“A Brief Look Back”

CELEBRATING OVER 100 YEARS OF JEWISH LEGAL PRESENCE IN GREATER HARTFORD

THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER HARTFORD

INVITES YOU TO A BOOK LAUNCH AND RECEPTION FOR THE NEWLY PUBLISHED JOURNAL
HIGHLIGHTING THE HISTORY OF GREATER HARTFORD JEWISH LAWYERS AND LAW FIRMS

COCKTAILS, LIGHT BUFFET DINNER, BRIEF REMARKS

WEDNESDAY MAY 14 6:30 PM TUMBLEBROOK COUNTRY CLUB
376 SIMSBURY ROAD | BLOOMFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06002

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO VIEW SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES PLEASE GO TO WWW.JHSGH.ORG/SPONSORSHIP.HTML
JHSGH 333 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE WEST HARTFORD, CT 860-727-6170

INVITATION COMING SOON!

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,

This has been such an exciting year and I am truly enjoying my increased involvement in the Society. Please take a few moments to stop over at the JCC and see our Society window in the hallway leading to the health club. There are a number of wonderful events coming this spring. Please support our lawyer’s program in May, which launches our newest historical journal and honors the Hartford area legal profession, and is also a major fundraiser for the Society. Don’t miss the Bat Mitzvah exhibit and the programs that are being held in conjunction with it. Also, this June, we are co-sponsoring (with the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford) a Jewish Heritage trip to Philadelphia which should be both educational and inspirational.

There are also ongoing projects which are very exciting, such as the Community Outreach Initiative. Our long term goal is to assist every community institution and organization in maintaining and preserving their own historical materials, while they share their materials for our archives. We’ve always known how important this is, but it was further highlighted recently when both The Emanuel Synagogue and the Mandell JCC did research in the archive to find photos and documents for their upcoming anniversary celebrations.

I was amazed to learn how much work goes on behind the scenes. Trips, programs and exhibits must be planned months, sometimes years in advance, and we work hard to collaborate as much as possible with other organizations so that we reach the widest possible audience. We respond to numerous research requests from students, scholars, and filmmakers but we never lose sight of our most vital mission — collecting, preserving and disseminating the history of Hartford’s Jewish community. Make sure you check out our website which has received rave reviews!

I am delighted to welcome our newest members and invite all of you to participate in the many activities that the Society offers. Please share this newsletter with family and friends who may not yet be members, and let them know what they are missing!

With best wishes for a wonderful Pesach.

Louise

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**SPRING 2014 CALENDAR**

**Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - 5:30 p.m.**
JHSGH Community Collections Outreach Seminar — Community Services Building

**Sunday, March 30, 2014 – 4:00 p.m.**
Film: The Prime Ministers
Digiplex Destinations, Bloomfield

**Thursday, April 17, 2014 - 2:00 p.m.**
“Revisiting Our Neighborhoods” Book Discussion
Avon Public Library

**Wednesday, April 23, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.**
JHSGH Board Meeting
Community Services Building

**Monday, April 7, 2014**
“Bat Mitzvah Comes of Age” Exhibit Opens
Mandell JCC Chase Family Gallery

**Thursday, April 24, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.**
Bat Mitzvah Event—“Today I Am a Woman”
Mandell JCC Chase Family Gallery

**Sunday, April 27, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.**
Jewish Hartford Bus Tour
Leaves from Community Service Building

**Wednesday, May 7, 2014 – 1:30 p.m.**
University of Hartford President’s College Series: History of Jewish Hartford
See bulletin article for more details

**Wednesday, May 14, 2014 - 6:30 p.m.**
“A Brief Look Back; A Hundred Years of Jewish Legal History in Hartford”
Tumblebrook Country Club, Bloomfield

**Thursday, May 22, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.**
JHSGH Board Meeting
Community Service Building

**Thursday, May 29, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.**
Multi-Cultural Coming of Age Program
Mandell JCC Adult Senior Lounge

**Friday, June 6 - Sunday, June 8, 2014**
Jewish Heritage Trip to Philadelphia, including visit to National Museum of Jewish History

**Tuesday, June 24, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.**
JHSGH Annual Meeting at the Mandell Jewish Community Center

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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
Barbara Vinick, co-author of Today I am A Woman: Stories of Bat Mitzvah Around the World will be our guest speaker on Thursday, April 24, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Mandell JCC. She will speak about the history of the bat mitzvah, as well as the ways in which this rite of passage are celebrated in different countries. Her talk will be followed by an open discussion where you will have an opportunity to share your own bat mitzvah memories.

Ms. Vinick has a Ph.D. in Sociology from Boston University and has conducted post-doctoral research at Harvard. She edited Esther’s Legacy: Celebrating Purim Around the World at the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute. She is also secretary of Kulanu (“All of Us’ in Hebrew) an organization that helps isolated and emerging Jewish communities around the world.

