

AJHS KICKS OFF \$4 MILLION CAMPAIGN TO RESTORE THE CUTLER PLOTKIN JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER



The AJHS is pleased to announce the start of a new capital campaign to restore Phoenix's first synagogue as the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center. When the building was originally constructed back in 1922, there were just over 100 Jews in the whole city of Phoenix. Today there are over 82,000, and we have spread out from central Phoenix to virtually every part of the Valley. Yet, in a wonderful twist of fate, we were able to rescue this first home of our community from certain destruction in 2002. Now we are forging ahead with our plans to renovate the site as a cultural and educational center of which we will all be proud.



When completed, the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center will serve our community as a museum, archive, and event venue right in the heart of downtown Phoenix. Our goal is to raise \$4 million above and beyond the purchase price of the facility. This total includes not only the construction costs but also an endowment fund for future operating expenses of the site. We currently

have topped \$1.6 million.

Located along the new light rail system, next to the Burton Barr Phoenix Public Library, the Phoenix Museum of Art, the Heard Museum, and the future home of Arizona State University's downtown campus, this center is set to become one of the star cultural attractions in the Valley.



The AJHS would like to acknowledge the enormous generosity of all those who have contributed to our new capital campaign. Please note that prior contributions towards the purchase of the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center can be applied towards a naming opportunity in our new **Builders Campaign**.

If you have not yet been contacted by our campaign, please call us at 602-241-7870.



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS!

What better way to kick off our 25th anniversary year than with a party! This year's special dinner was held at Chaparral Suites Resort to honor the original charter members of the AJHS. Guests dined and danced to the sounds of the Sentimental Swing Orchestra. Special thanks to committee **Chairs Joe Segal and Andrea Lewkowitz**, as well as committee members **Sherri Germaine, Louise Leverant, Lea Nach and Rita Segal**. Most of all, thanks to our founding members, who helped create the organization back in 1981.



AJHS Founding Chairman
Marshall Lehman



First AJHS Director
Pearl Newmark



Pearle Marr, Jerry Lewkowitz,
and Liane Toback at AJHS
costume party, 1986

SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday, May 31st

Save Our History Special Media Event

9:30 am at the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center
122 E. Culver Street
(Take 2nd Street south from McDowell)

Free to the public

Tuesday, September 19th Genealogy Clinic

Jewish Genealogy 101: "How to Trace Your Family Roots"

7 pm at Burton Barr Public Library

1221 N. Central Ave
Lecture Room, 4th Floor

Free to the public

Call 602-241-7870 for details

Sunday, October 22nd Legacy Series

Rabbi Albert Plotkin "The History of Congregation Beth Israel"

2 pm at the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center
122 E. Culver Street
(Take 2nd Street south from McDowell)

Free to the public

Sunday, December 10th

CARNEGIE HALL WEST 2006!

The AJHS is thrilled to announce that our **second annual Carnegie Hall West: An Afternoon of Music and Art** will take place on **Sunday, December 10th** at Congregation Beth-El. This exciting afternoon will feature musical performances by local Jewish musicians as well as artwork for display and purchase. Last year's event drew nearly 300 people and we are looking forward to an even bigger audience this year.

Underwriting and advertising opportunities are now available for this event.

Please contact 602-241-7870 for more details.

Preserve the Legacy of Arizona's Jewish Community



BUILDING THE FUTURE

By Lawrence D. Bell, Ph.D.
Executive Director

The Arizona Jewish Historical Society recently kicked off a new campaign to restore the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center as a museum, archive and education center. While our earlier campaign drive focused on the purchase of the facility, this new campaign is designated specifically for its renovation. Already, we have raised over \$1.6 million in contributions and pledges above and beyond the purchase price of the building. Our goal is to finish the campaign by the end of 2006 and begin the first phase of construction by 2007.

