



## THE ARIZONA JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY WINS \$10,000 GRANT FROM THE HISTORY CHANNEL TO SAVE OUR HISTORY!



The Arizona Jewish Historical Society is pleased to announce that we have received a \$10,000 award from the History Channel TV network to support the restoration of the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center.

These funds from the will be used for a "Cornerstone Project" to commemorate the history of the building, which was the home of grant Phoenix's first synagogue and later became a Chinese-American and Mexican-American Baptist church. In this project, the AJHS will create a series of four cornerstone-style plaques honoring the three different religious congregations who occupied this same sacred space as well as the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center. In addition, students from the nearby Kenilworth School will partner with the Arizona Jewish Historical Society to research the history of site and to create a video documentary on the different religious congregations who worshiped there. Money from the project will also go to purchase display cases and exhibition materials for a permanent display once renovations to the Heritage Center are completed.

Each year the History Channel awards over \$250,000 to various historic preservation projects. This year, the AJHS is especially honored as the only organization from Phoenix to receive this prestigious award, and one of only 26 nominees chosen nationwide. This award marks a great step forward in our efforts to restore the site. To have a major national organization and TV network such as the History Channel offer their support to us shows the significance of our project not just for the local Jewish community but for the city as a whole.

To find out more about the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center, and the ways you can contribute to this important undertaking, please contact the Arizona Jewish Historical Society at 602-241-7870, or visit us on the web at [www.azjhs.org](http://www.azjhs.org).

### *Jewish Legacy Series Proudly Presents:*

**Dr. Hava Tirosch-Samuelson,**  
**Professor of Jewish History at Arizona State University**  
**"Jewish Mysticism: Everything You Wanted to  
Know But Were Afraid to Ask."**

Thursday, February 23rd at 7:30 pm  
Congregation Beth-El -1118 W. Glendale Ave.

**Free to the Public**

Call 602-241-7870 for details.



A native of Israel, Professor Samuelson holds a Ph.D in Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She has taught courses in Jewish history, philosophy and mysticism for Hebrew Union College, Columbia University, Emory University, Indiana University, and most recently at Arizona State. Her works include *Between Worlds:*

*The Life and Work of Rabbi David ben Judah Messer Leon, and Happiness in Pre-Modern Judaism: Virtue, Knowledge and Well-Being in Pre-Modern Judaism.* Her lecture will focus on the main doctrines of kabbalah and its historical development from the middle ages through early modern-times, as well as the current interest in kabbalah today.

### **AJHS 25th ANNIVERSARY DINNER DANCE!**

Honoring  
**The Founders of the  
Arizona Jewish Historical Society**  
*(See page 3 panel)*

**Sunday March 5th at 6 pm**  
Chaparral Suites  
5001 N. Scottsdale Road

Ticket Price: \$200

Don't miss this exciting evening as we celebrate the silver anniversary of the AJHS and look forward to our exciting future!

Contact 602-241-7870 for more information

*\*Underwriting opportunities available.  
Contact Dinner Chair Joe Segal at 602-561-0107  
before February 17th for details.*

# SAVE THE DATE!

**Sunday, February 12th**

**Tu B'Shevat Festival**

**Sponsored by JNF**

12-4 pm at Scottsdale Civic Center Mall--Look for the AJHS booth!

**Thursday, February 23rd**

**Jewish Legacy Series: "Jewish Mysticism: All You Wanted to Know but Were Afraid to Ask"**

Dr. Hava Samuelson, Professor of Jewish History, ASU

7:30 pm at Beth El Congregation 1118 W. Glendale Ave.

Free to the Public.

More details: 602-241-7870

**Sunday, March 5th**

**AJHS 25th Anniversary Dinner and Dance**

Honoring the Founders of the Arizona Jewish Historical Society

6:00 pm Chaparral Suites

5001 N. Scottsdale Rd.

Reservations: 602-241-7870

**Sunday, April 23rd**

**Jewish Legacy Series:**

**"From Second Street to Main: A Backstage History of the Jewish Theater"**

Janet Arnold, Producing Director of the Arizona Jewish Theatre Co.

Film and Discussion 2:00 pm at

Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage

Center 122 E. Culver St. (Take

2nd Street South from McDowell)

Free to the Public

More details: 602-241-7870

**Sunday, May 21st**

**AJHS Annual Meeting - Brunch**

9:30 am at Chaparral Suites

More details: 602-241-7870

*\*Please note that times and dates in this column occasionally change due to circumstances beyond our control. Patrons are welcome to contact the AJHS at 602-241-7870 to confirm any details.*

Preserve the Legacy of Arizona's Jewish Community



## BUILDING THE FUTURE

By Lawrence D. Bell, Ph.D.

