

Heritage Highlights

A Publication of The Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County

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Shevat, Adar, Nissan, Iyar 5783



Solomon Schechter (1847-1915): founder of the United Synagogue of America and President of the Jewish Theological Seminary

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President's Message



Larry Gurman

The Museum provides us with the opportunity to connect and communicate with each other as we share and enjoy the exhibits, programs, lectures, journaling, and other varied activities that the Museum offers. It is a joy to hold, once again, in-person programming that interests our members and guests. We are also expanding our audience through the utilization of the internet. Soon we will be sending out a survey to ascertain how we can better serve you as we celebrate our history, culture, and heritage. Thank you, in advance, for any advice or suggestions that you have to offer, which will be helpful and valuable to the Museum and greatly appreciated.

The Museum is vibrant and active because of the contributions made by so many of its members and supporters. Here are a few things that we are thankful for at JHMOMC:

OUR ARTIFACT DONORS --- for giving us a piece of your family's or community's history so that we can share your stories with the world through programs, exhibits, research, and *Heritage Highlights*,

OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES --- for giving of your time, your energy, your talents and your guidance to the Museum;

OUR VOLUNTEERS --- for helping our visitors feel at home in the Museum and assisting us in the work of our committees;

OUR DONORS and MEMBERS --- for believing in our mission and for providing us with the strongest possible foundation on which to maintain our Museum. We cannot do this without you!

- Larry Gurman
JHMOMC President

Executive Director's Message

At year's end, I want to thank all of you – our members, donors, visitors, community partners, volunteers, staff, and board members – this past year has been one of positive change and growth. During the year, we presented memorable exhibitions about Rabbi Sally Priesand's 50th anniversary of her ordination as America's first female rabbi and her contributions to Monmouth County. Another of the Museum's exhibits honors Congregation B'nai Israel of Rumson, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary.

The Museum also hosted public programs in-person and via Zoom and built formidable relationships with community members and institutions that will help guide us in our efforts to strengthen our exhibitions, programs, improve the visitor experience, and increase community outreach in the upcoming year.

The Museum hosted a fun-filled fundraiser/friend-raiser called Casino Night on Saturday, November 12th, 2022, at the Freehold Jewish Center. The evening included popular casino games including blackjack, craps, roulette, Texas Hold'em, and other professionally run casino games. It was very nice to see familiar and new faces supporting the Jewish Heritage Museum.

One last achievement before year-end, The Jewish Heritage Museum is pleased to announce the revival of its Oral History Project Committee headed by Board Member Arlene Lutz. The Museum received funding for the Oral History Project through the New Jersey Historical Commission. These funds will help with the costs of this project. The Museum is looking for volunteers to conduct the interviews and be a part of the preservation of Monmouth County's Jewish population.

With best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year,

- Jessica Solomon
Executive Director

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OPENING RECEPTION CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL: 100th ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDING

On October 23, 2022, the Museum hosted the Opening Reception for the newest of its temporary exhibits, *Congregation B'nai Israel: Honoring the 100th Anniversary of its Founding*. On hand were several dozen members of the Congregation, as well as Museum volunteers and friends. Visitors were able to leisurely inspect the five display panels, each spanning a twenty-year period, telling the history of the Congregation and 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.



On display are transparent views of two walls of stained glass windows installed in the Rumson Synagogue in 1966 and 1976, with depictions of Jewish holidays and themes on one wall, and the history of the Jewish people from the Burning Bush to the establishment of the State of Israel on the other.

Having started in a renovated house at 10 Riverside Avenue in Red Bank, the Congregation now calls its 1958 building at Hance and Ridge Roads in Rumson, its home.

Speaking at the opening event were Rabbi Douglas Sagal, who drew a comparison to the story of the Tower of Babel which was that week's Torah portion. He suggested that, unlike the builders of the



Rabbi Douglas Sagal delivering his remarks.

Tower who the commentaries suggest did not represent a caring community, the Founders of the Congregation who were from different places and walks of life, came together, and cared deeply about each other and their community. And unlike Babel, this communal tower (CBI) has been sustained for multiple generations.

Representing one of the Congregation's earliest families, longtime member Mimi Silberstein Friedman spoke about her early recollections of Red Bank, and reflected on the need at that time for Jewish businessmen to avoid using their family names when naming their businesses. But her parents did use their name - Silberstein's. Mimi told of her parents' involvement in the early days of the Congregation, and that her father served as President. However, after the stock market crash in 1929, money became tight and the family had to resign its membership, only to return when the economy improved. Mimi served as the Congregation's office manager for many years.



Mimi Silberstein Friedman

Nelly Segal, the Congregation's historian, who compiled the text for this exhibit, recounted beginning her research forty years ago in preparation



Nelly Segal

for the 60th anniversary, which involved translating and transcribing the early Yiddish language minutes at her dining room table, and through them, learning of the first connection between two groups who had begun separate congregations that were ultimately brought together as Congregation B'nai Israel. She elaborated with stories about a few of the earliest families, noting that there is too much to include in a single exhibit.

