President’s Message

Jewish identity and continuity. That is our mission. Yet within our community, there are many who are unaware of its vibrant history and the many contributions that Jews have made here in New Jersey and well beyond. Louis Bamberger was such a larger than life player. The founder of L. Bamberger & Co. department store in Newark, his financial success led to a life of philanthropy that included the founding of the Newark Museum, the Jewish Y on High Street, Newark Beth Israel Hospital, and the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. This month sees the publication of Linda Forgosh’s “Louis Bamberger: Department Store Innovator and Philanthropist” by Brandeis University Press. Our Society will open a Bamberger exhibit in Whippany with a reception, book reading and signing on October 20. The title of the exhibit “Meet Me Under Bamberger’s Clock” will jog memories of those who worked and shopped at Newark’s largest and most successful department store.

Later in the fall, the exhibit will move to the New Jersey Historical Society in Newark where it will be presented to an even larger community. Kudos to Linda. It’s all very exciting.

This issue of our Newsletter highlights the Society’s many programs and activities. Please be sure to come to our programs and visit our exhibits. Bring your children and grandchildren. And, of course, buy a copy of Linda’s book! ✪

Thanks!
This JHJSNJ 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.

Linda Forgosh’s Biography Of Louis Bamberger Debuts On October 20

Linda Forgosh, Executive Director and Curator of the Jewish Historical Society of NJ, will be premiering her new biography, “Louis Bamberger: Department Store Innovator and Philanthropist,” in conjunction with the opening of an exhibit dealing with the life and accomplishments of the department store magnate, merchandising genius, and enlightened philanthropist.

About the book, published by Brandeis Press, Linda wrote: “Louis Bamberger (1855 – 1944) was the epitome of the merchant prince as public benefactor. Born in Baltimore, this son of German immigrants built his business – the great, glamorous L. Bamberger & Co. department store, into the fourth largest department store in the country! A multimillionaire by middle age, he joined the elite circle of German Jews who owned Macy’s, Bloomingdale’s, and Filene’s. Despite his vast wealth and local prominence, Bamberger was a reclusive figure who shunned the limelight, left no business records and kept no diaries. He remained a bachelor and kept his private life and the rationale for his business decisions to himself.

Yet his achievements are manifold. He was a merchandising genius whose innovations, including newspaper and radio ads and brilliant use of window and in-store displays, established the culture of consumption in twentieth-century America. His generous giving, both within the Jewish community and beyond it, created institutions that still stand today. Did you know that Louis Bamberger was the SOLE donor of the Newark Museum, the principal benefactor for establishing the much beloved Newark “Y” on High Street, and much, much more? Toward the end of his career, he financed and directed the creation of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, as in SOLE donor, which led to a friendship with Albert Einstein.”

Little historic attention

Despite his significance as business innovator and philanthropist, historians of the great department stores have paid scant attention to Bamberger. This full-length biography will interest historians as well as general readers of Jewish history nationally, New Jerseyans fascinated by local history, and the Newarkers for whom Bamberger’s was a beloved local institution.

Forgosh’s book has been made possible, in part, by generous support from the Jewish Historical Society of NJ and its board members as well as the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest and the NJ Historical Commission.

Reviews of the book are found on page 6 of this newsletter. ✪
Norbert Gaelen, Jewish Historical Society founder, long-serving board member and VP Emeritus passed away a few weeks ago, becoming the second outstanding leader lost to the Society and our Jewish community since our last newsletter.

When Norbert was honored in 2010 by the Society with its coveted Lasting Impressions Award we talked about his extensive practice in the art of philanthropy, and we titled it “The art of giving”. And that’s so truly described Norbert’s life.

Norbert was born in 1926 in Newark and attended Chancellor Avenue School and was graduated from Weequahic High School.

A Hall of Famer

He was graduated from Penn State University in 1947 with a degree in industrial engineering. He then joined the family business, O.Berk Company, a packaging company and, in 1951, assumed third-generation ownership and led the steady expansion of the company for the next 59 years. In 2003, he was inducted into the Packaging Hall of Fame by the NJ Packaging Executives Club, a testament to his entrepreneurial spirit, passion and dedication to his business. Norbert and his wife of 66 years, Audrey (also a past JHS long-standing board member) have been involved in a multitude of philanthropic endeavors.

