



## “Jews Finding Fertile Ground: New Mexico, a Landscape of Possibilities”

by Harvey Buchalter

**T**he lives of Dave and Kate Specter, parents of Lionel Specter and Judy Greenfeld, mirror the experiences of the majority of Jewish men and women who were born in Eastern Europe's shtetlach, or were born in the U.S. from immigrant parents who settled in major cities in the U.S., predominantly New York, Chicago, or St. Louis.

Kate's father was a presser in a garment factory in Chicago, and a lover of Yiddish, which Kate learned in a union “shuleh” (afternoon secular school). She met Dave on a blind date and the two married in 1927. Lionel was born in 1934 and Judy in 1936.

Times were hard, even for newly minted attorneys like Dave, during the Great Depression. Always imbued with the spirit of adventure and calculated risk-taking, Dave was determined to take his wife and two small children on the road to seek better circumstances. In a 1994 interview, Kate reminisced that leaving home was “a courageous thing to do because nobody left home in those days.”

Lionel seconded his mother's sense of awe about the previous generation, saying, “Those people didn't know they were adventurous. They knew they had to put something on the table.”

The road from Chicago took the family to Casper, Wyoming, and then to Scotts Bluff, Nebraska, as Dave became a traveling salesman, selling penny candy and breakfast cereal in the Midwest. The call of a larger city brought them to Denver,

where Dave sold clothing on the road for the May Company.

In Denver, Dave approached a man who was building a tavern. In conversation with this stranger, he learned that this man still did not have a sign for his establishment. Ever quick on his feet, Dave drew upon his legal instincts—after all, he was still an attorney—and proceeded to prepare a contract to supply a sign to fit the image of the tavern.

He then knocked on the door of the leading sign-making outfit, the well-established Zeon Sign Company. He knew neon signs were the way to draw attention to a business and lure customers through the front door.

Thus, with virtually no knowledge of the sign business, Dave began his life's work, an enterprise few would label a “Yiddische gesheft,” not typically a Jewish line of work.

Dave joined up with Zeon as a salesman in Denver. When the company established a branch in Albuquerque in 1939, the Specter family moved to the Duke City in a 1934 Chevy with, as Kate reminisced, “mittn bet gevant”—with goose-feather blankets and pillows in the trunk. (In 1939, the population of Albuquerque was just 35,000.)

After service in the Air Corps, Dave rejoined the New Mexico branch of operations in 1945. As Albuquerque prospered in the next two to three decades, Dave and partner Wilbur Jones built Zeon to become New Mexico's “oldest and largest full-service sign company,” producing nearly all the electric signs in

the state. By this time, Dave's son Lionel had entered the business. (Dave died unexpectedly in 1969.)



Harvey Buchalter

As Albuquerque prospered in the post-war years, Lionel became acquainted with its principal movers and shakers: bankers, builders, and politicians who were reshaping the city, such as Robert Nordhaus, builder of the Sandia Peak Tram, and architect Max Flatow, designer of Fair Plaza Shopping Center in the then-burgeoning Northeast Heights. Zeon supplied the signs for Foodway, later to become Smiths Supermarket.

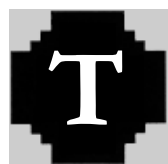
Until the rise of the interstates in the 1950s to early 1960s, and the appearance of corporate motels such as Holiday Inn, neon signs were all the rage along old Route 66, the Mother Road. Weary travelers kept an eye out for the colorfully flashing neon, calling them to rest their weary bones after a long day on the road. Albuquerque's Central Avenue motels vied for their business. The Premier and

*(continued on p. 3)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Jews Finding Fertile Ground.....	1
President's Column.....	2
Movers and Shakers.....	3
Temple Aaron 130th Anniversary.....	4
All Roads Lead to Denver.....	5
Legacy Next Steps.....	7
Pioneer Jewish Families in New Mexico.....	8
Speakers Bureau Travels to Las Cruces.....	9
Upcoming Programs.....	10
Fall Conference Photos.....	11
Calendar of Upcoming Events.....	12

## President's Column



he "backbone" or strength of any organization is its membership and support, either through volunteering at events, attending our annual Fall Conference and other programs, serving on committees and our board, or contributions over time. NMJHS has been and continues to be fortunate to have wonderful members throughout the state who have a diverse set of interests and are lovers of history.

