Our new on-line exhibit!

Historic Synagogues of Hartford

This online web exhibit showcases a wealth of information concerning the life and leadership of the historic synagogues of Hartford, along with an interactive timeline. Featuring archival images and commentary related to synagogue architecture, clergy, and significant moments in communal synagogue life, we hope you enjoy this new addition to our website. To access this exhibit, go to ‘Exhibitions’ on our website navigation bar, and click on ‘Online’ in the dropdown menu.

Please visit our website at www.jhsgh.org
Society Hours, Monday - Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(860) 727-6171
President’s Message

Dear Fellow Members and Friends,

It is with great enthusiasm that I begin my Presidency of the JHSGH Board. It all began about nine years ago when I happened to sit next to Estelle Kafer at an Emanuel Synagogue dinner. During our discussion she spoke about the work of the Society and its collections, mission, and programs. It sounded so interesting and worthwhile, that I immediately wanted to become involved. While still located in the JCC, I went to work on boxes of old photos that needed archival protectors and cataloguing, before the move to the new office on the Zachs Campus. I have been actively involved in many ways ever since.

The Society begins its 2013-2014 as active as ever. Our unique core mission: to collect and preserve the documents, photographs and memorabilia of the Jewish community of Greater Hartford, along with collecting oral histories of local individuals and families, sets us apart as a distinctive organization. To remain relevant, during the past three years, under the leadership of President Barbara Gordon, the Society initiated and invested in updating our web site (www.jhsgh.org), making it a state-of-the art, user friendly archival trove, utilized by students scholars, members, and the community at large. There will soon be an on-line synagogue exhibit available for viewing as well.

It’s important that we expand, share and promote our gem of an organization to friends and family. We are not for Hartford natives only! The history of our community is representative of the Jewish cultural experience throughout the country. So, no matter where you grew up, you’re going to find programs and events of interest to you.

Finally, I would like to welcome all our new members, and thank the Board of Directors for their commitment of time, energy and financial support.

From my family to yours, I wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year. L’shana Tova

Louise

F A L L  2 0 1 3  C A L E N D A R

Wednesday, September 18, 2013 – 1:00 p.m.
“Let’s Talk about Mrs. Auerbach”
Professor Virginia Hale and Marit Uusitalo
Adult Lounge, Mandell JCC

Monday, September 23, 2013 – 6:15 p.m.
Board Meeting
Community Services Building

Sunday, September 29, 2013 – 1:00 – 5:00
Sukkah Open House
In back of Community Services Building

Sunday, October 20, 2013 – 9:30 a.m.
“Back to the Old Neighborhoods” bus tour
Community Services Building

Tuesday, October 22, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting
Community Services Building

Wednesday, October 23, 2013 – 8:45 a.m.
“Heroines of the Lower East Side” walking tour
Bus to New York leaves from CSB

Sunday, November 3, 2013 – 9:30 a.m.
“Back to the Old Neighborhoods” bus tour
Community Services Building

Sunday, November 10, 2013 – 1:00 p.m.
“Documenting Maine Jewry”
Adult Lounge, Mandell JCC

Monday, November 11, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
Lecture by Dr. Deborah Lipstadt
UCONN Hartford Campus, Auditorium,
Library Building, 1800 Asylum Ave., West Hartford

Thursday, November 14, 2013 – 2:00 p.m.
“Vanished Downtown Hartford” – a talk by
Daniel Sterner, Adult Lounge, Mandell JCC

Thursday, November 21, 2013 – 7:00 p.m
Board Meeting, CSB

Sunday, December 8, 2013 – 10:00 a.m.
“Jewish Major Leaguers in Their Own Words”
Book Talk about professional baseball by
Peter Ephross
Location TBA

We want your E-MAIL ADDRESS !!!

The Society’s bulletin comes out twice a year and is filled with information about upcoming programs and events, but e-mail is a very efficient and cost-effective way for the Society to keep you informed throughout the year about new activities being added to the Society’s busy calendar. If you haven’t been receiving e-mails from us, it’s because we don’t have your address. Send it to: bbrodie@jewishhartford.org
VANISHED DOWNTOWN HARTFORD
A BOOK TALK BY AUTHOR, Daniel Sterner
2:00 p.m., Thursday, November 14, 2013
Adult Lounge, Mandell Jewish Community Center
335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Daniel Sterner, author of Vanished Downtown Hartford, will recall the lost face of downtown and talk about the historic landmarks that still remain. He will also focus on Hartford’s structural evolution. In July, Mr. Sterner was recently a guest on “Where We Live” on WNPR, speaking with other experts about the way that urban renewal and other means of “revitalizing” the city have impacted Hartford.