Supporter of the arts

The two met in Atlantic City and dated while Audrey was at Temple University and married in 1950. Throughout their years together they became one of Penn State’s most generous donors. Amid art collectors and connoisseurs of fine art for more than 50 years, Norbert and Audrey were benefactors of the Gaelen Gallery at the JCC’s in West Orange and Whippany. They donated their valued collection of American Indian Pottery to the Montclair Art Museum. Their annual Gaelen Art Show has offered local artists the unique opportunity to showcase their talent for the past 16 years. Jewish Community involvement was of paramount importance to him as evidenced by his sitting on the board of the JCC, NJ Jewish News, UJC and other boards within the MetroWest Federation. He was a major supporter of NJW, JFS, Rachel Coalition and the Montclair Art Museum.

Bamberger Exhibit to Open
October 20

Ah, the good old days. Whether you, a relative, or a friend took the Public Service Bus number 1, 2, 7, 14, 18, 31, 48, or 127 to go shopping in “downtown” Newark, you all had one thing in common. You met under the Bamberger clock. You might be interested in knowing that Bamberger’s clock was put on its building in 1912, the same year owner Louis Bamberger opened his new modern eight-story building. It is Bamberger’s clock that has inspired our Society’s exhibit – “Meet me under Bamberger’s Clock.” Of course, we know that many of you were not around to have such memories, but still it is great history to know about.

What will you see?

Vintage photographs of Bamberger’s family; photographs of what it took to build his department store empire; a look inside of his store as it grew exponentially from eight to 16 stories; a fifteen minute video focusing on Louis Bamberger’s benefactions – he was considered to be the greatest New Jersey philanthropist of the 20th century; a chance to listen to the first broadcast over WOR radio; see what Newark’s L. Bamberger & Co., after the 1929 expansion. It was a commanding presence in downtown Newark and was the engine behind Louis Bamberger’s influence on the economic prosperity and cultural life of Newark and New Jersey.

Executive Director’s Report

By Linda Fergosb

Have you seen the Broadway play “Hamilton?” Since its opening in November 2015, the name Alexander Hamilton has become the star of the hip-hop generation, some as young as ten years old, now singing the play’s score from the opening song to the last. It is a phenomenon that brings to life the story of a man who unfortunately is known mostly for being shot in a duel by Aaron Burr. But for the JHSNJ it is another opportunity to appreciate the role New Jersey played during the American Revolution. Did you know that Hamilton met his wife Eliza Schuyler in Morristown; that one of the most famous statues “The Alliance,” depicting the meeting of George Washington, Hamilton, and France’s Marquis de Lafayette is located on Morristown’s Green; and that Washington Headquarters, also located in Morristown has earned New Jersey the title “Crossroads of the American Revolution?

• A well-received program about Hamilton – “When History Met Broadway” was presented to seniors at Daughters of Israel and thirty-six history honors students from West Orange High School who participated in the Society’s intergenerational program whereby students conduct oral history interviews with the Home’s seniors.

We can never thank enough our member, Mali Schwartz, for the role she played in suggesting, organizing, and writing the successful grant that continues to fund this activity.

Enjoy the upcoming holidays.

Linda
One of L. Bamberger & Co.’s first delivery trucks Circa 1909.

Levine Papers Donated: Ellen Levine Cramer (bottom), daughter of Jackie Levine (top), who is known in the Greater MetroWest community as the woman who spearheaded the movement to free Soviet Jews — recently donated her mother’s papers to the Jewish Historical Society in Whippany, where they will be preserved, preserved, and made available to researchers.

Dr. Shapiro to present “Let’s Face The Music and Dance”

Prominent local historian, Dr. Edward Shapiro, expert in American Studies, will present a program about WWII-era American Jewish composers. It promises to be a “toe-tapping” afternoon as Dr. Shapiro presents popular songs such as “Over the Rainbow”, “Accentuate the Positive”, and “The House I Live in” and puts the songs in context with our nation’s efforts to win the war. The date is Wednesday, September 28, the time is 2-4 p.m., the place is the Aidekman Jewish Community Campus 901 Route 10, Whippany.

World War II was a watershed time for American Jews, particularly in how they viewed themselves as both Americans and as Jews. The two words that best describe America’s Jews during the 1930s are “insular” and “insecure.” The ideology used to justify America’s war effort, the fact that America’s greatest enemy was also the greatest enemy of the Jews, and the participation of America’s Jews in the war effort overcame any dissonance that Jews might have perceived between being a Jew and being an American, and in the process much of their insularity and insecurity dissipated.

