

continued from p. 3

González, Wertheim and Seligman. This is the first time in its eighteen-year history that the Society will be directed by such a broad representation of these pioneer families.

So, as I preside over the transition from old people to young, and from newly-arrived immigrants to old families, I must express my deep appreciation to the officers and Board members who have served so loyally during my two terms as President. I would like to particularly thank NMJHS Administrator Julie Gordon, who has worked so diligently and effectively during my tenure. I am pleased to report that Julie has taken over the bookkeeping duties, in addition to her administrative responsibilities. And to Past-President and long-time Board member Claire Grossman, what can I say? Claire has been THE driving force behind the success of the Society over the course of the past decade. Claire will be leaving us shortly to live closer to her children in New Hampshire. We will miss her very, very much.



Dr. Stan Hordes  
Photo by John Anderson

### Calendar of Upcoming Events:

- Annual Membership Meeting and Screening of *Adio Kerida*, featuring guest presentations by Dr. Ruth Behar and Stuart Ashman, June 13, 2004, Albuquerque
- Book and Art Sale, September 4 & 5, 2004, Wild Oats Community Room, Santa Fe
- Annual Conference, October 23 & 24 2004, Santa Fe.

The NMJHS is soliciting historical papers and photographs for inclusion in its archival collection at the New Mexico Records Center and Archives. For more information contact The NMJHS at (505) 348-4471 or nmjhs@jewishnewmexico.org.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society is: to promote greater understanding and knowledge of New Mexico's Jewish history. The Society's programs examine the state's Jewish heritage in all its diversity, and strive to present this heritage within a broad cultural context. The Society is a secular organization and solicits the membership and participation of all interested people, regardless of religious affiliation.

### Membership Dues

Membership fees are as follows:

- Renewal  New
- Individual \$35
- Family \$50
- Senior (55+) \$30
- Senior Couple \$40
- Fulltime Student \$20
- Business \$100
- Friend \$100 or more

- 2004  2005

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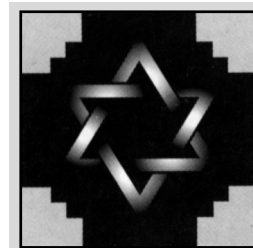
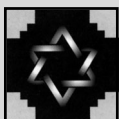
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New Mexico Jewish Historical Society



New Mexico

**Jewish Historical Society**

Volume 18, No. 2  
May 2004

# Newsletter

## Annual Membership Meeting to Feature Film, Speaker, on Jews of Cuba

by Stan Hordes



For its 2004 Annual Membership Meeting, the NMJHS will depart from its usual lecture-and-dinner format, and will present a fascinating film event examining the lives of Cuban Jews in the late twentieth century. The program will be held at the Madstone Theaters in Albuquerque on Sunday afternoon, June 13, and will feature the screening of *Adio Kerida* (Ladino for Goodbye, Dear Love), produced by University of Michigan anthropologist Ruth Behar. Dr. Behar will discuss the making of the film, focusing on her childhood years in Cuba, her experience in exile, and the process of reconciling the various components of her life as scholar, Ashkenazic-Sephardic Jew, American, and Cuban. Also participating in the discussion of the film will be Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, Stuart Ashman, who, like Dr. Behar, grew up in Cuba in the 1950s.

*Adio Kerida*, treats the phenomenon of Jewish survival among the Sephardic Cu-

ban community in the late twentieth century, both those who left into exile, as well as those who chose to stay behind after the Cuban Revolution of 1959. Born in Havana to a Sephardic father and Ashkenazic mother, Dr. Behar left Cuba as a young child in the early 1960s, and was raised in New York. After a long and distinguished career as an anthropologist, she decided to turn inward to examine the socio-cultural environment of her Cuban Jewish heritage, creating a penetrating, yet loving, film showing how each part of the community – those who left and those who stayed – adapted to their new and challenging environment.

During the course of her discussion, Dr. Behar will explain the context, process and motivation for the production of *Adio Kerida*. She will share with the emotional and methodological challenges she faced in dealing with cultural and family issues.

For more information on Dr. Behar and her film, please visit her website, [www.ruthbehar.com](http://www.ruthbehar.com).

The event will take place at the Madstone Theaters, 6311 San Mateo Blvd. NE, in Albuquerque. The program will run from 1:30 to 4:00 pm, beginning with the announcement of the Society's new officers and board members, and presentation of the Dr. Allan Hurst Award to Leah Kellogg. Following this brief segment, Dr.

Behar will introduce and show the film. After the screening, Dr. Behar and Secretary Ashman will offer comments and answer questions.

