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"Legacies of the Jewish Communities of the Southern Southwest & Celebrating 30 Years of The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society"

Henry Lesinsky  
Las Cruces, 1882

Eva Goldschmidt  
Jewish Museum of Tucson

www.geni.com

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society Fall Conference  
November 14-15, 2015

The New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum  
Las Cruces, New Mexico

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society is a beneficiary agency of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 14

CONFERENCE PROGRAM:
9:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Conference Registration
Silent Auction Bidding/Raffle Ticket Sales/Book Fair Open

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. - Museum Tour
11:30 a.m.: Luncheon Buffet

12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. Conference Welcome Remarks:
Paula Amar Schwartz, President, NMJHS
Dr. Dan Howard, Provost, New Mexico State University
Mark Santiago, Director, The New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum
Susan Krueger, President, Dona Ana County Historical Society

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Rick Hendricks, N.M. State Historian
"Go West Young Man: Jewish Migration to the Southwest in the Nineteenth Century"
Introduced By: Dr. Richard Melzer
Sponsored by: Hal and Judy Abroms; Sandra and David Dietz; and Halley Faust in honor of Ron Duncan Hart and Gloria Abella-Belen; Dorothy Amsden, LANL/RSVP

1:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. “A Sense of History and the Jews of New Mexico”
Dr. Henry J. Tobias, Professor Emeritus, University of Oklahoma
Introduced By: Dr. Noel Pugach
Sponsored by: David Gorlick in memory of his loving wife, Beverly Jane, and in honor of his daughter and four grandchildren

1:45 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. “Crypto Jews of the Southern Southwest”
Rabbi Stephen Leon, Congregation B’nai Zion, El Paso, TX.
Introduced By: Susan Michelson
Sponsored by: Linda and Ed Goff, in honor of Stan & Helen Hordes

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. BREAK

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. “Fractured Faiths: Spanish Judaism, the Inquisition, and New World Identities”
Dr. Ron Duncan Hart, Publisher, Gaon Books, Santa Fe, N.M.
Introduced By: Dr. Linda Goff
Sponsored by: Marjorie Weinberg-Berman, in honor of Stanley Hordes and Family

3:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. “Legacies of the Jewish Communities of the Southwest”
Debra Winegarten, Past President, Texas Jewish Historical Society
Emily Bois, Albuquerque, N.M.
Dawn Santiago, The New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum
Moderator: Dr. Noel Pugach
Sponsored by: The Gaon Institute of Tolerance Studies & 2015 Yom Limmud Committee
4:45 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. “NMJHS: Celebrating 30 Years. A Retrospective Panel: An Interview”
Dorothy Amsden, Lance Bell, Dr. Noel Pugach, and Naomi Sandweiss
Interviewer: Harvey Buchalter
Sponsored by: Lance and Julia Bell in honor of Irving and Marilyn Bell

6:45 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Cocktail Hour/Silent Auction/Book Fair

7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Buffet Dinner

Dinner Speaker: Dr. Jon Hunner, Department of History, New Mexico State University
“A Path Not Taken: J. Robert Oppenheimer”
Introduced By: Dr. Noel Pugach
Keynote Speaker Sponsored by: Dona Ana County Historical Society

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 15
CONFERENCE PROGRAM

7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Silent Auction Bidding/Book Fair/White Elephant Sales Open

8:00 a.m. Bagel Brunch is co-sponsored by Carla Freeman and NMJHS

8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.: Bagel Brunch Speaker: Dr. Jeffrey Brown, Department of History, NMSU “Las Cruces’ Jewish Community in a National Context”
Introduced By: Susan Michelson
Sponsored by: Susan Michelson & Bill Stein in honor of Bea Klein

9:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.: Panel: “A Spotlight on the Las Cruces Area Jewish Communities Panel” Rabbi Larry Karol, Frances Williams, Jeff Diamond, Debra Wechter Friedman, Lillian ‘Sis’ Druxman, Sandra and Sherman Levenson
Moderated By: Dr. Jeffrey Brown
Sponsored by: “Challah Rising in the Desert”: A Film Project About Jewish New Mexico

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. BREAK
11:00 a.m. – 12:30 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS I & II

CONCURRENT SESSION I: 30 minutes each
Ventana Room: I
Session Chair: Dr. Richard Melzer
Sponsored By: Janet Saiers

a. Dr. Gus L. Seligmann- , "The Triumph of Ethnicity Over Religion: The Rohman/May/Seligmann Family in 19th Century Southern New Mexico"

b. Dr. Richard Melzer- "Symbol of Peace or Hate?: New Mexico State's Swastika Yearbook, 1907 – 1983"

c. Dawn Moore Santiago- "In the Midst of History: The Jacobs Family's Impact on Southwestern Communities"