CBI President Barbara Rosen thanked the Museum and all the contributors for bringing this exhibit to life. She announced that the exhibit, underwritten by the Congregation, will next move to



Barbara Newman Rosen

Continued on Page 4

Announcing: Relaunch of our Oral Histories Project at the JHMOMC



Jean Klerman

the Eastern Branch of the Monmouth County Library. CBI long time member, and Jewish Heritage Museum member, Jean Klerman, also spoke about seeing her wish to create this exhibit come to fruition.

In addition to the wall panels, there are photos and newspaper articles highlighting significant community efforts including summer camp experiences for disadvantaged children in Red Bank; and, in support of Israel, the Judaica Showcase (renamed the Showcase of Israeli Arts in 2003) to show, sell, and support Israeli artists; and the Walk for Israel, later renamed the Shore Walk for Israel, which raised significant funds used by Magen David Adom and hospitals, to purchase ambulances and medical equipment in Israel.

The attendees viewed a brief, three-minute video, hosted by Rabbi Sagal, which included a thumbnail sketch of the Congregation's history, and it provided a preview of the full documentary, *100 years: Past, Present, and Future*, which was shown at the Museum on Sunday, December 18th at 2 PM.

The exhibit will be on view through January 15, 2023, when it will move to the Monmouth County Library.

- Alice Berman, Chair Exhibits Committee
Photos courtesy of Jerry Korn

The JHMOMC is excited to announce that we have formed a new team and received a ten thousand dollar grant to relaunch our Oral Histories project at the Museum. We want to invite our members to participate in this exciting new project and help us tell the stories of our Jewish Community.

You may not be aware, but we have had some excellent experiences with oral histories here at the Museum. As part of our WWII Exhibit, we interviewed many of the Jewish War Veterans that lived in Monmouth County. These video interviews and transcripts eventually were accepted into the Library of Congress and have become a permanent part of our history.

It is your turn now... Help us to tell your stories.

Recently, my father has been having memory issues. He is having trouble knowing where he is and what he is doing. But interestingly, his memories from 80 years ago, when he was a refugee from WWII, seem to be ever-present in his mind. My sister and I embarked on an effort to document his experiences and found the old original documents that his parents somehow brought over to America from their travels from Poland to Russia to Germany and Poland again then on to Paris, France and then to America. These documents, and the memories attached to them, have become a bit jumbled and fragmented in my father's memories over time.

Fortunately twenty years ago, I met the organizers of the USC Shoah Project founded by Stephen Spielberg and it arranged for my dad and my grandfather to be interviewed in the last week of the program. Their testimony and memories have become a permanent part of the Shoah Foundation oral and video memories. It is through those interviews that my sister and I were able to piece the fragmented memories and documents together into a cohesive story of my family's escape from Hitler's armies and eventual settlement in Bergen, Monmouth, and Ocean County, NJ.

My sister and I experienced great sadness but greater gratitude as we relived our family's history by listening to their stories from their own mouths. This documented history, personal stories, and experiences were here for us when the memories faded and failed.

We at the museum hope to provide a similar service to our community by recording the oral histories of our Jewish Community.

You can help bring this effort to life in a few ways.

1. Volunteer to help us conduct interviews.
2. Bring your stories and history to our program to become part of the story of us.
3. Tell your friends and family and get them to participate.

If you are interested, please reach out to the Museum at info@jhmomc.org or call us at 732-252-6990

- Marc Diamant
Vice President

INTERESTED IN ORAL HISTORIES?

50 years of county history tells saga of Jewish farmers

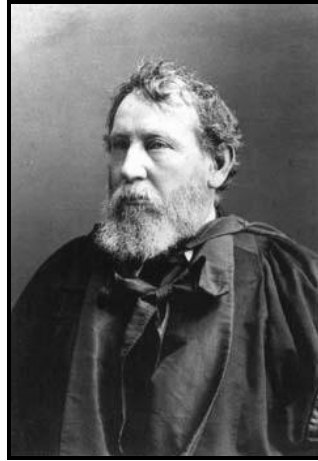
Dr. Gertrude Dubrovsky conducting oral histories for her book, *This Land was Theirs*.

The Jewish Heritage Museum is looking for volunteers to conduct oral history interviews with prominent members of Monmouth County's Jewish Community!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
JESSICA SOLOMON AT
JSOLOMON@JHMOMC.ORG

Solomon Schechter: In America, 120 Years

The school year 2022-23 marks the 120th anniversary of the arrival of Solomon Schechter to the United States. Generally regarded as the principal architect of Conservative Judaism, Schechter came to America in order to head the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, in New York.



Solomon Schechter

Born in Focsani, Romania in 1847, to a Hasidic family, Schechter studied at a local yeshivot, then went to Vienna to continue his education, and was ordained there as a rabbi. After studying in Berlin, Schechter went to England, where he became the Reader of Rabbinics at the famous University of Cambridge. Schechter attained worldwide renown for his discovery of the long-lost Hebrew original of the Apocryphal Book of Ben Sira as well as for his recovery of the contents of the Cairo Genizah, a vast treasure trove of medieval documents.