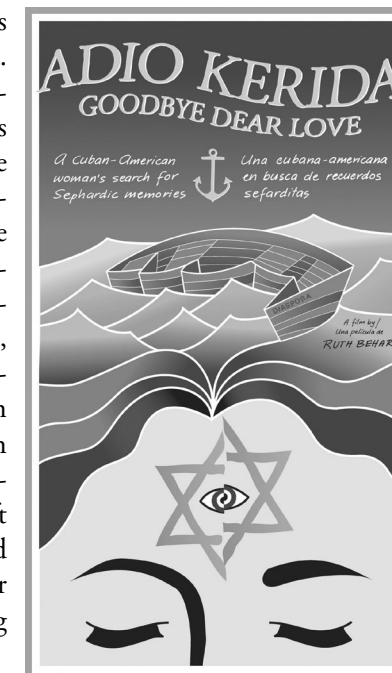
Tickets for the program are \$8.00 for NMJHS members, and \$10.00 for non-members, and can be reserved by contacting Julie Gordon, the Society's administrator in Albuquerque, at 505-348-4471, or via e-mail, [nmjhs@jewishnewmexico.org](mailto:nmjhs@jewishnewmexico.org). Please confirm your reservations with payment by June 11. Tickets will be available via will-call on June 13 and will not be mailed out prior to the event.

The NMJHS is grateful to the New Mexico Endowment for the Humanities, the Jewish Federation of Greater Albuquerque, and

Dr. Jean Rothenberg for their generosity in supporting this event.

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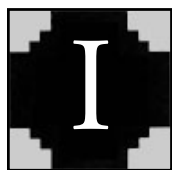
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## Introducing the Next NMJHS President: Lance Bell

By Lance Bell



I was born on May 9th, 1966 at St. Vincent's hospital in Santa Fe, New Mexico. At the time, the hospital was located in downtown Santa Fe on the corner of Palace and Paseo de Peralta. After attending and graduating from Santa Fe High School, I attended the University of New Mexico and graduated with a Bachelors of Business Administration degree in 1989.

I have always been interested in history and especially my family genealogy. My family came to NM in 1916. My grandfather Morris Bell and his brother Barney Bell traveled to NM from Trinidad and Denver, Colorado, on a covered wagon. My grandfather had shortened his name from Belitzer to Bell during this time. He eventually met and married my grandmother, Ethel Bell, in Denver, CO. They opened their first store in Espanola, NM, where my late father - their second son - Irving Aaron Bell, was born. Eventually my grandparents had about 9 stores throughout NM. The hub of what was later to be known as Bell's Department Stores was in Santa Fe, NM. My father and his family continued the business and operated Bell's in Santa Fe on San Francisco Street for 60 years in the same loca-

tion. Bell's was known as "Santa Fe's family store" as many generations of customers shopped there to purchase shoes, clothes, Levi's, wedding dresses, etc. - and even baptismal or holy communion outfits. My father passed away when I was 15 years old and Bell's closed when I was



Incoming NMJHS President Lance Bell and wife Julia

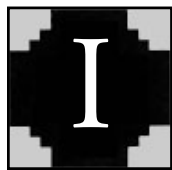
18 years old. I had always thought that I would one day work and run the business with my older brother Jon. After graduating from UNM and attending the Robert Anderson School of Management, I was not sure what I would do. My career path has taken me down the following road: I worked first for Nestle Foods, then Hershey Chocolate USA, Hershey Pasta Company, Johnson & Johnson's Ortho Biotech Division; and now I have found my new home working for the oldest and best biotech company in America,

Genentech. I am involved with a cancer therapeutic called Avastin that treats patients with metastatic colorectal cancer. My work is very rewarding, and I know that our message and our therapy helps people live longer lives.

I married my wonderful wife, Julia, in 1999. She and I reside in Santa Fe. My wife is a certified gemologist and a free lance writer for the *Santa Fe New Mexican*. We have one daughter who is 28 months old, named Jacqueline Ilana Bell. Her middle name is after my father Irving. My mom Marilyn lives in Santa Fe. She came to NM in 1960 from Birmingham, AL, and has lived here since. My brother Jon and his wife Sherry live in Albuquerque. My wife's parents, Michael & Rita Linder, and her grandmother, Ida Linder, live in Santa Fe. As you can see, we are all family-oriented and realize how blessed we are to be so close and see each other so often.

My interest in the NMJHS started by attending a meeting. I realized that the group had many intelligent people involved with some very interesting topics on the history of Jews in New Mexico. I have learned a lot and have met many wonderful people from the organization, and I hope that more people get involved and help out by joining and sharing ideas.

