



A Trip of a Lifetime

by Helen Seligmann Hordes

I had been planning a trip to Germany, and my friends asked me what was I going to be doing there. I get goosebumps just thinking about it. How do I describe the reason and meaning of this trip?

My mother, aunt and grandparents fled Ronnenberg, a small town near Hannover, in the late 1930s, during the Holocaust. This family of Seligmanns has deep roots in Ronnenberg, going back to the late eighteenth century, when my fourth great-grandfather lived there.

This trip to Germany was organized by the town and people of Ronnenberg, to honor and commemorate the Jewish families who died in the Holocaust or were forced to leave. In particular, they are installing a small museum about the Jews of Ronnenberg in the home in which my mother grew up. Being able to be part of this has moved me in a profound way.

As interesting as this occasion is, the story of my family's escape is also remarkable. After Kristallnacht, in November 1938, they knew they had to leave. My grandfather, Siegfried Seligmann, had been arrested and was released on the condition that he leave Germany as soon as possible. At that time, they were still allowing Jews to leave the country.

My grandparents and aunt ended up on the ill-fated ship, the *St Louis*.



Siegfried Seligmann

They had what they thought were valid visas to Cuba, only to be told when they got there that the visas were fake and they were not allowed to disembark. I can only imagine the dread and fear they felt. Eventually, they were sent back to Europe, not to Germany, but to Belgium. They thought they were safe, but then Germany invaded Belgium. So, then they fled to France, and, after Germany invaded, they were put in detainment camps there. Alma my grandmother, and aunt Ursula were sent to Gurs and my grandfather to St Ciprien. After about a year and a half of unimaginable living conditions, they were finally allowed to come to America, as they had been sponsored by one of their relatives. Somehow the Red Cross was able to find my grandfather before they left, and the family was reunited. Aunt Ursula tells me that she would not believe they were safe until she actually put her feet on the soil of the United States.

My mother, Else Seligmann, did not go with her parents, as she was the eldest sibling and the family had just received sponsorship for one person. So, she stayed behind in Germany with a relative while her parents and sister went ahead. Fortunately, she was able to leave after a few months, and no seri-

ous harm came to her. She had been able to get on a ship directly to the United States and was fortunate to escape the trauma of the camps.



Helen Seligmann Hordes

So now I'm on my way to Germany. After three changes of flights, my husband and I were greeted in Hannover by a lovely couple, Peter and



Else and Ursula Seligmann

Christiane Hertel. They have spent the last several decades researching the history of the Jews in Ronnenberg (mostly my family), and have written a book on the subject. Peter was responsible for spearheading this event and making all the arrangements. I owe him a deep debt of gratitude. I had met him in Germany three years ago and have a deep affection for him.

Peter and Christiane, along with the City of Ronnenberg, arranged to have all the guests picked up at the airport at various times of the day, and made sure we

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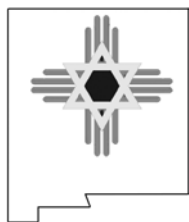
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President's Column



reetings from Santa Fe, and on behalf of NMJHS we hope you are beginning to enjoy some summer holidays, either close by or away from home. As all of our New Mexico members are aware, this was a terrible spring for devastating wildfires that destroyed people's land, property, and livelihoods, not to mention forests and wildlife. When I read about the number of acres affected, I have a hard time visualizing how big an area they encompass. New Mexico has always been known for its outdoor recreation opportunities and resources, which also have been severely compromised.

For those of you who were not able to attend our annual business meeting, either in person or via Zoom, we were able to report a successful 2021. Programming included our Fall Conference in collaboration with the Texas Jewish Historical Society, and we showed strong membership numbers and a good Year 4 of the Life & Legacy Endowment fundraising campaign. We thank our donors, who have given generously either for current or after-life gifts. Our first-ever Endowment Fund ensures that the stories of



Sharing Your Family History

NMJHS continues to collect New Mexico Jewish family histories through oral interviews to share with the public and preserve in the New Mexico State Archives.

