350th Anniversary of Jews in America

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This list reflects donations through January 2004. We extend our thanks to the many hundreds of other wonderful donors whose names do not appear here.
Whether you are receiving Heritage for the first time or are an old friend of the American Jewish Historical Society, I think you will find this issue an exciting one.

2004 marks the 350th anniversary of permanent Jewish settlement in North America. In 1654, a group of 23 Jewish men, women and children seeking refuge after the Portuguese conquest of Brazil landed at the Battery, just a few miles from our present site on West 16th Street in Manhattan, in the then-Dutch colony of New Amsterdam. Since then, we Jews have been a part of the American landscape, benefiting from the blessings of freedom this nation offers and helping to define by our acts and values the very nature of American freedom.

Our Society is proud to join with three other partners – the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration, and the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of Hebrew Union College – as the Congressionally-established "Commission to Commemorate 350 Years of American Jewish History." Congress has charged the Society and its partners with assuring that knowledge of American Jewry’s proud past reaches the widest possible audience. To learn more about the Commission’s activities, please go to its website, www.350th.org.

We are very encouraged by your positive response to the livelier and enlarged version of Heritage. Through its pages, hundreds of thousands of American Jews of all ages are learning more about their own American history. You can discover even more about your American Jewish legacy by visiting our website, www.ajhs.org, and our special website, www.jewsin-sports.org. From the heroic story of the Jews who landed in New Amsterdam in 1654 to the feats of baseball players represented in our set of cards, we have much to celebrate. We want you to think of the Society as a source of information, ideas and inspiration that you may draw on as you help perpetuate our sense of Jewish identity and belonging.

The rebirth of Heritage was made possible in part by a generous grant from the Passerman/Rosenfeld family. Neither Heritage nor the American Jewish Historical Society can continue, however, unless we continue to receive support from thousands of members and contributors like you. If you are not yet a member of the Society, please consider joining. Future generations of proud American Jews will thank you.

Best wishes for a Happy 350th Anniversary year.

Sincerely,

Sid Lapidus
Unique Bat and Bar Mitzvah Gifts

JEWISH WOMEN IN AMERICA

We want your daughter, granddaughter, niece, or friend to enjoy the most amazing encyclopedia of its kind ever published. This large and beautiful, two volume compendium of the history of Jewish women in America will be the gift that she will use for her whole life of learning.

The American Jewish Historical Society sponsored this triple award-winning set that Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Moore edited. Recipient of the American Library Association’s prestigious Dartmouth Medal Award, The Jewish Book Council’s National Jewish Book Award for Women’s Studies and the Barbara Dobkin Honorary Award, it is fun to read, historically accurate, and completely appropriate as a gift.

Two volume set • $200

SILVER ENHANCED BASEBALL CARD GIFT SET

Fewer than 5% of our Jewish Major Leaguers baseball cards were crafted and set aside for special occasions. We saved a few as Bar Mitzvah presents. All the pictures and statistics are the same as our regular collectible cards you will see on page 32. The difference is the rarity and the extra silver foil decoration.

The Bar Mitzvah boy will still treasure these cards when he is a grandfather. Our American Jewish sports heroes are a great source of pride and these cards and the story they tell will increase in value through the years. They will never be sold in retail stores and when this printing is gone, they become part of sports history.

Silver Sports Membership - Benefits shown in the centerfold and 1 set of a 1500 set edition of special silver foil embossed cards • $200.

To order call 1-866-740-8013 or go to our online bookstore @ www.ajhs-store.com.
In 1892, a group of Jewish leaders concerned about a new wave of American anti-Semitism created the American Jewish Historical Society. Their goal was to establish the credentials of the Jewish community as full-fledged Americans. In the Society's founding statement the organizers wrote:

*It is known that Jews in Spain and Portugal lent no inconsiderable aid to the voyages that led to the discovery of America, that a few accompanied the earliest discoverers and that Jews were among the first settlers on this continent. … Considerable numbers saw service in the Colonial and Revolutionary wars, some of them with great distinction. … Since the foundation of our government, Jews have played an active part in the political affairs of the country, and have been called upon to hold important public positions.*

The statement then set the Society's original mission: To collect archives and publish a scholarly journal.

*The records of the achievements of these men [and women] will, when gathered together, prove of value and interest to … historians, and per chance cast light upon some obscure parts of the history of our country.*

While concerns about anti-Semitism in America today are far fewer than in 1892, the Society still publishes a scholarly journal and gathers "the records of the achievement" of American Jewry. In its 112 years of existence, the Society has collected 20 million documents, 50,000 books (many of them rare), more than 10,000 photographs and images on paper, recordings, paintings and museum objects – all of which provide the raw materials from which historians write, curators assemble exhibitions, documentary filmmakers create television programs and students write dissertations and term papers – all on the subject of Jewish life in America.

The holdings of the American Jewish Historical Society include tens of thousands of fragile and unique manuscripts, books and newspapers that require ideal temperature and humidity conditions to preserve – documents such as the only surviving copy of Emma Lazarus's sonnet, "The New Colossus," written in her own hand; trial transcripts from the Mexican Inquisition of 1572; the first minute book of Congregation Shearith Israel in New York City (1762); admission and discharge ledgers from the Hebrew Orphans Asylum of New York (1890); photographs of Congregation Shearith Israel in New York City (1762); admission and discharge ledgers from the Hebrew Orphans Asylum of New York (1890); photographs of Jewish farmers settled in New Jersey by the Baron de Hirsch Fund (1902) and the personal notes that Molly Picon wrote in the margins of the scripts of each of her Yiddish theater performances. Our holdings range from Haym Salomon’s ketubah (marriage contract) to Sandy Koufax’s rookie year Dodger jersey. They are housed in state-of-the-art facilities in New York City and Newton, MA, where researchers use them under ideal conditions.

Today, the Society's mission extends well beyond providing providing collections to scholars and publishing a journal. We reach a worldwide audience of all ages through the Internet (www.ajhs.org; www.ajhs-store.com; and www.jewsinsports.org) and through this newsletter. Whether you want to know more about the history of Jews in the American Revolution, the feminist movement, baseball or medicine or, perhaps, your own family background, the American Jewish Historical Society is the primary resource for information about our past in this nation.

To become a member or supporter of the Society, want to arrange for a tour of our facilities or think you have materials to donate to our collections, please feel free to contact us at 212-294-6160 or www.info@ajhs.org. We want you to think of the Society as your own.
CITIGROUP/BIALKIN SERVICE AWARD
In December 2004, the society presented its inaugural Citigroup/Kenneth J. Bialkin Public Service Award posthumously to Eric Breindel, the late editorial writer for the New York Post and renowned political commentator. Eric Fettman, Post editorial page writer, summarized Breindel’s forthright contributions to New York City’s political dialogue over Israel/U.S. relations, American and European anti-Semitism, communism and Black-Jewish relations. A distinguished panel of Breindel’s colleagues, including Henry Kissinger, Ed Koch and Elie Wiesel, responded to Fettman’s presentation. Sonia Breindel accepted the award on her son’s behalf.

SOCIETY SALUTES JEWISH MAJOR LEAGUERS
To the sounds of Rabbi Joel Geor playing “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” on the shofar, 400 baseball fans of all ages attended the third annual Hank Greenberg Sportsmanship Award Event sponsored by the Society’s Archive of American Jews in Sports. The afternoon brought together old-timers such as Joe Ginsberg with recently retired players like Jesse Levis and current major leaguer Tony Cogan. Crowd favorites Ken Holtzman, Ron Blomberg and Richie Scheinblum signed autographs and shook hands with Jewish youngsters who brought along their parents and grandparents. The menu featured kosher ballpark food such as hot dogs, hamburgers and cotton candy. Future stars swung an electronically programmed bat at a video-pitched ball and pitched baseballs clocked by a radar gun.

The event celebrated the publication of the Society’s set of cards depicting Jewish major league players from 1871 to the present. Among the Hank Greenberg Award recipients were Jeffrey Loria, Larry Mael, Larry Bienfest and David Samson, owner-management of the world champion Florida Marlins; the late sportswriter Dick Schaap; old-timers Harry Danning and Ken Holtzman and current Los Angeles Dodger Shawn Green. Roger Grass, owner of Fleer/Upper Deck and Martin Abramowitz of Jewish Major Leaguers, Inc. accepted the Society’s first-ever “Most Valuable Player” awards for their contributions to producing the card set.

COMMENORATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING
On January 12, 2004 the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding and the American Jewish Historical Society hosted a dialogue on Black-Jewish Relations in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Through slides and reminiscences, speakers Gene Dattel and Clifton Taulbert described growing up in the 1950s, only miles from each other, in the Mississippi Delta, each facing challenges and creating opportunities, Dattel as the son of a Jewish merchant and Taulbert as the son of a sharecropper. Respondents included Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, Rabbi Marc Schneir of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding and Peter Geffen, Executive Director of the Center for Jewish History.
Calendar

All events will take place in the Leo and Julia Forchheimer Auditorium at the Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16th Street, New York City. For tickets, call the Box Office at 917-606-8200, Fax to 917-606-8201 or e-mail boxoffice@cjh.org. Major credit cards accepted.

