ANN ENRIQUEZ OF SAN ELIZARIO DISCUSSES HER FAMILY HISTORY WITH MEMBERS OF NMJHS

CALENDAR

JULY 14
NMJHS ARCHIVE RECEPTION – TO BE HELD AT THE NEW MEXICO STATE RECORDS CENTER AND ARCHIVES 404 MONTEZUMA, SANTA FE. 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM DISPLAY OF NMJHS ARCHIVAL MATERIAL. LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED.

SEPTEMBER 19
2:00 PM – MAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY (WASHINGTON AVE.) SUZAN CAMPBELL, NMJHS ARCHIVIST, WILL PRESENT A SLIDE LECTURE ON "IMMIGRANT JEWISH HISTORY IN NEW MEXICO, 1840-1930.

OCTOBER
DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED – SEMI-ANNUAL LAS VEGAS CEMETERY CLEAN UP. FOR DETAILS, CALL ELLEN ZIESELMAN AT 471-3033.

NOV. 12-13-14
SIXTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE NMJHS. THE THEME WILL BE "JEWISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO". TO BE HELD AT LA POSADA IN ALBUQUERQUE.

DECEMBER
DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED. FEL ROSE ESQ. WILL CONDUCT AN ESTATE PLANNING WORKSHOP.
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As I sit before my Macintosh to write my first letter as president of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society, I am reminded of the last words of Pancho Villa: "Don't let it end like this. Tell them I said something."

The something I'd like to tell you is this: Those who attended the Memorial Day weekend field trip to El Paso, so ably organized and navigated by Stan Hordes, heard some intriguing tales about Pancho Villa's dealings with the early Jewish merchants of El Paso. We were treated to two wonderful dinner gatherings -- in the gracious home of Ann Goodman, a descendent of those pioneers; and in the 300-year-old lovingly restored hacienda of Anna Enríquez and her husband, El Paso artist Gaspar Enríquez. A visit to Juarez, a tour of the missions established after the 1680 Pueblo Revolt, presentations on the old Ashkenazi and Sephardic families of El Paso and welcoming encounters with members of the El Paso community made this a delightful and memorable journey. Many thanks to all who participated.

And just around the corner is the Annual Archives Reception, held at the State Records Center and Archives in Santa Fe, starting at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, July 14. This event, lovingly produced by Suzan Campbell, provides a stimulating focal point for the NMJHS's work in collecting and preserving the wealth of Jewish history here.

Ralph Thaler, our devoted treasurer and membership committee head, tells us the organization now has 328 members. As we head into the summer and toward fall, our lively board will be hard at work organizing and producing our Sixth Annual Conference, to be held on the theme of Jewish contributions to the arts in New Mexico the weekend of November 12-14 at La Posada in downtown Albuquerque.

Sincerely,

Sharon Niederman, President
CONFERENCE REPORT

This year's annual conference will feature contributions to the arts by New Mexico Jews and by artists who incorporate Jewish themes in their work. While offering brand new research leading to an historical perspective, the conference will be a recognition and celebration of artists who are Jewish who have lived and worked in New Mexico in all manner of styles and media, have been influenced by the landscape and culture, and in turn, have influenced this center of arts. In addition, there will be artists who, while not Jewish, have chosen to work with traditional Jewish themes.

The conference will be held November 12-14 at La Posada in downtown Albuquerque. While it is impossible to cover all aspects of artistic endeavor in a single weekend, early conference planning finds us including performance, slide-lectures on visual arts and fine crafts delivered by the artists, poetry readings, puppetry, dance and folk music. We will have a crafts exhibit on the mezzanine, as well as book-signings. Svirka, the Balkan Women's Chorus, is preparing a special concert of Yiddish, Ladino and Russian folk tunes for the event. Many well-known and highly respected artists and writers will be participating.

This conference will pose many questions: how has ethnic identity affected the work of particular artists? What is commonly shared in the heritage of New Mexico's artists? What is learned or appropriated? How have Jewish artists, with their particular ethnic heritage, both influenced and been influenced by Hispanic, Native American and other cultures with whom they have lived side by side? How can we begin to place Jewish contributions to the cultural life here on New Mexico's multicultural agenda?

Please stay tuned right here for further announcements of the specific conference schedule and registration deadlines. This promises to be an event you won't want to miss.

If you are an artist or craftperson interested in the tabletop exhibition space, please write the NMJHS at the return address of this newsletter.
FROM THE ARCHIVES:

The following excerpts are from "In Santa Fe, The City Different: Old Jewish Settlers and New," by Albert Rosenfeld, first published in the May 1954 issue of Commentary. We hope that Nahum Ward, Santa Fe's new Rabbi, will enjoy this article, which was written the year Temple Beth Shalom was built.

Jewish families have trickled into the ancient City of Holy Faith, particularly during the last two decades. This year, with the dedication of a new temple and community center on old Barcelona Road—a small building simply designed in Southwestern Territorial style by famed architect John Gaw Meem—Santa Fe will have officially acquired a Jewish community for the first time in its long history.