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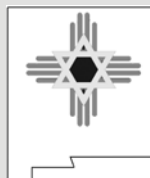
New Mexico Jewish history remain for future generations. If you are interested in learning more about our efforts, please contact me or the NMJHS office. It's never too late to participate!



NMJHS President
Linda Goff

With a little luck, we hope to hold a hybrid Fall Conference in person and via Zoom, this year in Santa Fe. The dates are October 29 and 30, and this year's theme is: "History ... and a Story to Tell: Cultural and Social Reflections of Jewish Life in New Mexico." Conference information and registration will be mailed or available on our website September 1 or shortly thereafter. The program features a wide variety of speakers and topics, plus the opportunity to reconnect with people, a silent auction, and raffle. This is our annual signature event, so please mark your calendars. Look for more preliminary information on our website in the near future.

We wish everyone a safe, happy, and healthy summer!✧



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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.

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A Trip of a Lifetime (continued from p. 1)

were comfortably situated in our hotel in Ronnenberg. We were their guests for the next four days. They wined and dined us and had many activities planned for us.

Peter had invited all known descendants of the Seligmann family. Among these were relatives I never knew I had, who now live in England and Israel. It turned out that they are related through my great-great-great-grandfather's first wife. (I descend from his second wife). So, it was quite amazing to return to my ancestral land to meet these cousins. Also in attendance were cousins that I had first met in Germany in 1998, who live in Chicago, Tucson, and St. Louis, as well as my daughter Shira and a close friend of hers. We have vowed to reunite in the United States sometime in the near future, instead of only being together in Germany!

I was awash with anticipation about seeing my family's prior home. I had been back to it two previous times, but this time was exceptional. They had invited the descendants back for the opening of a small museum in my grandparents' house. Walking into their home (today used as the city's registrar), one first sees photographs of my grandparents, mother, and aunt, taken around 1930. A wave of emotion came over me as I walked through the hallway, where I imagined my mother had run as a child. I felt so profoundly sad. To think that this small town was my heritage, and my upbringing and life would have certainly been different. Other photos were mounted on the walls, showing the family in their daily lives.

Also on display were various items that had been donated by family members.



Helen's grandmother Alma Seligmann

I had contributed two figurines and a place setting of my grandmother's silver.

Another relative donated his grandfather's tallit. Also on display were letters that had been written between family members, a typewriter used to write to the U.S. State Department, as well as other items.

My grandfather was a kosher butcher, but he was also able to sell the non-kosher cuts to the non-Jews. The

family had a wonderful life in Ronnenberg and were leaders in the Jewish community. They had a room in the house that was used for High Holiday services, and they were able to borrow a Torah from the synagogue in Hannover. My mother went to a boarding school in Florence for two years, which she loved, until things became too difficult for the Jews.

Ronnenberg had planned other events for all 16 of us. We saw the nine houses



Headstone of Helen's great-grandparents Henriette and Simon Seligmann

remaining that had belonged to Jewish families. We went to the Jewish cemetery where the headstone of my great-grandparents still remains. They took us to a memorial park commemorating the Jews of Ronnenberg. A monument is installed there; one side has the names of those who died in the Holocaust, and the other side has the names of those who were forced to leave. Again, seeing these memorials, I couldn't help but feel overwhelmed with both anger and sadness.

Another event the town organized was a visit to a local high school where about



Helen and daughter Shira in front of Grandparent's house

75 students of diverse backgrounds were gathered in the school auditorium. The Holocaust is a part of their education, and they are taught about prejudices and discrimination as well as tolerance and

human rights. We were invited to talk to these students about our experiences. They were also interested in how we practice Judaism. As there were 16 of us, you can imagine that there were 16 different versions. After speaking with them for about an hour and a half, the students put on a play that showed the effects of prejudice and bullying. It was good to see that in Germany they do not hide their past. As a friend said, they "acknowledge that atrocities cannot be washed away, but lessons can be learned to help prevent future suffering and loss of life."

