

NEWSLETTER

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Volume XXVII June 2014 Number 1



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Michael Schwartz

I am happy to report that our new tradition of moving our Fall Membership Meeting to different locations about our State will continue. On November 2, 2014 we will have our program at Temple Sinai in Cranston. Please circle the date. More details will be coming in the near future. I am sure that you will not be disappointed.

Our Association's web site continues to expand and develop. We now accept Pay Pal so that those members who may wish to make a donation or pay dues on line may do so.

In addition, the on-going digitization of our vast collection of oral history tapes has reached a new level. We will be posting on our website a list of the oral histories that have already been formatted. Should you wish to listen to one of the interviews, please contact Anne Sherman at our office. We cannot allow the tapes to leave our office, however, you are welcome to make an appointment to listen to them at the office. While there please take the time to see some of the other wonderful items usually on display.

Have a wonderful summer.

NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the 60th annual meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association that was held on Sunday, April 6, 2014, the following slate of officers were nominated for 2014 – 2015:

OFFICERS FOR A 1-YEAR TERM

President	Michael Schwartz
1st Vice President	Ruth Breindel
Secretary	Maxine Goldin
Treasurer	David Bazar

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD – ENDING 2015

Myrna Levine
Lowell Lisker
Estelle Millman
Philip Segal
Bailey Silechnik
Marlene Wolpert

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD – ENDING 2016

Shai Afsai
Mel Blake
Harold Foster
Herbert Katz
Marilyn Myrow
Mel Topf, Ph.D.

PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEE

Charles Kahn, M.D.
Michael Fink

PAYPAL IS NOW AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE!

You can pay your membership or make donations through this easy method.

Here's how to do it:

1. Go to our website: www.rijha.org
2. For Membership: Click on Membership for the Membership form
3. For Donation: click on Membership – then Donation Form will come up

We hope you enjoy this convenience.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

*Cornelis and Kathryn De Boer
Susan and Larry Ginsberg
Mr and Mrs. Mark J. Krauss
Beniamino and Robin Sciarcon
Dr. David Synder*

IN OUR OFFICE AND ARCHIVES

Anne Sherman

With the very cold and snowy winter, our members decided to stay inside and hibernate or go to Florida. Only a few acquisitions came into the office.

We will once again have a summer intern in the office, thanks to Mel Zurier and the Seebert J and Bonnie N. Goldowsky Fund for providing the funds. Our intern will be graduating from Rhode Island College this year. She will be scanning more volumes of the NOTES and writing articles for our column "Remember the Past" in the *Jewish Voice*.

Jeff Brier brought in a framed photo of the original Ledge-mont County Club, located in West Warwick. Included with the framed photo is a key. The caption states "Flag raising by Max L. Grant and presentation of golden key to president Jacob E. Edelstein by Walter I Sundlun." The photo is dated July 12th 1925.

Edith E. Grant found two very old Passover Hagadahs. One of the Hagadahs is dated 1932. It was published by the Star Hebrew Book Co. of New York, but made in Austria. It has a hot pink cover. The other Passover Hagadah was published in 1912 by Hebrew Publishing Co, Delancey St. New York City. This Hagadah is illustrated and has Hebrew on the right column of the page and English on the left side of the page. Mrs. Grant also found the front page from the *New York Times* dated September 5, 1892 and a page from *The Evening Bulletin* dated Thursday February 5, 1880.

Maxine Goldin continues to bring in items that belonged to her late husband's, Edward Goldin, when he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity at the University of Rhode Island. She brought in the 90th anniversary Membership Directory 2005. She also brought in letters from Senator Claiborne Pell and Mayor Joseph Doorley written to her husband.

Jean Riesman came in looking for information of the Mt. Hope section of Providence for a presentation she was giving at Laurelmead. A company in New York is doing a documentary on genealogy and called looking for information on South Providence. A relative of Louis Tint called looking for information on him. Mr. Tint was a member of Congregation Sons of Israel and David and was the second person buried in their cemetery in 1865. I received a call about Rabbi Bick, Rabbi at Congregation Sons of Jacob from 1923-1929. Dr. Marvin Wasser e-mailed me. His cousin was married by Rabbi Morris Schusshein, but she could not remember the

name of the synagogue— Temple Beth Israel.