## Message From the Departing President



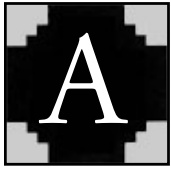
It is with a sense of gratification that I anticipate performing my last formal act as President of the NMJHS, when I hand over "The Aspirin" (the sole emolument of the office) to our incoming President, Lance Bell, at our Annual Membership Meeting on June 13.

I am pleased to report that the State of the Society is very good. Our financial house is in order (more or less - we can always use some more contributions), our membership has grown significantly over the past two years, our programming remains strong, and our Board is dedicated and hardworking.

I am most encouraged to be passing the torch to a new crop of officers who represent not only new faces, but also a new generation of leadership. And, though the faces are new, the families from which several of the officers and Board members emanate represent some of the oldest and most distinguished Jewish families in New Mexico - Bell, Terr,  
**continued on p. 6**

## Meet the Recipient of the 2004 Dr. Allan Hurst Award: Leah Kellogg

By Leah Kellogg



At birth we do not imagine what path our life will take. My family moved from a farm in Alberta, Canada, to urban areas ending up in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. My family felt that it was important that we all attend Cheder and learn Hebrew so that no matter which synagogue we went to in the world, we could daven and not just count windows. The organization Young Judaea attracted all the youngsters. Once a month we visited the Jewish families in our area to empty out their "blue boxes" and send the pennies and quarters to the Jewish National Fund to buy land in what was then Palestine. My degree work in Hospital Dietetics took me to the Hospital of the Good Samaritan in Los Angeles. For me as a Canadian, the second World War had begun in September of 1939, when Hitler's army of Nazis marched into Poland. In September of 1943 I enlisted in the American army as a citizen of an allied nation. My first assignment was in Santa Fe, NM at the site of the now College of Santa Fe. As I understand it, the Commanding General offered the non-sectarian chapel to the Jewish members of the post and they in turn offered the use of the chapel to the 30 families to worship with lay leader-

ship. In this way I was welcomed by the families into their homes. I was especially close with Ethel and Morris Bell. Perceiving my destiny to be an American citizen, I applied and received my citizenship in December of 1943. Before I was sent over seas to a tent hospital in a muddy cow pasture near St. Louis with the 189th hospital, I was semi-engaged to Gerald Bell. We were married December of 1946.

Santa Fe was a quiet village of 28,000 people. Understanding that we were a growing Jewish community needing to educate our children and provide a venue to worship and observe our holy days, Temple Beth Shalom was built. A couple of years after the death of Gerald Bell, I married Arden Kellogg. In 1970 Sam Pick nominated me to be president of the Board. Marian Silver and I alternated positions of president of Sisterhood and B'nai Brith auxiliary. I have saved every Temple bulletin and newsletter about Jewish causes since the 1960s.

One of my civic interests was being an early volunteer with the Rape Crisis Center, including writing their first grant with Federal law enforcement and organizing its Board, of which I was president. Dr. Allan Hurst arrived in Santa Fe with

a mission to found a New Mexico Jewish Historical Society. Under his leadership and inspiration and under that of those who followed, the NMJHS has flourished. With the sponsorship of the State Archives of NM, the Society has built a significant institution which reaches into every nook and cranny of New Mexico. In 1975 we finally chartered a chapter of Hadassah. In 1980 I was asked to become a member of the County Jail Advisory Board, where I was quickly asked to serve as president when the penitentiary went up in flames. The new jail was built on Airport Road. I was a member of the Synchronettes who performed once a year. I was a member of the Scarlet Ladies tap dancing group for about 20 years. When it became apparent that our growing Jewish community needed more space, a large committee at Temple Beth Shalom was appointed under Sam Ballen's leadership. The building was dedicated in September of 1986.

In 1991 I was recycled as president of Temple Beth Shalom for a two-year term. Santa Fe has been my home and my extended family system. We call it networking. I would urge all of my Jewish family in this beautiful state of New Mexico to continue to support our Jewish institutions of learning and knowledge.

# ANNOUNCING AVAILABLE ADVERTISING SPACE

**Interested in affordable advertising?  
Want to see your ad in the NMJHS Newsletter?**

**Listings in a business directory can be purchased on a per-issue or annual basis for a nominal fee, and we are accepting ads which occupy partial-page space.**

**Contact Julie Gordon for pricing and layout details - 505-348-4471.**

## Jewish Genealogy by Computer

by Steve Gitomer

**A**fter stamp collecting and coin collecting, it is said that genealogy is the third most popular American hobby. Seeking out your ancestors' names, relatives, personal stories, successes and failures, can be an absorbing pastime for family members of all ages. With the advent of the internet, doing genealogy research has come within the grasp of many of us who don't have access to, or interest in combing through musty libraries, or scanning reel upon reel of microfilm, in search of an elusive ancestor.