This was indeed a trip of a lifetime. I feel fortunate that the story of my family is being preserved and will not be forgotten in this small town in Germany.✧

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Sherman Levenson of La Mesa, New Mexico

by Harvey Buchalter



Research about the Jewish past of southern New Mexico has barely scratched the surface. Crypto-Jews and Pioneer Jews appear to be minor players in this vast area along the borderlands, stretching from El Paso to Las Cruces, and westward to Silver City. Eastern European and German Jews arrived in the south starting roughly in the 1920s. These families, important in the commercial, agricultural, and ranching history of the state, made a sizeable impact on their adopted communities. They include the Sterns, I.B. Goodman, the Lesinskys, the Wechters, the Freudenthals, J.B. Brown, and finally, the Bellmans. The Bellmans were partners in business with Moe and Fannie Levenson of La Mesa, New Mexico, whose son, Sherman (Sherm) Levenson, was born in El Paso in 1939. Sherm spent his formative years in this tiny spot on the map along Highway 28, between Las Cruces and El Paso, definitely not a Jewish lad's typical boyhood.



Sherman Levenson

Sherm “grew up in a family of merchants.” His uncles were merchants in El Paso, and his mother worked for an old El Paso family, the Krupps, “a very religious Jewish family,” according to Sherm’s wife, Sandy.

Moe and his brother, Max, became partners in the Bellman Mercantile in La Mesa, an enterprise whose founding went back to the turn of the century. Along the Rio Grande Valley—always subjected to the whims of Nature—Moe and Fannie Levenson also had a farm and ranch operation of 1,000 acres, in which know-how was gained “in the school of hard knocks,” according to Sherm.

The farmland’s basic crop was pima and short-staple cotton. Chile was added later, as were pecans. Indeed, the Levensons were instrumental in pecan cultivation, because Moe Levenson



Harvey Buchalter

financed recent immigrant Bill Stahmann’s venture as a pioneer planter of nut-tree orchards in the Valley.

La Mesa was hardly a metropolis. Sherm relates, “There were only four or five Anglos in town – my parents, my sister and me.” His grandmother, who lived with them, added Yiddish to the linguistic stewpot. There were also three or four bars, a couple of churches, lots of dirt roads, and a one-room schoolhouse. Sherm says, “I was always deeply connected to the Hispanic people. They were my brothers-in-crime and in everything else.”

He grew up hunting, fishing, and riding. He was also a keen observer of the goings-on in the Bellman store, which contained “all kinds of merchandise, groceries, fresh meat, dry goods, ammunition, hay, grain, chicken feed, pig feed, cow feed.”

The store also extended credit to its long-term customers. This development was a necessary and long-accepted practice that stoked the economy of cash-poor, rural New Mexico. Merchants in every corner of the state, many of them Jewish, often doubled as bankers and guardians of legal papers. Loan collateral sometimes consisted of livestock, and the story of “a couple of donkeys” left in trust at the store is a fact. The Bellman store was also

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Meet the Trauers: A Merchant Family in Bohemia, Missouri, and New Mexico

by David L. Caffey



The story of European-born Jewish merchants who came to America and New Mexico to establish businesses and seek opportunity constitutes a celebrated aspect of the region's history. Relatively familiar to students of the territorial period, 1850 to 1912, are the Spiegelberg, Staab, and Ilfeld families, and other Jewish immigrants who hoped to attain prosperity in New Mexico, years before the arrival of any railroad.