Even though there is only the one small structure for Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, and only one combined service for all, there has been a remarkable lack of family squabbling. The unity of effort has been largely due to the patiently persistent fence-mending of Marcel Pick, who has been not only one of the principal cohesive forces in the Santa Fe Jewish community, but also its nagging conscience. This small, bald gentleman with the quietly intense personality is not content merely with needling the local B'nai B'rith chapter to sponsor a Boy Scout troop or gently chiding his errant brethren for deserting the faith. On a broader scale, he works hard at human relations, making people ashamed of their indifference to the sufferings of others.

Once, during a discussion of a pending FEPC bill, Governor Thomas J. Mabry asked privately, "Marcel, why are you working so hard on this? There is no discrimination whatsoever against Jews here—you know that. It is the Spanish-Americans and Negroes who are involved."

Marcel—who had been pushed off Berlin sidewalks by storm-troopers, and whose relatives had disappeared forever into Nazi concentration camps—replied, "We, who know what it is to be discriminated against, cannot remain silent. If we make no protest when others get kicked in the face, then we have no right to protest when we get kicked."

* * *

Always completely accepted as full-fledged members of the community at large, Santa Fe's Jews have never before felt the need to form a specific Jewish community. Most of the town's Jews have more Gentile friends than Jewish, possess only the vaguest sort of Jewish consciousness, and are largely uninterested in Jewish affairs as such. The founding fathers of the new temple hope to change all this. But they have been faced with peculiar difficulties, even in organizing the temple. How many Jews, for example, are prospective members—fifty, a hundred, three hundred? No one is sure. For how can you tell, in Santa Fe, who is a Jew? . . . Wherever Jews have found themselves so unreservedly accepted, as under ancient Hellenistic civilization, a certain number of them have disappeared into the surrounding population. . . . "The Jewish community of Santa Fe," a wag once said, "is composed largely of Gentiles." This is only a slight exaggeration. The "typical Jewish merchant" in the clothing store turns out to be a staunch Catholic or a Christian Scientist. The blue-eyed, blond-haired
lady is not only extremely active in Hadassah, you discover, but also an officer in the B’nai B’rith ladies’ auxiliary. Of the two Rosen-thals in the telephone directory, only one turns out to be Jewish. Your mail carrier, whom you assumed to be Spanish, confides one day, “I, too, am a yehudah.” His father was Jewish, his mother an Indian converted to Catholicism. Here it is difficult indeed to distinguish between the descendants of Shem and those of Japhet. . . . Once, in the home of a woman I would not have guessed to be Jewish, she motioned to the adobe wall containing a lovely santo whose missing halo left a space on top of his head. “This,” said the lady fondly, “is Saint Loch-in-kop.”

The City Different, indeed.

When my son was born in Santa Fe two years ago, I made a last-minute decision to have the circumcision done according to ritual. As something of a backslider from my Philadelphia boyhood Orthodoxy, I didn’t know quite how to proceed. Santa Fe had no temple, no rabbi, no mohel. . . . I was faced primarily with the problem of getting together a minyan on short notice in a town where I wasn’t sure I knew ten adult Jewish males. “You might find ten Jews in Santa Fe,” Hilliard Crown told me, “but you won’t find ten Jews with hats!”

The next morning. . . . a group gathered on the third floor of St. Vincent’s Hospital. Edna Kasle had brought a bottle of wine, and Ruth Young had baked a batch of cookies. At that hour of the morning a good number of our prospects were unable to get off work with so little advance notice; so our minyan—including David Young, who is still several years this side of Bar Mitzvah age—consisted of nine Jewish males. But in Santa Fe, who counts?

* * *

All this does not mean that the Jews of Santa Fe take their Judaism lightly. The handful of faithful who built the temple hope to see a resurgence of interest in all phases of Jewish activity, not that there is a temple. One of the temple’s founders . . . was worried about his children. “They were beginning to want to go to Mass and Sunday services with the neighbor kids. I want them to know what they are, and not be ashamed of it.”

* * *

Like the lonely priestless community in the French movie God Needs Men, Santa Fe, seven thousand feet up in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of New Mexico, is without a rabbi. Barney Petchesky, a transplanted New Yorker who runs a department store in the Plaza, has volunteered to fill the gap temporarily. . . . His homespun sermons do not vie with those of the late Rabbi Stephen Wise in eloquence, nor would his pleasant baritone give Cantor David Kusevitsky any cause to worry about the competition. But “Reb” Petchesky performs, with sincerity and good cheer, an adequate Sabbath service for which the faithful are grateful. No one is afraid that he, like Nadab and Abihu, might be consumed by flames for failing to dot a few i’s and cross a few t’s of the ritual. Everyone is pleased that here at last is a physical gathering place to give the Jewish community an identity of its own.

