

Heritage Highlights

A Publication of The Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County

Vol. XI Issue 1 - Fall/Winter 2022-23 Elul, Tishrei, Cheshvan, Kislev 5782, 5783



The sanctuary interior of Congregation B'nai Israel in Rumson, which is celebrating it's 100th Anniversary in 2022.

Left: Stained glass windows depicting historical and biblical features of Israel.

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President's Message



Larry Gurman

- Larry Gurman
JHMOMC President

Executive Director's Message

Last July marked my third anniversary working with the Museum. These three years have been quite unique, with the Pandemic raging through the better half of my tenure. Nevertheless, I am incredibly grateful for the connections I have made with the community and my religion.

Within these three years, The Museum received over \$60,000 in grant funding, ample community support in creating the Jews of India exhibit, the Rabbi Sally Priesand exhibit, and hundreds of people attended programs or Speakers Bureau talks on Zoom or in-person. As the Museum continues to grow, so does our impact. The Museum has participated in the Gratitude Project with the Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey and recently completed a school supplies drive for Jewish Family and Children's Services of Middlesex county. It is essential to devote time to uplift the community surrounding the Museum because, without our members, we are nothing. The Museum provides a cultural hub to learn more about Jewish heritage, a safe space to identify proudly as a Jewish person, and a place to highlight the achievements of the Jewish community long before the Museum became what it is today.

Upon reflecting on my years at the Museum, I cannot express how grateful I am to the Board of Trustees, volunteers, interns, and all the Museum's members for believing in my capacity to run this Museum. I have learned so much from the people I meet and valuable lessons I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

- Jessica Solomon
Executive Director

Jewish Heritage Museum
of Monmouth County
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*NEW EXHIBIT TO HONOR THE
100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF
CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL, RUMSON*

Mazel Tov to Congregation B'nai Israel as it reaches the 100th Anniversary of its founding! The Jewish Heritage Museum is planning an exhibit this fall that will share the story of the congregation's founding, its role as a center for Jewish life, and the many achievements and contributions that the Congregation has made to the community over the course of a century. The exhibit will be open to the public on October 9 2022, with an Opening Reception on October 23 beginning at 3:00 PM. The exhibit will continue through the end of 2022.



Sunday School students in front of the synagogue on Riverside Avenue, 1932

The records leading up to the founding of the Congregation are slight. A group of men had been gathering in a private home "for the purpose of founding a spiritual center - a synagogue and Talmud Torah" - between 1914 and 1917 under the name Ahavat Shalom of Red Bank. The next time there is a record of the group's activities is January 5, 1922, when a meeting of the Congregation B'nai Israel was held at the Town Hall in Red Bank. A few days later, at a second meeting in a space above the Kreidel Store, the group decided to purchase the building at 10 Riverside Avenue in Red Bank. In order to avoid controversy in the town, the title was first transferred from the owners to member Max Mindlin, on

January 23, 1922. The following day, the title was transferred to Congregation B'nai Israel. The Congregation began with 40 families, and descendants of some of those families remain members 100 years later. The history of this congregation is, in many ways, a reflection of America's history and the effect that the nation's events had on the trajectory of the congregation. The 1920s and '30s the congregation felt the effects of the Great Depression. It was also a time when the rise of Nazism in Germany raised alarm bells. The congregation's leadership was active in supporting efforts to help European Jews. In the 1940s, the congregation supported the nation's war effort and military; and in the post-war years, the congregation emphasized education, community service, and support of Israel.



Removing the Torahs from the ark as they begin the transfer to the new building in Rumson

In 1955, the congregation formally affiliated with United Synagogue of America, the central federation of Conservative congregations in the US and Canada. In 1958, the Congregation moved from Red Bank to a newly constructed building on Hance Avenue in Tinton Falls, dedicating the sanctuary in May 1958.

Continued on Page 4

During the turbulent '60s, the congregation focused on discrimination against Jews in the Soviet Union. In addition, as women gained greater influence in public life, so, too, did the women of Congregation B'nai Israel, becoming Board members and leaders, fully participating in the congregation's spiritual and organizational life.



A wedding held in the current sanctuary

Through the next decades Congregation B'nai Israel has been in the forefront of social activism on behalf of Israel, community social service needs, and community healing events after national tragedies such as 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the shooting at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburg. All of this, even as the synagogue met the spiritual and life cycle needs of its members with full focus on Jewish tradition, Jewish education, and Jewish values.