Visit our website for additional events and updates — www.AJHS.org/about/calendar.cfm

EXHIBITIONS

THROUGH MARCH 21, 2004
As Seen By...Great American Jewish Photographers
Diane and Mark Goldman/AJHS Gallery
A collection of more than 40 of the greatest photographic images ever captured by Life magazine’s photographers, all of them of Jewish heritage. From Paul Schutzer’s portrait of Marilyn Monroe to Joe Rosenthal’s photo of the flag raising at Iwo Jima, Jewish photographers—shooting both Jewish and non-Jewish subjects—have left an indelible mark on American culture and history.

LECTURES, CONCERTS & EVENTS

MONDAY, MARCH 15, 6:30 PM
The Munificent Baron de Hirsch: Court Jew, Financier of Genius, Visionary, Utopist, Pharohic Philanthropist and Founder of the Jewish Settlements in South and North America.
Lecture by author/biographer Dominique Frischer on Baron Maurice de Hirsch, a Bavarian Jew born in 1896, who made his fortune in banking and railways. He created the Baron de Hirsch Fund in New York and the Jewish Colonization Association in London to rescue several hundred thousand Jews in Turkey, middle Europe and Tsarist Russia so they could emigrate to the Americas. Adults $7, students/seniors $3.50. AJHS members free.

TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 8 PM
Dialogue Forum Series
A Conversation with Rabbi William Berkowitz and Edgar Bronfman, President, World Jewish Congress. Free Admission; Reservations Required

SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 4PM
Presidents of the United States and the Jews
American Jewish historian, rabbi, and teacher, David G. Dalin will discuss his most recent book, coauthored with Alfred J. Kolatch. Prof. Dalin, who serves on the academic council of the American Jewish Historical Society, is currently Professor of History and Political Science at Ave Maria College in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and has taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary, George Washington University and the City University of New York. Adults $7, students/seniors $3.50. AJHS members free.

THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 7 PM
A Tribute to George and Ira Gershwin: A Program in Celebration of 50 Years of Jewish Life in America.
This is the first in a series on famous American Jewish composers/lyricists of musical theater. Composer/lyricist Milton Shaffer will premiere his original piano composition, based on the music of “Porgy and Bess,” and will discuss the significant contributions of the Gershwin brothers. Sponsored by AJHS and Sholom Aleichem Memorial Foundation.
Adults $8, students/seniors $3.50. AJHS members free.

TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 8 PM
Dialogue Forum Series
A Conversation with Rabbi William Berkowitz and David Ellenson, President of Hebrew Union College. Free admission; reservations Required

MARCH 29
Kurt Gerrons Karussell
Ilona Zioik’s musical documentary film is a celebration of the talents and achievements of a man who lived - and died - for show business. Berlin 1928: Kurt Gerron sings Mack The Knife on stage for the very first time, which proves to be the biggest break of his career. He moves effortlessly into sound, starring alongside Marlene Dietrich as the magician in the legendary film The Blue Angel. By 1933, with the rise of Nazism, he is forced to emigrate, first to Paris, and later to Amsterdam where he becomes one of the most important directors of Dutch cinema. Rounded up in Amsterdam, he is deported to Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia. Here, in the so-called VIP camp, he directs his own cabaret, The Karussell. Director: Ilona Zioik. 1999, 65mins, German and English w/English subtitles. Speaker: Ilona Zioik, director (TBC).

APRIL 26
Shalom of Safed
“Shalom’s art represents...a unique blend between a literary tradition - the Hasidic heritage and the mystical lore of the Kabala - and the artist’s sensitivity to the light and landscape of the Galilee.” - Daniel Doron, collector and patron.
This lovely film is an exploration of themes and influences in the paintings of Shalom of Safed (1887-1980). Born Shalom Moskovitz, his great grandparents came from Eastern Europe to Eretz Yisrael sometime in the 18th Century. A watchmaker by trade, his workshop was destroyed, and his tools lost, during the War for Independence in 1948. As he entered his 70’s, he became one of the most original Israeli artists of the 20th Century - a primitive artist who created a large body of paintings devoted to the Torah and Jewish life. Director and Producer: Daniel Doron and Arnold Eagle, 1969, 30mins. Speaker: TBA.

All films begin at 7:00 PM. Adults $8, students/seniors $4.

EXPRESSION AND EXPLORATION: PATHS OF JEWISH ARTISTS
Curated by: Sheba Skirball, in association with the Film Advisory Committee, Center for Jewish History. $8 adults, $4 Students and Seniors.

“Were I not a Jew (with the content that I put in the word), I would not be an artist at all, or I would be someone else altogether.”
- Marc Chagall

MARCH 8
Leonard Bernstein: Reaching for the Note
This look at the outstanding career of the world-renowned composer, conductor, pianist and educator, offers a balance of musical scholarship and personal insight. It is a tribute to the brilliant life and art of Bernstein, who elevated Broadway musical theater, demystified and democratized classical music for two generations of American children, and brought vigor and truthfulness to his conducting.

MARCH 22
Salomone Rossi: Between Worlds
Salomone Rossi, an important composer of the Renaissance and Baroque era, was the first to introduce choral music into the synagogue. Filmed on location in Italian palaces and synagogues in Mantua and Venice, Rossi’s works are performed by Israeli and Italian musicians, and also features reconstructed dances created by Jewish dancing master of the 16th and 17th centuries. Director: Asher Talilin. Narrated by: Martin Bookspan. Israel, 1996, 28mins.

Morizi Gotlib
Regarded as “the Jewish Rembrandt”, Polish Jewish artist Maurizio Gotlib (1856-1879) died tragically at the age of 23, over one hundred years ago. This films provides us with a detailed and vivid description of Gotlib’s paintings, and the atmosphere of life in 19th century Central and Eastern Europe is brought to life. Director and Editor: David Greenberg, 1979, 40mins. Speakers: Matthew Lazar, Founder and Director, Zamir Choral Foundation; and Gabriel Goldstein, YUM curator.

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Continued on page 9
NEW AJHS MASSACHUSETTS HOME AT HEBREW COLLEGE

In August 2002, the American Jewish Historical Society departed from its home of 35 years on the campus of Brandeis University in Waltham, MA and moved its Boston-based holdings to a new home in the Gann Library of Hebrew College in Newton Centre, MA. The Society is now operational at this site. The resources at the Society’s location include archival and other research holdings related to the history of the Boston-area and New England Jewish communities, traveling exhibitions and public programs such as lectures and films. AJHS continues to host the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston at its new home.

Generous gifts from Genevieve and Justin Wyner of Boston, MA and Marion and George Blumenthal of New York, NY enabled the Society to acquire and outfit this beautiful new facility, which is designated as the Wyner Center of the American Jewish Historical Society at Hebrew College.

Designed by architect Moshe Safdie, the stunning architecture and tree-graced grounds of the Hebrew College campus provide a beautiful backdrop to the Society’s New England home. The college generously provides the Society’s staff with high-speed Internet access and other features of contemporary library management in the information age.

Among the important collections housed at this facility are the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, the nation’s oldest Jewish federation; the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston, also the first JCRC in the United States; the archives of he Rabinowitz and Rabb Families and the Stop and Shop Company that they founded; and the personal papers of Boston communal leaders such as Dewey D. Stone and Lewis Weinstein. Soon to be available are the records of Shawmut Mills, another multigenerational Jewish family business founded in the Boston area.

The new facilities of the Historical Society in Newton Centre, MA are now a fixture on the Boston area academic scene with researchers, students and the general public visiting and examining its holdings and exhibitions. Interest thus far has focused on holdings dealing with genealogy, the Boston office of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and the records of the JCRC. Two public programs, sponsored jointly with Hebrew College, the local branch of the Workmen’s Circle and others, attracted several hundred participants. Future programs dealing with music, politics and film are being planned for the coming year.

For further information about events and services at the Wyner Center of AJHS, please call 617-559-8880.

LOEB PORTRAIT DATABASE

A generous grant from Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr. has enabled AJHS to create a section of its website, www.ajhs.org/research/loeb. It is a viewable database of portraits that will, over time, contain an image and information describing every known portrait of an American Jew painted before 1865. Currently, the database, which contains 70 images and captions, can be viewed by visiting the AJHS website and clicking on “Research Resources”, then clicking on the “Loeb Portrait Database”. The majority of images on this site are owned by AJHS from its own extensive collection of pre-1865 portraits and miniatures. In order to create the most comprehensive collection possible, dozens of institutions and individuals have given permission for AJHS to publish an image of paintings from their collections. We are grateful to each of them for their cooperation, and to Ambassador Loeb for his steadfast support of this project.

DONATIONS

From its very founding, the most precious holdings of the American Jewish Historical Society have been donated by its members and supporters. A century ago, history-minded supporters gave the Society such priceless treasures as Emma Lazarus’s sonnet, “The New Colossus” and its early American Jewish portraits. More recently, a generous contributor provided us with a letter from John Hancock to Aaron Lopez, a Jewish merchant in Newport, Rhode Island.