Executive Director

*"A people's memory is history; and just as a man without memory, a people without history cannot grow wiser, better." I. L. Peretz-Yiddish author.*

History is about more than memorizing names and dates from a long and distant past. History is about building the future. We must never forget that our identity as Jews today rests on a foundation over 3,000 years old. And the identity of generations yet to come rests on what we do with that foundation today.

Our mission at the Arizona Jewish Historical Society is to preserve the rich heritage of Arizona's Jewish communities and to educate the public about the Jewish contribution to Arizona and the United States. We are the ONLY local Jewish organization dedicated to this all important task. Our community archive now holds over 20,000 separate volumes and is growing every day. Our Legacy Series hosts speakers for the public on important topics in Jewish history. And our Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center will soon become a living and dynamic monument to our history right in the heart of downtown Phoenix. Our goal is to become a place where children especially will learn about our heritage, culture and traditions, that we may grow wiser and better with each passing generation.

Please join us for a very big year in 2006. The future is now!

### D-I-G-I-T-I-Z-A-T-I-O-N

The AJHS has recently begun digitizing all of the nearly 200 oral histories in our collection. Using machinery made available by AJHS volunteer Michael Bell, these tape recorded interviews will now be transferred to a digital format, allowing for long-term storage on computerized CD's. These CD's have a shelf life of thousands of years, in comparison to the roughly 25 year life of an average audio cassette tape. They are also far less sensitive to climate and temperature changes.

Volunteers interested in helping with this project should contact 602-241-7870 for more details.



### COMING IN APRIL!

Janet Arnold  
Program Director  
of the Arizona  
Jewish Theatre Company

*"From Second Avenue to Main: A Backstage History of the Jewish Theater."* Sunday April 23rd at 2:00 pm at the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center 122 E. Culver St. (Next to Burton Barr Public Library - Take 2nd Street south from McDowell) Free to the Public.

This interesting afternoon will feature a film on the history of

Jewish theater, "The Golden Age of Second Avenue," followed by discussion with Janet Arnold, Program Director of the Arizona Jewish Theatre Company.

Narrated by Herschel Bernardi, this documentary is an entertaining and loving chronicle of Yiddish theater in America, from its beginnings at the turn of the century to its Golden Age on Second Avenue. It contains excerpts from classic Yiddish films (subtitled in English) plus rare stills and musical vignettes from the American Yiddish Theater, as well as scenes from New York's Lower East Side. Exhibit and tour of the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center included. Call 602-241-7870 for more details.



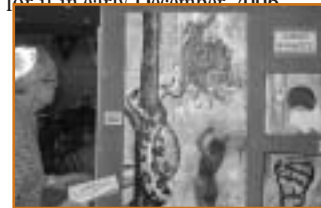
### CARNEGIE HALL WEST EVENT AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS

The AJHS would like to thank all those who attended our special music and arts event this past December. The afternoon was a smashing success. Nearly 300 guests were treated to a first-class musical concert followed by an art show and dessert. Former AJHS Executive Director Risa Mallin

was honored with the creation of a special award in her name to be given at future AJHS events.

Members of our planning committee included Chairperson Ann Polunsky, Mindy Brandt, Joy Carter, Paulette Fraenkel, Libby Friedman, Dolores Forman, Sherri Germaine, Sharlene Harris, Lee Kazan, Louise Leverant, Julia Maciandaro, Lea Nach, Michael Orlikoff, Ruth Rosen, Mark Sendrow, and Elaine Waxman. Special thanks also to all of the performers and artists who helped make this a memorable occasion. Proceeds from the afternoon go to fund such activities as our Jewish Legacy Series, our Oral History Project, our community archive, and of course, the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center.

If you missed this one of a kind event, have no fear, we are planning a Second Annual Carnegie Hall West event next year. Look for it in early December 2006.



AJHS volunteer, Mike Bell, enjoys the art during intermission.