Wool train in Albuquerque. (Source: Palace of the Governor's Archives)

More obscure but equally interesting are the stories of families that were less prominent, but whose members nonetheless witnessed and took part in significant events and contributed to the territory's development, and who helped to establish a Jewish presence in New Mexico. One such family is that of Aron and Katharina Trauer—Albert and Kate in their new home city of St. Louis, Missouri. With children in tow, they left their home in Dolni Lukavitz, Bohemia, to board the immigrant ship *Agnes* at Bremen, Germany, coming ashore in New York in September 1854. The family traveled on to St. Louis, and Albert resumed his familiar occupation, selling clothing and other dry goods. The family joined the B'nai El congregation, founded in the city in 1852.

Six children accompanied their parents from the old country, and two others

were born in St. Louis. The eldest, Moritz, was about ten years old when the family arrived in America. A few years later, he became Maurice. Other children also assumed new given names that perhaps were more "American" sounding. In descending order of age, the other children were Fanny; Leopold, who became Louis; Samuel; Janette, later called



David L. Caffey

Jane; and Simon, or Sigmund. The children born in America were Edward, in 1858 and Sally, in 1861. Two of the Trauer children died in their early teens: Jane in 1866, Edward in 1871.

The four surviving sons—Maurice, Louis, Samuel, and Sigmund—followed their father into the retail trade. Each appeared at one time or another in the St. Louis business directory, along with Albert, sometimes with a separate listing for "Trauer and Son." Each of the brothers eventually crossed the great plains to New Mexico in search of opportunity on the new frontier of American commerce and settlement.

To the Southwest Frontier

In the early years following the American Occupation in 1846 and New Mexico's attainment of territorial status in 1850, substantial business opportunity was found in contracting to supply military posts. Maurice Trauer was in New Mexico as early as 1862, soliciting at Fort Stan-

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Meet the Trauers (continued from p. 5)

ton and Fort Union, and perhaps other posts. At Fort Stanton, Maurice met Kit Carson and formed an impression of him as a leader who was always ready for an emergency, and who had earned a reputation for keeping promises. At Fort Union, he met with Capt. J. C. McFarran, who managed a large quartermaster operation. Maurice may have been representing his family's firm or the Spiegelbergs of Santa Fe, with whom the Trauers were acquainted. Maurice returned to St. Louis to continue in his father's business, but New Mexico had made an impression.

Next to take the Santa Fe Trail was Louis Trauer. In 1870, he was welcomed by members of the Spiegelberg family, who offered him work in their business and a bed in the household of Lehman Spiegelberg, whose boarders included Maurice and Ernie Wolf and Solomon and Nathan Bibo. Louis later worked in partnership with J. Francisco Chaves of Valencia County, political lion of New Mexico, who became a lifelong friend.

In 1871, Maurice headed to Santa Fe as chief clerk for the Spiegelbergs. Two years later, they supported him in moving north to open the Cimarron Trade Store. Soon Sam Trauer was in the territory, working at Isador Stern's store in Las Vegas. The fourth brother, Sigmund, came to Cimarron to develop a cigar factory. The Trauers arrived in time to be caught up in events of the "Colfax County War," an episode of exceptional hostility and violence.

The store at Cimarron proved to be the only enterprise in which the brothers would work together. Between 1873 and 1876, they experienced firsthand the violence for which the town was notorious. Maurice's store was twice commandeered by hellraisers on the run; another time, he was threatened with lynching in a dispute over ownership of a shipment of grain. The Trauers were at Cimarron when Franklin J. Tolby was assassinated in Cimarron Canyon. As the recently elected justice of the peace, Sam Trauer presided

over hearings on charges pending in the murder of Tolby and others concerning the related deaths of Cruz Vega and Francisco "Pancho" Griego. Having seen enough of Cimarron's violence, and understanding that more could be expected, the Trauers moved on early in 1876. Eventually they went their separate ways.