Sam Karfissen, who grew up in West Warwick, is an author who writes mysteries books set in West Warwick. He needed information on Congregation Ahavath Shalom for his next book. I am reading his latest book "The Mill Town— A Doherty Mystery."

Brian Sullivan, Alliance Director of Marketing, came in looking for old photos of synagogues, companies and activities. He wants to put them on their Facebook Page every "throw-back Thursday." One photo a week will be used.

Rachael Rosner came into the office with Dan Beck looking for information on our member, Dr Aaron Beck. She is writing his biography with the help of Dr Beck's son. They were most interested in Dr Beck's parents, Harry and Elizabeth (Temkin) Beck. Harry was the first Jewish printer in Rhode Island. Mrs. Rosner and Mr. Beck wanted addresses, as they wanted to visit some of the places that will be in the biography.

Everyone have a wonderful summer. Jerry and I are heading to Montana in July.

DONATIONS FROM DECEMBER 30, 2013 – MAY 15, 2014

IN MEMORY OF

Maurice Applebaum
Maurice Applebaum
Dayna Bazar
Baila Bender
Martin Bergel
Martin Bergel
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Herbert Brown
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Malcolm Bromberg
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Philip Feldman
David Friedman
Dr. Milton Hamolsky
Harold Hominoff
Charlotte Hopfenberg
Bruce Jacober
Cecilia Katz
Dr. Marvin Kertzner
Morris Levin
Morris Levin

FROM

Maxine Goldin
Betty & Robert Kotlen
Ann & Joseph Bazar
Sally Soren
Lillian N. & Harold Schwartz
Maxine Goldin
Renee & Alan Flink
Jerome Spunt
Ruth & Herbert Gold
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Erwin Summer
Reva & Milton Lewis
Erwin Summer
Maxine Goldin
Eugene Weinberg
Maxine Goldin
Sally Ann Soren

VISIT TO LISBON

George M. Goodwin

You may recall an extraordinary article by a Portuguese researcher, Rui Miguel Faisca Rodrigues Pereira, in the 2006 issue of *The Notes*. His amazing genealogical study documented the Iberian ancestry of Aaron Lopez and Jacob Rodriguez, two of the most prosperous Jewish merchants in colonial Newport.

Last fall, when Betsey and I began planning a spring trip to Europe, I sent Rui an email, hoping that he would like to meet us in Lisbon. Indeed, he was interested, but currently resides near Honolulu, where he is a postdoctoral fellow in physics at the University of Hawaii. (A graduate of Lisbon's Technical University, he is one of several foreign postdoc fellows in his department.)

Rui suggested that his mother, Maria Manuela Pereira, might like to befriend us. Fortunately, she seemed eager, so we arranged to meet at our hotel before heading to a popular seafood restaurant and brewery, *Cervejaria Trindade* (located in a former monastery).

Manuela, who apologized for her lack of English fluency, was actually quite articulate and thoughtful. Thus, it was no surprise to learn that she is a retired high school physics teacher. Rui's younger brother had preceded him to America. Now in his fifth year of doctoral studies in engineering at Louisiana State University, in Baton Rouge, he is focusing on hydrology (particularly the dynamics of flooding!). Both brothers, who are single, would be pleased to return to their homeland, but little opportunity awaits them.

After discussing local tourist destinations, our conversation turned to Portuguese Jewish history. Proud of her Jewish ancestry, Manuela explained that her forebears had been forced to become *Cristãos novos* (new Christians). Through an e-mail conversation about nine years ago, Rui had explained that his Jewish ancestry was "no big deal," for perhaps ten percent of Portuguese citizens have such roots. Indeed, Rui had been able to prove that he was distantly related to the Lopez and Rivera families.

Manuela mentioned that Betsey and I might like to see an inscription relating to the Portuguese Inquisition, on or near the Church of St. Dominic, past which we had strolled the previous day. Consequently, Betsey and I later returned to examine the church's facade and entryway, but found nothing.

After exiting St. Dominic, I suddenly noticed a marble and bronze sculpture, about seven feet high, at the opposite end of a small plaza. Its form resembled an "H," which was hardly a coincidence, for this was in fact a memorial, inscribed in Portuguese, to Hebrews and new Christians who had been persecuted by Catholic authorities.

