



Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



*View from the balcony as Executive Director
Lawrence Bell addresses the audience*

Back in June 2008, we finally broke ground on our project to restore Phoenix's first synagogue into a museum and education center. Phase One is now complete!

This phase includes exterior repair and rehabilitation of the original temple building and classroom annex, along with restoration of the interior of the sanctuary. On November 2, 2008, we held a special community open house to showcase the progress so far and give people a glimpse of what is to come. Over 150 people attended this free event!

We are currently preparing to begin Phase Two of the project. This phase will involve the remaining interior restoration of the classroom annex, rehabilitation of the "Rabbi's House" on the east side of the property, the creation of an entry plaza on the west side of the facility, and all site work, landscaping, and paving. We hope to have all major construction finished by December 2009, with development of museum exhibits shortly thereafter.



*Photo left: Herman and Jerry Lewkowitz stand in front of the Cornerstone Plaques commemorating the three congregations who worshiped in the temple as well as the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center.
Photo right: Guests listen as Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon gives Keynote Address.*

AJHS Wins \$225,000 Grant from Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust!

The Arizona Jewish Historical Society was awarded a grant of \$225,000 from the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust in September 2008 to support the restoration of Phoenix's first synagogue as the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center.

"We are honored to have received this grant from the Virginia Piper Charitable Trust," says AJHS Executive Director Lawrence Bell. "This shows that our project is not just a 'Jewish' project, but really is something important to the larger civic culture of our city. It provides our Jewish community here with a unique opportunity to take a leadership role in areas such as the arts, culture, education, and historic preservation that are essential for any large city to grow and thrive."

The grant from the Virginia Piper Trust is divided into two parts. The first \$100,000 of the funds are a direct contribution to the AJHS. The remaining \$125,000 is structured as a 1-1 matching grant to be equaled by funds raised in the community. This presents an incredible opportunity for members of the Jewish community to double the effectiveness of their donations without detracting from other community resources or projects. To make a contribution, or to get involved, please call 602-241-7870, or visit us on the web at www.azjhs.org

The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust is committed to honoring Virginia Piper's legacy of making grants to non-profit organizations whose work enhances the lives of people living in Maricopa County. By strengthening nonprofits and encouraging strategic planning for the future, the Trust strives to make Maricopa County a stronger, healthier, more livable community. For more information about the Trust, please visit www.pipertrust.org

In addition to the Piper Trust, the AJHS has received a \$25,000 grant from Salt River Project and a \$20,000 grant from American Express, this fall in support of the project!



SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, May 17th

AJHS Annual Meeting and Brunch
10am at the Sanctuary Camelback Mountain
Resort and Spa
5700 E. McDonald Drive, Paradise Valley
Reservations: Contact 602-241-7870

SAVE THE DATE!

Learn your family history!
AJHS is a proud co-sponsor of the following Jewish Genealogy events this spring:

Sunday, February 22nd

Seminar: Jewish Genealogy 101
2:00-4:30pm at Beth El Congregation
1118 W. Glendale Ave.
Part One of two part seminar
\$15 for single session, \$20 for both
Contact 602-944-3359, ext 123 for reservations

Sunday, March 1st

Seminar: Jewish Genealogy 102
2:00-4:30pm at Beth El Congregation
1118 W. Glendale Ave.
Part Two of two part seminar
\$15 for single session, \$20 for both
Contact 602-944-3359, ext 123 for reservations

Sunday, March 8th

Film: "Cast a Giant Shadow"
7:00pm at Beth El Congregation
1118 W. Glendale Ave.
Free to the public

Sunday, March 15th

Special Passages Lecture - Jewish Genealogy
Arthur Kurzweil, America's foremost Jewish genealogist
7:30pm at Beth El Congregation
1118 W. Glendale Ave.
Tickets \$15. Contact 480-634-8050 for information
This event is sponsored by the Bureau of Jewish Education

Sunday, March 29th

"Researching the Family of Israel's First General - U.S. Army Colonel Mickey Marcus"
Millicent Fuhrer Tuckman of Tucson, and her son, Phoenix resident Greg Tuckman, will share family stories about memories of the war hero portrayed in the movie "Cast a Giant Shadow" and talk about their extensive family research
1:00-3:00pm at Beth El Congregation
1118 W. Glendale Ave.
Free to the public

Sunday, May 17th

AJHS Annual Meeting and Brunch
10am at the Sanctuary Camelback Mountain Resort and Spa
5700 E. McDonald Drive,
Paradise Valley
Reservations:
Contact 602-241-7870

Preserve the Legacy of Arizona's Jewish Community



BUILDING ARIZONA

Lawrence D. Bell, Ph.D.
Executive Director

How do we forge a community out of people who are all from somewhere else? We must start by creating an identity, something to bind us together with a common past and a common future. In our community today, we have done an excellent job of instilling a Jewish identity among our members. We have been far less successful, however, in instilling an Arizona identity among our local Jewish residents.

