President’s Message

This year is very special. The JHS celebrates its 25th anniversary. We remember our founders of blessed memory, Jerome Fien, Ruth Fien and Saul Schwarz, who recognized the importance of preserving the history of our community so that it could pass down to our children and grandchildren. In the years that have passed since then, the JHS’s mission has been to bring that history to life. Let me share with you a few highlights of upcoming events as the JHS celebrates its silver anniversary.

We are busy preparing for our annual Lasting Impressions Gala to be held at the Crystal Plaza on the evening of May 26th. This year’s honoree is Howard Kiesel, a longtime member of our Board and its immediate past President. Howie has worked tirelessly for over 20 years lending his many talents in support of the JHS. I had the pleasure of informing Howie of his selection as the honoree, who, in typical understated Howie fashion, responded “Why me?” No one has been more deserving of this award than Howie who has given so much of himself to the Society and its mission.” At this very special event the society will also take special recognition of the organization’s founders, Ruth and Jerome Fien and Saul Schwarz and the original board of trustees. The celebration will take place at Crystal Plaza in Livingston at 6:30 pm.

Howie, an outstanding Jewish leader in our community, in addition to serving as JHS’s Secretary for 10 years and President for four years, chaired both UJA and Israel Bonds campaigns in Springfield; served as president of Temple Sha’arey Shalom in Springfield; as president of the Metropolitan NJ Conference on Soviet Jewry, which helped set the stage for the miraculous Soviet Jewish exodus; and served on the Board of Newark Beth Israel Medical Center for more than 10 years where he chaired its Marketing, Advertising and PR Committees.

He also served as vice-president of the Hebrew Free Loan Association of MetroWest; on the board of Healthcare Foundation of NJ; and, for many years, on the Community Relations Committee of MetroWest.

Commercial artist & advertising executive

Howie attended Pratt Institute and graduated from Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts as a commercial artist.

His business career began as an assistant art director at Street & Smith Publications in 1949 and grew over 53 years when he retired as Executive VP and COO of Keyes Martin Advertising. There, over a period of 22 years, he directed the marketing and advertising pro-

Howard Kiesel to be Honored at JHS’ 25th Anniversary Gala

Founders to be Recognized at May Event

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Founding members’ recognition

A ceremony is planned for the event, as part of the 25th Anniversary celebration, to commemorate the original board of trustees that included Horace Bier, Arthur Brody, Howard Charish, Sam Gonvissor, Daniel Drench, Dr. Helene Ershow, Jerome Fien, Ruth Fien, Martin Fox, Audrey Gaelen, Norbert Gaelen, Larry Gonzer, Ellen Hirschhorn, Isidor Hirschhorn, Lila Horowitz, Donald Karp, Martin Kesselhaut, Elaine Lewis, Jeanette Lieberman, Sylvia Litwin, Alan Lowenstein, Janet Lowenstein, Susan Lubov, Albert Millman, Sam Oolie, Elaine Reichel, Mitzi Reisen, Dr. Norman Samuels, Saul Schwarz, Daniel Shiman, Stanley Strauss and Jerome Waldor.

All are invited

Join us as we celebrate our 25th anniversary and we honor the society’s founders and bestow our coveted Lasting Impressions Award to Howie. It promises to be a wonderful evening! For further information about the event, Call Irene Segal at 973-929-2703 or email her at isegal@jhsmw.org.
President’s Message Continued from pg.1

Ronson Lighters.” Aronson, who was raised in Newark, is best remembered as the manufacturer of the famous Ronson table lighters, which once graced every family’s coffee table back in the 1940’s and 50’s as the epitome of luxury and good taste.

Dory Schary Film Festival

At the Society’s annual meeting on the evening of June 10th, we celebrate our silver anniversary with keynote speaker, Ulysses Dietz, the Decorative Arts Curator for the Newark Museum, who will present a program entitled “All Things Silver” that draws upon the wonderful exhibit at the museum showcasing Newark’s remarkable history as a center for the manufacture of decorative silver.

Finally, we will round out our anniversary year next fall with what promises to be a block bust er of a program in which we honor Newark born, Dory Schary, the acclaimed Hollywood writer, producer and director. We will screen one of his best remembered movies “Sunrise at Campobello.” The film will be introduced by Dr. Eric Goldman, adjunct professor of film at Yeshiva University, and a scholar of Schary films, at a special showing at the JCC in West Orange.

