

AJHS Launches Spring Capital Drive for Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center



The AJHS is looking to raise \$1 million by April 10, 2008 to ensure the swift renovation of Phoenix's first synagogue as the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center. With construction slated to begin by April 10th, the AJHS is seeking funds to enable the completion of all three phases of the project. **Phase One** involves the demolition of extraneous buildings on the site, **Phase Two** the restoration the historic temple and annex, and **Phase Three** the construction of a new reception building, office, archive, and social hall to be linked with the original temple. Construction is expected to take approximately one year for all three phases.

Located in the heart of downtown Phoenix's arts and culture district, the center will serve the community as a museum and educational facility, where people of all faiths will come to learn about our Jewish history, culture, and the contributions Jews have made to Arizona and American life.

Our goal is to promote a positive understanding of our Jewish identity among both Jews and non-Jews alike.

Many exciting naming opportunities are available.

Contact 602-241-7870 or visit www.azjhs.org for details.



Students from Pardes Jewish Day School celebrate Sukkot at the JHC, 2007

"To Life" Concert is Big Success!



Darrell James Rowader singing "If I Were a Rich Man" from Fiddler on the Roof.

The AJHS is pleased to announce that this year's concert event raised over \$25,000 to help restore Phoenix's first synagogue as the Cutler Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center. Over 750 people were in attendance at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts as Warren Cohen and his Musica Nova orchestra performed various selections of Jewish music from the movies. We would like to thank all our sponsors, advertisers, and attendees for all your support. We look forward to another successful show next year!



Special thanks to all the committee members who worked so hard on this event. Pictured from left to right are Sherri Germaine, Louise Leverant, Mike Bell, Linda Aarons, Elaine Waxman-Segelbaum, Ann Polunsky, Larry Bell, and Judy Stern. Additional members included Jay Bycer, Joy Carter, Lea Nach, Ruth Rosen, Rita Segal, and Sallie Terman.

I N M E M O R I A M

IRA MORTON

It is with great sadness that we mourn the death of AJHS board member Ira Morton. In addition to being a successful author, newspaper columnist, and advertising executive, Ira was also a great community activist and historian. His charisma, spirit, and enthusiasm will be missed by all.



Photo shows Ira Morton (l) with Arizona Governor Paul Fannin, 1960.

SAVE THE DATE!

Thursday, February 7th
Genealogy Workshop
"Finding Your Family Roots"
7pm at Temple Solel
6805 E. McDonald Dr.
\$10 Registration fee each program
or \$20 for all three programs
Call 480-991-7414 ext. 121 to RSVP

Thursday, February 21st
Genealogy Workshop
"The Complexities of Finding Information"
7pm at Temple Solel
6805 E. McDonald Dr.
\$10 Registration fee each program
or \$20 for all three programs
Call 480-991-7414 ext. 121 to RSVP

Thursday March 6th
Genealogy Workshop
"Computers and the Internet as Resources"
7pm at Temple Solel
6805 E. McDonald Dr.
\$10 Registration fee each program
or \$20 for all three programs
Call 480-991-7414 ext. 121 to RSVP

Monday, March 3rd
Jewish Legacy Series
Dr. Edward Shapiro
"Decade of Crisis: American Jewry During the 1940's"
12pm at Beth El Congregation
1118 W. Glendale Ave.
Contact 602-241-7870 for details
Co-Sponsored by Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix Free to the public

Monday, March 3rd
Jewish Legacy Series
Dr. Edward Shapiro
"The Crown Heights Riots Revisited"
7pm at Valley of the Sun JCC
12701 N. Scottsdale Ave.
Contact 602-241-7870 for details
Co-Sponsored by Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix Free to the public

Sunday April 6th
Israel at 60: Community-Wide Celebration
12-5pm at Ina Levine JCC
12707 N. Scottsdale Rd.
Free Admission
AJHS is a co-sponsor for this event

Wednesday, April 30th
Jewish Legacy Series
Dinah Schwartz
"Jews in Shanghai During the Holocaust"
7pm at Congregation Beth Israel
10460 N. 56th St.
Contact 602-241-7870 for details
Free to the public

Sunday, May 18th
AJHS Annual Meeting and Brunch
Details to be announced

Preserve the Legacy of Arizona's Jewish Community



THE TIME IS NOW

Lawrence D. Bell, Ph.D.
Executive Director

We are so excited to finally begin restoring the site of Phoenix's first synagogue as a museum and educational center. When finished, it will contain exhibits featuring first-person accounts of the Arizona Jewish experience. It will also serve as a social hall, event venue, and archive.

We need your support! Please consider some of the many ways this project will benefit our community.

First and foremost, the center will document our experience here in Arizona, promote Jewish identity among our youth, and provide a unique location for events in the heart of downtown Phoenix.