This Arizona identity is important in so many ways. For one, it will help create a tie between us and the place we live, work, and pray. Although many of us were born elsewhere, we are all Arizonans now, and the stronger we make our community here, the better off we and our families will be as we look to the future. Building an Arizona identity in our community will not only create a stronger bond between us, it will help anchor us in the larger non-Jewish community which surrounds us.

The **Arizona Jewish Historical Society** is committed to building this identity. Just as a people cannot exist without a history, so too a community cannot truly exist without a history. Ironically, our community *already has* a history. The problem is that too few of us are aware of it. By restoring the **Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center**, we are creating a space to publicize our history and to educate the community about our deep Jewish roots in this city and this state. It's not just about us. It is about our children and grandchildren and the generations yet to come.

We have succeeded in establishing ourselves as Jews here in Arizona. I hope you will join with us now in becoming **Arizona Jews!**

Documenting History Through Video

Over the past six months, the **Arizona Jewish Historical Society** has filmed over 100 interviews with community members as part of the *Phoenix Jewish Video History Project*. The interviews, filmed by **Sun Devil Productions**, will be used to create a short documentary video about the Arizona Jewish experience, and will eventually be put on display at the **Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center**. The subjects selected for interviews included a diverse cross-section of the community in terms of gender, class, place of origin, and religious observance. Filming is now complete.

We would like to thank former AJHS Director and Committee Chair **Risa Mallin** for all her work on this project, as well as Project Coordinator **Elyssa Ford**. Thanks also to all of the wonderful volunteers who participated in this project both as interviewers and as subjects. Funds for this project have been provided by the **Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Phoenix** and the **Young Leadership Division of the Jewish Federation**.



"Rhythm and Jews" Is a Big Hit!

What do Klezmer, pop, spiritual, and bluegrass music have in common? They all form a part of America's Jewish musical culture. This year's annual concert drew over 450 people to the **Tempe Center for the Arts** for toe-tapping, foot-stomping performances by the **Rural Street Klezmer Band**, **Todd Herzog**, and **Shalom Feivel and Rocky Mountain Jewgrass**. The event was held on Sunday, January 11, 2009, and raised over \$18,000 for the **Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center**.

Special thanks to all the people who worked so hard on this event. These include committee chair **Ann Polunsky**, as well as **Mike Bell**, **Louise Leverant**, **Lea Nach**, **Rita Segal**, **Judy Stern**, **Sallie Terman**, **Elaine Waxman**, and **David Wein**. Thanks also to all the sponsors, underwriters, and advertisers for the show.

Finally, the **AJHS** would also like to extend our warmest thanks to both **Todd Herzog and the Rural Street Klezmer Band**, who donated their performances, and to **Brahm Resnick**, who served as volunteer emcee.



L to R: Committee members Ann Polunsky, Elaine Waxman, Lawrence Bell, Judy Stern, Ruth Rosen, Mike Bell, and Louise Leverant.

Arizona's Jewish Cowboys (and Cowgirls Too!)

The domestication of cattle began in prehistoric times. Ancient Sumerian inscriptions refer to the raising of cattle, and from the third millennium BCE they are depicted in Egyptian, Assyrian, and Babylonia drawings. The Torah mentions cattle among the possessions of Abraham (Gen. 12:16), and makes clear that cattle were commonly raised among the people of ancient Israel.

In modern times, Jews have been active in cattle ranching in such places as Israel, Argentina, and the United States. One of the more interesting aspects of Arizona's Jewish experience has been the prominence of many Jews in the cattle industry here.

Below are excerpts from a few of Arizona's own modern Jewish cowboys and cowgirls:

Aubrey Grouskay, 1986



Here in the early days people seem to be rather surprised that there were Jews and in the cattle business. If one knows the history all the way back to the Bible days, Jews were in agriculture, they were shepherds, and it's not unusual. Throughout the country there's been a lot of Jews who were meat packers. But this seems to have been quite a question being Jewish and having cattle feed lots and that kind of involvement. Many people seem to be surprised that I would work all my cattle myself with cowboys on horseback

because it's like anything else. You can learn to do these things. And we did. I had a lot of fun being talked about so much for being a Jewish cowboy...

Harvey Dietrich, 2007

When I was young I went to school in Los Angeles from 7a.m. to 1 p.m., and after that I went to the slaughter house and I worked at the slaughter house. I used to feed the cattle there after school and I learned a lot of the inside of the plant, how things are done. I learned about grading, about what cattle are good and which ones aren't and why it gave me a lot of background. When I got out of high school I did all that and then when I was about 19 years old, they felt that I was seasoned enough, although pretty young, they sent me to the country and I used to buy cattle... I'd leave on Monday and come back on Friday. I would look at cattle and call it into the office. I would describe the cattle, the grade what I thought they would yield and what the guy was asking for and then I would trade on the price.

I did that until I was about 22, when I got married. It was in the summer of 1958. Eli Grouskay (Aubrey's father) in Arizona was a cattle buyer for the same company as me. He used to buy cattle in Arizona and ship them to Los Angeles. He was going to retire. So they had asked me if I would like to move to Arizona and take his place. That's how I ended up in Arizona, replacing Eli Grouskay with the Globe Packing Company.