Without you we wouldn't be able to:

- Remain a vibrant organization now in our 33rd year;
- Organize and present our Fall Conferences, our signature event;
- Provide knowledgeable and interesting speakers and programs in different state locations, as well as sponsor a Speakers Bureau in collaboration with the Historical Society of New Mexico;
- Produce an award-winning Newsletter, *Legacy*;
- Publish books and articles on New Mexico Jewish history;
- Establish Restricted Funds for Special Programs and Projects such as: Visiting Scholar Program; Speakers Bureau; Research Fellowship; Oral Family Histories, and Pioneer Panels and Teacher Curriculum;
- Add to our archival collection of family records and documents;
- Begin an Endowment Fund as part of the L'Chaim New Mexico Life

### Sharing Your Family History

NMJHS will continue to collect New Mexico Jewish family histories through oral interviews to share with the public and preserve in the New Mexico State Archives. If you are interested in participating, contact the NMJHS office:

5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109  
505-348-4471, [admin@nmjhs.org](mailto:admin@nmjhs.org)

& Legacy Program, with the assistance of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and coordinated state-wide by the Jewish Community Foundation of New Mexico and the Jewish Federation.



*NMJHS President  
Linda Goff*

Our membership has grown, and we now have more than 300 memberships or approximately 425 individuals, including business and non-profit members. This speaks to your incredible dedicated support and encouragement for what we do: research, collect, preserve, publish, and present and disseminate New Mexico Jewish history. You make it happen!

To ensure our stories and work continue to share with your children and grandchildren, please consider joining our Year 2 Life & Legacy campaign for NMJHS tomorrows!

**AND**

Continue your membership and recruit new members! It is all greatly appreciated! Thank You!✡

### Welcome New Members

Janet Abrams  
Temple Aaron of Trinidad, Colorado  
Jane Bernard  
Barbara and Ron Bloomberg  
Bonnie Ellinger and Paul Golding

NMJHS is on Facebook and Twitter.  
Please "like" us at  
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and follow us on Twitter at  
<https://twitter.com/NMJewishHS>.

## NMJHS Officers and Board of Directors

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## Mission Statement

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society is a secular organization that promotes greater knowledge and understanding of New Mexico's diverse Jewish experiences within a broad cultural context.

*Legacy* is the quarterly newsletter of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society  
5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

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# Movers and Shakers in New Mexico History: Colonial Era to Statehood

by Linda Goff



MJHS and the Historical Society of New Mexico (HSNM) are partnering for the first-time to co-sponsor a conference, June 8th, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Albuquerque Auditorium. The conference is open to the public and free of charge.

The spark for this new venture originated during a coffee break at the 2018 HSNM Annual Conference in Alamogordo. Janet Saiers, former president of HSNM, a Los Alamos Historical Society member, and I brainstormed about ways in which our two state-wide organizations could work together more closely. The idea of a joint, co-sponsored program on a theme of mutual interest was born. Follow up conversations with Dennis Reinhartz, president and Nancy Owen Lewis, vice-president ensued over six months bringing the program to the two

organizations and public.

Three broad panel session themes emerged from our meetings: 1) “The Role of Women”; 2) “Art and Culture”; and 3) “Business, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development.” Panelists will include members of each organization.

Specific topics are:

- “Spanish Colonial Women and the Law: Complaints, Lawsuits and Criminal Behavior in Eighteenth Century New Mexico”;
- “Municipal Housekeepers?” Women’s Clubs in New Mexico Territory”;
- “Jewish Women in New Mexico History: From Business Partners to Civic Leaders”;
- “Crypto- Jewish Identity through Poetry”;
- “Pueblo Artists and their Patrons: The Struggle for Survival”;

• “A Brief History of Hispanic Music in New Mexico”;

• “Jewish Homes on the Range: The Extensive Involvement of Jews in New Mexico Ranching”;

• “From Stagecoaches to Railroads: Commerce along the Camino Real in the Mid-Nineteenth Century”;

• “A Mid Century Microcosm of Albuquerque’s Jewish Community in the Post WW2 Era”.



Linda Goff

Join us for what promises to be an interesting journey through New Mexico history and celebrating our new collaborative partnership with HSNM. NMJHS also wishes to thank the Jewish Federation for a “mini-grant” to make this program possible. ☆

## Jews Finding Fertile Ground *(continued from p. 1)*

Zuni motels on Central stood out in a long list of motels with Zeon neon signs.

Other signs featuring fluorescent lighting and plastic lenses were commissioned by the George Maloof Beverage distributors, Public Service of New Mexico, and downtown Albuquerque’s Kimo Theater’s remake of its neon sign.

The heyday of neon signs is documented in UNM professor of art Ellen Babcock’s 2005 definite history, “The Zeon Files,” which is dedicated to the memory of Dave and Wilbur.