Daniel Sterner majored in history at Wesleyan University and earned a master’s degree in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Chicago. He has been a guide at the Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe Houses in Hartford and the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum in Wethersfield. His website, Historic Buildings of Connecticut (historicbuildingsct.com) and his previous book, A Guide to Historic Hartford, Connecticut, have both won awards from the Hartford Preservation Alliance.

GRAND STATE OF MAINE
Sunday, November 10, 2013
1:00 p.m., Mandell Jewish Community Center
333 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford

The Society is partnering with Documenting Maine Jewry to present an afternoon of reminiscing and storytelling about Jewish Life in Maine. Documenting Maine Jewry is a community based history project providing information on Jewish citizens of Maine through a state of the art genealogical and historical resource reflecting the Jewish traditions of memory, remembrance and inter-generational learning.

If you were born in Maine, have lived in Maine, went to camp in Maine, fell in love in Maine or just like Maine, join us for this opportunity to tell us how you are connected to Maine and what that means to you. Go to the website: www.MaineJews.org to see thousands of photos, links to Maine Jewish organizations and people, and to listen to oral histories. You may hear the voice of someone you know.

There is a $15.00 registration fee which goes to support this project. To register, send a check to: Elaine Kahaner, 239 Ludlow Road, Manchester, CT 06040. For further information e-mail: elainecrasnick@gmail.com

“Holocaust Denial: A New Form of Anti-Semitism?”
PROFESSOR DEBORAH LIPSTADT
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2013, 7:30 p.m.
Library Building Auditorium, UCONN, 1800 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford

Dr. Deborah E. Lipstadt is the Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies at Emory University. She is also the author of several books, Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory; Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust; History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier; and The Eichmann Trial.

Professor Lipstadt is a noted Holocaust scholar and lecturer. At Emory, she created the Institute for Jewish Studies and served as its first director. She also directs the website known as HDOT (Holocaust Denial On Trial/ www.hdot.org) which provides answers to questions frequently raised by Holocaust deniers. She was a historical consultant to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and served two terms on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. In 2005, she was part of a delegation representing the White House at the 60th anniversary commemoration of the liberation of Auschwitz. She also spoke to the State Department on the impact of the Eichmann trial on April 11, 2012, the 50th anniversary of the trial’s start.

Although the lecture is free, seating is limited. Those wishing to attend may pick up tickets after October 1st from one of the following sponsoring locations: the University of Connecticut, Mandell JCC, Congregation Beth Israel, and Beth David Synagogue.
BEATRICE FOX AUERBACH: 
THE WOMAN, HER WORLD AND 
HER WARDROBE

Explore the history of a very unique and powerful woman through her wardrobe and personal accessories. Beatrice Fox Auerbach was an extraordinary woman — a loving mother and grandmother, a world traveler, an influential philanthropist, and the owner and CEO of America’s largest privately owned department store, G. Fox & Co. This exhibit includes garments and personal items from the UCONN Historical Costume and Textile Collection, along with historical information and archival photos of Mrs. Auerbach from throughout her life. Please join us for a lecture held in conjunction with the exhibit on Wednesday, September 18th, at 1:00 p.m. with Professor Virginia Hale.

THIS EXHIBIT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

“BACK TO THE OLD NEIGHBORHOODS” BUS TOUR

The Society has scheduled new fall dates for its popular bus tour which travels through 200 years of Jewish history in three hours. Previous tours have been sold out, so book early for best availability. This year we are also offering the tours to synagogues and other organizations. Several congregations have already signed on to give their members this very special experience and we offer a discounted rate for groups of 30 or more. The next tours will take place on:

- Sunday, October 20, 2013 at 9:30 a.m. and
- Sunday, November 3, 2013 at 9:30 a.m.

For more information, please call 860-727-6171 or go to our website at: www.jhsgh.org The cost is $24/per person for members and $28/per person for non-members. You may also register at our website using your credit card.

REVISITING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS: 
STORIES FROM HARTFORD’S PAST