Louis V. Aronsson, aboard his yacht “the Ellveay” circa 1938 with his grandson Louis V. Henston

Thanks…

This JHSNJ newsletter is funded by a generous donation from the Klein/Fien Philanthropic Fund which enables the Society to publish its biannual newsletters.

The fund is managed by Judie Fien-Helfman and Mark Fien, children of the Society’s founders, Ruth and Jerome Fien.

Ulysses Grant Dietz to Speak at JHS Annual Meeting in June

Chief Curator, Decorative Arts Department of the Newark Museum

At its 25th “Silver Anniversary” annual membership meeting, to be held on June 10, 2015, well-known curator, Ulysses Grant Dietz will speak about “All Things Silver”.

Ulysses Grant Dietz has been the curator of Decorative Arts at The Newark Museum since 1980, overseeing the museum’s vast collection of silver items manufactured in Newark by Tiffany and donated to the museum by Newark’s Louis Bamberger. He received his BA from Yale and his MA from the University of Delaware’s Winterthur Program. The curator of over 100 exhibitions during his tenure, Mr. Dietz is particularly proud of his work on The Newark Museum’s 1885 Ballantine House. In 1997 Mr. Dietz was the project director for The Glitter & The Gold: Fashioning America’s Jewelry, the first-ever exhibition and book on Newark’s once-vast jewelry industry. Mr. Dietz has published numerous articles on decorative arts, as well as books on the Museum’s Studio Pottery, Art Pottery and nineteenth-century furniture collections. His lecture will included slides.

Admission is free. For further information, contact Linda Forgosh, JHS Executive Director at 973-929-2994 or email at lforgosh@jfjedgmw.org. ◆◆

All in all, a series of most interesting and significant programs. Please mark your calendars and JOIN US! ◆◆

Alan Richman

Food Critic to Speak on April 29

Alan Richman, sixteen-time winner of the James Beard Foundation Award for food writing, and the most decorated food critic in American history, will be the keynote speaker at the Jewish Historical Society’s program “Jews and Food” on April 29, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at the JCC in Whippany.

Born in Somerville, New Jersey, this globe-trotting “professional eater” writes for GQ magazine. He is the author of the remarkably funny book “Fork it Over.” Richman was recently interviewed over Heritage Radio Network’s “Chef’s Story.” He spoke about his most savory culinary adventures, the best restaurants and most irresistible meals, and where to find the best barbecue in America. His favorite article is the story “The Last Day of the Old Jewish Waiters” a subject that is familiar to those of us who recall eating cholesterol-laden foods such as kishka, kugel, and knishes in one-time Jewish restaurants.

Food tasting

There will even be time for Q. and A. and a sample tasting of specially prepared foods. Reservations are required.

Admission is free. For more information and to make your required reservation, contact Linda Forgosh, 973-929-2994 or e-mail lforgosh@jfjedgmw.org or Irene Segal 973-929-2703 or e-mail isegal@jhsmw.org. ◆◆
A 25-Year Retrospective of The Jewish Historical Society

By Howard Kiesel

The Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest was organized in Spring, 1990 to collect and preserve the source materials of our local Jewish history and to educate our community about that history. Its founders, Ruth Fein, Jerome Fien and Saul Schwarz laid the groundwork for the concept of having an historical society in MetroWest. Just like new parents who know how to offer care and concern to their newborn, they set the tone by spreading the word far and near about the importance of having an historical arm in our community. They spent many hours communicating with leadership of the United Jewish Federation about the importance of having a Society to help strengthen Jewish identity and the sense of continuity as a Jewish community.

Ruth Fien's legacy

When established, the agency had a Board of Trustees of 32 distinguished community leaders, elected a slate of officers with Ruth Fien as its first president. Grants were received from the NJ Council for the Humanities, the NJ Historical Commission, and the Jewish Community Foundation of MetroWest.

In November, 1990, the society welcomed its first archivist, Joseph Settani, who was responsible for organizing, cataloging and preserving materials received by the Society and for establishing and leading sessions for volunteers. Among its new acquisitions were items presented to Meyer Ellenstein -- the first, and only Jewish mayor of Newark -- including a replica of the key to the City of Newark and a gavel inscribed with his name; an oil painting of the residence of Rabbi Isaac Schwartz, who was the first religious leader of Temple B’nai Jeshurun, and one of the founders of Congregation Oheb Shalom; and a 1929 photograph of the Lippel Katie Kids, boys and girls who studied at Newark’s Lippel School of Dance.