Over the years, neon went out of fashion, often by edict of municipal legislation. The appearance of corporate motels combined with the demise of family-owned ones also signaled the end of neon as a means of beckoning travelers from the road. Gradually, fluorescent

and LED signs replaced much of them.

The Specters made a name for themselves not only in the sign business, but in the realm of Jewish community life and welfare as well. Dave and Kate became members of Congregation B’nai Israel in the early 1940s, making friends with Louis and Belle Ravel and others who had founded the Conservative congregation in 1920. Kate eventually became president of both the shul’s Sisterhood and Albuquerque’s branch of Hadassah.

Dave’s contribution to the Jewish community was monumental. In the 1960s, he was instrumental in the \$75,000 purchase of 10 acres for the Jewish Federation from the vast holdings of John Simms. It is now the home of the Jewish Community Center and the David Specter Shalom House for the elderly, a joint Federation and U.S. Department of Housing facility.

The well-known charismatic mayor of Albuquerque, Clyde Tingley—the face of Albuquerque in the 1930s and 1940s—voiced his pride in the view of downtown Albuquerque from the railroad overpass at First Street and Central Avenue, especially at night as neon signs punctuated the darkness with a festive air. They could be seen from the east and west mesas surrounding the city. Today’s Central Avenue is not what it used to be, according to Lionel. Something has been lost!

The Specter family story reflects the challenges and accomplishments of a Jewish family centered in Albuquerque. Both Dave and Lionel took highly individualistic paths. Neither followed the norm—and for this their stories are unique. ☆



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## Temple Aaron 130th Anniversary Gala Weekend Friday, June 21-Sunday, June 23, 2019

by David London



Temple Aaron in Trinidad, Colorado, is turning 130 years old! It is the oldest surviving synagogue in the Mountain West and the third -oldest west of the Mississippi.

The congregation was formed in 1883, and the magnificent structure, designed by renowned architect Isaac Hamilton Rapp, was completed in 1889. Throughout its history, Temple Aaron has been significant to the Jewish history not only of Colorado but also of New Mexico. The late Kathryn Rubin, of blessed memory, winner of the 2017 NMJHS Hurst Award, took loving care of Temple Aaron for over 30 years. While the building was nearly sold in 2016, that did NOT happen, and since then a dedicated group of people from both states has raised over \$75,000 and significantly raised awareness about Temple Aaron. We are committed to keeping the building in Jewish hands, making the necessary repairs, and creating a vibrant community that uses the building for Jewish and appropriate secular events.

Please join us for a gala weekend of events from Friday, June 21, to Sunday, June 23. All events will be held at the temple at 407 S. Maple Street, Trinidad (five minutes from I-25). We will have services on Friday night, Saturday morning, and Saturday evening; an unveiling of a historical marker donated by the Jewish-American Society for Historic Preservation, a Jewish storytelling session, and a screening of the film "Raise the Roof," co-sponsored by NMJHS and the Santa

Fe Jewish Film Festival. On Saturday evening, we will have a catered buffet dinner and Jewish music. The weekend will conclude with a farewell bagel brunch on Sunday morning.



David London

All events other than the marker unveiling, which will be free and open to the public, will require advance registration on our website. Tickets for the entire weekend of events are \$130 per person (a savings of \$50), with tickets for Saturday



Temple Aaron in Trinidad, Colorado.

costing only \$72 and for either Friday or Sunday costing \$54 per day. We are also seeking sponsorships and donations in conjunction with this celebration so we can continue our important work. Please visit our website at [www.templeaaron.org](http://www.templeaaron.org) for full details.

We hope to see you in Trinidad for this amazing weekend!! If there is sufficient interest, NMJHS may be able to arrange for van or bus transportation from Albuquerque and Santa Fe, with a visit to Montefiore Cemetery in Las Vegas on the return trip Sunday afternoon. ☆



# All Roads Lead to Denver

## Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies 28th Annual Conference

by Corinne J. Brown



In keeping with the theme of this year's SCJS annual conference, June 30-July 2, "Place and Identity: Redefining the Crypto-Judaic Experience in the Western Hemisphere," numerous exciting proposals have been submitted, guaranteeing a stimulating program.

Conference panels will feature speakers from renowned academic institutions, as well as various independent researchers, writers, historians, and of course, descendants, sharing up-to-the-minute news in this fascinating field of study. Further, this year marks the inauguration of the Stanley M. Hordes Distinguished Scholar Lecture, a distinction bestowed upon a scholar whose contribution to advancing the field of crypto-Judaic studies has been exemplary.