It will also serve a point of contact with unaffiliated Jews, who make up the majority of the valley's Jewish population, by providing them with a rewarding Jewish cultural experience in a friendly, warm environment.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, our project will reach out to non-Jews to educate them about who we are, what we believe, and the ways in which we have contributed to our state and our country as a whole. What better way to fight against anti-Semitism, for example, than host a class of fourth grade students as part of their school curriculum, providing them with a positive interpretation of our culture and our history.

Please join us in this unique opportunity to transform this truly historic landmark into a useful resource for our entire community. Many exciting naming opportunities are still available. Call 602-241-7870 to make a donation or to arrange for a private tour of the site.

Coming March 3rd

AJHS & Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix
present

Professor Edward Shapiro

*Decade of Crisis:
American Jewry During the 1940's*

12 noon at Beth El Congregation
1118 W. Glendale Ave., Phoenix

*Could it Happen Again? The
Crown Heights Riots Revisited*

7pm at the Valley of the Sun JCC
12701 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale

Edward S. Shapiro is professor emeritus of history at Seton Hall University, where he taught for three decades. Among his many publications are *A Time for Healing: American Jewry Since World War II* (Pulitzer Prize nominee), *Letters of Sidney Hook: Democracy, Communism, and the Cold War*, *We Are Many: Reflections on American Jewish History and Identity*, and *Crown Heights: Blacks, Jews, and the 1991 Brooklyn Riot* (National Jewish Book Award honorable mention). He is presently working on a book exploring the role of American Jewish business moguls.

Learn Your Family History

Researching your family history is not as hard as you may think! It just takes, time, patience, and lots of tenacity. The AJHS is co-sponsoring a special workshop with Temple Solel this spring on how to do Jewish genealogy. The program will consist of three evening sessions on Thursdays, February 7th, February 21st, and March 6th. Each session will last from 7-9 pm and will cover such topics as getting started, what resources are available, and using your computer to do research. Sessions cost \$10 each (or \$20 for all three sessions) and include computer access. They will take place at Temple Solel, 6805 E. McDonald Drive.

Contact **Janette Silverman** at 480-991-7414, Ext. 121, or by email at jsilverman@templesolel.org for more information.

"Israel turns 60!"



David ben Gurion proclaims Israeli independence, May 14, 1948. There will be a community-wide Israel 60 celebration in Phoenix April 6, at the JCC.

CUTLER PLOTKIN JEWISH HERITAGE CENTER: The History of a Sacred Space



Jews have been present in Phoenix ever since the origins of the city back in the 1870's. As early as the 1890's, such venerable families as the Diamonds, Goldwaters, Korricks, and Rosenzweigs began to make an impact on the city and its economic development. Yet it wasn't until 1920 that the Jewish community was large enough to support a true community. In that year, the leading Jewish residents of Phoenix banded together to form **The Hebrew Center Association**, charged with the task of building a permanent home for the valley's growing Jewish population, then surpassing 100 souls.



By 1921, they had raised enough money to begin construction on a synagogue at 122 E. Culver Street. The original price-tag was \$14,000. To design the building, members of the community chose the noted architectural firm of **Lescher, Kibbey, and Mahoney** who designed a quaint, yet warm Spanish Mission revival structure, with Romanesque elements, that fit well with the Southwestern style of many local area churches. Most of the features of this original design survive up to this very day.

The project was completed less than a year later, and from 1922 until 1949, the building became the home of **Congregation Beth Israel**, in addition to serving as an informal community center and social hall. During the Second World War for example, the synagogue was used to host special religious services and dances for military personnel stationed at Luke Field. It also hosted numerous AZA dances and other events.



The early years of the congregation were turbulent. Originally, the congregation was not affiliated with any major religious denomination and a series of Rabbi's came and went, often lasting less than a year. One of the most notable early figures was a shochet named **Y. H. Dow**, who served as the spiritual head of the congregation from 1926-1930. In 1930, a schism occurred within Beth Israel over whether to retain Dow's services. The more traditional members who wanted to keep Dow left to form **Beth El Congregation**.



It was not until 1935 that **Rabbi Philip Jaffa** established some stability in the congregation, affiliating it with the Reform movement. His successor, **Abraham Lincoln Krohn** greatly expanded the membership and also earned much notoriety as a civic leader, working tirelessly on behalf of the poor, and for better interfaith relations between Christians and Jews.



Largely as a result of Krohn's work, the congregation grew too large for the building, and eventually built a new home on 10th Avenue and Flower. Yet, the history of the temple did not end, for in 1949 it was sold to the **Southern Baptist Convention**, where it began new life as a Christian church.



The First Chinese Baptist Church was the product of missionary work done by **Mr. W. C. Henderson**, a local area grocery manager, among the Chinese community here in Phoenix. In 1948, they hired **George Lawrence Stanley** as their pastor. Initially they met in a private house. However, in 1949, the Southern Baptist Convention purchased the old synagogue on 122 E. Culver Street as a mission for this new congregation. The congregation grew swiftly and was incorporated as an independent church in 1957. Because the pastor spoke only English, a special translation booth was installed in the building so that the largely Chinese-speaking congregants could understand the services.