Perhaps you have an item of historic value to donate to the Society. While you may not consider it as dramatic or important as an Emma Lazarus manuscript or a colonial-era portrait, no one can predict how valuable one of your historic items will become in another hundred or more years.

If you have items you wish to consider donating to the Society, please contact Lyn Slome, AJHS Director of Library and Archives, at 212-294-6167 or lslome@ajhs.cjh.org. She will be pleased to discuss how you can donate items to AJHS.

JOIN OUR LISTSERV –

AMJHISTORY, the American Jewish History Online Discussion Group, is dedicated to the dissemination of information and ongoing discussion of issues of interest to the American Jewish historical community. It encourages individuals and organizations involved in studying, teaching, preserving or exhibiting aspects of American Jewish history to exchange information, ideas and plans. AMJHISTORY is sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society and distributed via an electronic mailing list.

To subscribe to the list, send an email to:
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SOCIETY LOSES TWO DISTINGUISHED LEADERS

This past Fall, the American Jewish Historical Society lost two of its elder statesmen and former presidents, David R. Pokross and Rabbi Abraham J. Karp.

On October 31, 2003, David R. Pokross, a pillar of the Boston legal community, passed away at the age of ninety-six. Mr. Pokross was one of Boston’s top lawyers in the mid-twentieth century and practiced law for seventy-two years, seventy of which were with the firm now known as Nixon Peabody. As counsel to the firm in later years, he worked several days each week in Nixon Peabody’s Boston office right up until last April, when health problems prevented him from coming in.

Mr. Pokross was involved in and honored by many charities and organizations in Massachusetts, including Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, United Way of Massachusetts Bay, the Boston Foundation, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Beth Israel Hospital, the United Planning Corporation, the Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare at Brandeis University and, of course, the American Jewish Historical Society. He served as the Society’s president, chairman and honorary chairman.

In a Boston Globe article on October 30, 2003, Robert Clark, former dean of Harvard Law School, referred to Mr. Pokross as “the ultimate gentleman” and “a philanthropist in the truest sense of the word.”

David Pokross and his wife Muriel were married in 1939, and together they raised three children in Belmont, Massachusetts. In addition to his wife, Mr. Pokross leaves a daughter, two sons, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

In late November, 2003, Rabbi Abraham J. Karp, former president of AJHS and Joseph & Rebecca Mitchell Adjunct Research Professor of American Jewish History & Bibliography at the Jewish Theological Seminary passed away. Rabbi Karp was a noted bibliographer and collector of Judaica Americana. His wealth of knowledge and love of books, particularly those with a link to the American-Jewish experience, was evident in his remarkable library of rare editions, much of which he donated to the Jewish Theological Seminary Library.

Born in Poland in 1921, Rabbi Karp came to the United States at age nine. A pulpit rabbi in Rochester, NY, he left his congregation in 1972 to pursue his scholarly endeavors and joined the faculty of the University of Rochester History Department that year. He served as AJHS president from 1974 to 1976, the national Bicentennial.

Rabbi Karp penned many distinguished publications, including Haven and Home; Jews in America: A Treasury of Arts and Literature; A History of the Jews in America; Jewish Continuity in America; and The Jewish Experience in America. He is perhaps best-known for the exhibition and catalog he created for the Library of Congress titled From the Ends of the Earth: Judaic Treasures from the Library of Congress.

MAY 3
Berlin’s Jewish Museum: A Personal Tour with Daniel Libeskind
Berlin’s Jewish Museum is Daniel Libeskind’s first commission. In this personal tour, filmed prior to the installation of exhibitions, Libeskind is questioned by Alan Riding, NY Times journalist, as he takes him through the building. “To arrive in the Jewish Museum, visitors must enter through the 18th-century building and then descend to underground passageways and “voids”, which in themselves give a strong sense of the tragic fate of the German-Jewish population during the Hitler years. Director: Michael Blackwood, 2000, 58 mins.

Louis Kahn: Silence and Light
An examination of six of Mr. Kahn’s most significant buildings: The Salk Institute in La Jolla, the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, the Center for British Art in New Haven, the library at Philips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad, and the Parliament Buildings of Bangladesh in Dhaka. Director: Michael Blackwood, 1995, 58 mins.

MAY 24
The Possessed
Pearl Lang’s choreographed work of Sholom Ansky’s Yiddish classic “The Dybbuk” with an evocative score by Meyer Kupferman, incorporates klezmer, Hebrew songs and chants. The cinematic version (completed in 2001 after 12 years of work) is notable for its use of cinematic techniques to heighten the drama. Dance Magazine calls the cinematic version “luminous,” and Lang herself dances the role of Leya. Director/Choreographer: Pearl Lang; 2001, 63 mins. Speaker: Pearl Lang

JUNE 7
Robert Capa: In Love and War
Hungarian-American photographer Robert Capa (1913-1954) was born Andre Friedmann in Budapest in 1913. Celebrated as the “Greatest War Photographer in the World,” Capa recorded five wars, beginning with the Spanish Civil War of 1936. It was during this conflict that he achieved fame with his heartbreaking photograph, Falling Soldier, capturing the death of a Spanish freedom fighter at the moment of the bullet’s impact. Capa went on to photograph several of the major battles of WWII, including D-day. Director: Richard Whelan, 2002, 90 mins.

Masters of Photography: Diane Arbus
“There are things which nobody would see unless I photographed them,” said Diane Arbus (1923-1971). Born Diane Nemerov, Ms. Arbus was one of the most notable woman photographers of the 20th century, and found most of her subjects in New York City and its environs during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1972, Diane Arbus was the first American photographer to be exhibited at the Venice Biennale. 30 mins.

JUNE 14
Jazzman of the Gulag
This is a fantastic biography of a little-known musical genius whose inspiring gift to the world of music and Jazz could not be silenced. Trumpet player, Adolph Eddie Rosner was a Polish Jew born in Berlin in 1910. He discovered jazz at the age of 15, and by 19 came in second to Louis Armstrong in a music competition in Chicago. His hot style of music had him touring all over Europe until 1939 when the Nazis invaded Warsaw. He was persecuted as a Jew, and as a “degenerate” musician. Together with his wife he fled to the Soviet Union, where he was made conductor/bandleader of the official Soviet Jazz Orchestra based in Moscow. He toured Russia, playing to packed houses as World War II raged. Eventually he fell out of favor, was exiled to Siberia, yet continued to play and form yet another orchestra. Director: Pierre-Henry Salfati, France, 1999, 58 mins. English and Russian with English subtitles. Speaker: Dan Morgenstern, Director, Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

All films begin at 7:00 PM. Adults $8, students/seniors $4.
350TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE POSTER

With unique images drawn from the extensive archives of the American Jewish Historical, this beautiful timeline poster (with text by Professor Pamela Nadell) will entertain and educate. From the first settlement in 1654 to the nomination of Joe Lieberman for vice president of the United States, you will find fascinating incidents and developments that made the American Jewish experience. A must for every home, school and library. Available only through AJHS. 24x36" • $16. Shipping $4.

To order call 1-866-740-8013 or go to our online bookstore @ www.ajhs-store.com.
The three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Jewish settlement in North America is a time to celebrate the religious freedom that is currently the hallmark of American civilization. However, religious tolerance was not an inherent feature of early colonial life. The Puritan colonies in New England vigorously expelled Quakers, Lutherans, Catholics and Jews; the French barred Protestants and Jews from the French colonies; and in New Spain, the Inquisition actively persecuted (and even executed) Catholics who were suspected of secretly practicing Judaism.

Initially, even the generally tolerant Dutch tried to exclude Jews and Catholics from their American colonies. The first Dutch Jews who settled in New Amsterdam, capital of New Netherlands, had much to do with altering that intolerant policy.

While only a handful of facts regarding the first permanent Jewish settlers in Dutch New Netherlands are well documented, it seems clear that a group of twenty-three Jewish refugees fled Recife, Brazil to New Amsterdam in 1654 after the Portuguese conquest of Brazil. The Portuguese gave the Jews a month to leave. The twenty-three who landed in New Amsterdam were sailing on a vessel called the Sint Catrina. Legend has it that, after stops in Jamaica and Cuba, a Spanish privateer captured the Sint Catrina and stripped the passengers of their valuables. Such circumstances would have made a return to Europe out of the question. When the Sint Catrina landed in New Amsterdam, its captain sued his propertyless passengers for failure to pay their fares. Peter Stuyvesant (1592-1672), the Dutch colonial governor, seized the Jews'indigence might make them a burden to the community, Stuyvesant "deemed it useful to require them in a friendly way to depart."