Events will be held at the suburban DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton, located just off I-25 in southern Denver, along one of the major stops of the city's A-Line, or airport train. The hotel offers free parking, free Wi-Fi and group rates.

This year, SCJS proudly welcomes keynote speaker, former *Life* magazine journalist Jeff Wheelwright, who, in 2008, wrote the pivotal article for the *Smithsonian Magazine*, the "Secret of the San Luis Valley," followed by his book, *The Wandering Gene and the Indian Princess*. His work, focused on the discovery of the BRCA gene found in women in southwestern Colorado, helped shed new light on the ancestry and heritage of this secluded community.

Following a genealogy workshop on Sunday, with sessions by Genie Milgrom and Schelly Dardashti, plus the opening panel, a cocktail reception will feature the talents of Lorenzo Trujillo and the Southwest

Musicians. The opening dinner welcomes special guest José Luis Parrado, Consul of Spain for Colorado, among others.



Connie Brown

Sunday night's prize-winning play, "Conviction," stars Ami Dayan, a master dramatist who plays nine roles in this compelling and thought-provoking story about faith, love and persecution. Monday's Martin-Sosin Address for Advancement in the Arts features nationally recognized composer David Wohl in a multi-artist, original presentation. Monday night The Lost Tribe, performs Sephardi, Mizrahi and Ladino music.

The conference concludes Tuesday afternoon. Hotel group rates are extended prior to and after the conference duration. SCJS president Debbie Wohl-Isard



Kneeling is priest Andres Gonzales in 1486, in confession

and conference chair Corinne Joy Brown extend a warm invitation to any and all to attend for this historic event.

(continued on p. 6)

**TEMPLE AARON**  
**Celebrates Its 130th Anniversary**  
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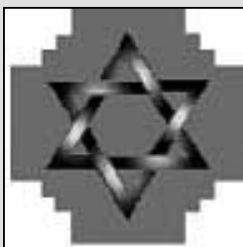
**NMJHS announces its  
LIFE & LEGACY  
“Pioneer” Society Donors!**

The following members have made their commitment to ensure our Legacy will be passed down to the next generations by contributing to our new Endowment Fund. We reached our Year 1 goal of 18 Letters of Intent!

We are currently working hard to obtain the Year 2 goal of 18 additional Letters of Intent. Won't you join us today?

Anonymous  
Patricia Carlton  
Alan & Diane Chodorow  
Elliot Gerson  
Jessica Herzstein  
Murray Tucker

**NMJHS Legacy Team:**  
Lance Bell  
Diane Chodorow  
Linda Goff  
Naomi Sandweiss



**IN MEMORIAM**

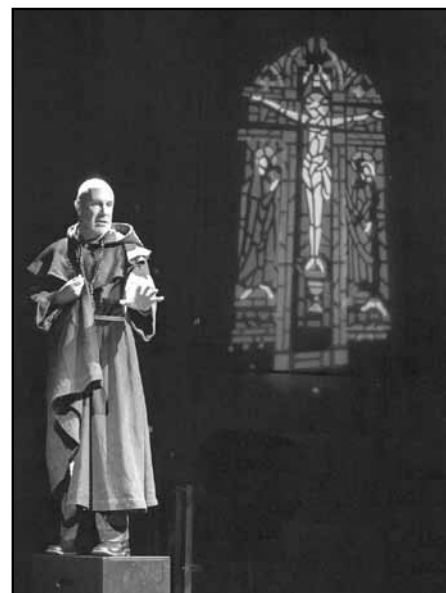
**Mel Eisenstadt, 1938-2019**  
**Richard Shapiro, 1938-2019**

**All Roads Lead to Denver** *(continued from p. 5)*

With thanks to the Sosin-Petit Foundation, Mizel Museum, Museo de Las Americas, and Theater of Denver, as well as Gaon Books and Film, and Temple Aaron, Trinidad for their support.