Make plans this fall to visit the Museum to see this new exhibit, or join us for the Opening Reception.

- Alice Berman,
Chair, Exhibits Committee

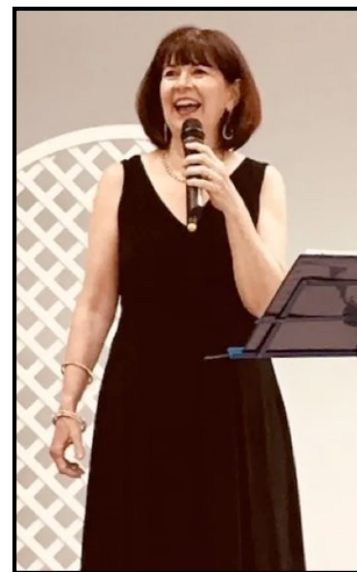
Deborah Zecher
Cabaret Singer / Rabbi
Comes to the Museum September 18th
at 4 PM



On her website, Rabbi Deborah Zecher describes herself as “A rabbi who sings the Great American songbook and more. A cabaret singer who loves to tell stories. A storyteller who uses music and Jewish values to illustrate those stories.”

Straight from *Don't Tell Mama* in Manhattan, The Jewish Heritage Museum welcomes Rabbi Zecher to perform on Sunday, September 18 at 4 PM. Admission is \$20 for non-members, \$18 for members. This program is presented in connection with the Museum's exhibit on Rabbi Sally Priesand's 50th ordination anniversary, and is sponsored in part by members of Monmouth Reform Temple.

Rabbi Zecher grew up in Pennsylvania, and wanted to become a rabbi from a young age. She was ordained in 1982, the 49th woman to be ordained following Rabbi Priesand. She served congregations in New York and Maryland, and as chaplain at American University and Williams College, before settling at a congregation in the Berkshires in Great Barrington, Massachusetts as both rabbi and cantor. In those years, she presented numerous concerts as fundraisers in a show that combined Biblical stories with Broadway songs - and her unique genre was born. In 2014 she launched a successful career as a cabaret singer, and she will bring her special program to the Museum this fall.



Seating is limited, so make reservations early for this delightful, in-person program. You won't want to miss it!

Alice Berman
Chair, Exhibits Committee

The History Behind the Dreidel



Some dreidels are not dreidels at all but model the beloved spinning top game. This dreidel is part of a set of salt and pepper shakers!

The dreidel has a significant symbolic meaning in Jewish culture—the miracle of the story of Hanukkah. The dreidel is a spinning top with four sides and each side is inscribed with a letter of the Hebrew language. Dreidels from outside of Israel are inscribed with Nun (nothing), Gimel (all), Hey or Chai (half), and Shin (put in), which create an acronym for the Hebrew saying, “Nes

Gadol Hayah Sham,” meaning “a great miracle happened there.” The letters also represent the four kingdoms that attempted to destroy Judaism in ancient times: N stood for Nebuchadnetzar (Babylon); H stood for Haman (Persia or Madai); G stood for Gog (Greece); and S stood for Seir (Rome). However, in Israel, dreidels have Pey instead of Shin, which is an acronym for the phrase “Nes Gadol Hayah Po,” meaning “a great miracle happened here.” This saying refers to the Maccabees’ victory over the Syrian-Greek army in 165 BCE and the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem where, according to the story of Hanukkah, the one-day supply of oil burned for eight days. The dreidel’s Hebrew letters also represent the divine characteristics of a human being: Nun stood for Nefesh (soul); Gimmel for Guf (body); Shin for Sechel (understanding); and Hey for Hakol (everything). Surprisingly, the dreidel’s letters have another representation. In Hebrew, each letter has a numerical value and the value of the dreidel’s four letters is 358, which is also the numerical value of Moshiach, or Messiah.

