthplaces in the former Soviet Union, and his memoir "Swimming in the Sea of Azov," was published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* [39 (2006): 101-112]. Professor Gaines has taught

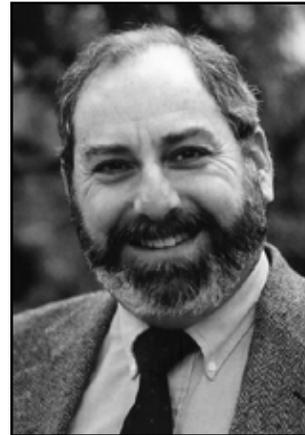


Barry Gaines

Shakespeare at the University of New Mexico for twenty-eight years. He is also the theater critic for the *Albuquerque Journal*.

Professor Stan Hordes will focus on Sephardic and crypto-Judaic roots in his part of the workshop. An adjunct professor of history at the University of New Mexico, Professor Hordes recently published *To the End of the Earth*, a history of New Mexico's crypto-Jews. For this book Dr. Hordes conducted extensive interviews as well as archival research in New Mexico, Mexico, Spain, and Portugal to establish the genealogy of several New Mexico Hispanic families. Cur-

rently Dr. Hordes is studying crypto-Jews in the Caribbean. He says his family name originally was Chodosch, and that his family roots extend to Lithuania and Ukraine. In the spring of 2005 he visited ancestral towns in Lithuania and Latvia.



Stan Hordes

This year's workshop, Exploring Your Jewish Roots, will be held on Sunday afternoon, October 14, 2007, from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center, at 5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE in Albuquerque. The advance registration fee before October 8 is \$10 for NMJHS members

and \$15 for non-members. Registration at the door is \$15 for NMJHS members and \$20 for non-members. For further information, telephone 505-662-6398 or go to www.jewishnewmexico.org for a registration form.

Dorothy Amsden is a retired technical writer and editor who wears several hats in NMJHS. She currently serves as vice president, genealogy chair, and newsletter editor. ✧

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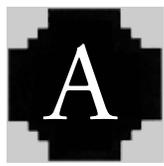
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Huge Book Sale

by Dorothy Corner Amsden



Labor Day weekend tradition in Santa Fe, the NMJHS Book & Etc. sale is a major fund-raising event for the Society.

It takes place each year, thanks to the organizational abilities of Shirley Jacobson, a local book dealer in rare and Southwest books, also a past president of the Society, with much assistance from board member Sheila Gershen, a free-lance editor.

Over the year Shirley and Sheila accept and store donated books, then mark, categorize, and display them for an eager corps of knowledgeable bargain hunters. The annual book sale is particularly noted for fine arts books, which come from the Santa Fe Museum of Fine Arts and sell for ridiculously low prices.

“Huge Book Sale” proclaimed a message on a highly visible sign at the intersection of St. Francis Drive and Cerrillos Road. Details gave location and sponsorship. The signboard belongs to the New Mexico School for the Deaf, which allows it to be used for announcements of community and cultural events. NMJHS is grateful to Frances Roibal at the school for posting the notice. This is a great help in getting word out about the book sale to the public each year.

Wild Oats Natural Marketplace on St. Francis Drive allowed NMJHS to use its Community Room for the sixth year

in a row. The spacious room is located behind the store facing Córdova Road and has ample parking right at the door. This is an ideal location for a book sale, and we appreciate their generosity.

The first day of the book sale people start lining up at the door about an hour before the event begins. When the doors open at 10, dozens and dozens rush in, many of them Santa Fe book dealers looking for collector’s items at bargain prices. Those first few hours on Saturday morning are the busiest time; afterwards everything calms down. On Sunday a good number of items remain,



Veterans of the annual NMJHS book sale, Sheila Gershen (left) and Shirley Jacobson (right) soldier on in spite of an injured back (Sheila) and broken ankle (Shirley).

marked down to half the amount from Saturday’s prices.

This year there were more than 75 cartons of donated books stored in Sheila’s garage that had to be transported to the Wild Oats Community Room. In addition to snapping up books at bargain prices, patrons eagerly bought

Thai natural body products at a third their retail value. These lovely soaps and lotions, donated by Shirley’s son Seth Jacobson, generated half the income from this two-day sale.

After the sale closes some books remain. Sheila takes the best of those books to the El Rito library in northern New Mexico. The rest are donated to local charitable thrift stores.

At the moment, there are six books in Sheila’s garage for the book sale next year. She is ready to accept good, salable books of interest to the public. If you have books to donate for next year’s sale, you may contact Sheila Gershen in Santa Fe at 505-988-3143.

It takes a lot of volunteer work to put on a book sale year after year. Shirley and Sheila often find themselves short-handed. Think about volunteering next Labor Day weekend. ☆

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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.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

October 5-7, Semi-annual meeting of the Texas Jewish Historical Society in Amarillo. Noel Pugach will be the guest speaker at the Saturday evening banquet. For information, contact Jo Ann Holt, jaholt@arn.net.

Sunday, October 14, 1:30 - 4:00 p.m., Jewish Genealogy Workshop with Professors Stan Hordes and Barry Gaines, Jewish Community Center, Albuquerque. For more details, see the article in this issue, October Genealogy Workshop.

Thursday, October 18, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., "Jews and Environmental Stewardship in New Mexico," a joint program with the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives to commemorate New Mexico Archives Month. Speakers: Howard Kaplan, Dr. Robert M. Bernstein, and Don Goldman. The event will take place at the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, 1205 Camino Carlos Rey in Santa Fe. For further information contact Geri Aron (gunthergeri@hotmail.com) or Melissa Salazar (melissa.salazar@state.nm.us).

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