An excited crowd came together on Wednesday, June 26th to welcome our newest book about Hartford, Revisiting our Neighborhoods: Stories From Hartford’s Past. Unlike the previous book which focused exclusively on the North End, this volume contains essays and oral histories from those who lived in all of Hartford’s neighborhoods, so that along with more North End stories, there are reminiscences from those who grew up in other areas throughout the city. A number of archival photos used throughout wonderfully evoke that very special time period. Reading this is sure to bring back many wonderful memories. If you loved “Remembering the Old Neighborhood”, we know that you’ll enjoy this book as well. You can order “Revisiting our Neighborhoods” from our website at www.jhsgh.org, or stop by the office and pick up a copy.
I forgot how old I was, maybe 8 or 9 years old, and my grandmother took me to Pennsylvania where my Uncle Al had a music shop, and he had a brother-in-law who was a pharmacist. My grandmother would say, “He makes a very nice living as a pharmacist.” I went out there and I looked and he had a soda fountain in his store and they had a very nice apartment and they lived in a lovely area. So, being from the North End of Hartford, I was very impressed at an early age that pharmacy wasn’t such a bad thing to do. Then, in 7th or 8th grade, we had to choose the type of college course that we wanted to take in high school and I said, “Maybe pharmacy would be pretty good.” So, back then, I decided that I was going to be a pharmacist.

I worked through college at G. Fox and Co., more or less in merchandising, but in 1962, I went to work for A.D. Pierce and Son as a pharmacist, although I also did that at G. Fox for six months, as well. But G. Fox taught me a lot about how to buy drugs and other facets of business, like buying merchandise at the right prices and the right amounts and how to budget. I was able to apply all of that to my business.

I bought the pharmacy because Morris Feldman wanted to be out of the business after ten years. I wasn’t ready financially, or sure that I really wanted to own a small business. But I didn’t want anyone else to buy it, so I approached a relative and he gave me a loan on the condition that I take in one of his relatives as a partner. The building was probably a hundred years old with gas chandeliers and archaic shelves that weren’t adequate. As soon as I bought the business I had to remodel it.

We were a complete service pharmacy. We treated everybody equally and with very good service. We delivered for those who needed it. We had a very good customer base, and were so busy that in two years we had to put on an addition, which doubled our size. We started cashing checks for our customers and had money orders and ‘Moneygrams’ and wire transfers. It was like a meeting place because there were bus stops on the corners nearby.

All my kids worked in the store. When my mother and father came back from Florida or wherever, they would enjoy working a few hours in the store. My father used to like to lend money. People would come to him and say, “Pop, I need a dollar. Pop, I need two dollars.” He would take out his little book and write down their name and give them a dollar or two. We all did that.
From the Director

Dear Friends,

As we approach the High Holiday season, I reflect back to the past year filled with activity and educational opportunities. Last Spring, the Society offered two outstanding programs, a documentary about Jewish Women in Sport presented by Professor Linda J. Borish and a lecture about the newly discovered Chesterfield mikveh by Professor Stuart Miller. We also began work on three very significant projects. One is the renovation of the outdated Holocaust exhibit located at the Mandell JCC. We received a planning grant from CT Humanities to develop a multi-media, interactive display of local survivors, and a professional team is now collecting and editing testimonies. The second project is a scholarly journal tracing the 100 year history of Jewish lawyers in Greater Hartford. The publication will culminate with a spring symposium and fundraiser. The third is an ongoing project, The Community Collections Outreach Initiative, which will reach out to community synagogues and institutions to promote awareness of the importance of collecting and preserving their individual contributions and history. By providing archival support and specialized workshops, we hope to encourage the community to be collectively responsible for preserving our heritage. This long term project has received initial funding from the Beatrice Fox Auerbach/Koopman Share at the Jewish Community Foundation.

In July, Professor Samuel Kassow led the Society trip to Russia and Lithuania. We listened to the tragic history, struggles and sacrifices the Jewish people endured in these countries and viewed the contrasting opulence and architecture under czarist dynasties. We visited synagogues, memorials, museums and ghettos. For many of the participants, the experience was a personal and emotional one. My father lived in Kaunas (Kovno), Lithuania as a young man before the war, and most likely attended the synagogue we visited, remarkably not destroyed by the Nazis. As in Eastern European countries, Jewish life is slowly reawakening in the cities we visited, descendants discovering their hidden identity and hungering for a glimpse into their heritage.

You must check out the Society’s updated website and new on-line Historic Hartford Synagogues exhibit, designed by our talented archivist, Greg Farr. Greg has spent many months selecting extraordinary images and we welcome your feedback. We are also very proud of our new publication “Revisiting Our Neighborhoods”, and an achievement award presented by the Jewish Federation at their Annual Meeting for our highly successful Jewish Hartford Bus Tours.

However, as a result of the steady decline in grants and contributions, your generosity and support is needed now more than ever to sustain our programming. Please consider the new additional levels of giving as well as the contribution opportunities for any occasion.

Wishing you all a joyous and healthy New Year!