Novels and music by Jews

This can be seen particularly in the realm of culture. For the first time in modern history, Jews defined for the general population the meaning of war. While America’s Jews comprised less than 4% of the population, they wrote four of the most popular World War II war novels (Herman Wouk’s, “The Caine Mutiny,” Leon Uris’s, “Battle Cry,” Norman Mailer’s “The Naked and the Dead,” and Joseph Heller’s “Catch-22”), and Jews, not surprisingly, were prominent characters in these novels. The same phenomenon occurred in the realm of music. Jewish classical and popular composers were in the forefront in the effort to mobilize music behind the war effort, and they wrote many of the most popular and enduring wartime musical compositions.

A music analysis

Among those that will be discussed and played at the event are Aaron Copland’s “Fanfare for the Common Man,” Morton Gould’s “American Salute,” Irving Berlin’s “God Bless America,” and Irving Berlin’s “God Bless America.”

Dr. Shapiro continued on pg. 6

Dr. Jerome Horowitz JHS Past President

In May, the Jewish Historical Society lost one of its most devoted past presidents when Dr. Jerome Horowitz passed away. Jerry served in that capacity from 2006 to 2008 and brought many advancements to the society throughout his tenure. During his first year in office he directed what still remains as the society’s most successful fundraiser when he chose Murray Laulicht as recipient of the JHS 2007 Lasting Impression Award. He also directed the moving of the event from the Federation campus to the prestigious Crystal Plaza in Livingston, NJ. He continued to serve as an important advisor for several years after he stepped down as president.

Jerry was devoted to the things that mattered most to him: his family, his community, dentistry and his beloved New York Giants.

He was also deeply committed to the vital task of preserving the history of the MetroWest Jewish community.

U.S. Navy Veteran of WWII

After attending East Orange schools he finished his preparatory schooling at the Riverside Military Academy in Georgia. During WWII he served as a Navy Pharmacist’s Mate attached to the 6th Marine Division in the Pacific campaigns of Guadalcanal, Kwajalein and Eniwetok. After his discharge he earned a bachelor’s degree from Rutgers in 1946 and his DDS from Temple University in 1950 and opened his Millburn office in 1951.

Dr. Horowitz founded the dental department at the Daughters of Israel Geriatric Center in West Orange. He also served for seven years on the New Jersey State Board of dentistry with one term as president.

In addition, Dr. Horowitz served on the Northeast Regional Board of Dental Examiners and as its Chief Examiner from 1991 through 1993.

Impressive community service

He also developed a record of community service that is as impressive as it is long. He was a past president of the Millburn Board of Education on which he served for six years, the founding president of the Millburn-Short Hills Volunteer First Aid Squad, a past president of the Millburn-Springfield Kiwanis club.
I n the well-known motion picture, "It's a Wonderful Life", the point is succinctly made that if Jimmy Stewart's character had never been born, the world in which he lived would've been very different.

Accordingly, if there were no Warren Grover there would be no Jewish Historical Society of NJ, at least as we know it today.

For us, one of Warren’s greatest achievements – and there are so many – is his molding of the society into one of the foremost and highly-respected historical societies in the state – perhaps the nation.

It was in 1995, five years after the society’s formation, when Ruth and Jerry Fien, cofounders of the Society, sat at their breakfast table and asked Warren if he would consider taking over the presidency because Ruth wanted to step down the following year after having served six years as its CEO. Warren says, “I didn’t hesitate for one second,” and so began his exemplary leadership. He was then tutored by Saul Schwarz, also a society cofounder and unofficial historian of the Jewish community of MetroWest, who, according to Warren, “had a selfless devotion to the society.” Although Warren was also a founding member and on its original board of trustees with 12 other community leaders, he had not yet become one of its officers. And so he ascended to the office of president in 1996 and began placing his imprint on the organization. And, as the saying goes, “the rest is history” (pun intended)!

He grows our prestige

It didn’t take long for Warren to change the society’s image from a small repository to a well-regarded historical society by bringing to the community, all in one year, six outstanding Jewish historical scholars in one of the most successful lecture series ever held in our area. He conducted many bus tours of “Jewish Newark” as a fundraising effort for the society. He also embarked upon a personal fundraising effort by getting community leaders to contribute to an endowment fund to benefit the society.

Another of his accomplishments was to bring to the society, Linda Forgosh, who he hired originally as Outreach Director after writing a successful grant proposal for a matching grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission and MetroWest Federation. Her job was to visit every synagogue and Jewish organization in Morris and Sussex counties to obtain their very valuable archives for preservation. Her efforts helped “grow” the society immeasurably. Linda eventually rose to the posts of Curator and Executive Director of the society, a leadership position which has led to the community’s high regard for the organization through her popular exhibitions and public relations efforts.

Warren held this post until 2002 when he turned to Max Kleinman, then CEO of MetroWest Federation, for Max’s recommendation for his replacement. Fortunately for us he recommended Bob Max who stepped into the position with his own style and influence.