HISTORIC SYNAGOGUES OF HARTFORD

If you haven’t already taken a look at our new on-line exhibit, Historic Synagogues of Hartford, go to our website, www.jhsgh.org and click on the title, which will link you to the exhibit. There, you’ll find photos and information about historic synagogues, religious leaders and communal life, as well as a timeline. There is also a listing of additional resources and present day synagogues. Developed by the Society’s archivist, Greg Farr, it is a fascinating journey into Hartford’s past.
A History of Jewish Hartford

with
Estelle Kafer, Betty Hoffman, Mary Donahue, Avi Patt, moderator

Register for this course online at www.hartford.edu/presidentscollege

While the history of the Jewish presence in Hartford is as old as Hartford itself, it was in the mid-19th century that immigrant Jews began to arrive in significant numbers from Europe. Their influence on the industrial and retail history of the city grew as the city expanded. Synagogues were built, a sense of community was created, and small businesses flourished. A century later, many of Hartford’s Jewish residents moved out of the city and into the suburbs, leaving behind them places that they had once lived in, the schools they had once attended, the places were they had once worshipped. This course will look back at that rich history. It will include a bus visit to the historic synagogues of Hartford, a visit to the archives of the Jewish Historical Society led by Estelle Kafer, and lectures on Jewish history by Betty Hoffman and Mary Donahue. This course will be moderated by Avi Patt.

Wednesdays, May 7, 14, 21, 28,
1:30 - 3:00 p.m.
(bus tour on May 21, 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.)
**“BACK TO THE OLD NEIGHBORHOODS” BUS TOUR**

The Society has scheduled a new spring date 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 for 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 tour will take place on:

**Sunday, April 27, 2013 at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.**

For more information, please call 860-727-6171 or go to our website at: [www.jhsgh.org](http://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.

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**THE COMMUNITY COLLECTIONS OUTREACH INITIATIVE**

An ongoing mission of JHSGH, along with the preservation of its current collections, is to acquire materials to strengthen our holdings that illuminate the history of Jews in Greater Hartford. The Community Collections Outreach Initiative has emerged from that commitment, and a pilot version is now ready for implementation.

I am privileged to serve as coordinator for this project, and after two postponements due to snow, we look forward to meeting with synagogue representatives at our first Open House workshop on March 19, 2014. At this time, Estelle and archivist Greg Farr will introduce participants to the archives and discuss the vital part that synagogues play in collaborating with JHSGH to document and manage their own historical collection. To that end, a substantive packet of material will be offered to each participant that clearly addresses the framework for the involvement of JHSGH and the participating synagogues. In addition, a most helpful webpage of resource information has been created by our archivist to further guide participants in the collection process.

As the liaison, I will assist synagogue representatives in identifying material to be preserved and in developing a structured approach to storing documents that tell their synagogue’s story. We are happy to note that the initial feedback has been positive, especially from synagogues that do not have a procedure in place for organizing important records.

As the initiative proceeds, the pilot phase will be refined and expanded. This is a most absorbing project on many levels and I am happy for my role in its implementation.

-Ruth Ann Graime

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**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

If you have some time to share, we have many interesting volunteer positions to be filled. These are just a few of the ways in which you can help the Society:

- Work on the wedding exhibit committee
- Transcribe oral histories
- Interview members of the community*
- Oral history database processing
- Acquisitions processing

*We are looking to increase our core group of interviewers so that we can continue to add to our oral history collection. Training will be provided by the Society. It’s a wonderful chance to become acquainted with fascinating people and add their story to those already in the archives.

If you would like to assist in any way, please contact Bea at 860 727-6170.
From the Director

Dear Friends,

By this time of the year, as we are all hoping warmer weather will arrive soon, the Society has been busy planning a number of exciting programs to enjoy this spring. An exhibit on loan from the Museum of American Jewish History, Bat Mitzvah Comes of Age, a historical narrative on this evolving Jewish American tradition, will be on view from April 7 through May 29. Our fifth scholarly journal entitled A Century of Jewish Law in Hartford will be presented at an important fundraising event at Tumblebrook Country Club on May 14. Please consider making a donation to honor a firm or lawyer and join us for this very special evening. In June our co-sponsored trip to Philadelphia will tour a number of impressive sites that I have visited - the amazing MAJH museum and three historic synagogues – sit back, relax and enjoy a weekend of Jewish culture and history!

You may be starting to hear about the community’s collaborative Aim Chai Endowment Campaign. Community leaders and twenty-eight institutions have partnered to work together to raise the funds to ensure the future of Jewish Hartford. You will all have an opportunity to be part of supporting the Society’s and community’s long-term needs and collective vision for the future. Please contact me or Hollis Dorman at the Jewish Community Foundation for more details on making a personalized gift that is meaningful for you.