To register, go to [cryptojews.com](http://cryptojews.com). Click on “Conference.” For more information, write to [scjsconference.Denver@gmail.com](mailto:scjsconference.Denver@gmail.com). ☆

**Note:** The SCJS is a secular and academic group founded in 1991 dedicated to the research of the historical and contemporary development of crypto-Jews of Iberian origin. Anyone and everyone are invited to attend the conference, whether a member of SCJS or not. ☆



*Under the stained glass is priest Andres Gonzales in 1486, putting the fear of God in the hearts of members of his congregation that turned into a rabid mob, bent on a witch hunt.*



**NMJHS Annual Business Meeting**  
**Featuring Norma Libman**

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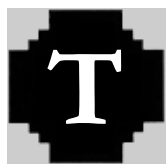


*Norma is a journalist and lecturer who has been collecting women's stories for more than 20 years. Her areas of concentration are crypto-Jews and Conversos, Chinese women writers of Nu Shu, and diaries of women pioneers. She has published more than 500 articles and written for textbook publishers and newsletters.*

Sunday June 2, 2019 1 p.m. Temple Beth Shalom in Santa Fe

## Legacy: Next Steps

by Rae Lee Siporin



his past autumn, Dianne Layden, the editor of *Legacy*, decided to step down after a lengthy and award-winning tenure.

Calling upon the knowledge of past *Legacy* editors, several editorial reports from Dianne and other editors, a small team was created to discuss the future of *Legacy*. We gathered information about the construction and production of newsletters, specifically Jewish and historical content newsletters, to ensure the high quality of our award-winning newsletter would be maintained.

We quickly realized that producing *Legacy* would require a team effort. The Board of Directors approved a proposal to offer a stipend to the next *Legacy* editor who will work in tandem with a newly established editorial advisory group. With this major change, we focused on the opportunity to make structural changes to the previous process, and tasks were identified that could be delegated. For example, NMJHS's administrator will assist in completing several administrative tasks formerly handled by the editor, and the new editorial advisory group will assist with identifying and soliciting contributing authors for *Legacy* articles. Maintaining the focus on Jewish history and culture in New Mexico was absolute; at the same time, we look forward to overall comprehensive balance by adding more information about the society itself, its members, and how it operates.

The new editorial advisory group will also serve as a sounding board for the Editor, who will be tasked with reviewing possible changes to format and distribution of *Legacy* and potential other changes to the cycle of future *Legacy* issues.

We also encourage strategic use of *Legacy* to contribute more to NMJHS's overall goals: attracting new members, reaching out to potential younger members

by involving future generations in writing articles and generating personal family histories, and reaching out to wider audiences to become involved in NMJHS in exciting opportunities to generate and disseminate Jewish

New Mexico history. Current opportunities exist to assist in obtaining gifts for the silent auction held at the Fall Conference, to support the Program Committee in developing new NMJHS programs, and to assist with outreach efforts for NMJHS activities, as well as expanding member participation throughout greater New Mexico.

NMJHS sincerely thanks Dianne Layden and all of the previous editors for their talent, creativity and dedication throughout the evolution of *Legacy*. Looking to the future, the Board of NMJHS strongly believe that this approach will lead to an even more vibrant and stronger *Legacy* and NMJHS.

Please contact the NMJHS office for information or to participate in any of the opportunities mentioned. We are especially interested in reaching out to people who may only have limited time to contribute but are interested in becoming involved. ☆



Rae Lee Siporin

## Many Thanks for Your Contributions

### Pioneer

Ira Rimson  
Robert and Irene Gale  
Lena and Michael Keslin  
Lester and Eleanor Einhorn  
Stuart Feen and Carol Sonnenschein  
Samuel and Karen Kaplan  
Iris Weinstein and Steven Margulin  
Sandy and Franklin Schargel  
Melvin and Paula Amar Schwartz  
Phyllis Arlow  
Patricia Carlton  
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David London

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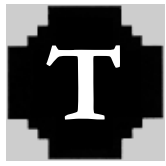
Sandra Dietz Chair, Membership Committee

### IT'S TIME TO RECRUIT YOUNGER MEMBERS

The future of the NMJHS, as well as remembrance of the past, depend on attracting a new generation of members. A gift of membership to your child, grandchild, or great-grandchild will introduce your family's next generation to the colorful history of the Jewish people in our state. Consider membership as a wedding or Bat or Bar Mitzvah gift. Invite an old friend or new acquaintance to attend an NMJHS function. Help us grow our membership.

## ***Pioneer Jewish Families in New Mexico* Wins HSNM Lansing B. Bloom Award**

by Dianne R. Layden



The Historical Society of New Mexico honored *Pioneer Jewish Families in New Mexico*, an anthology sponsored by the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society, with the 2019 Lansing B. Bloom Award for outstanding publication by an institution affiliated with HSNM. *Pioneer Jewish Families* was edited by University of New Mexico history professors Noel Pugach and Richard Melzer.

Published by Gaon Books of Santa Fe, the book is composed of family histories compiled by NMJHS. The book brings together in one volume previously published booklets to underscore the many contributions of the pioneer Jews to New Mexico's rich history. Noel authored nine of the 15 booklets, edited three more, and was involved in a fourth.