Forms Newark History Society

In 2000, Warren, along with Newark historians, Charles Cummings and Tim Crist, formed the Newark History Society. It, too, has taken its place as one of the most highly regarded historical societies in the nation. The Newark Archive Project, which Warren helped create and support with Rutgers University, and has as its director, former JHS board member Gail Malmgreen, has produced nearly 3,000 archival collections with materials dealing with the city of Newark, which, by the way, is celebrating its 350th anniversary this year. Warren has been a moving force in that celebration as well. In its 16 years, the Newark History Society has produced 60 outstanding programs all offered free to the general public!

A native Newarker

Warren was born in Newark and educated in Newark’s public schools, graduating from Weequahic High School in January, 1955. He then went on to obtain his AB and MA Degrees in History from New York University. He then joined a family business, Merit Mailers in Elizabeth, NJ and rose to the position of president and CEO. After selling the business in 1996, he returned to his first love and became an instructor of history at Newark College of Engineering and, eventually a visiting professor of Newark history at Rutgers Newark University.

Board memberships and awards

In addition to his serving on the board of the JHS from 1990 to the present time he has served on the board of the New Jersey Historical Society from 2000 to the present as well as his ongoing board position of the Newark History Society. He has appeared as speaker and panelist at scores of Newark history events throughout New Jersey and has been involved in UJA and MetroWest Federation as an associate campaign chair as well as Chair of the Circle. He has served on the Federation board as well as the boards of the Jewish News, Jewish Community Housing Corp. and MetroWest’s Population Study. In 2008 he was recognized by the Newark Arts Council with the “Art & The City” award as well as a Special Recognition award from the Newark Public Library.

Books and other publications

Warren authored the acclaimed book “Nazis in Newark”, now in its fourth edition. He wrote “The History of the Newark Communist Party, 1917–1933” as well as articles on Newark history for the NJ Italian Tribune and the NJ Jewish News. He is currently working on a book titled “Newark In Extremis.”

So it is with great admiration that we give a huge Yasher Koach to Warren for his outstanding and continuing support of our society and all he has accomplished for the Jewish community and beyond.

Dr. Horowitz, continued from page 3

and a past president of Congregation B’nai Israel of Millburn. In 1990 he was the vice-president of the Daughters of Israel Geriatric Center, and served on the Board of Trustees of the Jewish Federation of MetroWest. He was Chairman of the Professions Division of the United Jewish Appeal and chairman (twice) of the Dental Division.

He leaves his wife, the former Rita Tepper, four children and five grandchildren. His funeral was held before an overflow crowd at Temple Oheb Shalom in South Orange.

He will be missed by all.

(Note: If you would like to make a donation in tribute to Jerry, go to the society’s website at www.jhs-nj.org and click on “Tributes”) 

HATS OFF TO:

By Howard Kiesel

Editor

Warren Grover

SYNAGOGUE RESEARCH – Committee members, from left, Phil Yourish, Harold Kravis, and Dr. Max Herman, conduct research in the Jewish Historical Society archives for an exhibit about the history of Newark’s synagogues. Anyone who has photographs or artifacts from a Newark synagogue is asked to contact Linda Forgosh at 973-929-2994 or lforgosh@jfedgmw.org.
Notes From the Stacks
By Jill Hershorin
JHS Archivist

Collections
• Recently we received The Jacqueline Levine Collection. (See photos page 3) The materials reflect the decades of dedication to social causes. For over six decades, Jackie has served the Jewish community and has been involved in key moments of civil rights, women’s rights and the movement to free Soviet Jewry.
• The donated materials include reference materials, publications, minutes from meetings and discussion groups, as well as speeches by Jackie and others.
• Some of the organizations that she was involved with are: NJCRAC, American Jewish Congress, Council of Jewish Federations, National Conference on Soviet Jewry, and Jewish Council for Public Affairs.
• Some topics that she was involved with include: Israel-Mid East issues, Vietnam War, Jewish and Palestinian Women’s Dialogues, Nazi War Criminals, Ethiopian Jews, Russian Jews.
• Some of the items of interest include: Her arrest documents from protesting at the Russian Embassy in D.C. in 1986, many of her speeches, a scrapbook highlighting some of her work, Israel Mission diaries, and her work with hunting Nazi war criminals.
• We are pleased to add this important collection to our archive!