Such circumstances would have made a return to Europe out of the question. When the Sint Catrina landed in New Amsterdam, its captain sued his propertyless passengers for failure to pay their fares. Peter Stuyvesant (1592-1672), the Dutch colonial governor, seized the Jews' remaining possessions and ordered them sold at auction. When the auction failed to raise sufficient funds to pay the captain, Stuyvesant wrote to the Dutch West India Company in Amsterdam asking permission to expel the Jews. Noting that the Jews'indigence might make them a burden to the community, Stuyvesant "deemed it useful to require them in a friendly way to depart."

The Jewish community in Amsterdam petitioned the Company on behalf of their fellow Jews in New Amsterdam. In April 1665, the Company granted Jews permission to settle there "so long as they do not become a burden to the Company or the community." Stuyvesant relented, but tried other measures to discourage Jewish settlement.

Stuyvesant barred Jews from serving in the volunteer home guards and levied a tax on them to pay for others to serve in their place. In November 1655, a Jew named Asser Levy petitioned the colonial court for the right to stand watch or to be relieved of the tax. After a two-year legal battle, the court granted Levy the right to stand watch.

In December 1655, Stuyvesant's troops captured the Swedish territory along the Delaware River. Stuyvesant refused to issue trade permits to Jewish settlers in the new area. Asser Levy and others wrote to their associates in Holland protesting this new discrimination and the Company again disciplined Stuyvesant. From then on, Jews in the colony could trade and own real estate but not hold public office, open a retail shop or establish a synagogue. In 1657, Levy was denied to the right to open a butcher shop, but petitioned this injustice and won. When he received his butcher's license in 1661, it explicitly exempted Levy from having to slaughter pigs.

When the English captured New Amsterdam in 1664 and renamed it New York, Levy – who doubtlessly felt he owed the Dutch no allegiance – swore to support the British crown. In 1671, Levy became the first Jew to serve on an English jury in North America. Ironically, one of the defendants tried before him was Peter Stuyvesant, who stood accused to misuse of office. Despite his personal grievances, Levy voted for acquittal.

Asser Levy lies buried in an unknown grave somewhere in lower New York. In tribute, a public school in Brooklyn and street in Manhattan bear his name, a tribute to his struggle for religious equality and Jewish rights.
Three hundred and fifty years of American history have produced many Jewish military heroes, including Medal of Honor winners and generals. David Salisbury Franks was a military and diplomatic hero of the American Revolution and the Early National period. Because at one point in his career he served as aide-de-camp to the traitorous Benedict Arnold, however, Franks’ reputation became tainted. Although cleared on all charges of complicity in Arnold’s efforts to surrender West Point to the British in 1780, Franks’ reputation never fully recovered and his name is rarely included in pantheon of Revolutionary patriots.

David S. Franks was born in Philadelphia around 1740 and moved with his family to Quebec. In 1775, David Salisbury Franks was living in Montreal, serving in the distinguished position of parnas (president) of the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue in that city. According to historian Jacob Rader Marcus, because Franks publicly defended the right of a protestor to call King George III of England a fool, Franks was jailed for six days. Thus, when the Continental Army invaded Quebec to “liberate” it from the British, Franks joined the revolutionaries. Appointed paymaster of the Continental Army in Quebec, Franks expended his own funds to pay the American volunteers.

When the American campaign faltered, Franks retreated to Philadelphia, reaching it in July 1776. He served actively until October 1777. Because he spoke French, Franks became liaison officer to the Comte d’Estaing, commander of French naval forces fighting with the Americans. Major Franks was then assigned as aide-de-camp to Benedict Arnold, whom General George Washington appointed commander of the strategic garrison at West Point.

When Arnold’s treason became known, Franks naturally fell under suspicion. To make matters worse, he was probably confused with his uncle, David Franks of New York City, who remained a Tory. Eventually, a court martial dropped all charges against David Salisbury Franks. Remarkably, Arnold himself wrote an unsolicited letter exonerating Franks. However, Arnold’s support did little to restore Franks’ good name.

Franks returned to duty as part of Washington’s command. However, officers in Franks’ regiment started a whispering campaign against him. To clear his name definitively, Franks asked General Washington to institute another court martial that would investigate, not simply drop, the charges against him.

After a month-long investigation in 1780, the court completely exonerated Franks. Promoted immediately, Franks was entrusted to carry highly secret documents to diplomats Benjamin Franklin in Paris and John Jay in Madrid. In 1783, Franks left for Paris to deliver to Franklin the official copy of the peace treaty that ended the war and granted American independence. On these trips, Franks paid more of his expenses than his beloved young nation could afford to reimburse.

At war’s end, Franks was appointed American vice-consul at Marseilles, France. In 1786, he was appointed to the American diplomatic team that negotiated a trade treaty between the United States and the potentates of Morocco. Yet, political opponents pursued David Salisbury Franks, attacking him for his association with Benedict Arnold. In 1786, the attacks succeeded and Franks was dismissed from the diplomatic corps. He returned to the United States discredited and bankrupt.

Once more, Franks fought to restore his reputation. He petitioned President Washington for reappointment to the diplomatic service. Finally, in 1789, Congress granted Franks 400 acres of land in Pennsylvania in recognition of his national service. His last position was that of assistant cashier at the Bank of the United States.

David Salisbury Franks died of yellow fever in October of 1793 at the age of 53. His fortune gone, a Christian neighbor rescued his corpse from the coroner’s wagon before it went to potter’s field. Franks today lies buried today in Philadelphia’s Christ Church Burial Yard, saved from the pauper’s fate but not among his fellow Jews, or in an honored place in history.
In light of the numerous contributions made by Jewish women to American society over 350 years, it is fitting to recall America’s first identifiable Jewish feminist, Ernestine Louise Rose. Rose left her mark on many of the significant social and political reform causes of the turbulent mid-nineteenth century. She also developed a critique of Judaism’s traditional attitudes toward women that foreshadowed the religious reforms advocated by twentieth-centuries Jewish women.

Born in Russian Poland in 1810, the only child of a rabbi and his wife, the daughter of a wealthy businessman, Ernestine and her family moved to England while she was still a young child. There, she received an education in Jewish scripture in the original Hebrew, tutelage quite unusual for the time. Ernestine was a questioning child, observing of herself, "I was a rebel at the age of five." According to historian Janet Freedman, around this time Ernestine began "to question the justice of a God who would exact hardships such as her father's frequent religious fasts." When she reached the age of fourteen, according to Freedman, while Rose retained her pride in being a Jewish woman, she "rejected both the idea that women were inferior to men and the Jewish texts and traditions that supported this belief."

Two years later, Ernestine’s mother died. Her father arranged for her to marry a young man of his choosing and paid the prospective groom a dowry. However, Ernestine refused to cooperate. She boldly traveled several hours in severe weather to try to dissolve the marriage contract in a civil court. Ernestine won her case and recovered the dowry. She returned most of it to her father after taking out enough money to pay her way to Berlin, which was then the capital of Prussia.

In Berlin, Ernestine found herself the victim of an anti-Semitic law that required every newly arrived non-Prussian Jew to have a Prussian sponsor. Unwilling to suffer this affront to her religious heritage, the still teenage Ernestine appealed directly to the Prussian king, who – impressed by her self-reliance – exempted her from the law. Around this time, Rose invented a room deodorizer that she sold to support herself while she continued her travels. She visited Belgium, Holland, France and England, where in 1832 she met the renowned utopian socialist Robert Owen. Rose stayed in England for three years, lecturing alongside Owen on the principles of human equality. In 1835, she married a man of her own choosing, a fellow Owenite and jeweler named William Ella Rose, and in 1836 the couple moved to New York.

The Roses arrived in America at a time when the issue of slavery was dividing the nation. Rose, who had been fighting for her own freedom and equality since adolescence, considered slavery an abomination. She lectured throughout the Northeast, arguing for the abolition of slavery and in support of religious toleration, public education and legal equality for women. With great courage, Rose traveled to the American South to speak out against slavery. When she confronted one slaveholder, he told her that, if she were a man, he would have tarred and feathered her. Rose remained undeterred. She also traveled to Michigan, where she demanded that the women of Michigan be given the vote.

In the 1840s and 1850s, Ernestine Rose joined the pantheon of great American women – Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Paulina Wright and Sojourner Truth – who advocated for women’s rights and against slavery. In 1854, Rose supported a proposed New York state law allowing married women to retain their own property and have equal guardianship, with their husbands, of their own children. It took the New York legislature 15 years to adopt these now widely accepted standards.

When the Civil War ended and slavery was abolished, many reform-minded male politicians urged that women set aside their agitation for suffrage and focus on establishing rights for the former slaves. Rose was among the most outspoken critics of this approach. She proclaimed, "Emancipation from every kind of bondage is my principle," and insisted that women’s suffrage be kept at the top of the reform agenda.

Despite her personal disagreement with traditional Jewish attitudes toward women, Rose never abandoned her pride in being Jewish and spoke out against anti-Semitism with the same fervor she brought to the anti-slavery and women’s suffrage movements. When the editor of the Boston Investigator charged that Jews were "a troublesome people to live in proximity with" and hoped that they would not increase in number in America, Rose replied that, "The nature of the Jew is governed by the same laws as human nature in general. In England, France, Germany and the rest of Europe (except Spain), in spite of the barbarous treatment and deadly persecution they have suffered, they have lived and spread and outlived much of the poisonous rancor and prejudice against them, and Europe has been none the worse on their account.