CONCURRENT SESSION II: 45 minutes each
Ventana Room: II
Session Chair: David Beer, President, Texas Jewish Historical Society
Sponsored by: The Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival

a. Dr. Ann Ramenofsky- "Family, Mining, and Place: The Copper Mountain Mining District, 1870 – 1885"

b. Jan Siegel Hart- "From Russia to West Texas"

12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. "Writing the Next 30 Years of New Mexico Jewish History: Where do We go from Here?"
Drs. Noel Pugach, Richard Melzer, and Dianne Layden
Moderator: Harvey Buchalter
Sponsored by: The Jewish Community Council of Northern New Mexico

Goldschmidt Sisters
Jewish Museum of Tucson

Eugene Stern's Store, Las Cruces, 1920s
Jewish Museum of the American West
OPTIONAL POST CONFERENCE TOURS:

1. J. Paul Taylor House:
J. Paul Taylor was a teacher, principal, and associate superintendent in the Las Cruces Public School system for over three decades. Post retirement, he served as District Representative in the NM legislature for 18 years. During his tenure he was known for his support of programs to help indigent and disabled New Mexicans, and as an advocate for arts and culture. Mr. Taylor has been called “the conscience of the New Mexico legislature.” For many years, J. Paul Taylor has taken people through his beloved home in Old Mesilla, explaining the home’s architecture, contents, and history.

2. La Mesilla Walking Tour
The tour of Old Mesilla will be offered after on Sunday afternoon by Preciliana Sandoval, a seventh generation Mesilla Valley native. She proudly shares her colorful hometown history on tours of Historic Mesilla during which visitors hear romantic ghost stories, find out what Billy the Kid’s last words were, see where Mesilla’s bloodiest battle happened, our food, our traditions, folklore, what pink flamingos love about New Mexico – the tour ends with a guaranteed scare!

SILENT AUCTION/RAFFLE TICKET/BOOK FAIR INFORMATION

This year’s Silent Auction features a variety of items for you to bid on to raise funds for NMJHS and future programs, activities, and general operation. Your continuing support is crucial to the well-being of NMJHS and our ability to serve our members and friends throughout the state and elsewhere.

Items for Silent Auction bidding include: gift certificates, art work, jewelry, books, NMJHS Gift memberships, and Judaica.

In addition, NMJHS is organizing a Book Fair offering not only its own publications, including Noel Pugach’s new pamphlet entitled, “Four Alsatian Families Shape Albuquerque” and NMJHS’ “The Jewish Legacy in New Mexico History” edited by Richard Melzer but also other New Mexico Jewish authors are displaying and selling their own works. Rio Grande Press and Gaon Books are also featuring their publications. Please be sure to stop by the Book Fair, browse, and buy a book for yourself or family member.
Early New Mexico Jewish Historical Society Pioneers: Written Notes and Anecdotal Stories

In 1979, a group of New Mexicans, Jews and non-Jews met at Temple Beth Shalom in Santa Fe to brainstorm about forming an organization focusing on New Mexico Jewish history. A. David Scholder, spearheaded the early meeting. Among those who attended included: Leah Kellogg, Peter Hess, Jim Mafchir, Rabbi Leonard Helman, Stan Hordes, Jerry Wertheim, Ralph Scheurer, Manuel “Manny” Rodriguez, Dr. Paul Kovnat, Walter Kahn, and Michelle Zackheim.

According to NMJHS’ “informal history” written by Bobbi Jackson, former part-time Administrator, the first organized event of the newly formed, official New Mexico Jewish Historical Society was held in August 1986 at St. John’s College. The organizers were unsure how many might show up, perhaps twenty-five or so at best! Much to everyone’s surprise and delight, approximately 250 attended! Who knew?!