## ORAL HISTORIES



### *President's Message...*

Happy 2006! The AJHS is in for an exciting new year. In addition to our lecture series, our oral history project, and our recent music and arts event, we are beginning our new fundraising campaign to refurbish the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center. Our architectural plans are very exciting. The facility will include the historic temple, a Jewish history museum, and the offices and archives of the AHJS. If you have not yet seen the building, please call to arrange a tour. We look forward to making the center a first-class facility of which we will all be proud. I hope you will become involved in our fine work this year as we make history together.

*Jerry Lewkowitz*

### NEW ACQUISITION: FEDERATION PHOTOS

The AJHS recently acquired over 1,000 historic photos from the **Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix**, ranging in dates from 1948-1987. The photos include a variety of Federation activities, such as annual dinners, local events, and community missions to Israel. Below are samples from this impressive collection.



*1967 Emergency Campaign for Israel.*



*Presentation of Leadership Award to Phil Taxman, 1959.*



*Dinner honoring Abba Eban, 1978.*



*Greeting Leon Uriis for Annual Dinner, 1961.*



*Federation Mission to Israel, 1960's.*



### **NAT SILVERMAN recalls the Federation Campaign for Israel in 1948.**

All in all, I served five different terms as president of the federation... and of course many, many great things happened during those many years. There was a lot of growing up that we had to do in the community. We were coming out of being a small community into a more prominent Jewish community. Our activities were more varied. More congregations came into being. More organizations were formed to pick up the work of our Jewish people. The life of the community, the life of the Jewish community became much more involved during the first three years of my presidency.

*Interviewer: In what way?*

**Silverman:** Well, in the number of organizations that they joined and the social life that they now enjoyed. In the excitement of what was going on in Israel. The fund-raising that was done on behalf of Israel, particularly during the 1948 war, when a mass meeting was called at the community, met at Temple Beth Israel, and a goodly sum of money considering those days, something like half a million dollars, which in those days was, you know, was the equivalent of five million dollars, I suppose. But every dollar was sorely needed by Israel, and our community responded very well.



### **IRV PEARLSTEIN humorously recalls a Federation meeting in the late 1960's.**

One time at a board meeting at the Federation, I sat to the right of Nat Silverman, and it's hard to visualize that in those days Nat Silverman lit a cigar and the guy on my right was smoking a cigarette and

the smoke was filling the room. Can you believe it? Today, I wouldn't sit next to a man with a cigar for all the tea in China but in those days everybody lit up. So Nat Silverman lit up a cigar...and he took the first puff and then another second puff, third puff, fourth puff and fifth puff. One after another. 90 puffs he took. I kept count. He took 90 puffs on that stogie before he put it out.



*Herb Smith with David Ben Gurion, Israel, 1973.*

### **HERBERT SMITH relates his experience as Federation Campaign Director during the Yom Kippur War in 1973.**

During the Yom Kippur War, you know, we only had 20,000 Jews in Phoenix then. And I raised almost 3,000,000 dollars! I gave up working for six months. I never came to the office. I was out there hustling and trying to get money for Israel, and we raised almost 3,000,000 dollars. I had a bar mitzvah club of doctors, which is unheard of. I had 13 doctors that gave in excess of 10,000 dollars. Some gave 10, some gave 12, some gave 15, some gave 20, and one gave 23,000 dollars. And that's unheard of in any community... We had over 80 families that gave over 10,000 dollars ... It was hard work. I enjoyed it though. Because I felt, hey, I wasn't doing this for myself. I was doing it for Israel, you know. When I would get down, by golly, somebody would come through with a real good pledge and ah! The sky would open up, you know...

**AJHS is collecting additional stories from the community. If you have a story to be told or if you would like to interview others, please call the AJHS office at 602-241-7870.**

# HISTORY MANNERS



## BE A PART OF HISTORY!

Join us in preserving the legacy of Phoenix's first synagogue building.

**AJHS is dedicated to the preservation, collection and exhibition of materials relevant to the Jewish community in Arizona and the Southwest.**

- \$50 Supporting member
- \$100 Circle of Friends
- \$180 Chai Circle
- \$250 Research Circle
- \$500 Builders Circle
- \$1000 Curators Circle

Membership PLUS a donation to help continue a special project

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish Legacy Series Fund
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Endowment Fund
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish Heritage Center Restoration
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Oral History Fund

Thank you for your tax deductible gift. Checks should be made payable to AJHS.