Most scholars believe that the dreidel stemmed from the English version of the top, referred to as a teetotum or totum which was popular during Christmas. Totum originates from



This unique porcelain dreidel opens and Hanukkah gelt can be placed inside.

the Latin “totum,” meaning “all.” The four letters also had different meanings: T = Take all; H = Half; P = Put down; and N = Nothing. The game also arrived in Germany and the letters were changed. G stood for gantz (all), H for halb (half), N for nicht (nothing), and S for stell ein (put in). In Germany, Jewish children found interest in the game and it became a popular holiday pastime in Jewish culture. Yiddish-speaking Jews changed the name of the game to dreidel, which came from the German word drehen (to spin). Some believe that the teetotum was used in ancient Greek and Roman times where its connection to Hanukkah begins. Ancient Greeks had outlawed



Recently donated to the Museum by Barbara Silvers’ estate, this dreidel by artist Yair Emanuel from Jerusalem showcases the beauty of Israel in his designs.

the study of Torah and the crime was punishable by death, which resulted in Jews having to study in secret. If Jews suspected getting caught, they would fool the Greeks by hiding their Torah scrolls and pretending to play with dreidels.

Currently, dreidels are created and decorated with different materials and paints. For example, some dreidels are silver to fulfill the Jewish commandment of hiddur mitzvah while others are wooden because of the Prophet Ezekiel’s vision of the end of exile, when the Twelve Tribes of Israel will be written together on a wooden tablet. Family members can use their creativity to design their dreidels and bond with each other for an entertaining game of dreidel!

Arsheya Puri
Administrative Assistant

Sources

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- <https://abc7news.com/dreidel-hannukah-chanukah-hanukkah-celebrations/408071/>
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- <https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/2014-12-14/ty-article/.premium/gyration-nation-the-weird-ancient-history-of-the-dreidel/0000017f-db4a-db22-a17f-ffff3e080000>

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, November 12, 2022 @ 7:30 PM

THE JEWISH HERITAGE MUSEUM OF
MONMOUTH COUNTY'S

Casino Night!

AT THE FREEHOLD JEWISH CENTER
59 BROAD STREET, FREEHOLD, NJ.

Professionally-run ~ Basket Raffles ~ Desserts and Wine
Casino Games

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL THE MUSEUM AT 732-252-6990 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.JHMOMC.ORG.

THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO EVERYONE!

The Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County presents its first fundraising event since the Pandemic, Casino Night, on Saturday, November 12th, 2022, at 7:30 PM at the Freehold Jewish Center. Place your bets and win great prizes during our raffle giveaway! The proceeds from this program will help support the Museum's efforts to explore and exhibit the rich and unique 300-year history of the Jewish residents of Greater Monmouth County.

The evening will feature popular casino games: blackjack, craps, roulette, Texas Hold'em, and other professionally run casino games on Saturday, November 12th, 2022, @ 7:30 PM at the Freehold Jewish Center. Tickets for this fundraising event are \$75 per person or \$140 per couple. This includes admission to the event and \$200 in chips.

Reserve your spot by October 12th to receive \$50 in additional chips.

For more information or to make a reservation, please call the Museum at 732-252-6990 or visit our website at <http://www.jhmomc.org>.

THIS ROSH HASHANAH, GIVE
YOUR FAMILY THE SWEETEST
GIFT – YOUR JEWISH LEGACY.



HOW WILL YOU ASSURE
JEWISH TOMORROWS?



The Jewish Heritage Museum
of Monmouth County



To create your Jewish legacy contact the
Museum at 732-252-6990.

Fall Programs!

Sunday, September 18th at 4 PM

From Rabbi to Cabaret Singer



Rabbi Deborah Zecher

Rabbi Deborah Zecher describes herself as “A rabbi who sings the Great American songbook and more. A cabaret singer who loves to tell stories. A storyteller who uses music and Jewish values to illustrate those stories.”

This program is presented in connection with the Museum's exhibit on Rabbi Sally Priesand's 50th ordination anniversary, and is sponsored in part by members of Monmouth Reform Temple.