Rose died in England in 1892. She never ceased working for human rights and social justice. Rabbi Jonas Bondi praised Rose with a fitting epitaph: "She was the earliest and noblest among the workers in the cause of human enfranchisement in the United States."
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American Jewish Historical Society Honors Jews in Big League Baseball

How often have you heard someone say about the history of Jews in sports, "It must be a short story"? When it comes to Jews in baseball, this stereotype is, to borrow a phrase, way off base. Between 1871 and 2003, one hundred and forty-two Jews played major league baseball. While most Americans are familiar with immortals Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax, many other Jewish players have been outstanding: pitcher Ken Holtzman won more games than Koufax and pitched two no-hitters; Harry Danning was a four-time All-Star catcher for the New York Giants; and in 2002, Shawn Green of the Los Angeles Dodgers had the single most productive nine-inning game at bat of any major leaguer in history.

The next time someone challenges you about the prowess of American Jewish ballplayers, you can impress them with the following statistics. According to Martin Abramowitz, the one hundred and forty-two Jews had 22,246 hits, and a .265 batting average (three percentage points higher than all players combined), hit 2,032 home runs and drove in 11,632 strikeouts. The fact that Jewish pitchers are 20 games over their fair share of wins, with 810 complete games (164 of them shut-outs) and 11,632 strikeouts. The fact that Jewish pitchers are 20 games over .500, a winning percentage, means that they pitched slightly better than the entire non-Jewish pitching corps (since by definition, the won-lose record of ALL pitchers has to be .500). Jews have thrown five of the 230 no-hitters (three for Koufax, two for Holtzman), about twice as many as the "statistical fair share" would predict. Jewish pitchers' collective ERA is 3.66, a bit lower (that means "better") than the 3.77 allowed by all Major Leaguers. In short, Jews have more than held up their own and, in the case of Sandy Koufax, Hank Greenberg and Shawn Green, more than excelled.

The American Jewish Historical Society has made a major commitment to informing Americans of every background about the significant role that Jews have played in the quintessential American game. The Society has created the Archive of American Jews in Sports to collect documentation on Jewish participation in American athletics and created the world’s most extensive website on the topic: www.jewsinsports.org. To highlight the role of Jewish players in baseball in particular, the Society recently published the first comprehensive set of trading cards depicting the presence and prominence of the 142 "American Jews in America’s Game."

The Society obtained the rights to print and distribute this limited edition set of cards from Jewish Major Leaguers, Inc., whose founder Martin Abramowitz spent four years researching and producing images, statistics and text for the cards. The Society then approached Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association, along with the retired players and their heirs, to obtain permission to use their copyrights and images. Major League Baseball and the Players Association generously agreed to waive their usual royalties for using their licensed insignia.

The final piece in the puzzle was filled by Fleer/Upper Deck, the renowned sports card manufacturer. Fleer’s CEO, Roger Grass, agreed to redesign, manufacture and package the set for the Society at cost. The professionals on Grass’s staff created a set whose quality and art is equal to the finest cards ever produced.

On January 25, 2004, the American Jewish Historical Society celebrated the publication of its limited edition of "American Jews in America’s Game" at Bridgwater’s at the South Street Seaport in New York. At the event, the Society presented its third annual Hank Greenberg Sportsmanship Awards to retired players Ken Holtzman and Harry Danning and to Shawn Green of the LA Dodgers. The management of the 2003 World Champion Florida Marlins, including owners Jeff Loria, David Samson and Larry Mael and General Manager Larry Bienfest also received Greenberg Awards. Martin Abramowitz and Roger Grass received the Society’s "Most Valuable Player" Awards for their efforts to bring the baseball cards to the public.

Sets of the cards still remain available for a limited period of time. Only 15,000 regular sets and 1,500 specially trimmed and boxed Silver Edition sets were printed. The sets are available only to those who become a “Sports Member” of the American Jewish Historical Society. You can sign up for Sports Membership and receive your set of cards by logging onto www.ajhs-store.com or by phoning 1-866-740-8013.

Most collectors never have a chance to acquire the original uncut sheets from which packs and sets of baseball cards are made. The cards come off the press in these poster-sized sheets and are precisely cut and sorted into packs, sets or series; only a few are saved for display by the manufacturer or sold to privileged collectors. The Society has decided to make its remaining uncut sheets available to its members and supporters. These are guaranteed to rise in value with each passing year.

We have framed fewer than fifty original uncut set sheets with press proof color markings in the border. The cards are identical to
the boxed sets, including all statistics on the reverse side. The thin black custom frames have thick acrylic protectors front and back so that both sides can be viewed. We have been told that the collector value of these rarities will be very high. The historic and Jewish pride value and beauty speak for themselves.

There are 98 cards in one 29x38" frame and 49 cards in one 29x20" frame. The two framed sheets are given as a gift to members who join the Society at the $600 Grand Slam Membership level.

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Patriotic Posters

Newspapers, radio, television and the Internet are now the dominant means for swaying public opinion, and modern western governments no longer publish political posters to convey messages or stir mass loyalty. During the World Wars, however, the engines of mass propaganda were far less sophisticated than today, and patriotic posters played a significant role in mobilizing public opinion. Some of the classic war propaganda posters that activated American and British citizens include the famed image of Uncle Sam looking sternly at the viewer and telling him that "Uncle Sam Wants You!" and the British poster depicting German soldiers with Belgian babies impaled on their bayonets. In some cases, American and British Jews were the targets of patriotic posters aimed exclusively at them.

Since the fall of the Second Temple, Diaspora Jews have prayed for the restoration of their homeland, a dream finally achieved in 1948 with the creation of the modern state of Israel. However, while Jews living in modern democratic societies prayed for a Jewish homeland, they exhibited high levels of patriotism toward their Diaspora homelands. In every war of the United States between the Civil War and Viet Nam, for example, Jews fought for their nation in numbers well beyond their proportion of the population. By one estimate, more than one million American Jewish men and women fought for the United States in World War II – one Jew in eight, an extraordinarily high fraction of the American Jewish population.

The war propaganda posters shown here reveal some interesting aspects of the patriotic appeals made to Jews. The beautiful American poster urging its viewers to purchase United States War Bonds depicts the nation’s leading symbol of freedom, the Statue of Liberty, for visual power and uses Yiddish to address an audience of patriotic Jewish immigrants. In the years between 1887 and 1913, more than two million Jews entered the United States from Yiddish-speaking Eastern Europe. Some of them served in the US military in World War I and, in many cases, their American-born children enlisted for the fight. This poster invited the immigrants to participate financially in supporting the nation’s war effort.

The Canadian poster calling on Jews to join the British war effort is a more explicit, almost pleading effort to align Jewish citizens with British war aims. Unlike the United
States, which had no colonies in the Middle East, Britain controlled the area that was then Palestine. When Theodor Herzl called for the re-establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine in 1897, British and American Zionists harbored hopes that Britain would declare a Jewish homeland there. Some Zionists believed, however, that the defeat of Britain might lead more readily to a Jewish homeland in Palestine than if Britain continued to hold the territory. Aware of these tensions, Britain appealed strongly to its Jewish citizens to remain loyal to the Crown.

Reproductions of each of these powerful posters are available from our bookstore. See the information at right to order.

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Opposite page — U.S. War Bonds poster, AJHS Collection, donated by Sid Lapidus.  
Above — British Recruitment poster, ILVO Collection. Reproductions of both posters are available from AJHS. See ordering information in column (right) on this page.
S
he is tiny--like her people," remarked Louis Nizer in a 1943 tribute to Molly Picon, superstar of Yiddish stage and film. Her small stature notwithstanding, Picon’s impact on Yiddish-speaking Jewish culture in America and worldwide was enormous. Long before Mary Martin starred in "Peter Pan" on Broadway, or Barbra Streisand played "Yentl" in Hollywood, Molly Picon used her gamin-like appearance and acrobatic skills to play, in the words of historian Joann Green, "adorable young waif[s], often a motherless boy who, with naive gumption, a charming display of tears, laughter, somersaults, splits, songs, cartwheels and musical instruments, accompanied by an occasional farm animal and good luck, managed to make it in the adult world."

Picon’s own childhood on the Lower East Side of New York parallels that of the characters she played. Her father left home when Molly’s younger sister Helen was born, and her mother Clara moved the family to Philadelphia, where she supported her two girls and her own mother by working as a seamstress at Kessler’s Lower East Side of New York parallels that of the characters she played. Her father left home when Molly’s younger sister Helen was born, and her mother Clara moved the family to Philadelphia, where she supported her two girls and her own mother by working as a seamstress at Kessler’s Grand Opera House and they married that same year. Molly wore a dress fashioned by her mother from a theater curtain.