Last month, when news of our beloved Crown possibly closing shocked our community, the office received a number of phone calls and emails. We heard a communal concern to save the memorabilia and photographs and capture the memories of this 74 year old family business before it was too late. We are so fortunate that a dedicated group of community members saved the Crown, but we realize that the next generation's shopping experiences will be different than ours and our parents. The Society’s commitment to preserve the past as an integral link to the future dictates us to once again collect and document the memories of this last prevailing landmark of the Old Neighborhood while we still have the storytellers amongst us. This summer, we will begin to collect stories, memorabilia and photographs of the Crown for a future project. We hope you will share your recollections with us! Please go to www.jhsgh.org for more information.

Wishing everyone a joyous and delicious Passover holiday,

Estelle

From the Archivist

Dear Friends,

We are now preparing to work with synagogues throughout the Hartford area in an effort both to collect current archival materials and to assist these synagogues in preserving their own institutional archives. I am also pleased to report that over the past few months the JHSGH has also made great strides in providing public access to its oral history collection and has created a new in-house exhibit. This new and original exhibit, entitled Tikkun Olam in Our Community, highlights the achievements of individuals and organizations that have contributed to the Greater Hartford community through acts of social justice or philanthropy. It was created from documentation and original photographs found in our archive and also utilizes information available in our oral history collection. At present, over 500 oral histories in this collection of over 1400 cassette-taped interviews have been digitized for purposes of preservation, and a searchable finding aid of our oral history collection is now available online on the JHSGH website. Audio samples, and, in some instances, full transcripts of interviews are also available in these online finding aids.

We have had a number of genealogical inquiries over the past winter months and worked to verify historical facts for a national publishing company (Scholastic Books) and an up-coming photography exhibit developed by Trinity Professor, Pablo Delano, set to display at the CT Historical Society in October 2014. We have also received some interesting archival donations, including two scrapbooks from area synagogues, new publications from local authors pertaining to Jewish cemeteries in Hartford, and some fascinating historic photographs that have made a fine addition to our repository holdings on Jewish education. The JHSGH also received a significant donation of manuscript and related materials from a Chicago author who recently published a biographical work on the songwriter, composer, and artist Harold Rome. Mr. Rome, a Hartford native, became a well-known lyricist and writer for musical theater, finding success on Broadway and working with such professionals as Barbra Streisand, Alfred Hitchcock, and Hartford’s own songstress and entertainer, Sophie Tucker. 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 holiday,

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)  Gloria Bein
Stanley Wiesen  
  Naomi and Michael Cohen  Linda and Henry Cohn  Barbara and David Klau
Bess and Sidney Koppell  Martin Koppell
Rabbi and Mrs. Hans Bodenheimer  Dr. and Mrs. Louis Brown
Johanna Tobias Bramson and Joseph Levi Bramson  Margaret Lesser
Natalie Lebovitz  Sandra and Michael Myers
Robert Cherlin  
  Nancy Savin, Erica Willheim and Yohanna Willheim
Miriam and Sydney Rudy  Nancy and David Savin
Joan Hoberman  Harvey Hoberman
Raelea S. Bobrow, (mother of Nancy Gitlin)  Louise and Todd Kaufman
Gertrude “Trudy” Brodie  Susan and Allan Viner
In memory of those who have gone before  Lillian Hillman

In honor of:
Alan Lazowski, Brian Newman and Henry Zachs  Thank you for saving the Crown Market and helping to renew, preserve and inspire the Hartford Jewish community
  Deborah and Lance Goldberg
Estelle Kafer  Shira Berger  Michael Weinreich
Gregory Farr - with thanks for his help with research  Judith Singer

Get Well Wishes to:
Dan Blume  Susan and Allan Viner

General donations:

Gift to JHSGH Endowment:
Deborah and Steven Kleinman  Lauri and David Miller

IN MEMORIAM
Stanley Wiesen

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
Louise Belkin  Cynthia Blayer  Ruth Tulin Cion  Andrea deHaas  Kathy Fishman  Nan L. Glass  Nancy Gordon  Martin Koppell  Michael Levine  Lawrence Levy  Jeffrey Lewis  Carol Lewis and Saul Nesselroth  Raphael L. Podolsky  Jeffrey Renert  Selma M. Schwartz  Judith Singer  Elaine and Howard Smith  Zhanna Virkerman
HELP US PRESERVE MEMORIES

Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford

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

Name
Address
City, State, Zip
Telephone
Email

For Membership: please check the appropriate category and amount level you wish to support. Membership dues are effective July 1 to June 30 of each year.

- Heritage Society $1,800
- Preservation Society $1,000
- Scholar $500
- Archivist $250
- Historian $125
- Friend $50
- Senior*/Student $36
*82 and over

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- 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.
I am interested in more information about the Society.
All gifts of $18.00 and above will be acknowledged in the Society’s Bulletin. Your donation is fully tax deductible.

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

Zachs Campus
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