Noel is an emeritus professor at UNM-Main Campus, and Richard is an emeritus Regents professor at UNM-Valencia Campus. Noel teaches U.S. foreign relations, the Holocaust as history, early Jewish history, and modern Jewish history.

Richard teaches U.S. and New Mexico history. For NMJHS, Noel has served as president, board member, and chair of several history projects, and Richard has served as vice-president, board member, and conference co-chair.

Both have been honored many times for contributions to their community and profession. Noel received the NMJHS Hurst Award and a Distinguished Service Award, and the Jewish Community Center Humanitarian Award. Richard has received nine HSNM awards, includ-

ing six for books, three New Mexico/Arizona book awards, and a UNM teaching award.

The anthology represents some 15 years of efforts by historians, archivists, and dedicated volunteers in collaboration with NMJHS. Its inception was a video archive project that sought to broaden the coverage of pioneer Jews depicted in a photographic exhibit at the Palace of the Governors in 1999-2003. Scholars provided historical research and

The definition was expanded to include families arriving after 1879 who contributed to the fabric of Jewish life before statehood in 1912, and whose varied occupations included ranching, mining, and entrepreneurship.



Dianne R. Layden

Ilfeld, Spiegelberg, Seligman, Taichert, Bibo, Gusdorf, Nordhaus, and Wertheim are some of the family names that became part of New Mexico history.

A map in the book shows that Jewish families were dispersed throughout the state. Accompanied by more than 100 photographs and a glossary, engaging narratives relate how Jewish families brought needed business skills to the territory, learned English and Spanish, and served as business and political leaders while maintaining their Jewish identity – in rural areas by traveling long distances for religious services and in larger towns by establishing synagogues and

Jewish institutions. Notably, Jews felt welcome in New Mexico and seldom experienced the discrimination they had known in Europe and elsewhere in the United States.

*Pioneer Jewish Families in New Mexico* is distinguished by the quality of its historiography and its unique subject – immigrant Jewish families who made significant economic, political, social, and cultural contributions to their communities and to New Mexico. ☆



trained and supervised volunteers who conducted oral history interviews with descendants of 24 pioneer families. Authors include Durwood Ball, Noel Pugach, Naomi Sandweiss, and Henry Tobias.

The time span is from the late 1840s through 1919. The term “pioneer families” refers to families from Europe who arrived in New Mexico territory before the railroad came in 1879, traveled all or part of their journey in wagons on the Santa Fe Trail, and became merchants.



## Speakers Bureau Travels to Las Cruces

by Richard Melzer and Jeff Brown

*This article is a summary of the Las Cruces program.*



On Sunday, March 10, 2019, Temple Beth-El welcomed Dr. Richard Melzer as he presented “The Swastika in New Mexico Cultures and History.” Dr. Melzer is a retired history professor and a former vice president of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society.

Dr. Melzer began by stating that while the swastika is most often remembered as a symbol of great hate and barbarism under Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime in Germany, the symbol had a completely different meaning in New Mexico long before and after its perversion by a demented dictator.

Like many cultures in world history, several Native American tribes of the American Southwest used the swastika design as an icon representing good will and healing in their religions. Eventually, the symbol appeared in not only religious ceremonies, but also on commercial products created and sold by the Navajo, Apache, and Hopi craftsmen. Swastikas appeared on popular Indian jewelry, rugs, pottery, and even moccasins sold to tourists.

By the early 20th century, Anglos of the Southwest and beyond began to adopt the swastika as a symbol of good luck, as common as the horseshoe, rabbit’s foot, and four-leaf clover in mainstream American culture. Hotels, a fuel company, a newspaper, a railroad line, clubs, and a coal camp in Colfax County used the name in New Mexico.

In 1907, the students of New Mexico A&M (now New Mexico State University) chose the swastika as the best name for their new yearbook. It made perfect sense: they hoped to send their graduates off into the world with a symbol of good luck and well-being. Determined not to surrender its traditional meaning to a

terrible dictator half-way around the world, students continued to use the name and symbol on their yearbook through World War II.

When polled several times, New Mexico State University students refused to relinquish their yearbook’s name long after World War II. A series of protests by Jewish students like Paula Steinbach, professors like Jerry Brown, local Jewish community members, and others finally led to a NMSU Board of Regents vote on the issue on May 6, 1983. With Governor Toney Anaya’s influence and NMSU President Gerald Thomas’s support, the regents voted 3-1 in favor of the name change. In the most dramatic moment of the meeting, Nathan Wieselman, a Jewish refugee from Europe and local businessman, declared, “Have you forgotten already the Holocaust?”