Picon and Kalich’s partnership created some of the most memorable shows ever to appear on the Yiddish stage, with Kalich scripting and directing and Picon starring. Their 1920s collaborations included "Yankel," "Mamele," "Circus Girl," and "Molly Dolly." She created the character of the much-loved nincompoop, "Schmendrick." Her athleticism, charm, good looks and humor made Picon an All-American maydl, packing in both Yiddish and non-Yiddish speaking audiences. In the 1920’s, the Second Avenue Theater in New York - the best known of all Yiddish theaters in America - was renamed in her honor. Picon made her first Yiddish film, "Das Judenmadel," in Austria in 1921. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Picon remained committed to filming in Europe despite the rising wave of anti-Semitism there and her films provide graphic documentation of authentic shetel life before the Nazis obliterated it. In Warsaw in 1937, Molly was paid the record sum of $10,000 to star in Joseph Green’s "Idl Mit’n Firld." In 1938, at age 40, she played a vivacious twelve-year old girl in "Mamele," the last Jewish film made in Poland. Surprisingly, D. W. Griffith, director of the monumental though racist "Birth of a Nation," called Picon "the most interesting actress in America." Griffith tried but failed to raise money to make a Yiddish movie in which Picon would have starred.

Picon showed her versatility by playing a wide variety of roles in radio, television, films and theater. The sixty-six year old Picon was still somersaulting on Broadway in 1964 —this time with sheep and goats– in "Milk and Honey," a musical about Israel. Her best-known Hollywood film roles included the Italian mother in "Come Blow Your Horn" (1963), for which she received an Oscar nomination, and Yente, the matchmaker in "Fiddler on the Roof" (1971).

Picon devoted herself to patriotic and humanitarian work. During World War II, she visited refugee camps in Canada and toured army bases across the U.S. to entertain the troops. Her appearances were especially meaningful to Jewish soldiers. A letter from a soldier found in her papers residing at the American Jewish Historical Society reads, "Above all the shows we’ve had, you were the tops, above all the movie stars and everyone else who have performed before us, we have chosen you as the best of them all... And also we would like you to know that you have been selected the number one pin-up of our Squadron."

When World War II ended, Picon and Kalich were the first entertainers to visit the Displaced Persons camps so that, in Picon’s own words, the survivors "might feel like [men and] women again." According to historian Joann Green, "In one camp audience a three-year-old heard his first sounds of laughter." Picon continued her active support of Jewish refugees by working for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration and selling Israel bonds.

Picon’s performances blended Yiddish culture with American show business, a combination that appealed to audiences beyond the immigrant generation. Even as the second generation pursued Americanization, Picon helped them maintain a connection to Yiddish culture. One non-Yiddish speaking fan wrote, "I have never before been so moved by a thespian performance. ... I’m sure I missed a lot [of the Yiddish]. I feel, however, that what I did understand was reward enough."

Molly kept performing in one-woman shows until just a few years before her death in 1992 at the age of 94. She was sometimes called the "Helen Hays of Jewish Theater." After watching her perform, however, Ms. Hays is reported to have said, "I would be proud to be called the ‘Molly Picon of the American Theater.’"
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THE RABBI’S FAMILY

EAST SIDE SADIE
Circa 1929. “A $100,000 production. Thrilling from beginning to end. The greatest and most interesting that you have ever seen. It took a year to produce. You will weep and laugh until you cry when you see ‘East Side Sadie.’” Producer: Worldart Film Company. Director: Sidney Goldin. Printed by Universal Theatrical Corporation, New York, N.Y.; silkscreen in orange, aqua, black and pink.

THE REVEREND’S LADY (The Cantor’s Wife)
EMMA LAZARUS
SONNET,
"THE NEW COLOSSUS"

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“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”
The descendants of the Sephardic Jews who first settled what is now the United States, although small in number compared to the descendants of Yiddish-speaking, Eastern European Jews, have left a remarkable legacy. One of the most distinguished Sephardic Jews in American history was Benjamin Nathan Cardozo.

In 1932, President Herbert Hoover appointed Cardozo to the Supreme Court of the United States. Cardozo was the second Jew, after Louis D. Brandeis, to serve on the nation’s highest court. Previously, Cardozo served as a judge on the New York State Supreme Court and as Chief Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals.

The Cardozo family is one of America’s oldest and most distinguished. Cardozo forebears were numbered among the founders of Congregation Shearith Israel in New York. One eighteenth-century forebear served as the first Jewish incorporator and trustee of what is now Columbia University and another, in 1792, helped found the New York Stock Exchange. Poet Emma Lazarus was his cousin.

Benjamin Cardozo was the son of Judge Albert Cardozo and Rebecca Nathan. Albert Cardozo served as vice president and trustee of Congregation Shearith Israel and was successful and respected. The Cardozo family image suffered a major setback, however, when Albert, a Tammany Hall appointee to the New York City bench, resigned his judgeship in 1872 just as a legislative committee was about to recommend impeaching him for nepotism.

Despite this taint of notoriety, Benjamin chose to enter the law and — one might say defiantly—entered his father’s law firm upon graduation from Columbia University Law School. The young Cardozo distinguished himself as a litigator. Shy and reserved in his personal life, Cardozo was a powerful orator in the courtroom. Above all, perhaps driven to redeem his father’s disgrace, Cardozo developed a reputation for the utmost integrity.

After his bar mitzvah, Cardozo stopped attending religious services and described himself as an agnostic, but he never failed to identify himself as a proud, traditional Jew. Cardozo refused to allow pork and shellfish into his home and maintained the family pew at Shearith Israel. In 1895, at age 25, Cardozo opposed an innovation that would eliminate gender-segregated seating in the congregation. Cardozo delivered a "long address," according to the congregational minutes, "impressive in ability and eloquence," which helped carry the day for the traditionalist side.

At a time when "polite" anti-Semitism was rampant among the New York social elite and Jews were virtually excluded from venues such as the New York Athletic Club and the Union League Club, Cardozo joined the Judean Club, an association "designed to gather together a body of cultured Jewish gentlemen … to advance the intellectual and spiritual aspirations of the Jews." Cardozo also served on the board of the American Jewish Committee and, despite his ambivalence, joined the Zionist Organization of America. He wrote:

I have signed the application with some misgiving, for I have confessed … that I am not yet an enthusiast. But today, the line seems to be forming between those who are for the cause and those who are against it, with little room for a third camp. I am not willing to join those who are against, so I go over to the others.

In the 1928 presidential contest, Cardozo backed Democratic candidate Al Smith against Herbert Hoover. While he respected Hoover, Cardozo wrote to a cousin that in the Republican camp "will be found all the narrow-minded bigots, all the Jew haters, all those who would make of the United States an exclusively Protestant government. … The defeat of Smith will be acclaimed as a great victory by … the friends of obscurantism." Despite Cardozo’s party loyalty, the victorious Hoover appointed him to the Supreme Court four years later.

Cardozo tried never to let his Jewish identification influence his judicial reasoning. Although an avowed personal opponent of Hitler’s regime, he was distressed when, in 1935, a New York City magistrate dismissed assault charges against five of six Jewish defendants who stormed a German ship in New York harbor that flew the Nazi flag. The magistrate held that the lawbreakers were justified because the flag provoked them. Cardozo wrote to a family member: "What is the use of striving for standards of judicial propriety if [we] condone such lapses! It would have been bad enough if [the magistrate] had been a Gentile; but for a Jew it was unforgivable."

Professor Roscoe Pound of Harvard considered Cardozo one of the ten best legal minds in American history, and his writings made major contributions to American common law. As a jurist of integrity and committed Jew, Justice Cardozo brought dignity to the law and honor to his people.
In January 2000, the American Jewish Historical Society joined with four distinguished partners to inaugurate the Center for Jewish History in New York City. Located at 15 West 16th Street in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood, the Center for Jewish History (CJH) has become a magnet for scholarly research, intellectual discourse and cultural activity unlike any other in the United States. Ten years in the planning and built at a cost of more than $40 million, the CJH is now the largest facility specifically devoted to the study of Jewish history and culture anywhere outside of Israel. Along with the AJHS, the Center is home to the American Sephardi Federation, the Leo Baeck Institute, the Yeshiva University Museum and YIVO.

The Leo Baeck Institute (LBI) archives preserve the history of Jewish life in Germany before the Shoah, as YIVO’s holdings do for pre-Nazi Yiddish-speaking Eastern Europe. Since more than ninety percent of all Jews now living in the United States trace their ancestry back to Central or Eastern Europe, the links among the collections of the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS), LBI and YIVO are strong, and researchers benefit from being able to use all three collections in the same reading room.

The presence of the Yeshiva University Museum at the Center for Jewish History means that, in addition to each of the archival partners having its own small exhibition space, the Center’s largest galleries are filled with world-class exhibitions organized by the museum’s professional staff. Finally, the American Sephardi Federation’s small but growing archival collections, library and programs round out the picture of the Jewish historical experience in the modern era.