Photo caption:

1. Temple Beth Israel, 1940's
2. Rabbi & Mrs. Philip Jaffa, in front of synagogue, 1936
3. USO JW B Sukkot Dance, 1942
4. WW II Passover Seder, 1944
5. Rabbi Krohn presides over WW II Passover Seder, 1945
6. Members of First Chinese Baptist, 1960's
7. Founding members, First Chinese Baptist Church, 1957
8. Ivy Epstein prepares for her Bat Mitzvah at JHC, 2003
This was the first Jewish ceremony held in the old synagogue in over 50 years.



In 1981, the Chinese Baptists sold the building to a Spanish speaking congregation, the **Iglesia Bautista Central**. They continued services until 2002, when the **AJHS** purchased the site.

Cutler☆Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center Nominated as Phoenix Point of Pride

The AJHS is pleased to announce that the **Cutler☆Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center** was nominated recently as one of ten finalists for this year's *Phoenix Points of Pride*.

The Phoenix Points of Pride Commission was founded in 1991 to foster a sense of community pride among valley residents.



Community Passover Seder on Culver Street, 1926

Community members are encouraged to support the Heritage Center by voting online at www.phoenix.gov/pride2008

Nominations are accepted once every four years. This year's finalists include:

- Arizona State University West
4701 W. Thunderbird Rd.
- Burton Barr Central Library
1221 N. Central Ave.
- Cesar Chavez Park
7858 S. 35th Ave.
- Chase Field
401 E. Jefferson St.
- **Cutler☆Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center, 122 E. Culver St.**
- George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center
415 E. Grant St.
- Murphy Bridle Path
Central Ave. between Bethany Home and Arizona Canal
- North Mountain Visitor Center
12950 N. 7th St.
- Pioneer Living History Museum
3901 W. Pioneer Rd.
- Royal Palms Hotel
5200 E. Camelback Rd.



**ARIZONA JEWISH
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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

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www.azjhs.org

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Y.H. Dow Family, Phoenix 1930's

BE A PART OF HISTORY!

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

- ___ \$50 Supporting Member
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- ___ \$180 Chai Circle
- ___ \$250 Legacy Circle
- ___ \$500 Curators Circle
- ___ \$1,000 Lifetime Member

TOTAL AMOUNT \$ _____

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

Name (please print)

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www.azjhs.org

Call 602-241-7870



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

HISTORY MANNERS

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

NEW MEMBERS FOR 2008:

Allen, Susan and Don	Lewkowitz, Karen and Franklin
Ben-Shalom, Jim	Franklin
Brazlin, Dolly and Hy	Ligorsky, Edythe and Robert
Bressler, Eve and Stephen	Lisker, Steven
Burns, Ronald and Cathy	Lory, Marvin
Charnofsky, Eileen and Sol	Mishkin, Shannon and Keith
Cohen, Lauren and Jordan	Mitchell, Esta and Robert
Cohen, Eileen and Herbert	Nemerov, Jack
Dietz, Janice and Charles	Newhoff, Bonnie
Evers, Anita and Patrick	Paroly, Geneva
Fleischer, Essie	Peven, Harry
Folkman, Laurie	Pfeffer, Marcia
Friedlander, Pat and Gary	Polen, Karen and Dave
Gerber, Elaine and Jerry	Poles, Ruth and Jack
Gerson, Marysia and Matthew	Reichard, Bob
Gerstman, Renee and Peter	Richelsof, Marty and Fran
Ginis, Betty	Rosenthal, Jonathan and Robyn
Goldfine, Beverly	Rosman, Jean
Goldstein, Mary Lou and Melvin	Sak, Sharon and Aaron
Golub, Jean	Saper, Sylvia and Milt
Goodfarb, Jay	Schwartz, Arnold
Gordon, Joanne and Jerry	Schwimmer, Tracy and Marc
Greenwood, Alexandra	Seiden, Enid and Michael
Guberman, Elaine	Shefrin David S.
Harris, Donna	Shlonsky, Donald
Herring, Barbara and Rabbi Charles	Shuch, Bunny and Sandy
Higgins Jill and Harry	Silverman, Iris and David
Hiller, Peggy and Neil	Simon, Gayle and Ronald
Hirsch, Lori and Howard	Sir, Erin and Gregory
Jensen, Jacque	Smith, Janice and Jeffrey B.
Jones, Susan and Gregory	Snitz, Elissa and Irwin
Kaplan, Carolyn and Morris	Starikoff, Carole
Lee, Rabbi Barton	Steinberg, Pat
Levin, Sheri and Thomas	Sussman, Marvin
	Targovnik, Selma and Jerome
	Tracht, Teri Lee and Mark
	Zoloto, Beverly and Lee

*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 • www.azjhs.org*