Research
• In April a former employee of the Newark Beth Israel Medical Center donated some interesting items related to the hospital as well as a Weequahic High School Yearbook, The Legend from 1953.
• Added to the Judge Leo Yanoff Collection were items donated by his children to include a book of published opinions from 1969-1991 as well as his memoirs.
• A generous donation that has been added to our popular “Dolls for Democracy” was 5 new dolls from Doris Wise. 2 of the 5 dolls are new additions and will be used in future exhibitions.
• In June, we received a new collection of scrapbooks from the B’nai B’rith Women Agam Chapter, Hopatcong. Our B’nai B’rith Women’s Chapters Collections now total 5.

New members
Ellen L. Cramer
Amy Jayson
Kayle Engle-Lewis
June Sachs

Tributes
In memory of
Dr. Jerry Horowitz
Robert Rose
Howard Kiesel
Bob Max
Carol Marcus

In memory of
Joseph Wilf
Howard Kiesel

In memory of
Norbert Gaelen
Howard & Audree Kiesel

In Honor of Bob and Ellen Rose’s 50th Anniversary
Dr. Bill Nadelberg

In honor of Bob Cowen, JHS 2016 Honoree
Niso Abuaf
Barbara and Jonathan Bick
Hoda and Robert Blau
Robin and Neal Buchalter
Beth Furman
Ross and Nancy Gillman
Harriet Hirsch
Meg and Howard Jacobs
Hy Kleinman
Norman Krueger
Elaine Lieb
Judith Lieberman
Amy and Bill Lipsey
Sandra Newman
Sheba Mittelman
Patricia Nathan
Barbara and Bob Rosenberg
Ann Stein
Lois and Bruce Tapper
Timothy Todreas
Marilyn Zirl

Donations
Fred Bennett
Audrey & Norbert Gaelen
Edison Properties Newark Foundation
Unity Club of Maplewood
Reviews of Forgosh’s Bio of Louis Bamberger

“Forghosh’s captivating biography of Louis Bamberger (1855–1944)...is the first comprehensive examination of Bamberger’s life, and it is long overdue.”

—Library Journal

“In an elegantly written biography, Linda Forgosh brings Louis Bamberger back to life. Newark’s leading citizen of the first half of the twentieth century, he was the city’s most successful merchant and a philanthropist extraordinaire. Yet today he is largely forgotten. Forgosh has filled this void with a fascinating work that both celebrates this reclusive giant and recreates the Newark of his time.”

—Warren Grover, founder of the Newark History Society and author of “Nazis in Newark”

“This biography, by Linda B Forgosh, is the first biography of one of the greatest of merchant princes descended from German Jewish immigrants who came to America in the 19th century. I finished this well done biography with a great sense of admiration for Mr. Bamberger and I wish I could have shopped in his store. Unlike his contemporaries ... he did not develop a contempt for the average person. His employees all held him in high esteem. When he died all flags in Newark flew at half staff three days. He is someone we can truly admire and I thank (Ms. Forgosh) for making it possible to know his story.”

—The Reading Life

Forgosh Speaking & Book Signing

October 9
Couples at Leisure 2-3 p.m.
Aidekman JCC, 901 Route 10, Whippany, NJ

October 30
Words bookstore 2 p.m.
179 Maplewood Avenue, Maplewood, NJ

November 3
Temple B’nai Jeshurun 12 noon
1025 South Orange Avenue, Short Hills, NJ

November 3
Newark History Society 6-8 p.m.
Newark Public Library
5 Washington Street, Newark, NJ

November 30
Congregation Ohr Shalom 9:30 a.m.
Summit Jewish Community Center
67 Kent Place Boulevard, Summit, NJ

December 1
New Jersey Historical Society 7 p.m.
52 Park Place, Newark, NJ

December 11
Newark Museum 3 p.m.
49 Washington Street, Newark, NJ

Dr. Shapiro, continued from pg. 3


RSVP will be appreciated. Contact Irene Segal by email isegal@jhswn.org or by phone 973-929-2703. Admission is free and light refreshments will be served.

Calendar of Events

“Let’s Face the Music and Dance”
September 28, 2016 2-4 p.m.
Aidekman JCC 901 Route 10, Whippany
Speaker: Dr. Edward Shapiro,

“Meet me under Bamberger’s clock”
October 20, 2016 7:00 p.m.
Aidekman JCC 901 Route 10 Whippany

“Meet me under Bamberger’s clock”
Opening Reception and book signing
December 1, 2016 7:00 p.m.
NJ Historical Society, 56 Park Place, Newark
Speaker: Linda Forgosh

JHSNJ Board Meeting
September 20, 2016 4 p.m.
Aidekman JCC 901 Route 10, Whippany

All Welcome – Free Admission

For more information please visit www.jhsnj.org