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EL PASO FIELD TRIP HIGHLIGHTS ASHKENAZI AND SEPHARDIC HERITAGE

by

Stan Hordes

On May 28–30, about thirty NMJHS members were treated to an enlightening and moving weekend during the Fourth Annual Memorial Day Weekend Field Trip to El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. Hosted by local members of the El Paso community, participants enjoyed a wide spectrum of activities, ranging from lavish dinners, to walking and driving tours of historic sites, to exploring the markets of Juarez, to inspirational presentations relating to the Ashkenazi and Sephardic experiences in the El Paso area.

Our hosts, El Pasoans who are in the process of reviving the El Paso Jewish Historical Society, spared no effort in extending to us gracious hospitality. Upon our arrival at the hotel on Friday afternoon, Ann Goodman and her family provided us with beautiful gift packages, consisting of mini-challahs, bottles of wine, mints, and small bottles of "Sweet Fire" chile. That same evening, Ms. Goodman, who had worked closely with the late scholar of Jewish history, Rabbi Floyd Fierman, entertained us with a sumptuous dinner at her home.

Saturday’s activities included a discussion with Ruth and Mayer Erlich, who regaled the participants with stories of Jewish El Paso in the early 1900s, and led us on a brief walking tour of sites of significance to Jewish settlement in the downtown area. Following a shopping excursion to Ciudad Juárez, the group proceeded in a caravan on a tour of the churches of Ysleta del Sur and Socorro del Sur, Indian communities established just downriver from El Paso by New Mexico Pueblo Indians fleeing from the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. The tour terminated at the small community of San Elizario, a Spanish settlement dating from the mid-1600s, where we were met by Anna Enríquez, descendant of the original settlers of the town. Anna lives in the original adobe residence built by her ancestors over three hundred years ago, and there we were treated to a wonderful dinner and tour of the Enríquez home. But Anna opened up far more than her home. During the course of the evening she took the opportunity to share with us the Jewish heritage of her family, explaining how she had known of her roots since childhood, and describing how her grandmother blessed the Shabbat candles on Friday nights at the family’s dining room table.

At breakfast on Sunday, Ann Goodman gave us an overview of El Paso Jewish history, followed by an extremely moving personal tribute by Shirileen Askenazi to her Sephardic grandmother, who had migrated from Aleppo, Syria, to El Paso in the early part of the century. In relating how this remarkable woman made the very difficult transition from Middle Eastern to Southwestern culture, Shirileen (who bakes Baklava professionally) did such an effective job that by the end of her talk, all of us had fallen in love with her grandmother.

Special thanks must go to Nardo Goodman for a superb job in handling all of the local arrangements for us, to his wonderful family, and to Ann Goodman and her family for putting themselves out on our behalf.

All who participated in the weekend experience left El Paso feeling a hunger for more. And more they will get when the Texas Jewish Historical Society meets in El Paso April 8–10, 1994! Check upcoming NMJHS Newsletters for further details.
SANTA FE WELCOMES NEW RABBI

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society joins the Santa Fe community in welcoming Rabbi Nahum Ward, who will assume the pulpit at Temple Beth Shalom in mid-August. Rabbi Ward, who holds the degree of Master of Arts in Hebrew Literature from Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles, was ordained in 1981. His most recent pulpit was at Congregation Shir Hadash in Los Gatos, California.

We understand that the Rabbi is particularly interested in the phenomenon of crypto-Judaism, so he and members of the Society will have a great deal in common.

Rabbi Ward and his wife, Shelly, who is a health educator, are looking forward to becoming a part of our community.

WELCOME!

NMJHS ARCHIVES ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE TO HE HELD JULY 14

The annual NMJHS Archives open house will be on July 14 at the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, located at 404 Montezuma Street in Santa Fe, where the NMJHS archives are housed. The open house, from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM will feature light refreshments and an exhibition of recent acquisitions in the NMJHS archives. For more information about the open house, please call NMJHS archivist Suzan Campbell at 983-9516.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF INTEREST:

Anyone who is a descendant of Dutch Jewry and wishes to receive data about birth, death or marriage of his/her ancestors may contact R. S. Cortissos at Kanteel 104, 1083DC Amsterdam, The Netherlands. He is the president of the Dutch Genealogical Society, and he has written to the NMJHS to indicate his availability for a small fee calculated in terms of time expended.

If you know of Holocaust survivors who would like to participate in a program about this topic, please contact the Society.

Copies of the report to the New Mexico Endowment for the Humanities on our 1992 Conference are available at $10 each. Contact the NMJHS. Videotapes of the conference (a total of 6 tapes) are available at $15 each. Contact Marjorie Hiestand, Rt.9, Box 67H, Santa Fe, NM 87505.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New
Renewal

NAME

ADDRESS

Phone(day) (evening)

AMOUNT PAID:  Regular  $20.00  Supporting  $50.00
Sustaining  $100.00  Patron  $250.00
Other  $  

IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRING?

To see if you are one of those whose membership has expired or is about to expire, check the date which appears on the bottom of your address label. If the date is 7/93 or earlier, please renew your membership NOW. Fill out the above Renewal Form and return it to the Society with your check payable to NMJHS. In that way, you will continue to participate in the exciting and challenging work which the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society is doing.

THE NEW MEXICO JEWISH
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