The juxtaposition of the partners’ collections, lectures, films and exhibitions allow researchers and audiences to comprehend the range and variety of modern Jewish history beyond the old distinctions between German-speaking and Yiddish-speaking Jews, or Ashkenazi versus Sephardic Jewry. At the Center for Jewish history, the common threads in the fabric of Jewish historical experience are on display for all to see.

Of course, the American Jewish Historical Society is equally proud of its new home at Hebrew College in Newton, Massachusetts (see related story on page 8), successor to its Waltham facility, which continues to house the Society’s Massachusetts- and New England-related holdings. Together, our two facilities have provided AJHS with stunningly beautiful homes for our collections, exhibitions and programs. Please contact us for a tour of either location.
To find out about ways in which you can contribute to the Center or for naming opportunities, please complete the form below and return it to the Development Office at the Center for Jewish History 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011, or call 917.606.8281 for more information. Thank you!

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BARNEY ROSS’S GREATEST BATTLES

Among the areas in which Jews have left their mark over the past 350 years is professional sports. Although many have forgotten today, boxing was once known as a “Jewish sport.” Boxing has traditionally served as a path of inward and upward mobility for immigrants and racial minorities. From the 1920s to the 1950s, many of boxing’s champions were Jewish. Despite opposition from their parents and teachers, Jewish boys sought to make good with their fists.

One such typical story comes from Chicago, where the young and pious Barnet Rasofsky planned to become a Talmudic scholar and Hebrew teacher. In 1924, however, when Barnet was 14 years old, two men killed his father while they robbed the family grocery store. Left alone to care for five children, Barnet’s mother had a nervous breakdown and went to live with relatives. Barnet and his oldest brother moved in with a cousin; his three youngest siblings went to an orphanage.

His life now forever transformed, Barnet Rasofsky vowed to make enough money – by whatever means – to reunite his family. He renounced his Orthodox faith and became a petty thief, numbers runner and brawler. Barnet took up amateur boxing and, when he won, pawned his medals for the few dollars they brought. Sometimes, he took six fights in a week. At age 19, Rasofsky turned professional and took the name Barney Ross so his mother, now back on her feet, wouldn’t worry about him. As Barney Ross, he won world championships and election to the Boxing Hall of Fame. But life never got any easier for Barney Ross.

Ross entered the ranks of the boxing greats in a brutal series of welterweight fights against Jimmy McLarnin, who outweighed Ross by several pounds. McLarnin was a harder puncher with a reputation for beating Jewish boxers. In their first and bloodiest battle, Ross defeated McLarnin by a split decision. Ross offered McLarnin a rematch five months later and McLarnin avenged the defeat in a vicious battle, the only fight in his career in which Ross suffered a knockdown. When they met for the third time, Ross took the rematch in a fight that showed his clear superiority as a boxer.

Ross’s most courageous prizefight was his last, in 1938, against Henry Armstrong, the only man at that time to hold the featherweight, lightweight and welterweight crowns. By the time he fought Armstrong, Ross was only 28 years old but he had fought almost 300 times. Ross started strong, but tired after the fourth round and Armstrong pummeled him at will. After the tenth round, the referee asked Ross if he wanted to stop, but the champion refused. After the twelfth round, the referee approached Ross’s managers, asking them to throw in the towel, but Ross told them, “You do that and I’ll never talk to you again. I want to go out like a champion.” Through rounds thirteen, fourteen and fifteen, Armstrong pounded away at Ross, who would not go down. Voices in the crowd pleaded with the referee to stop the fight but he respected Ross’s wish to end his career without failing to go the distance. In the last minute of the fight, Ross rallied and stood toe to toe with Armstrong, exchanging blows. The crowd was on its feet, many with tears in their eyes, cheering for Ross, knowing they had seen the heart of a true champion.

Ross retired after that fight and opened a restaurant. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Ross, who at 32 was beyond draft age, volunteered for the Marines. Assigned to serve as a boxing instructor, Ross asked for combat duty and was shipped to Guadalcanal, scene of some of the bloodiest fighting in the Pacific. One night, a superior force of Japanese troops attacked Ross and three comrades on patrol in Guadalcanal. All three comrades were wounded. Ross gathered them in a shell crater and defended them by firing over 400 rifle rounds. When he ran out of bullets, Ross threw 22 grenades at enemy machine gun positions. Ross said two hours of prayers, many in Hebrew, hoping to make it through the night. Finally, at dawn, with two of his three comrades dead, out of ammunition and wounded in the leg and foot himself, the 140-pound Ross picked up his 230-pound surviving comrade and carried him to safety. Ross, whose helmet had more than thirty shrapnel dents, received the Silver Star for heroism.

At the military hospital, medics gave the wounded Ross all the morphine he requested. Released from the hospital, Ross toured military factories across the United States to raise morale among workers but couldn’t shake his need for morphine. When his habit began costing him $500 per week and his wife left him, Ross finally checked into a drug treatment facility. While few gave him much chance of succeeding, Ross went “cold turkey” and, after much agony, emerged 120 days later having kicked the habit. While he lived in constant pain from his wounds, Ross spent the remainder of his life speaking out against drug abuse. Hollywood later turned Ross’s autobiographical account of his addiction into a movie, “Monkey on My Back.”

In his autobiography, Ross recounted that a rabbi once told him that, since he was a Jew in the public eye, he had to lead an exemplary life. Barney Ross did not let the rabbi – or his people – down. Of the many things Ross achieved in his life and all the obstacles he overcame, the one that meant the most to him was having earned enough money in the first Canzoneri fight to reunite his mother at home with her three youngest children. He redeemed the pledge that 14 year old Barnet Rasofsky, the former Talmud scholar, had made.

Jews have made significant contributions to American popular culture. One of the areas most influenced by the creativity and inventiveness is the graphic arts, and particularly "comic" books.

As a means to express American virtues such as honesty, patriotism and chivalry, few popular media can compete with comics. Since the 1930’s, heroes who populate the imaginary universe American comic books save innocent victims, liberate entire nations –protect the earth itself – from characters representing pure evil. Crime fighters such as Dick Tracy and Batman, fighters against foreign espionage agents like the Green Lantern, and that forerunner of modern feminism, Wonder Woman, rank among the best-known and enduring comic book superheroes.

But no comic book hero embodies American ideals more fully than does Superman. After all, the man with the "S" on his chest embodies "Truth, Justice and the American Way." What fewer people know is that the creators and definers of Superman’s Americanism were two Jewish teenagers from Cleveland, Jerry Siegel (1914-96) and Joe Shuster (1914-92).

Superman’s early development was awkward. Siegel first used the name in 1933 for a science fiction story titled, "The Reign of Superman," with illustrations by Schuster. Inspired by the German philosopher Nietzsche, Siegel’s first Superman was an evil mastermind with advanced mental powers. Unfortunately, the text of this story has been lost to history.

After Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933 and proceeded to distort Nietzsche’s concept of Superman, however, Siegel and Shuster rethought their concept of Superman’s character. They changed their Jewish-created Superman to a force for good. Their biggest challenge was finding a publisher interested in producing a Superman comic. It took five years to find one who would.

In 1938, just before the outbreak of war in Europe and at a low point in the Depression, Siegel and Shuster were working for Harry Donenfeld and Jack Liebowitz at D.C. Comics in New York. There, an editor finally agreed to let Superman appear in the first issue of Action Comics, (volume I, #1, June, 1938). The newly reconceived Superman leaped tall buildings in a single bound while bullets bounced off his chest as he lifted automobiles and ripped steel doors from their hinges. In that first issue, the forward-thinking Superman rescued battered wives from abusive husbands.

When America entered World War II after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Superman’s character evolved into a combat hero. He destroyed Nazi armor, Japanese submarines and everything else thrown at the Allies. The cover of a 1944 issue of Superman Comics featured the Man of Steel throttling Hitler and Tojo by the collar.

Despite his superhuman powers, Superman shared some traits with typical American Jewish immigrants in the 1940s. Like them, Superman arrived in America from a foreign world. His entire family — in fact his entire race — had been wiped out in a Holocaust-like disaster on Krypton, his home planet. Like German-Jewish parents who sent their children on the kindertransports, or the baby Moses set adrift in a basket into the bull rushes, Superman’s parents launched him in a rocket to Earth in hopes that he would survive. And while the mild-mannered, shy and reserved Clark Kent held a white collar job as a reporter by day, the "real" man behind Kent’s meek exterior was a virile, indestructible crusader for justice. This fantasy resonated with American Jews feeling powerless to help their brethren in the death camps of Europe. Superman obeyed the Talmudic injunction to do good for its own sake and heal the world where he could. Consciously or not, Siegel and Shuster created a mythic character that reflected their own Jewish values.

By the 1950’s, Siegel and Shuster grew dissatisfied with their personal financial arrangement with D.C. Comics and they sued the company to recover the copyright to Superman. Eventually, D.C. Comics agreed to pay them a modest royalty for the rest of their lives. Today, Siegel and Shuster, barely known during their lives, are largely forgotten. However, the most influential individuals ever to work in the American comic book industry left an enormous mark on the American popular imagination... with a little help from a nice Jewish boy from Krypton.
The impending arrival of the 350th anniversary of permanent Jewish settlement in North America, which the nation will mark in 2004, inspired the AJHS staff to search our archives to find the record of how the Jewish community celebrated the 250th anniversary, a century ago. The AJHS was instrumental in organizing that celebration and, as the only collector of American Jewish archives at that time, became the official repository for the records of the committee that organized the event.