Then, as Betsey and I continued our stroll, we noticed, about thirty yards away, a low, triangle-shaped wall adorned with letters from numerous alphabets, including Hebrew. All the words appeared to proclaim: "Lisbon, City of Tolerance." Perhaps this was one reason why many blacks, presumably from Portugal's former African colonies, stood besides or sat on nearby benches. When I searched the wall's scuffed plastic surface, I noticed a small inscription: "Sculpture offered by the Jewish Community"

Betsey and I encountered a third monument, which was also missing from our detailed guidebook. A large stone hemisphere, perhaps six feet in diameter, supported a bronze inscription within a Mogen David. It explained, in Portuguese, that 2,000 Jews had been massacred at this site on April 19, 1506. This monument, erected in 2008, also bore the years "5266-5766."

Another of Manuela's comments stirred us. She explained that, during the late 1930s and early 1940s, many wealthy Jewish refugees, from various European countries, had resided in our hotel, the Avenida Palace. Manuela also mentioned that one of her great-uncles, a tailor in a nearby shop, had made clothes for these émigrés who had brought so few with them. No doubt Aristides de Sousa Mendes, the Portuguese consul in Bordeaux, had rescued some of these Jews. Mike Fink wrote about his heroism in our 2010 issue.

Some day Betsey and I hope to meet Rui and learn about his further Jewish discoveries. Indeed, he and Manuela would be delighted to speak to our Association.

IN MEMORY OF

Morris Levin
Morris Levin
Mary Lewis and Philip Lewis
Carolyn Marks
Beatrice Wattman Miller
Beatrice Wattman Miller
Beatrice Wattman Miller
Beatrice Wattman Miller
Beatrice Wattman Miller
Gertrude Olshan
Gertrude Olshan
Alvin Pansey
Alvin Pansey
Thomas Pearlman
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Paula Rice
Gerald Rich
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Harvey S. Sindle
Shim Silverstein
Barbara and Seymour Silverstein
Rosalie Tanzer & Philip Tanzer
Hayvis, Lillian & Meryl Woolf

FROM

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Geraldine Foster
Mary Kierman
Charlene Underhill
Shirley Wolpert
LGC&D
Anita Solomon
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Miriam & Richard Sharfman
Barbara Morgan
Mike Fine
Jerome Spunt
Barbara Spunt Bernstein
Mr and Mrs. Bernard Goldberg
Charlotte Primack
Sally Ann Soren
Barbara & Morris Schwartz
Beverly Satloff
Ilse Schaler
Phyllis Stambler
Bridget & James Gershman
Ruth Samdperil
Ellen & Harold Schein
Reva & Milton Lewis
Marcia Woolf Hicks & Bob Hicks



NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT: MICHAEL SCHWARTZ
OFFICE MANAGER: ANNE SHERMAN

DONATIONS FROM DECEMBER 31, 2013 – MAY 15, 2014

IN HONOR OF

Todd & Barbara Bazar's marriage
Dr. Nathan Epstein's special birthday
George Goodwin
Dr. Abraham Horvitz's birthday
Harriet Landesberg's 102nd birthday

Bea & Nathan Shwartz's 70th anniversary

FROM

Ann & Joseph Bazar
Alice Eichenbaum
Bobby & Norman Shack
Dr. Banice Webber
Lois, Mich, Rich, Marcy,
Noah, Gabe Cohen

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Joel Cerel

FROM

Beverly & Robert Goldblatt

IN APPRECIATION

Dr. Caldwell W. Smith

FROM

Florette & Marvin Brill

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IN MEMORY OF ANITA FINE

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IN MEMORY OF ERWIN STRASMICH

Herbert Emers and Jill Brody, Keevim Geller, Ann Marie Lewis, Marilyn Kagan, Jenna and Lea Osiason, Maxine & Jay Rosenthal, Jerome Spunt,

**SAVE THE DATE
THE FALL MEETING OF RIJHA
WILL BE ON
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 2, 2014.**

This year, we are having the meeting at
Temple Sinai in Cranston.
Look for the invitation with information
regarding the speaker and directions
to the Temple the first week in October.