Ruth formed a professional advisory committee in 1992 to provide expertise from archivists, librarians, historians, educators and museum curators. Members included Charles F. Cummings, Associate Director of the Newark Public Library, Clement A. Price, Professor of History at Rutgers University; and Dr. Norman Samuels, Provost of Rutgers University in Newark... just to name a few.

As the Society became more established, more support was garnered. At its 1994 Annual Meeting, Dr. Price gave a talk titled The City of Opportunity: Blacks and Jews in Newark -- 1900 to 1967. The Jewish Community Foundation and a society board member, Alan Lowenstein, made a commitment to fund the writing of a book on the history of MetroWest Jews to be written by well-known historian, writer Dr. William Helmreich. The Society’s first major exhibition -- produced by Ruth -- was titled Lasting Impressions: Greater Newark’s Jewish Legacy. It was housed at the Newark Public Library, co-sponsored by Newark Beth Israel Medical Center Foundation and had an overflow crowd of nearly 800 participants upon its opening.

Ruth Fien’s legacy as president of the Society from 1990 to 1996 established long-lasting goals that are still relevant today. Helmreich, who began researching his book during Ruth’s tenure, completed the book, The Enduring Community: The Jews of Newark and MetroWest, a few years later.

Warren Grover’s legacy

In 1996, Ruth handed the reins of leadership over to Warren Grover, the Society’s second president. Warren, a trained historian and author, believed that “Knowledge of one’s history is vital to all people...and most especially to Jews.” Warren, who served as the Society’s second president from 1996 to 2002, brought his own vision to the Society while building on Ruth’s achievements. He brought the Society more visibility and prominence. He introduced symposiums dealing with international, national, state and local politics. During his tenure, Helmreich’s book was completed.

The community at large continued reaching out to the Society for its archival holdings. For example, famed writer, Philip Roth sought a 1936 Weequahic High School yearbook; Charles Cummings asked for a photograph of the No Name Club for a Star Ledger article he was writing. MetroWest agencies turned to the Society to either help organize exhibitions or research materials from our archives. Exhibitions included the 40th anniversary of the Julius and Bessie Cohn Young Leadership Awards... “From Home to Home”, an interactive Jewish children’s exhibition which included memorabilia from our archives... a photo exhibition celebrating The Jewish News 50th anniversary... another commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the founding of MetroWest... another was a photo exhibit celebrating Israel’s 50th birthday and honoring the 50-year partnership between Israel and MetroWest.

Newark’s prominent citizens and institutions were researched and promulgated by the Society. In 1997, Dr. Elliot Shore gave a lecture on Louis Bamberger and his involvement with Princeton’s Institute for Advanced Study. He noted that Bamberger listened to the advice of Abraham Flexner, not to set up a medical school in Newark, but to set up instead, in bucolic Princeton, the Institute described by Shore as “a model for scholarly endeavor.”

The origins and history of Newark Beth Israel Hospital has been researched thoroughly by the Society. In 1999, the records of Newark Beth Israel Medical Center were acquired. Highlights from the collection included information about cutting edge medical inventions and medi-
During Warren Grover’s tenure, a book on the history of The Newark Beth Israel Medical Center was begun, sponsored by the Society and funded by the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey. Its authors noted that “Public hospitals often limited, severely, the number of Jews on their staffs. Hospitals founded and run by non-Jewish religious orders preferred to reserve admitting privileges to gentle physicians.” Also, at the turn of the century, mostly orthodox Jews needed Kasrnut that was not available at public hospitals. At Catholic hospitals the patients were treated by nuns which also made Jewish patients uncomfortable. So the Jewish community (mostly wives of physicians) decided to form their own hospital and in 1901 opened the Beth on High Street as a 21-bed hospital.

In the year 2000, Warren accomplished a major coup when a $22,000 matching grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission was awarded to JHS in order to hire an Outreach Director for Sussex and Morris counties who was charged with finding and preserving important historical documents and memorabilia of Jewish institutions in the two counties, focusing on schools and synagogues. And so, Linda Forgosh was hired to fill that post. As we know, she has gone far beyond that position, becoming the Society’s outstanding Curator and, eventually, Executive Director of the Society.