Sigmund Trauer, c. 1854-1899

Sigmund Trauer accompanied Maurice to Santa Fe, where they continued retail and cigar-making operations. In Santa Fe, Sigmund acquired a reputation for playing the French harp, or harmonica. He won \$50 in a musical match, but cigar making and harmonica playing did not provide an adequate living in New Mexico, which was still largely primitive and isolated, for want of a railroad. Sigmund returned to St. Louis, where he could enjoy a measure of security in his father's business. After New Mexico got its railroad, he returned in 1883, to try again to make a cigar factory pay, this time in Albuquerque. When the business failed to thrive, he returned to St. Louis permanently, practicing his trade as a cigar maker until his death in 1899. Details of his burial arrangements are unknown.

Samuel S. Trauer, c. 1850-1888

Sam Trauer was easily the most gregarious of the brothers. Wherever he lived in New Mexico—in Las Vegas, Cimarron, Santa Fe, Socorro, and Albuquerque—he entered the life of the community and was well received. In Las Vegas, he took part in community musicals and vaudeville productions. In Cimarron, he won a 100-yard foot race and nearly blew his head into a million atoms handling a Spencer rifle. In Santa Fe, Sam was pressed into service as a baseball umpire. In Socorro, he helped capture a killer, and in Albuquerque, he was part owner of a dance academy and organized social dances, while also serving as a bugler for the Albuquerque Guard. Sam endured some friendly razzing on account of his big feet.

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Meet the Trauers (*continued from p. 6*)

Following the time in Cimarron, Sam was briefly joint proprietor of Trauer and Loebner, a store in Santa Fe. At Socorro, he collaborated with A. A. Goldberg in outfitting prospectors and miners for work in the nearby hills. Sam moved on to Albuquerque in 1884, but then he vanished from sight. Having been well and widely known, he appears in no public record until 1888, when he died of a brain tumor in the insane ward at the poorhouse in St. Louis, and was interred at the city's Jewish cemetery, New Mt. Sinai.

Maurice Trauer, c. 1845-1914

Among the four brothers, Maurice was perhaps the most traditional, hewing to the family business of retail dry goods and clothing sales. He appeared to have a talent for sales, but in early experiences as an entrepreneur, he was accident-prone failing after several tries. Maurice spent much of the decade of the 1890s selling suits in Leadville and Denver, Colorado, returning to Albuquerque by 1900 for a brief, final fling at managing. Still a single man, he moved south to El Paso, where he spent his last years as a tailor. Maurice suffered a fatal attack of apoplexy and was found dead in his shop in January 1914. Louis traveled from Albuquerque to attend to his brother's affairs, arranging for services to be led by a rabbi, and burial at the Temple Mt. Olive Cemetery.

Louis Trauer, c. 1848-1927

It took some 25 years for Louis to find his calling following his arrival in Santa Fe in 1870. After Cimarron, much of his time was spent in or about St. John's, Arizona, where he worked as a carpenter, kept a barber shop, served as an auctioneer, and advertised his services as an undertaker. As with the other Trauers, Louis sometimes fell back on the retail trade, working with the Barth brothers in Winslow, Arizona, and later entering into a partnership with Solomon Block in Grants, New Mexico.

Louis Trauer's business success began when he entered the sheep and wool trade around 1895. Ere long, he was buying and

selling sheep by the thousands and buying 20 or more wagonloads of wool at a time. In 1896, at age 48, he married Regina Deutschland. His life was changed with these developments. Though they had no children, Louis and Regina were mutually devoted and took on active roles at Temple Albert in Albuquerque, where they made their home. Through Regina's married sisters, they had extended connections with the Neustadt and Levy families.

In 1904, Louis was involved in an event of historic import, the murder of his longtime friend, J. Francisco Chaves. The men had traveled to Pinos Wells on business. On arrival, Louis went off to find dinner, Chaves to visit a friend. There were competing theories of the crime, but it was never solved.

Louis and Regina were active congregants at Temple Albert, at least once occupying the manse in the absence of a rabbi. When Regina's mother died, the couple gave a beautiful pair of menorahs in Mrs. Deutschland's memory. Louis died in 1927, Regina in 1933; both were buried in the B'nai B'rith Cemetery.