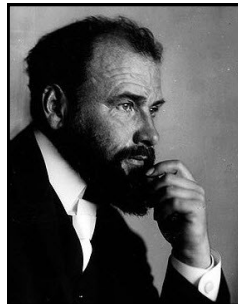
\$18 members, \$20 non-members

Wednesday, October 26th at 2 PM

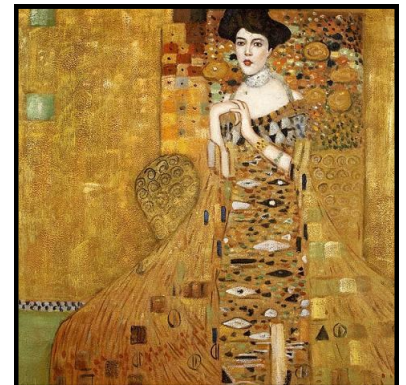
Gustav Klimt: The Women in Gold A Talk led by Professor Maurice Mahler



Prof.
Maurice Mahler



Gustav Klimt



Portrait of Adele Bloch Bauer was featured in the movie, *Woman in Gold*.

\$10 members,
\$12 non-members

Sunday, October 30th at 2 PM
Itay Goren in Concert



Pianist Itay Goren

Pianist Itay Goren's playing is described as "an evocative journey from shimmering excitement to calm contemplation." His performances touch the heart and magically transport the listener's imagination.

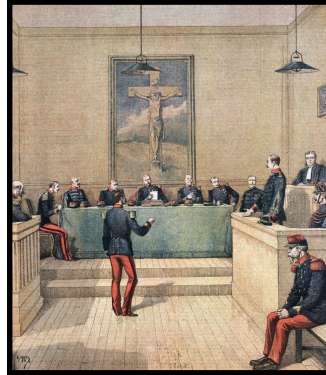
His concert will include pieces by Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn Milhaud and Ravel.

\$15 members, \$18 non-members

Sunday, November 13th at 2 PM

The Dreyfus Affair: One of the Top Ten Trials in History (1896-1906)

A Talk by Susan Addelston



Learn how the trial of an obscure French artillery captain changed the course of history, shook a major European nation to its foundation, inspired two extraordinary literary milestones, sundered families and friendships and resulted in the creation of the State of Israel.

\$10 members, \$12 non-members

Wednesday, November 16th at 2 PM

An Afternoon with Artist, David Levy



David Levy's presentation will focus upon the observation, analysis, and evaluation of his art; an art that has evolved over fifty years; from Optical art to hard-edged representational painting, and after a hiatus of forty-two years, his returning to Optical art and moving toward abstract geometric painting.

\$5 members, \$7 non-members

Sunday, November 20th at 2 PM

*Mel Brooks:
"t's Good To Be The King*



John Kenrick

presented
by
John
Kenrick



Mel Brooks

Brooklyn native, Mel Brooks, became one of the most influential comic writers and filmmakers of our time. A humorous look at the life and career of a man who discovered how to offend and amuse generations of admirers. Mel Brooks has directed a number of classic film comedies including *The Producers*, *Blazing Saddles* and *Young Frankenstein*. Brooks has earned an Academy Award and multiple Emmy, Grammy and Tony Awards.

\$12 members, \$15 non-members

Fall Programs!

Sunday, December 4th at 2 PM

Florian Schantz Jazz Combo
Songs from the Great American Songbook



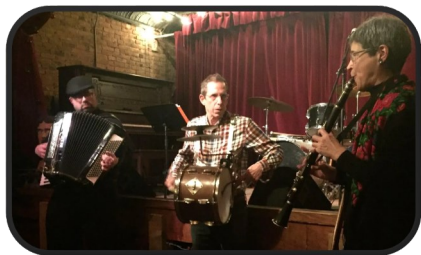
The Florian Schantz Jazz Combo was formed in 2012 by then 9 year old Florian Schantz. Since then, the band has delighted audiences in hundreds of venues in the greater NYC area and in Germany.

\$12 members, \$15 non-members

Sunday, December 25th at 2 PM

T-Klez!

Klezmer Band Concert



Reena Ressler
(Clarinetist),
David Licht
(Drummer), **Psachya**
Septimus
(Accordianist, Pianist)

Rooted firmly in traditional 19th and 20th century klezmer (the music of the Jews of Eastern Europe) T-Klez plays a full gamut of tasty tunes. These range from spirited dance pieces played at weddings, to slower waltzes, tangos, and Romanian horas, to the rejoicing and spiritual wordless melodies of the Hasidim, as well as new repertoire from Romania and the U.S.

\$15 members, \$20 non-members

Sunday, December 11th at 2 PM

An Afternoon with
Artist Harvey Levy



Jacob's Dream



A Shepherd's Work is Never Done

Harvey was educated in part by the School of Visual Arts and mostly by life and an imagination that is wild and whimsical, as well as a deep connection to the Torah, the Jewish Bible.