Dr. Melzer’s presentation was sponsored by the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society and the Historical Society of New Mexico’s speakers’ bureaus. Dr. Melzer is the editor of the award-winning anthology, *The Jewish Legacy in New Mexico* (2015). Along with Dr. Noel Pugach, he has also edited *Pioneer Jewish Families in New Mexico*, published by Gaon Press in Santa Fe as noted on page 8 of this issue. The Historical Society of New Mexico has just awarded this book the Lansing B. Bloom Award as the outstanding publication on New Mexico or the Southwest borderlands by an institution affiliated with the HSNM. ☆



Richard Melzer



Jeff Brown



**NMJHS announces its  
LIFE & LEGACY  
“Pioneer” Society Donors!**

The following members have made their commitment to ensure our Legacy will be passed down to the next generations by contributing to our new Endowment Fund. We need your help to reach our first year goal of securing 18 Letters of Intent by March 2019.

**Won’t you join us today?**

Dorothy Corner Amsden  
Gloria Abella Ballen and  
Ron Duncan Hart  
Lance and Julia Bell  
Stuart Feen and  
Carol Sonnenschein  
Bill and Margrethe Feldman  
Carla Freeman, z”l  
Sheila Gershen  
Linda and Ed Goff  
Betty and Keith Harvie  
Kathleen Kahn Mahon  
Cynthia and David London  
Steve and Beth Moise  
Noel Pugach  
Bob Rosenstein  
Naomi Sandweiss  
Rae Siporin  
Anonymous

**NMJHS Legacy Team:**  
Lance Bell  
Diane Chodorow  
Linda Goff  
Naomi Sandweiss

## Upcoming Programs

### "The German Kulturbund"



#### "The German Kulturbund" Presented by Steven Ovitsky

*There were many popular Jewish musicians in Germany from 1919 to 1933. After the Nazis rose to power, these musicians were banned from public performances.*

*Some of these musicians and other artists formed the Kulturbund Deutsche Juden (The Cultural Association of German Jews) to provide performances for the Jewish populations of Berlin and other cities. Steven Ovitsky will explore this unique experiment with rare recordings and film made for especially by the Kulturbund.*

*Steven Ovitsky is Executive Director of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and he is widely appreciated as a scholar of Jewish musical history.*

Sunday May 19, 2 p.m. at the JCC Auditorium in Albuquerque  
\* This event was originally presented and sponsored by the Jewish University of Santa Fe Scholar Series in 2018.

Suggested donation: \$10.00 to support future NMJHS Programs.  
Light Refreshments will be served.

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society is a beneficiary agency  
of  
The Jewish Federation of New Mexico



### SAVE THE DATE!

**"Jewish Life in Taos and Northern New Mexico:  
Past, Present, and Future"**

**2019 NMJHS Fall Conference  
November 8 – 11, 2019  
Sagebrush Inn and Suites, Taos**

## Movers & Shakers in New Mexico History: Colonial Era to Statehood



Join The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society and  
The Historical Society of New Mexico  
for an afternoon of panel sessions to  
celebrate historic adventures and  
achievements in the Land of Enchantment



Panel Sessions will feature:

The Role of women in New Mexico history  
Business, entrepreneurship and economic development  
Art and Culture

**Saturday 8 June 2019 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.**

The Jewish Community Center of Albuquerque, 5520 Wyoming Blvd NE

For more info contact the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society  
[www.NMJHS.org](http://www.NMJHS.org) 505-348-4471 [admin@nmjhs.org](mailto:admin@nmjhs.org)

NMJHS is a beneficiary agency of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico

## TEMPLE AARON of TRINIDAD IS TURNING 130!!!! JOIN US IN CELEBRATION JUNE 21-23, 2019

**WHAT:** A gala weekend of services and events at Temple Aaron to commemorate the building's 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary and celebrate its future!

**WHEN:** **Friday, June 21:** Temple doors open and ticket pickup begins at 6pm. Shabbat Service with Kiddush and live music to follow begins at 7 pm.

**Saturday, June 22:** The main event!

9:45 am: Shabbat service officiated by Beth Cohen of Congregation Nahalat Shalom, Albuquerque

11 am -12:45 pm: Unveiling of a historical marker donated by the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation. This outdoor event will include noted speakers, live music, and light refreshments. *This portion is free and open to the public; all other events require advance ticket purchase.*



1-2 pm: Storytelling with renowned Jewish storyteller Cherie Karo Schwartz. Appropriate for all ages!