Across the Miles and Years

The brothers Trauer, who lived in New Mexico at various times and for varying periods, often distant from a synagogue or active Jewish community, lived in ways that were consistent with their family heritage, history, and values. They were far from the family home, but tethered to their parents and the security they represented while they lived. The Trauer men kept in touch with other family members across great distances and significant age differences. In the 1880s, Maurice's absentee business partner was Michael Hyman of New York, husband of his younger sister, Fanny. In 1884-1885, Maurice had

a long visit from his other sister, Sallie, who stayed at his home in Albuquerque and spent several weeks with Spiegleberg family friends in Santa Fe.

The brothers Trauer got on well with non-Jewish members of the communities in which they lived in New Mexico, but they were also part of a sprawling network of Jewish immigrants who were engaged in retail and wholesale commerce and

government contracting throughout the territory. These men, many of them natives of Eastern European countries, were more colleagues than competitors, united in their faith, and by trials they faced as immigrants and entrepreneurs.

By the relationships that they maintained and the customs that they observed, the Trauers acknowledged and kept the Jewish faith—as evidenced in part by their having found final rest in consecrated Jewish burial grounds. Jewish faith and practice had but scant history in the places to which they had come; in essence,

they were making that history. The brothers Trauer had not the prominence of the Spiegelberg, Staab, and Ilfeld families, but as history belongs to all, they lived a full measure of New Mexico's territorial experience, participating in and witnessing significant transitions. As is said of diverse peoples who have experienced events in New Mexico's history, "They passed this way." Our history is richer for their having done so.✡

Author's Note: None of the Trauers who visited or lived in New Mexico left descendants. Their story is told from birth, death, marriage, and census records, and from newspaper articles. The author may be reached at david.caffey@clovis.edu.



Menorah at Temple Albert

Welcome New Board Members

Frankie Lerner

Frankie Lerner was born in El Paso, Texas, and moved to New Mexico in 1997. For 10 years, she lived on Palomas Creek in Sierra County, and then moved to Las Cruces. She worked for the city while residing in El Paso, was also active in various civic organizations, and held the presidency of National Council of Jewish Women and the Cadillac-LaSalle Club. Since moving to New Mexico, she has served

on the Citizens Review Board for the Department of Family Services, was president of the Sierra County Genealogical Society, and began the Dona Ana County Genealogical Society in Las Cruces. She belongs to the local Audubon Society and native plant groups. Her hobbies are gardening, quilting, and genealogy. She has three sons, who live in Dallas and Houston, Texas, and Madison, Wisconsin. She has three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. ☆



Deborah Avren

Deborah Avren is president of Ha-Makom, the Jewish Renewal congregation in Santa Fe. She was born in Winnipeg, Canada, to immigrants from Eastern Europe. She and her two sisters and one brother attended religious school at Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, the oldest synagogue in Winnipeg. She moved to the United States in 1985 and maintains dual citizenship—along with an undying love for the music of another native Canadian, Leonard Cohen. After working in the hospitality and travel industry as a hotel and resort marketing director, she branched out on her own to focus on producing events and

corporate meetings. She owned and operated the companies Bixel Avren and Silver Birches in Los Angeles, where she was also a founding member of the Women's Leadership Council. In 2009, she moved to Santa Fe, where she continues her work in corporate and social event production. As a longtime practitioner of Anasura yoga, she teaches in conjunction with Upaya Zen Center, offering weekly yoga classes with meditation in prisons in Northern New Mexico. In her spare time, she enjoys riding bikes with her partner Len Goodman. She also participates with Len in Best Daze, a provider of medical cannabis that now offers healing to all customers, medical and recreational. ☆



Roberta Scott

Roberta Scott is a native New Mexican. She was born and grew up on a farm in Dona Ana County in southern New Mexico. After finishing her first year at NMSU in Las Cruces, she married. By the time she finished her degree in history at the University of Texas at Arlington in 1971, she had three children. After she finished her MBA at NMSU in 1988, she worked for a family business as head of finance. In 1989, she started a PhD program in business at NMSU, where she took classes and taught business classes.