Harvey (Chaviv) Levy is a Sephardic Jew. In many of his pieces, one can find imagery that is especially Sephardic in both shapes and designs.

Harvey's works of art are usually packed full of intricate themes, design, and humor. One can completely enjoy the art from a distance, enjoying form and color, or spend a lot of time in viewing every inch of the page to appreciate the works real essence and totality of meaning.

Please enjoy Harvey's art ... with a smile and a pensive appreciation of the depth that his artwork brings!

Free of Charge

Become a Member

The Jewish Heritage Museum is pleased that its membership is growing! Becoming a member and renewing membership, ensures that we will be here to achieve our mission and goals. Membership to this "hidden jewel" in the community is essential to keeping our Jewish heritage alive.

Please support the Museum by completing this membership form and returning it today! Volunteer, visit, and attend programs, but become a member first. Thank you.

- Helene Cohen
Chair, Membership Committee

Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County

310 Mounts Corner Drive, Freehold, NJ 07728

732-252-6990




BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

BASIC Membership

- ___ Individual \$20.00
- ___ Family \$36.00
- ___ Institutional \$40.00
- ___ Senior (age 65)/Student \$18.00

ENHANCED Membership - includes the Basic Membership level of your choice (**select above**) with your enhanced level (**check below**) of the Museum. Thank you for your support!

- ___ Supporter \$50
- ___ Patron \$100
- ___ Benefactor \$250
- ___ Donor \$500
- ___ Founder \$1000+



I have already remembered The Jewish Heritage Museum in my estate plan.

I would like information on remembering The Jewish Heritage Museum in my estate plan.

*Preserving the Past and Present
for the Future*

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Tel.# _____ E-mail _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

PLEASE MAIL THIS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION WITH YOUR PAYMENT TO:

JHMOMC, PO BOX 7078, FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Or, to register online, go to www.jhmomc.org/membership

The JHMOMC is a tax exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is handicapped accessible. Donations and Membership dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Consult with a tax professional.

For office use only: CC _____ Type _____

JHMOMC Calendar of Events, Spring / Summer 2022

Tuesdays at 10:30 AM Jewish Journaling Workshop \$5 per session

All programs will be held *in person* and *live streamed*. Upon registration, you will receive an email with a link if you wish to view the program on Zoom.

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------|------|--|
| Sunday | Sept. 18 | 4 PM | <i>From Rabbi to Cabaret Singer</i>
A concert by Rabbi Deborah Zecher
\$18 members, \$20 non-members |
| Wednesday | Oct. 26 | 2 PM | <i>Gustav Klimt: The Women in Gold</i>
A talk by Professor Maurice Mahler
\$10 members, \$12 non-members |
| Sunday | Oct. 23 | 3 PM | <i>Exhibit Opening Reception</i>
100th Anniversary of the founding of Congregation
B’Nai Israel, Rumson |
| Sunday | Oct. 30 | 2 PM | <i>Pianist Itay Goren in Concert</i>
\$15 members, \$18 non-members |
| Sunday | Nov. 13 | 2 PM | <i>The Dreyfus Affair: One of the Top Ten Trials
in History (1896-1906)</i>
A Talk by Susan Addelston
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| Wednesday | Nov. 16 | 2 PM | <i>An Afternoon with Artist, David Levy</i>
\$5 members, \$7 non-members |
| Sunday | Nov. 20 | 2 PM | <i>Mel Brooks: It's Good To Be The King</i>
presented by John Kenrick
\$12 members, \$15 non-members |
| Sunday | Dec. 4 | 2 PM | <i>Songs from the Great American Songbook</i>
Florian Schantz Jazz Combo
\$12 members, \$15 non-members |
| Sunday | Dec. 11 | 2 PM | <i>An Afternoon with Artist Harvey Levy</i>
Free of Charge |
| Sunday | Dec. 25 | 2 PM | <i>T-Klez Klezmer Band Concert</i>
\$15 members, \$18 non-members |

For more information or to make paid reservations to any of our events, please call the Museum at 732-252-6990 or visit our website at www.jhmomc.org.

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Monmouth County
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Freehold, NJ 07728

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and is handicapped accessible.