(left to right) are: Alyosha Zhitomirsky, his father Yuri Zhitomirsky, Steve Gitomer, and Yuri's brother Alexander (Sasha) Zhitomirsky, taken in Kiev, Ukraine in June 2003.

Many homes have at least one home computer. That plus a modem, or a high speed internet connection, widely available, plus a few mouse clicks can set you on a path to track down your ancestors' early days in the USA, information about their arrival to these shores from distant places, etc. You don't have a home computer? No problem. Lots of public libraries make limited internet access available to you free, or for a nominal cost.

So what are some of the more popular sources of information on the internet for doing Jewish Genealogy? For general sources and resources, try "Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites on the Internet" (web address is <http://www.cyndislist.com>). This site is full of all sorts of interesting genealogy sites covering most areas of use to beginning and seasoned genealogists. Under the heading of "Jewish" for example, there are over 600 sites. Our own Henry Tobias' book *History of the Jews of*

*New Mexico* is listed, for example, along with my personal favorite text on Jewish genealogy by Arthur Kurzweil, *From Generation to Generation*. Through Cyndi's List, you can find listings leading you to sources such as: the Social Security death index; where to write for vital records (birth, marriage, death certificates); what's

available from the LDS (Mormon) church; the US National Archives holdings; etc.

Another site I find useful is "JewishGen: The Home of Jewish Genealogy" (web address is <http://www.jewishgen.org>). This site gives you access to others researching ancestors with the same last names as yours (Jewish Family Finder), holocaust research, a wide variety of Jewish genealogical databases (some completed, some in progress), shtetl/region specific discussion groups, Jewish roots travel, etc. Check it out!

One of my favorite sources of family information, the passenger arrival record or "boat list," is now available over the internet. If any of your ancestors came into the US through Ellis Island, for example, log onto the Ellis Island database

(web address is <http://www.ellislandrecords.org>). If you can find your family members' arrival information, you can view the actual boat list on-line, and order a copy as well.

Not all my genealogy research is carried out on-line. One of the benefits of my work is that it takes me often to the former Soviet Union. During the first of my many trips, I visited my Gitomer grandfather's hometown of Lubny Ukraine. In 1895, the grandfather I knew as Harry Gitomer was born Hillel Zhitomirsky. On my first visit to Lubny, in 1992, I met Zhitomirskys still there nearly 100 years after my grandfather's birth! I periodically visit these "cousins". As the photo to the left shows, I am surrounded by three of the eight Lubny Zhitomirskys at a restaurant in Kiev in June 2003.

I hope this short article serves to encourage you to begin your search for your Jewish roots, or to continue it using the modern resource of the computer. Happy searching!

Steve Gitomer lives in Santa Fe with his wife Joyce. He is a physicist at Los Alamos where he has worked for over 30 years. He has done research on, written about, and presented lectures and workshops on the subject of genealogy since the bug bit him over twenty years ago.

## 2004 Montefiori Cemetery Cleanup

by Gunther & Geri Aron

**O**n Sunday, April 25, the volunteers at the Annual Montefiore Cemetery Cleanup worked under mostly sunny skies as they weeded and raked around the headstones of the old cemetery in Las Vegas, New Mexico. Temple Beth Shalom Youth Group Director, Deborah Weinberg gave the attending children the task of taking information from the headstones for a National Cemetery Registry, while others made gravestone rubbings.

Shortly before lunch, the unveiling of Marvin Taichert's headstone took

place. Lewis Terr, President of the Montefiore Cemetery Association, introduced Rabbi Marvin Schwab, of Temple Beth Shalom, who conducted the ceremony during which children removed the covering from the headstone, and friends were given the opportunity to remember Marvin. Marvin Taichert, who

died in 2003, was founder and first president of the Cemetery Association, and a descendent of an old Las Vegas mercantile family. Afterwards, the volunteers sat around on the grass enjoying a tasty box lunch provided by the Montefiore Cemetery Association. It is estimated that approximately 70 people attended, including children and dogs.



Photo by Nancy Terr



Rabbi Schwab conducting unveiling ceremony. Photo by Gunther and Geri Aron.



A volunteer picks up debris at the cleanup. Photo by Nancy Terr

## SAVE THE DATE

**The 2004 NMJHS Annual Conference will take place in Santa Fe over the weekend of October 23rd and 24th.**

**The Conference will have a "Hands-on History/Making History" theme and will feature speakers as well as hands-on genealogy and oral history recording workshops. On Sunday there will be a guided tour of the Jewish Pioneers of New Mexico exhibit at the Palace of the Governors which coincides with the last day of the exhibit.**

**This Conference promises to have something of interest for everyone...  
...So Mark Your Calendar.**