4 pm: Screening of film "Raise the Roof," sponsored by the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society and the Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival.

6 pm: Havdalah service, Gourmet Buffet Dinner by Alys' Restaurant in La Veta, and Live Music

**Sunday, June 23:** Farewell Bagel Brunch at 10 am.

**WHERE:** Temple Aaron, 407 S. Maple Street, Trinidad, CO 81082 (five minutes from I-25)

**WHO:** All interested! We have plenty of room in the Temple's beautiful 200-person sanctuary.

**COST:**

- Entire weekend: \$130 (save \$50)
- Friday and Sunday: \$54 each day
- Just Saturday: \$72

*Tickets are required for all events other than the marker dedication ceremony.*

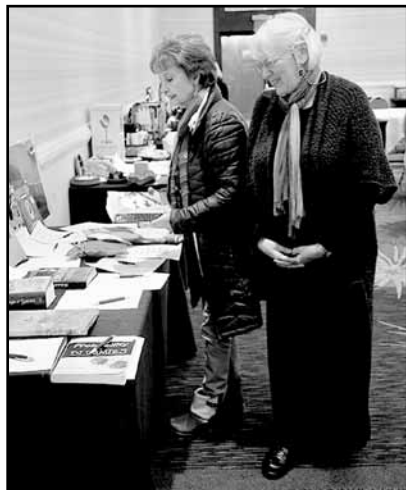
**WHY:** We have much to celebrate! There is renewed energy and momentum to save this magnificent synagogue, which is so important to the Jewish history of our region. Over \$75,000 has been raised in the last 18 months, but much work remains to be done.

Register for a day, two days, or the full weekend at [templeaaron.org](http://templeaaron.org).

*La Quinta Inn in Trinidad offers discounted rates for those attending Temple Aaron events.*

Questions? Call 303.905.2161 or email [info@templeaaron.org](mailto:info@templeaaron.org)

## 2018 Fall Conference Highlights in Photos



*Susan Michelson and Gila Yaniv  
Perusing the Silent Auction*



*Betty Harvie, Conference Co-Chair*



*Rebecca Rossen- Keynote*



*Harvey Buchalter*



*Dorothy Amsden*



*Marcia Torobin*

## “Nooks and Crannies in New York City”

A slide show presented by Justin Ferate  
February 28, Temple Beth Shalom, Santa Fe



*Justin Ferate, Presenter*



*Justin Ferate*



*Members Enjoying the program reception  
with knishes and babka!*

# Legacy

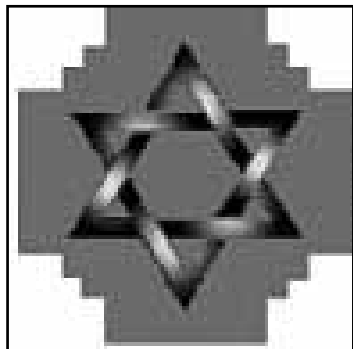
NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW MEXICO JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

New Mexico Jewish Historical Society  
5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE, Suite B  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

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## Membership in NMJHS

For information contact the NMJHS office at 505-348-4471 or [admin@nmjhs.org](mailto:admin@nmjhs.org) to request a membership brochure. Alternatively, you can download a membership application from the NMJHS website, [www.NMJHS.org](http://www.NMJHS.org)



## Calendar of NMJHS Upcoming Events

Check for future events at [www.nmjhs.org](http://www.nmjhs.org)

**May 18:** *Challah Rising in the Desert: The Jews of New Mexico*, film and discussion. National Hispanic Cultural Center, 1701 4th St. SW, Albuquerque, 7 p.m.

**May 19:** "The German Kulturbund" (Jewish Cultural Association). Steven Ovitsky. Jewish Community Center Auditorium, 5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, 2 p.m.

**June 2:** Annual Business Meeting and Program. Speaker: Norma Libman: "The Story of What I Wrote and Why." Temple Beth Shalom. 205 E. Barcelona Rd., Santa Fe, 1 p.m.

**June 8:** "Movers and Shakers in New Mexico History: Colonial Era to Statehood" co-sponsored by NMJHS and the Historical Society of New Mexico, Jewish Community Center Auditorium, 5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, 1:00 p.m.

**June 21 - 23:** 130th Birthday Party, Temple Aaron  
407 South Maple St. Trinidad, Colorado.

**Nov. 8 - 10:** 2019 NMJHS Fall Conference  
"Jewish Life in Taos and Northern New Mexico: Past, Present and Future"  
Sage Brush Inn, Taos, New Mexico.