**Bob Max becomes third president**

Building on the efforts of Ruth Fein and Warren Grover, Bob Max was installed as president in 2002. Bob brought to his new post the skills and experience he garnered over a long and distinguished career in business and in community service. In Bob’s first message in the society’s Newsletter in the Fall of 2002, he commented, “Within the archives of our Society, we have accumulated massive documentary evidence of the efforts of a community and its organizations to provide life saving and life enriching services to many. It’s a story that must be told…telling that story will become part of the Society’s agenda for as long as it takes to carry it out.” And so he conceived of the Traveling Exhibitions. Taking the archives out into the community for all to see…not just scholars and historians who visit the archives.

**Morris & Sussex County Jews**

The first exhibition to be prepared during Bob’s presidency, in the Fall of 2002, designed and produced by Linda Forgosh, dealt with Morris & Sussex County Jews. The result of two years of research on her part, this exhibition focused on Dover, Franklin, Morristown, Mt. Freedom, Newton, and Pine Brook (see photo page 8.) Then in 2003, Linda prepared a second exhibit on the Morris and Sussex County Jewish Lake Communities, tracing a history dating back to circa 1906 when The Sunrise Hotel in Pine Brook was the first kosher hotel and offered a refuge for Jews seeking respite from the steaming summers of New York City.

**A whole series of traveling exhibits**

In September 2004, Who’s Minding the Store? made its debut at the Aidekman Campus and was attended by hundreds of visitors. This exhibition traveled to a number of venues including Jewish day schools, synagogues, as well as Rutgers University in New Brunswick and other public (non-Jewish) venues, seen by thousands of viewers. It featured a life-like recreation of items that would have been sold at a 1930’s grocery store.

Next came Born at the Beth which opened on September 15, 2005 at the Aidekman Campus to several hundred participants including members of the medical staff and hospital administrators from Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. The most popular feature was the 24-foot-long gallery of photographs of MetroWest residents who were born at Beth Israel.

Other Traveling Exhibitions included the exhibit and stage presentation of One More Night at Eling’s Metropolitan Yiddish Theater where an intergenerational performance thrilled young and old alike. The performance and exhibit was attended by hundreds of excited MetroWesters who were treated to Yiddish songs and skits presented by youngsters and adults, as well.

**Dr. Jerome Horowitz takes the reins**

In 2006, Dr. Jerome Horowitz became President bringing his leadership skills to the Society having been president of Congregation B’nai Israel of Millburn, president of the Millburn Board of Education, President of the NJ Dental Society, as well as sitting on a number of Federation boards.

At its Lasting Impressions Gala, in May of 2006, the JHS honored the Jewish Day schools dedicated to developing the strength and vision of the future leaders of the MetroWest community. Focusing on the theme M’Dor, L’Dor…L’Dor, from generation, to generation…to generation, the event kicked off a Year of the Day School program and recognized multi-generational day school families of the Joseph Kushner Hebrew Academy; its sister-school, Rae Kushner Yeshiva High School; Solomon...
Schechter Day School of Essex and Union; and Hebrew Academy of Morris County. The successful gala resulted in generating the impetus to begin the multi-million dollar fund drive for scholarships to the three Jewish Day Schools in MetroWest.

Also, in 2006, the society produced the exhibit, Daughters of Israel: 100 Years of Care celebrating the anniversary of DOI’s century of providing care to our community.

In 2007, Jerry urged that the Society’s Lasting Impressions Gala be up-graded to encourage greater participation in fund raising for the Society and increase visibility for the organization. The committee chose to hold the event at a new venue, the elegant Crystal Plaza. There guests mingled, dined and honored Irving “Yitz” Greenberg who had a keynote address on multi-culturalism and religious pluralism as a path to peace. The Gala was the most successful one in the Society’s history.

In 2008, the society then honored its own Bob Max for his 60 years of community service, at which time June Walker, National Chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, one of the world’s most important and influential Jews, gave the keynote address… elevating the importance of the Society in the national community.

Howard Kiesel becomes 5th president

In June 2008, Howie officiated at the opening of the Society’s most ambitious exhibition, Weequahic Memoirs: Celebrating Newark’s Legendary Jewish Neighborhood at the Maurice Levin Theater in the JCC West Orange with 500 in attendance with Newark’s Mayor Cory Booker as the keynote speaker. After several weeks, the exhibit moved to Whippany and subsequently to several other venues. Over many months it was viewed by thousands and received universal accolades! This blockbuster presentation broke all attendance records and the talk of the Jewish community not only here, at home, but as far away as Florida and Arizona, wherever Weequahic High School alumni reside.