She then started as the assistant director of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Dona Ana Branch College. The SBDC helps small businesses with startups, business plans,

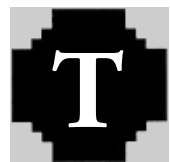
financial statements, loan packages, etc. She was then offered the position of SBDC Director at UNM-Valencia in Los Lunas. She was there about 11 years when she retired.

Since retiring, she has volunteered at Rotary, Businesswomen of Valencia County, the Literacy Society, Los Lunas Chamber of Commerce, Valencia County Historical Society, and the Historical Society of New Mexico. She has served on the boards of all the above organizations, as treasurer of most and president of several. She was also elected to the UNM-Valencia Advisory Board for two terms (eight years). After leaving that board, she joined the UNM-Valencia Development Board, which works on donations to the community college. She has served as treasurer of the Historical Society of New Mexico for the last eight years, and conference registrar for NMJHS this year. ☆



Marian Silver In Memory

by Lance Bell



he NMJHS family lost one of its pioneer members on April 24th, when Marian Silver passed away in her Santa Fe home.

Marian, a Santa Fe native, was born into a well-known and successful family line of merchants: the Uhlfelder, Petchesky and Silver family names earned a fine reputation in Santa Fe. Many North-

ern New Mexicans shopped in downtown Santa Fe at Marian's family's business on the Santa Fe Plaza from 1912, the year New Mexico achieved statehood, until the day the store closed in 1988. The store, opened up as "The White House" but eventually the name was changed to "the Guarantee". It was a ladies' ready-to-wear and shoe store that sat prominently on the northeast corner of the Plaza.

The Guarantee was known as "the store with more."

Marian Petchesky met and married Abe Silver, Jr., in 1951 in New Orleans, where Abe was a sportswriter and Marian was attending Sophie Newcomb College. The Silvers eventually moved to Santa Fe to help run the family store and start their own family.



Marian Silver

In 2013, Marian was honored to receive the NMJHS Dr. Allan and Leona Hurst award. At this time, Marian summed up her life: "Santa Fe is a utopian and wonderful community, and I love to give back to it because of all that my family has received."

Marian's community service, along with that of her husband and soul mate Abe was quite extensive. She had been known to

serve many organizations with passion, commitment, leadership, and generous patronage. The list included a directorship with the United New Mexico Bank, St. Vincent Hospital Auxiliary, St. Vincent Hospital Foundation Board, The Santa Fe Opera Guild, United Way, Chamber of Commerce, Temple Beth Shalom Board, Rodeo de Santa Fe, Museum of New Mexico, and Santa Fe Children's Museum. When I asked Marian

for her thoughts on how the diverse Jewish population had grown in Santa Fe and throughout the state, she replied, "There is a 180-degree difference." She remembered back before there was a synagogue in Santa Fe. The Jewish community would gather in people's homes. "We all had respect for each other." Usually, meetings occurred with other Jewish families at the poker table. "We never considered ourselves competitors, we were all in business together!" Marian and her family were instrumen-

tal in helping to make Temple Beth Shalom a reality and a special place to worship. Before her passing, she was the last living charter member of the Temple.



Lance Bell

Marian is survived by her two daughters, Margaret and Carolyn, and several grandchildren. Sadly, in the year preceding her passing, she lost both her son, John Silver, and son-in-law, Scott Jones. Santa Fe was blessed with a strong, courageous, and passionate woman. Marian dedicated her life to her family, her community, and her faith. In essence, Marian Silver lived a modern version of the life of the Jewish Pioneers, full of historical footnotes, passion, religious growth, philanthropy, and involvement with the growth and success of the City of Santa Fe. Her presence, her smile, and her passion for helping others will be missed by us all. May her memory always remain a blessing for all who knew her and loved her. ✨

Footnote: To learn more about Marian's story first hand, make sure and watch her interview from 2018 on the Jewish Learning Channel, a mini-documentary where Marian Silver discusses her memory and stories of Jewish life growing up in Santa Fe. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUx4yk0PY5A>

Sherman Levenson of La Mesa, New Mexico (continued from p. 4)

a purveyor of the latest technology, as the first Zenith dealer in Doña Ana County.