Your contribution is vital to the success of this project. Located in the heart of Phoenix's revitalized downtown, the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center will be a historic monument not only for the Jewish community, but also for the city as a whole. Imagine a place where children of all races and religions will come to learn about our history, our culture, and most importantly, the contributions which Jews have made to our great state and our great nation.

Please help us build the future by saving our past. If you have not yet made a donation, please consider doing so. If you have not yet seen the synagogue, please contact us for a guided tour. Your support is essential.

COMING IN SEPTEMBER!

JEWISH GENEALOGY 101: HOW TO TRACE YOUR FAMILY ROOTS

Presented by Judy Shappee
Genealogy Research Associate, Arizona State
Library and Archives

Tuesday, September 19th, 7pm
Burton Barr Public Library
1221 N. Central Ave., Lecture Room, 4th Floor

Have you been thinking of researching your family history but don't know where to start? Then this event is for you! Jewish Genealogy is easier than you think – and there are plenty of people to help you.

Our clinic will feature **Judy Shappee**, a genealogy specialist with the Arizona State Library and Archives. She will discuss basic techniques for doing genealogy as well as resources you can use for Jewish genealogical research in particular.

Free to the public.

LEGACY SERIES 2006-2007

The AJHS is pleased to announce an exciting schedule for our **2006-2007 Legacy Series**. This year, we will focus on the history of Jews in Arizona with a special lecture by **Dr. Blaine Lamb** on the pioneer Jewish settlers of our state. In addition, we are introducing a new series documenting the history of Phoenix's different Jewish congregations.

Rabbi Albert Plotkin will lead off the series on Sunday, October 22nd with a lecture on the early history of Congregation Beth Israel. A more complete list of events will follow in our fall newsletter.



Building site of Roosevelt Dam, c. 1906.
Includes Lantin store on left.



Max Lantin's store, c. 1907.
Lantin was an early Jewish merchant in Globe.

ARIZONA
PIONEER
LIFE

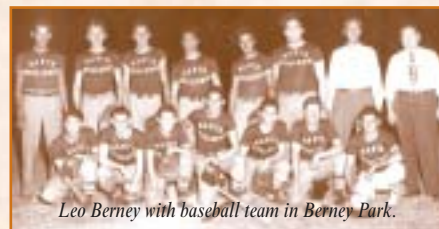
THE STORY OF LEO BERNEY



President's Message...

Jerry Lewkowicz This year marks the celebration of our 25th anniversary. It is hard to believe the impact the AJHS has had on the entire Phoenix community over the past 25 years. What started in the First Federal Savings building at 3033 N. Central has grown into a source of many accomplishments; our oral history project, our extensive archival collection, our Legacy Series, and of course the purchase of the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center. A sincere thanks to all those who have supported the organization and watched it grow over the years. Here's to even greater accomplishments yet to come!

Recently, a professor from Phoenix College contacted the AJHS regarding this photo of Leo Berney that was published in our Spring 2005 newsletter. The profile below is a follow up on that conversation.



Leo Berney with baseball team in Berney Park.

Although few people today remember **Leo Berney**, those who knew him 60 years ago admired him as a patriot, a community activist, and most of all a man who cared about children. Not just his own kids, but all children, of all races and ethnicities. After moving to Phoenix in 1939 due to ill health, he noticed that the local kids in his neighborhood had no place to play. With no positive outlet for their energies, many teenagers were turning to crime and delinquency. To help them, Berney spearheaded a campaign to create a public park on a 5 acre tract of vacant land on south 20th street and

"Berney Park" to sell War Bonds to support the struggle against Nazi Germany and Japan. According to one of these kids who later became a U.S. Army paratrooper, "If it hadn't been for Leo Berney and his baseball teams, I'd probably be in the penitentiary right now."

To show their appreciation for this man and his efforts on their behalf, kids from the neighborhood collected \$67 in pennies and nickels in 1946 to help European Jewish refugees in the aftermath of the war.

CERTIFICATES FOR ALL OCCASIONS

Looking for the perfect tribute for someone special?