Also, in 2008, during Jewish Heritage Month, the Society sponsored a program titled American Jewry and World War II, with speaker Dr. Edward Shapiro.

During 2009 and 2010, several programs were produced including Longie Zeidman: NJ’s Infamous Bootlegger and Gangster with speaker Warren Grover, Ladies First a tribute paid to the Jewish women of the Morris County;

Four Wars and the Men that Fought Them which commemorated Armistice Day; and a photographic exhibition Family by Family commemorating Jewish Heritage Month.

In 2011 JHS mounted an exhibit celebrating the 75th anniversary of UJA Women’s Campaign as well as a program about JTGL Global Services News Archive with speakers David Billotti and Andrew Carroll, NJJN Editor.

Robert G. Rose assumes 6th presidency

From 2012 to 2015 many additional programs and exhibitions were produced by the society. These included a film premiere Out of Newark: The Life and Work of Philip Roth; a lecture given by Dr. Victor Parsonnet titled The Sound of Music; a live performance called Jews and Jazz; a program titled When the Comedy Was King; Jews and Comedy given by radio personality, Charlie Bernhaut; Jews In Sports a PowerPoint presentation given by Ron Kaplan, sports and features writer for NJJN; What’s Old? Treasures from the Archives an exhibition featuring memorabilia housed in the society’s archives; and Federation @ 90 commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ.

The Society published many books and papers including The Enduring Community; The Jews of Newark and MetroWest; The Jews of Morris County; Jews of Weequahic; MetroWest Goes to WWII; Covenant of Care: Newark Beth Israel and the Jewish Hospitals in America; and others.

Three archivists since inception

Joseph Settani, the original archivist, left the Society in 2004, after nearly 11 years of service. In 2004, Jennifer McGillan was hired as the new archivist. She remained until 2008 when the present archivist, Jill Hershorin, was hired. Jill has performed in an exemplary fashion completing the processing of some of our most valuable archival collections. She also “doubles” as our website and Facebook administrator keeping the public up-to-date on JHS happenings.

As a matter of fact, through the efforts of all 3 archivists, the Society has been described by the New Jersey Historical Commission as “an organization that has amassed an enviable collection of papers relative to Jewish experience in northern New Jersey and has built a first class archives to house them.” When the founding members formed the Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest twenty-five years ago, as far-thinking as they were, they could not have envisioned the growth and importance to community that today’s Society enjoys. Much of the Society’s success belongs to Linda Forgosh, our esteemed Executive Director and Curator. Her diligence and devotion to our community has brought the society to the importance it enjoys today. Her concepts and exhibit designs have been universally applauded. Her warm personality and ability to please all with whom she comes into contact, have helped the society achieve a universal acceptance, both to the profession and the public. She deserves all the accolades she receives.

Irene Segal, our able administrator, whose melodious South African accent greets us as she answers our phone line, joined our staff in 2007 and has efficiently managed our office ever since.

Each of our leaders brought his own special ideas and goals to help the society fulfill its mission. And, in doing so, elevated the organization to heights beyond those the originators ever imagined. ♦
Executive Director’s Report

By Linda Forgosh

On June 4, 2015 the Jewish Historical Society of New Jersey will celebrate its milestone twenty-fifth anniversary (1990-2015). The Society, founded by Ruth and Jerry Fien and Saul Schwarz, is no longer your “father’s Oldsmobile.” It has grown to include 630 collections donated by institutions, synagogues, and private individuals representing the history of Jewish life in Greater MetroWest NJ.

Maybe you recall our popular traveling exhibits such as “Weequahic Memoirs” or “Born at the Bath;” attended one of our public forums, including “Jews and Jazz” or more recently, “The Ghost Army;” saw in-house productions of the video “Federation @ 90” on You Tube, or admired the masterful film “Joachim Prinz: I Shall Not Be Silent” whose filmmakers relied on iconic photos of the rabbi and Martin Luther King, Jr. that came from the Society’s archives.

Many do not know that our JHS is a destination for students doing research for their master’s or doctoral theses; or that students have filled their college requirements by serving as an intern (lots of letters of recommendation have resulted in college acceptances) in our archives. You get the message. If you, a relative, or a friend is connected to the history of our Greater MetroWest community we want to help preserve your history for future generations to come.