TOTAL AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

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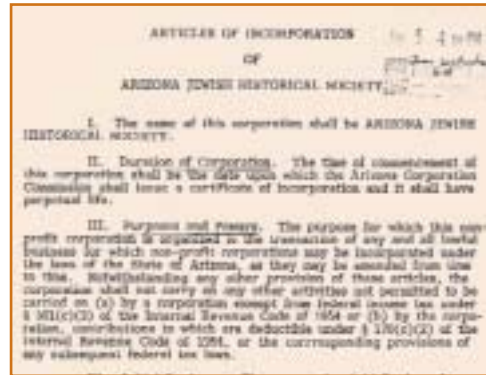
Your family most likely has a picture or other memorabilia for our archives.

Call 602-241-7870



4710 N. 16th St., #201, Phoenix, AZ 85016

# HISTORY MANNERS



The following people were the charter members of the Arizona Jewish Historical Society in 1981.

We are proud to dedicate our dinner in their honor.

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Bellman, Lamar *         | Lehman, Carl *             |
| Bellman, Celia *         | Levy, Leon F.              |
| Berkovitz, Norma         | Lewkowitz, H.J.            |
| Bilgray, Albert T. *     | Lewkowitz, Burton *        |
| Bloom, David A.          | Maisel, Mrs. John J.       |
| Bloom, Leona G.          | Mallin, Sol *              |
| Brohner, Shirley         | Mallin, Sylvia             |
| Brook, Benjamin N.       | Marks, Royal D. *          |
| Chanin, Mildred          | Marsey, Edna *             |
| Chanin, Abe S.           | Meckler, Brenda Weisberg * |
| Chesler, Martha Lehman   | Metz, Debra J.             |
| Citron, Julius           | Michels, Helen Goodman     |
| Citron, Aaron L.         | Pozil                      |
| Citron, Sophie Goodman * | Michels, Rabbi Albert *    |
| Citron, Toby             | Myers, Sondra              |
| Cohen, Lawrence M.       | Neer Michael               |
| Davis, Betty             | Newmark, Pearl             |
| Davis, David             | Newmark, Cecil *           |
| Eckstein, Paul & Flo     | Newmark, Steve             |
| Eckstein, John & Diane   | Pickelner, Dorothy *       |
| Ely, Linda L.            | Plotkin, Rabbi Albert      |
| Feinstein, Charlesa      | Plotkin, Sylvia *          |
| Fireman, Esther *        | Ramenofsky, Dr. A. I. *    |
| Frank, Florence *        | Ramenofsky, Elizabeth *    |
| Frazer, David            | Rochlin, Harriet           |
| Frazer, Joan *           | Rochlin, Fred *            |
| Freedman, Maxine         | Rosen, David & Sue         |
| Gersten, Ellie           | Rosenthal, Judith Kroloff  |
| Giss, Maurice M. *       | Rosenthal, Frank           |
| Gonsker, Geoffrey        | Rosenthal, Myron & Judy    |
| Grouskay, Aubrey *       | Rosenzweig, Harry *        |
| Herzberg, Dr. Benjamin * | Sandler, Ida Ann *         |
| Herzmark, Barbara        | Schaffer, Shyrl            |
| Kaplan, Hirsh *          | Segal, Ralph               |
| Kesselman, Annie         | Segal, Nona Lewkowitz *    |
| Kirschner, Elaine        | Shultz, Martin             |
| Kurn, Neal               | Spector, Eleanor           |
| Lamb, Blaine             | Straiser, Steven           |
| Lantin, Jeanetta         | Trobman, Bertram J.        |
| Lehman, Steve            | Volk, Marvin               |
| Lehman, Sarah F. *       | Weizenbaum, Sharon         |
| Lehman, Marshal          | Weizenbaum, Rabbi Joseph   |
| Lehman, Phyllis          | Weksler, Lois              |

\* Deceased



**THE FUTURE IS NOW!**

The **Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center** project is about more than just preserving the past. It is also about creating a vision for the future: A place where people of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds will learn about Jewish culture, history, and the contributions Jews have made to Arizona life. Please be a part of this exciting project.

*Naming opportunities are still available. Contact 602-241-7870 for more information.*

Kline Phoenix Graphics



**ARIZONA JEWISH  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

4710 N. 16th Street, Suite 201  
Phoenix, AZ 85016

**BE A PART  
OF HISTORY!**

**Arizona Jewish  
Historical Society**

is dedicated to the preservation  
of the Jewish contributions  
to Arizona history.



*We invite your  
participation and  
contribution of your family  
memorabilia and artifacts.*