Searching for something for the person who has everything? Want to let someone know you are thinking of them?

The perfect solution for that perfect tribute is right here. Make a contribution to the Arizona Jewish Historical Society. From births, birthdays, B'nai Mitzvahs to weddings, anniversaries and passings, a contribution to AJHS is a significant way to acknowledge that special person and enable our organization to continue to preserve Arizona's rich Jewish heritage for future generations. Your donation will be recognized with a large certificate sent to the recipient announcing the project that the contribution will support.

To send a Tribute, please call (602) 241-7870.



Leo Berney (center) helps organize local War Bonds drive, 1944.



Kids from Berney Park present \$67 donation to Charles Korrick of the United Jewish Welfare Fund, 1946.



Commendation from U.S. Treasury Department to "Boys of Berney Park" for their efforts on behalf of the War Finance Program. Dated December 16, 1944.



Members of the Phoenix Jewish Free Loan Association, 1972. Seated L-R: Ben Sonkin, Harry Shcolnik, Mathis Becker. Standing L-R: Harry Adler, Lee Kazan, Harry Kipnis, Maury Roth

Grant. He placed the first down payment on the land and eventually encouraged the county to buy it in 1944. He then organized baseball teams for the children at the park, at his own expense, which competed in local youth leagues. During the Second World War, Leo Berney also recruited the "Boys of

Sadly, Leo Berney died in 1947 at the age of 43. The public park which bore his name languished after his death, and is now a parking area for nearby Sky Harbor Airport. Virtually the only record of this interesting story now lies in the archives of the AJHS.





SAVE OUR HISTORY SPECIAL MEDIA EVENT

May 31, 2006 at 9:30 am
Cutler☆Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center
122 E. Culver Street, Phoenix

*Please join us for a special event
celebrating the completion
of our Cornerstone Project.*

In December, the AJHS received a special \$10,000 grant from the **History Channel TV network** to document the history of Phoenix's first synagogue. As part of this project, the AJHS commissioned a series of cornerstone plaques to commemorate the three religious congregations who worshiped in the old synagogue and students from **Kenilworth School**

researched and produced a special video on the history of the building. Come watch as we unveil the new plaques and show the documentary video for the first time.

Free to the Public.

Contact 602-241-7870 for more information

DISCOVERING THE PAST - BUILDING THE FUTURE



Kenilworth students Flor Chavez, Angelica Pacheco, Daniella Gallegos, and Raul Bencomo with teacher Ed Flores, May 8, 2006.



Students interview Lawrence Bell at the JHC, March 27, 2006.



Students film narration for video, May 8, 2006.



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.*

HISTORY MATTERS

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

NEW MEMBERS FOR 2006:

Mr. Philip Baratz

Dr. and Mrs. Robert Baratz

Mr. and Mrs. Alex Cohon

Mr. and Mrs. George Edlin

Mr. and Mrs. Irv Fellner

Mrs. Cindy Funk

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Jacobson

Judge Paul and Shirlee Katz

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Katzenstein

Mr. and Mrs. Sherwin Kaufman

Dr. and Mrs. Barry Kriegsfeld

Ruth and Gerald Laurie

Dr. and Mrs. Sabin Levenson

Mr. and Mrs. Rolf Schwarz

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Slonsky

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Waller

*If you are not a member today,
we encourage your membership
and participation in our
projects, activities and exciting vision of the
AJHS. • 602-241-7870 • azjhs@aol.com*

HISTORY MATTERS



Celia Halas, Sandra Day O'Conner and Joy Carter, 1984.

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 Lifetime Member

Membership PLUS a donation to help
continue a special project

- \$_____ Jewish Legacy Series Fund
- \$_____ Jewish Heritage Center Restoration
- \$_____ Oral History Project

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

TOTAL AMOUNT \$ _____

Name (please print)

Address

City State Zip

Phone

e-mail

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