On a personal note, I owe a great debt of gratitude to former JHS board member and my mentor in graduate school, Dr. Edward Shapiro, who called me “out of the blue” and said “Linda, do I have a perfect job for you.” This was followed by a face-to-face meeting with past-President, Warren Grover at Millburn Starbucks.

To this day, when I meet a friend in Millburn, we arrange to meet at Starbucks and we always sit at the same table where Warren interviewed me for my job – would you believe it – fifteen years ago! ✪

Past few years we have been providing access to our collections to the folks at the Newark History Society’s Archives Project. They have been searching our collections for all materials related to Newark, NJ and adding this information to the database that their Society has created. You can find their database at: http://nap.rutgers.edu/

We are assisting NJ Hall of Fame President Steve Edwards with photographs from the Weequahic Collection for his documentary “Lucky Jack.”

A grand-niece of Michael Stavisky approached us as she was looking for information on her father, one of the 7 Stavisky brothers. We looked through the Stavisky collection and were able to find the information in one of the obituaries.

Another researcher came to us looking for information about his grandfather Rabbi Leonard (Aryeh) Kaplan a one-time rabbi of Adath Israel.

We received a call on behalf of the Executive Director (Dr. Gary Zola) of the American Jewish Archive at the Hebrew Union College. Dr. Zola was planning on visiting Temple B’nai Or of Morristown and was looking for assorted historical information about the Synagogue.

Donation

With the generous donation from Newark historian, Donald Karp, we were able to purchase a microfilm reader/scanner (see photo). Because of this new piece of equipment, we are able to scan in the very valuable microfilm collections of newspapers. Locally, our microfilm collection of The Jewish Chronicle can only be found with us and the Newark Public Library. It is a great improvement to our research facility and it will vastly improve researcher’s needs.

Visit our website.

“Like us” on Facebook.

Please visit our website and look around. Come to our facebook page where “every day is Throwback Thursday!” www.jhs-nj.com and www.facebook.com/JewishHistoricalSocietyofNJ

Please feel free to come by and look at any of the collections! There are many wonderful things to see here; often researchers come in looking for something specific and get distracted by other items! Our archive houses fascinating collections from the community for the community. ✪

Notes From the Stacks

By Jill Hershorin

Collection Development has been moving along. Some of the following items were brought in to create new collections or to add to existing ones:

We acquired documents and letters of Esther Berlowe, former director of DOI; Donors gave us a vintage Mason apron belonging to Aaron Stiller and an etching by Emmanuel Haller; Additions were made to the Weequahic collection; A found medallion of the Asiatic Pacific Campaign was found and donated and finally, with the dismantling of the Waldor Library, some new books were added to our library shelves. Some of the books are out of print and have been used by both staff and researchers.

Research

Reference work at the JHS is ongoing. Individuals with various interests visit our office. For the
Louis V. Aronson Exhibit to Open
May 5
Newark businessman was inventor of safety match and Ronson lighter

To commemorate Jewish Heritage Month, JHS has prepared an exhibit about the world-renowned inventor of the Ronson cigarette lighter, Louis V. Aronson (1869-1940). The exhibit will open on May 5, 2015 and run until June 30, 2015.

Aronson wore “many hats.” He was an industrialist, a metallurgist, a politician, a patriot, and a philanthropist. His factory, Art Metal Works, was located in Newark on Mulberry Street where the company lived up to its name by producing jewelry cases, lamp and wall light fixtures and some rather fancy automobile radiator ornaments. Hollywood used Ronson lighters in such movies as “The Maltese Falcon” – Humphrey Bogart used one; Alfred Hitchcock made a Ronson lighter the central “character” in his movie “Strangers on a Train,” fans of late night TV saw one on Johnny Carson’s desk, and yes, even the handsome leading man, 007’s Sean Connery used one.

Aronson’s invention of the “Safety Match” in 1900 won him a prize of 50,000 Belgian francs meaning his match had no sulphur or, more accurately, phosphorous in it. His “kitchen match”, and years later, his invention of a “fuse” lighter for airplane bombs was donated to the U.S. government for the period of WWI. For this and other contributions, Louis Aronson received the War Department’s “Distinguished Service Certificate”, from President Woodrow Wilson. In time, Aronson’s firm became the largest concern of its kind in the world.