From that time forward, these early NMJHS Society Pioneers and its elected leadership lovingly nurtured and grew the organization to what it is today. We remain a vibrant Society dedicated to researching, preserving, and writing New Mexico’s rich and diverse Jewish History. To our early Pioneer Founders, we thank you!!!
Honoring Past Recipients of the Dr. Allan and Leona Hurst Award:

Stan Hordes          Abraham Chanin
Walter Kahn           Lance Bell
Henry J. Tobias       Dorothy Corner Amsden
Melanie LaBorwit      Naomi Sandweiss
Claire Grossman       Sharon Niederman
Taos Jewish Center    Lisa Kaplan Witt
Leah Kellogg          Marian Silver
Rabbi Leonard Helman  Ron Duncan Hart
Noel Pugach           Betsy Nordhaus Messeca

2015 FALL CONFERENCE PRESENTERS:

Emily Bois- is a former History/Social Studies Teacher at Mayfield High School, Las Cruces, N.M.

Jeffrey Brown- is Associate Dean for Research in the College of Arts and Sciences and Associate Professor of History at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, N.M.

Harvey Buchalter- is a retired Albuquerque Public Schools teacher and former NMJHS Board member.

Jeff Diamond- is head Partner in The Jeff Diamond Law Firm with offices in Texas and New Mexico.

Lillian ‘Sis’ Druxman- was born in Douglas, Arizona in 1926 and moved to Las Cruces in 1929. Sis’s father, Sam Klein, became mayor of Las Cruces. Sis and her husband, Jay, were part of the founding group of Temple Beth El.

Debra Wechter Friedman- was born and raised in Las Cruces (1956) and enjoyed the first 18 years of her life being nurtured in the small Jewish community that her parents helped found and support.
Jan Siegel Hart- is active in the arts and has toured the U.S. presenting programs to children and adults. She also serves on the Board of the Texas Jewish Historical Society.

Ron Duncan Hart- is a cultural anthropologist and former university vice president and dean. He is a former NMJHS Board member and recipient of the Hurst award.

Rick Hendricks- serves as New Mexico State Historian at the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives.

Jon Hunner- is Professor of U.S. and Public History at NMSU and has researched and published extensively on J. Robert Oppenheimer.

Rabbi Larry Karol- has been spiritual leader at Temple Beth-El of Las Cruces, New Mexico since July of 2011. He was ordained at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati in 1981.

Dianne Layden- is a retired American Studies Professor, Writer, and Editor in Albuquerque, and serves on Boards of the NMJHS and the Albuquerque Historical Society. Dianne is currently Editor, The Legacy, NMJHS’ quarterly Newsletter.

Rabbi Stephen Leon- has served as Rabbi at Congregation B’naï Zion, El Paso, TX. since 1986.

Sandy Epstein Levenson- was born, raised, and educated in El Paso and moved to California after marrying her husband Sherman. They returned in 1991 and Sandy became a Las Cruces Middle School Science teacher.

Sherman Levenson- was born in El Paso and grew up on a farm in La Mesa, N.M. He retired in 2011 after a successful career in Dairy Production and Husbandry.

Richard Melzer- is Professor of History at UNM -Valencia and serves on the Boards of NMJHS and NMHS.

Noel H. Pugach- is Emeritus Professor in History at the University of New Mexico, and is Past President of NMJHS.

Ann Ramenofsky- is Professor Emerita, Department of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico.


Dawn Santiago- is an Editor, Publications Coordinator, Indexer, and former museum curator. She is on staff of The New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum.

Gus Seligmann- is Associate Professor of History at the University of North Texas, Denton, TX.

Henry J. Tobias- is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Oklahoma and published the seminal work, "The Jews of New Mexico" in 1990.
On behalf of the Board of Directors, we want to pay special thanks to the individuals and others who generously donated to the success of the 30th Year Anniversary NMJHS Birthday Celebration! We are grateful for your on-going support of NMJHS as we look forward to writing the next chapters of New Mexico Jewish History over the next thirty years!

**Benefactor: $500.00 +**
Dorothy Amsden  
Department of Jewish Studies  
Arizona State University  
Carla Freeman  
Los Alamos National Labs, Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Dorothy Amsden, Past President*

**Keynote Donors: $250.00+**
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**Conference Donors: to $249.00**
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"Challah Rising in the Desert: A Film Project about Jewish New Mexico"

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* Los Alamos Laboratory’s Vecinos Volunteer Program-neighbors helping neighbors
Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords removing the 100 year old time capsule from the cornerstone of the Jewish History Museum building on October 24, 2010

"A Jewish Heroine from the Southern Southwest"

SAVE THE DATE!!!!!

2016 Fall Conference
"Jewish Identities: Lost, Rediscovered, and Reclaimed"
November 12 & 13, 2016
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Leah, Haymon, Bernhard, Birdie and Paula Krupp
El Paso, TX.
Southwest Jewish Archive
University of Arizona