At the time, Eli was in his late '70's and his eyesight wasn't the greatest and the job required a lot of driving. So I would drive him around and he would take me all over the state and introduce me to all his people, which was just marvelous. I loved the guy. At that time, Aubrey, he was in business for himself. He had a feed lot. He used to buy cattle and put them on feed and then sell them.

So basically, I was a customer of Aubrey. I used to go and buy fat cattle from him. Aubrey was one of the leading cattle breeders in the state... It made him very proud that a Jewish kid would come here and make an impact on the business.

Note: Harvey Dietrich currently runs Cholla Livestock and maintains a 750,000 acre ranch in northern Arizona.

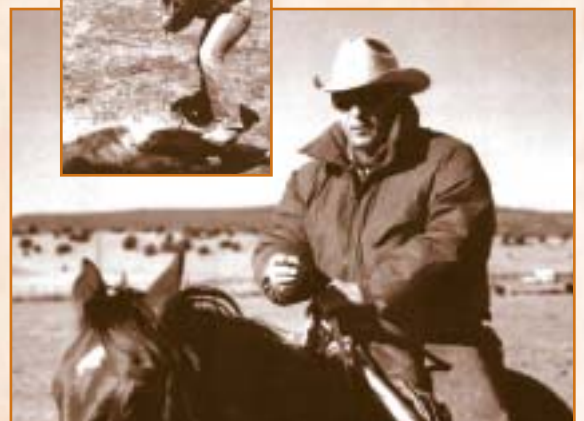
Betty Gould Spitalny, 1986



(Married to rancher and dairyman Sam Spitalny)



Well, [my husband] bought this ranch near Flagstaff (in the 1940's) and when he took me up there to show me the ranch, the ranch was lovely, but the house was terribly run down. They had all the cowboys sitting in the kitchen with the great big stove and they chewed tobacco. Tobacco was spit on the walls and on the floor. I ran in and I ran out and I started to cry and I said, "You want me to live in this pig-hole." He said, "Oh, don't worry, I'll fix it where you'll be happy." Which he did. He remodeled the whole house and it looked beautiful afterwards... We had running water and a bathroom but we didn't have electricity. We had a wooden stove and we had kerosene lamps. We really had an old-fashioned house then.



Happy Birthday Arizona!

On February 14, 2009,
the great state of Arizona
celebrates its 97th birthday.

This photo shows the
members of Arizona's
constitutional convention
held in 1910.

Prescott Jewish merchant and
politician, Morris Goldwater,
uncle of U.S. Senator
Barry Goldwater, served as
Vice President of the
convention.



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
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memorabilia and artifacts.*

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HISTORY MANNERS



"Crowning Laura Orman as Queen Esther, 1953"

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

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HISTORY MANNERS

*Together we will preserve the past
for the next generation!*

NEW MEMBERS FOR 2009:

Analovich, Minna	Lieberman, Becky and Dan
Bendalin, Evey and Sherman	Lipsman, Geraldine and Milton
Blank, Carmela and Michael	Lucas, Daniel
Burdman, Babbi and Richard	Miller, Phyllis and Leonard
Celniker, Ilene and Ben Chernin, Gitta and Homer	Miller, Rochelle and Marvin
Cherow, Annette and Les Cohen, Rochelle and Murray	Nemerov, Jack
Cohen, Ruth	Neumann, Gerard
Cohen, Robyn and Alex Coppe, Martin S.	Olgin, Marilyn and Jerry
Ehrenreich, Theresa and Arthur	Petersen, Lisa and Phil
Eliscu, Ann	Pressman, Linda and Howard
Epstein, Florence	Pullan, Ida Mae
Foster, Virginia and David Gitt, Ellen and Jeffrey	Reiss, Leni and Barry
Goffman, Hirsch Thomas	Resnik, Susan
Goldstein, Barbara and Louis	Rubin, Mr. and Mrs. Richard
Golner, Gerald	Rush, Judy and Alan
Good, Susan and David	Salter, Miryam
Gordon, Deborah	Schimmel, Sandra
Gordon, Elaine and Philip	Scholar, Diane and Aaron
Guzman, Susan and Nestor	Schotz, Linda and Jeff
Harrison, Ellen and Mark	Shapiro, Dr. William R.
Harwin, Nancy and Jeffrey	Shapiro, Mary and Joel
Horwitz, Sylvia	Shore, Gertrude and Aaron
Hyman, Geraldine	Slaton Law Office, P.C.
Jalowiec, Cheryl and Phillip	Solomon, Kathy and Raymond
Kahn, Adolyn and Lawrence	Solomonov, Lyudmila
Kaplan, Harriet	Sommer, Amy
Leibsohn, Rachelle and Eric	Stark, Karen and Richard
Lentin, Laura Ziff and Scott	Stein, Sandra
Levin, Hy	Stein, Gayla C.
	Stern, Jaime and Jeffrey
	Stralser, Rosemary and Steven
	Turgel, Lynn and Stuart
	Van Camp, Lala and Peter
	Weitzman, Leonard
	Winograd, Barbara and Herbert

*If you are not a member today,
we encourage your membership
and participation in our projects,
activities and exciting vision of the AJHS.
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