Sherm relates the following anecdote: "When they put my father in the ground for the final time, there was probably \$200,000 that was never paid. His mother told him to get after them, but he was a very mild person. He would sacrifice our family for other people who could not pay their bill."

The store in La Mesa was closed for the High Holy Days, but would re-open at the

close of Yom Kippur until three or four o'clock in the morning, so that people could get their groceries. His parents and grandmother kept a kosher home.

As memorable as the years spent with his Hispanic friends were, hunting in the fields and fishing along the ditch banks of La Mesa, some of the time was also spent at the synagogue, in Congregation B'nai Zion on Mesa Street in downtown El Paso. Sherm fondly recalled his Bar Mitzvah training with Rabbi (who was called "Reverend") Zissman: "I was trained by

Reverend Zissman who was a shokhlet – a ritual slaughterer. I would go to his house and we would study in the basement where he would slaughter the chickens while I was studying for my Bar Mitzvah."

Sherm has long cherished his memories of growing up in La Mesa, recollections far different from the childhood memories of his urban contemporaries. His experiences were unique. They help fill in spaces in the portrait of Jewish life in one of the most rural parts of the state. ✨



NMJHS ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

*"History ... and a Story to Tell:
Cultural and Social Reflections of Jewish Life in New Mexico"*

October 29 - 30, 2022

SANTA FE

Courtyard Marriott Hotel

Presenters & Topics include:

Stacey Abarbanel, Filmmaker:
*"UnRaveling My Grandfather,
Pancho Villa and Me"*

Diane Layden, Ph.D.:
*Ruth Bader Ginsburg at the
Santa Fe Opera*

Doris Francis, Ph.D.:
The Santa Fe Cemetery Project

And much more!

SAVE THE DATE!
Registration and conference
details coming soon!

*Hybrid Conference:
In person and Zoom*

Photos From the Annual Meeting



Deborah Avren, Nancy Terr, Lewis Terr, Jack Shlachter, Beverly Post



Leona Rubin



Ron Duncan Hart



Norma Libman; Hurst Award Recipients: Lewis Terr - Montefiore Cemetery Association, Patricia Carlton



Naomi Sandweiss



Harvey Buchalter



Sandy Dietz

Photographer, John Rivers



Welcome Table



Norma Libman, Dianne Layden, Noel Pugach

Legacy

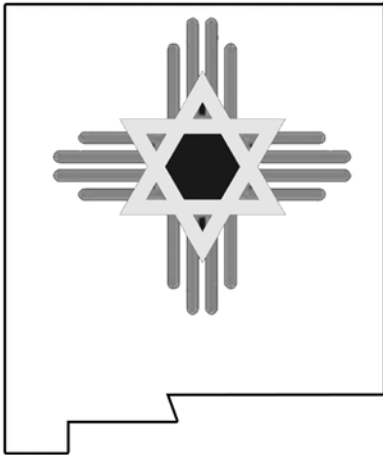
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Membership in NMJHS

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Future Events

NMJHS Annual Fall Conference: “History...and a Story to Tell, Cultural and Social Reflections of Jewish Life in New Mexico” October 29-30, 2022. Hybrid Conference In-Person and Zoom.
Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, 3347 Cerrillos Rd., Santa Fe, NM 87507

Ruth Bader Ginsburg “Notorious RBG”, Dianne Layden, Chautauqua Conference with N .M. Humanities Council.
Date to be Confirmed

“The Mystery Sone Revealed” Field Trip with John Taylor, Albuquerque
Date to be Confirmed