Aronson family members living in New Jersey, New York, Colorado, and California have contributed rare family photographs, artifacts, and collections of vintage cigarette lighters for this exhibit. For information and tours, contact JHS curator, Linda Forgosh, 973-929-2994 or e-mail lforgosh@jfedgmw.org

JHS Awarded Grant by Lillian P. Schenck Foundation
Intergenerational Program set for May 1 at Daughters of Israel

by Mali Schwartz

The Jewish Historical Society of New Jersey sponsored intergenerational oral history program, HIStory, HERstory: Gaining a Deeper Understanding of History Using Personal Accounts, was recently awarded a $2,000 grant from the Lillian P. Schenck Foundation for the program which pairs students from West Orange High School with residents of Daughters of Israel Geriatric Center.

“This is the fifth year that I have brought my freshman honors history class students to Daughters of Israel where they interact with senior residents over the course of the school year,” says Douglas Drabik, a West Orange High School history teacher. “This program enriches my curriculum by allowing students to learn about historical events outside the classroom,” continues Drabik, who has believed in the efficacy of this program from the beginning.

“A number of my senior residents have asked to participate in this program each year. Since they interact with a new set of students, it’s allows seniors to share their personal stories and create a bond with a new set of teens each time,” shares Rachel Block, the Daughters of Israel Activities Director.

A total of 160 students will have participated in this oral history program by May 2015, the month in which a culminating event is scheduled to commemorate American Jewish Heritage Month and where the students’ work is showcased.

Mali Schwartz, a Jewish Historical Society board member and creator of this oral history program states, “This program has acted as a catalyst to encourage two different populations to not only interact but to develop an ongoing relationship.” The Jewish Historical Society has also received a Good Neighbor Award Grant from State Farm Insurance for two consecutive years which helped to underwrite the cost of administering this program. The Lillian P. Schenck Foundation, based in Bergen County, funds a variety of educational programs including the New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra, which provides orchestral education to musicians of all ages and skill levels.

“This grant will help bring more students and senior residents together so that they can bridge the generation gap and discover that they can connect on a level they might not have thought possible before participating in this program,” shares Mali Schwartz.

The film makers of the video documentary “Joachim Prinz: I Shall Not Be Silent” (left) Rachel Pasternak and (extreme right) Rachel Fischer are seen with JHS Executive Director, Linda Forgosh, Union County College administrator Shirley Holliedavis, coordinator for a program commemorating Black History Month, and the rabbi’s daughter, Deborah Prinz. There is a copy of the Prinz film in the JHS archives and JHS members are welcome to make an appointment to view it.
New Members
The following have joined since the last newsletter:
Ronald Brandt
Robert Braun
Susan and Robert Fuhrman
Howard Koransky
Dr. Ivan Nelson
James Maxwell Saslow
Renee and Marshall Sherman
Abigail and Alan Spierer
Jon Ulanet

Calendar of Events

April 29, 2015 — Time: 6:30 p.m.
“Jews and Food”
Keynote speaker food critic for GQ Magazine, Alan M. Richman
Place: Alex Aidekman JCC 901 Route 10, Whippany, NJ
R.S.V.P. required

May 1, 2015 — Time: 12:00 noon
Final session for the
JHS’ fifth annual intergenerational oral history program
between West Orange high school freshmen and
Daughter of Israel residents; keynote speaker Linda Forgosh
at Daughters of Israel campus
1155 Pleasant Valley Way, West Orange

May 5 – June 30, 2015
Opening of JHS exhibit
“Louis V. Aronson: Inventor, Metallurgist, Philanthropist, Politician,
Community Leader, and founder of Ronson lighters.”
Place: Atrium of the JCC, 901 Route 10, Whippany, NJ;
on view during building hours, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tours available by
appointment. Contact Linda Forgosh 973-929-2994 or
e-mail lforgosh@jfedgmw.org.

May 26, 2015
Lasting Impressions Gala
Honoring Howard Kiesel; Time 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.,
Crystal Plaza Caterers, 305 W. Northfield Avenue, Livingston, NJ

June 10, 2015
JHS annual meeting
Celebrating the Society’s 25th anniversary; keynote speaker
Ulysses Grant Dietz, Decorative Arts Curator for the Newark Museum
speaking about “All Things Silver” Time 7:00 p.m.
At the Alex Aidekman JCC, 901 Route 10, Whippany, NJ

Jewish life in Morris and Sussex counties was the subject of a JHS exhibit in 2003. Featured are members of Dover’s Unity Club in 1920.