Estelle

From the Archivist

Dear Friends,

The past few months at the JHSGH archive have been filled with much interesting work related to processing our extensive oral history collection, developing our new online web exhibit “Historic Hartford Synagogues”, researching materials for an upcoming exhibit on Jewish legal professionals in Hartford, and preparing a new Holocaust space. We have also been responding to a variety of archival information requests, that, as a result of our online outreach, are in some cases coming from places are far away as Los Angeles! Such inquiries, just to note a few, include questions about local historic businesses in the Hartford area, the origins of the Hartford mikveh, the cultural and artistic contributions of Jewish farmers in Connecticut, and the involvement of early synagogue founders in local lodge organizations.

Archival donations of manuscripts, photographs, artifacts, and electronic records have been trickling in over the summer as well. We have received materials including books and film information related to the American poet and Trinity College graduate, Hyam Plutzik (1911-1962), turn-of-the-century photographs of Hartford residents (the Itzovitch Family) donated by Leonie Goodfriend, and two substantial donations of synagogue records (newsletters and scrapbook materials) from Hartford’s Beth Sholom and Bloomfield’s B’Nai Tikvoh Sholom. These last two items serve as a good start to our upcoming Community Collection Outreach Initiative which we will launch this Fall, as we plan to offer workshops for archival collecting in synagogue settings and directly seek to acquire archival materials from area synagogues to continue to properly document the history of the Jewish community in the greater Hartford area.

Please consider contributing your historical artifacts, manuscripts, and photographs to the JHSGH archival collection and many thanks again to all those who are participating in the life of the archives!

Wishing everyone many blessings for the upcoming holidays,

Greg
Thoughtful Contributions
Contributions to the Jewish Historical Society are a thoughtful way of honoring or memorializing an individual, or commemorating an event, and at the same time supporting the Society. All contributions of $18.00 or more will be printed.

In memory of:
Leon Zeeberg (father of Estelle Kafer)
Bea and Gordon Brodie
Eleanor Caplan
Linda and Henry Cohn
Barbara and Mark Gordon
Barbara and David Klau
Debbie and Steve Kleinman
Ona and Tom Mastronarde
Sandra and Marshall Rulnick
Michelle Souza
Susan and Allan Viner
Helen Sodafsky Mehlman
Hollis Schneider
Bernice Birnbaum
Nanette Levin
Margaret Klau
Naomi and Michael Cohen
Janet Poitras
Bea Brodie
Janice Cohen & Byron Fisher
Robert F. Garro
Carol Gershenson
Victoria Stuart
Sally Wagner
Elene R. Neededelman
Harold Rosker
Linda and Henry Cohn
Carole S. DeVoe (mother of Greg Farr)
Bea Brodie
Barbara Gordon
Susan Viner
Zena Litman
Barbara and Mark Gordon
Charles Weiner
Barbara and Mark Gordon
Etta W. Sussman
Eileen and Elliott B. Pollack
Irving Bein
Dr. and Mrs. Bernard Shapiro
Gertrude “Trudy” Brodie
Susan and Allan Viner
In memory of those who have gone before
Lillian Hillman

In honor of:
Barbara Gordon’s presidency:
Sandra and Marshall Rulnick
Louise K. Kaufman’s presidency:
Sandra and Marshall Rulnick
The wedding of Steven and Deborah Kleinman’s daughter
David Klau
Al Kadden’s birthday
Helene and Felix Springer
Louise Kaufman
Joan Kemler
Marsha and Ed Lotstein’s new home
Paulette and James Lotstein

Get Well Wishes to:
Dan Blume
Susan and Allan Viner

General donations:
Michael Cohen
Linda Cohn
Allan Geetter
David Klau
John O. Tannenbaum
Howard Steinberg
Susan and Allan Viner
Henry Zachs
Jessica and Eric Zachs
Judy Zachs
Edith & Bob Whitman
Joel M. and Naomi Balfine Kleinman

IN MEMORIAM: JANET POITRAS
The Society suffered a great loss this spring with the death of longtime volunteer, Janet Poitras. Janet came to the Society after her retirement, looking for interesting and meaningful work. She found it in transcribing oral histories from our archives and came in to the JHSGH every Monday for five years. Janet transcribed many of the Holocaust tapes in our collection, and found herself very moved by the stories she heard. She also helped out at our many program and events. We offer our condolences to her family and many friends. Janet will be sorely missed.
Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford

**Complete this form** for membership and/or donations (Please print)

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**Payment methods**

- Check (please make checks payable to: JHSGH, and return in this envelope.)
- Credit (please visit our website at www.jhsgh.org and use our secure PayPal account)
- Please send additional contribution envelopes.

**Questions?**

Contact us at jhsgh@jewishhartford.org, call 860-727-6171, or visit our website at www.jhsgh.org.

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Zachs Campus
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333 Bloomfield Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117