One of the most interesting documents they discovered is an original letter from President Theodore Roosevelt to Jacob Schiff, chair of the 250th anniversary celebration. Schiff had invited Roosevelt to address the attendees at the celebratory dinner in New York City that marked the start of the anniversary, and Roosevelt wrote back to his friend Schiff that his personal policy was to remain in Washington, DC while Congress was in session. He also pointed out to Schiff, with a touch of annoyance, that he did not want to set a precedent that would oblige him to attend celebrations organized by every American ethnic or religious group, no matter how important the occasion. (Of course, presidential public relations have changed a great deal since that time). However, TR did offer to send a message to the gathering; Schiff accepted.

The anniversary dinner was held in 1905. Former president Grover Cleveland delivered the keynote speech, but before he spoke Schiff read Roosevelt’s message to the assembled throng. Its words still stir the reader today, and we thought we would reproduce the letter and share it with our readers. The handwritten editorial changes in the letter were made by Roosevelt himself, who—as an excellent amateur historian—very likely composed it without the assistance of a speechwriter.
Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Jacob Schiff regarding the 250th anniversary of permanent Jewish settlement in North America. ©AJHS.
Historical Society

terrorism. The rally’s resounding message reverberated with Israel and support for the war on global terrorism. Numerous non-Jewish friends of Israel, converged at the Capitol in an unprecedented outpouring of solidarity with Israel and support for the war on global terrorism. The rally’s resounding message reverberated in Washington, Jerusalem and around the world. America Stands with Israel contains more than 200 color photos, transcripts of the speeches and participant comments recording this historic event. Edited by Michael Feldberg, Executive Director of AJHS, and others, the book contains an introduction by Malcolm Hoenlein, Executive Vice President of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

BEYOND WORDS
A Holocaust History in sixteen woodcuts done in 1945 by Miklos Adler, a Hungarian survivor. Edited, with an introduction and commentary, by Saul Touster. Contains facsimiles of the woodcuts and a separately bound volume with Professor Touster’s commentary, bound in a folio box. Hardcover • $200.

HOOPSKIRTS AND HUPPAHS
A Chronicle of the Early Years of the Garfinkel-Trager Family in America, 1836-1920.
Written by Milton M. Gottesman. Published by American Jewish Historical Society, New York. 96 pages, 6” x 9”, cloth bound, with 37 period photographs, 91 endnotes, appendix, glossary, and an introduction by Professor Jeffrey S. Gurock. Subjects include:
- Two mid-19th century rabbis who make their livings as hoop skirt manufacturers and minister to their congregations in South Carolina and New York on a pro bono basis.
- A hoop skirt salesman who briefs Union Army officers on Confederate military preparations and becomes a freelance intelligence operative with a personal introduction from General Grant to the commanding general of the Union Army in Washington.
- A home in Columbia, South Carolina, that is specially protected by Union army officers from the conflagration that consumes the rest of the city during Sherman’s March to the Sea.

BLESSINGS OF FREEDOM
Blessings of Freedom is a collection of vignettes and episodes that, taken together, outline the overriding directions and tendencies of the much larger tapestry that comprises the American Jewish experience. Starting in 1997, the American Jewish Historical Society published a weekly feature entitled Blessings of Freedom: Chapters in American Jewish History in the English-language Forward and other newspapers. This volume comprises 120 of the best columns, organized according to subject and period. Each chapter is a window through which the reader gets an interesting and illuminating glimpse at an important and often colorful aspect of the American Jewish story. Bibliographical information is given for those interested in learning more about the topic. Hardcover • $20. Paperback • $15.

THE LEVY FAMILY AND MONTICELLO
Each year more than a half-million people from around the world visit Monticello, but few people realize that Jefferson’s house was also home to the family of Uriah P. Levy and his nephew Jefferson Monroe Levy. Even fewer realize that without the Levy family’s stewardship, there might not be a Monticello to visit.
In a story filled with drama, irony, political wrangling and legal battles, Professor Melvin I. Urofsky corrects the misconception that a “century of ruin and neglect” marked Monticello between Jefferson’s death and the creation of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, the private, nonprofit organization that today owns and operates Monticello. The story of the Levy’s and Monticello is a story of the blending of cultures and personalities, of Yankees and Virginians, of Jews and Christians, of city folk and rural people. It is the story of the power of a symbol, and how in America such symbols cut across lines of religion and class and ethnicity. And behind all of this is the presence of Thomas Jefferson.

THE LEYBES
The Levy family is one of America’s most prominent German-Jewish dynasties. Their ancestor, Abraham Lehmann (1785-1865), lived in the Bavarian village of Rimpar. After their emigration to Montgomery, Alabama, in the middle of the nineteenth century, his sons founded the banking firm of Lehman Brothers, today one of the most prestigious on Wall Street.
Abraham Lehmann’s descendants including Herbert H. Lehman, governor and senator from New York, Irving Lehman, chief justice of the New York State Court of Appeals, Robert Lehman, who gave his world-renowned art collection to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Edgar M. Bronfman, Jr., CEO of Seagrams Corporation, Robert M. Morgenthau, New York County district attorney, John L. Loeb, Jr., former U.S. ambassador to Denmark, Sir Philip Goodhart, former Conservative member of the British Parliament, Lord William Goodhart, co-founder of the Liberal Democratic Party of Great Britain, and Eva Lehmann Thalheimer, a first cousin of Governor Lehman. Eva Thalheimer was killed in Treblinka.
In June 1996, members of the Lehman family from the United States and England congregated in Rimpar to pay tribute to their forebears and the village’s Holocaust victims. In a personal message, U.S. president Bill Clinton wrote: “Germans and Americans alike are proud to claim this family as their own, and their ongoing success is a testament to the spirit and values of both our nations.”
This second edition of The Levyes includes an additional chapter that tells the story behind the highly emotional gathering in Rimpar. • $19.99.

THE JEWISH JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT REVISITED: BRANDEIS TO FORTAS

THE LEHMANS
The Lehmans are one of America’s most prominent German-Jewish dynasties. Their ancestor, Abraham Lehman (1785-1865), lived in the Bavarian village of Rimpar. After their emigration to Montgomery, Alabama, in the middle of the nineteenth century, his sons founded the banking firm of Lehman Brothers, today one of the most prestigious on Wall Street.
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THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN AMERICA

Volume I - A Time for Planting
In the Autumn of 1654, twenty-three Jews aboard the bark Sainte Catherine landed at the town of New Amsterdam to establish the first permanent Jewish settlement in North America. In A Time for Planting, Eli Faber recounts these earliest days of Jewish life in America, as Jews from Lisbon to Amsterdam to London extended the wanderings of their centuries-old diaspora.

Volume II - A Time for Gathering
Between 1820 and 1880, European Jews arrived in the United States in ever greater numbers. While later Jewish immigrants would criticize their “rush” to assimilation, the Jews of this period created the institutions that continue to shape Jewish life in America. In A Time for Gathering, Hasia Diner describes this “second wave” of Jewish migration.

Volume III - A Time for Building
The years between 1880 and 1920 marked the third great migration of Jews to the U.S.-including more than two million from the Russian empire, Austria-Hungary, and Rumania. A Time for Building describes the experiences of Jews who stayed in the large cities of the Northeast and Midwest as well as those who moved to smaller towns in the deep South and the West.

Volume IV - A Time for Searching
Henry Feingold chronicles the turbulent period between 1920 and 1945-when Jews were poised to enter the mainstream of American life-and explores issues that would preoccupy America’s Jewish community for the rest of the century. Despite the specter of anti-Semitism, signs of success and acceptance were everywhere.

Volume V - A Time for Healing
A Time for Healing chronicles a time of rapid economic and social progress. Yet this phenomenal success, explains Edward S. Shapiro, came at a cost. Shapiro takes seriously the potential threat to Jewish culture posed by assimilation and intermarriage — asking if the Jewish people, having already endured so much, will survive America’s freedom and affluence as well.

YIDDISH NOTE CARDS
In the early part of the 20th century, American Jewish immigrants from Yiddish-speaking lands in Eastern and Central Europe sent Rosh Hashanah and other holiday greeting via Yiddish postcards. Quite possibly, your own grandparents or parents received an original of one of the cards shown here. The American Jewish Historical Society has assiduously collected and preserved hundreds of these cards in its archives as a way to mark the immigrant experience in America. The Society has now selected twenty-seven of these cards and made them available as note cards to its members and supporters. Each box contains 18 note cards reproduced from New Year postcards converted into folded notes usable for any occasion but most suitable as New Year’s cards. Envelopes are included. These are very high quality and charming reproductions not available in stores. Please specify box I or III as illustrated at right (box I sold out).

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