Solomon Schechter at work in Cambridge University Library, 1898

In 1902, Schechter was recruited to serve as the President of the Jewish Theological Seminary, which had been founded in New York in 1886 by Rabbi Sabato Morais of Philadelphia and other traditional rabbis. Starting in the fall of 1902, Schechter transformed the Seminary into a first-rate academic institution with a faculty that included such luminaries as Alexander Marx, Louis Ginzberg, and Israel Friedlander. Schechter remained its president until his death in 1915.

In 1913, Schechter founded the United Synagogue of America, which became the umbrella organization for all North American Conservative Synagogues.

Schechter's religious standpoint was somewhere between that of traditional Conservative Judaism and Modern/Orthodox Judaism; and the graduates



Louis Ginzberg, Solomon Schechter, and Israel Friedlaender, members of the Jewish Theological Seminary faculty circa 1909

of his Seminary served in both kinds of congregations. Schechter's philosophy emphasized both tradition and change – a deep love for Jewish tradition combined with a willingness to make modest changes to suit the tenor of the times. When he passed away in 1915, Schechter was regarded as one of America's most significant religious leaders.

Solomon Schechter was no stranger to the Jersey Shore, spending his vacations at places such as Atlantic Highlands and Lakewood, as well as in Atlantic City. By visiting the shore, Schechter was part of a long tradition of Conservative Jewish leaders that enjoyed our area. In 1887, the earliest students of the Seminary took a steamer to Long Branch, where they enjoyed a game of baseball at the home of Mr. J. Emanuel. Later, such Conservative leaders as Rabbi Charles Isaiah Hoffman of Newark and Professor Louis Ginzberg of the Seminary summered at the Shore; and it was at the home of Professor Ginzberg in Avon-by-the-Sea that the American Academy for Jewish Research was founded.

Today, 120 years after Solomon Schechter arrived in America, the Jewish Theological Seminary is still often referred to as "Schechter's Seminary."



The Solomon Schechter Day School in Howell closed in 2010. It is now the home of Yeshiva Emek Hatorah.

For more on Solomon Schechter, please see my books, *A Different Spirit: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1886-1902*, and also *Solomon Schechter*

in America: A Centennial Tribute, that I edited with the assistance of Rabbi Jonathan Waxman.

- Rabbi Dr. Robert E. Fierstien
Co-Chair History Committee

WINTER PROGRAMS

An Afternoon with Artist David Levy
Sunday, February 26, 2023 at 2 PM

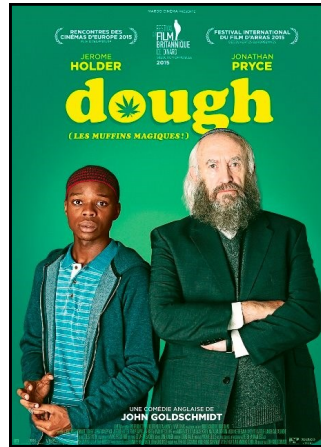


David Levy's presentation will focus upon the observation, analysis, and evaluation of his art: an art that has evolved over fifty years from Optical art to hard-edge representational painting, and after a hiatus of forty-two years, his returning to Optical art and moving toward abstract geometric painting.

\$8 members \$12 non-members



Winter Film Festival
Sunday, January 22, 2023 2 PM
Dough



Widower Nat Day (Jonathan Pryce) clings to his way of life as a Kosher bakery shop owner in London's East End. Understaffed, Nat reluctantly enlists the help of teenager Ayyash (Jerome Holder), who has a secret side gig selling marijuana to help his immigrant mother make ends meet. When Ayyash accidentally drops his stash into the mixing dough, the challah starts flying off the shelves and an unlikely friendship forms between the old Jewish baker and his young Muslim apprentice. *Dough* is a warmhearted and humorous story about overcoming prejudice and finding redemption in unexpected places.

Sunday, February 19, 2023 2 PM
Farewell Mr Haffman



Occupied Paris, 1941: all members of the Jewish community are instructed to come forward and identify themselves to authorities. Dedicated jeweler Joseph Haffmann, fearing the worst, arranges for his family to flee the city and offers his employee, François Mercier the chance to take over his store until the conflict subsides. But his own attempts to escape are thwarted, and Haffmann is forced to seek his assistant's protection.

Sunday, March 26, 2023 2 PM
Valiant Hearts



The story recounts the odyssey of six Jewish children in August 1942 who are forced to take refuge where no one will ever think to look for them: amidst the Louvre Museum artworks hidden in the Château de Chambord. Between fear, outbursts of laughter, and unexpected encounters, the children learn about independence and discover solidarity and friendship in the midst of tumultuous circumstances.

\$10 per film \$25 for all three films
 If you prefer, you may watch the films from home
 for 72 hours after the in-person date.

Thursday, JANUARY 26, 2023 at 11 AM

Managing Stress in a Stressful World



**A Talk on Zoom
by Rita Sason**

(Rita Sason is the Director of Jewish Family and Children's Service of the Jewish Federation of Ocean County.)

\$8 Members, \$12 non-members

Sunday, February 5, 2023 at 2 PM

A Talk by

**Registered Dietitian and Genealogist
Caryn Alter
and Genealogist Stephen Cohen**

**Gleaning Genealogical Clues
from Jewish Food:**



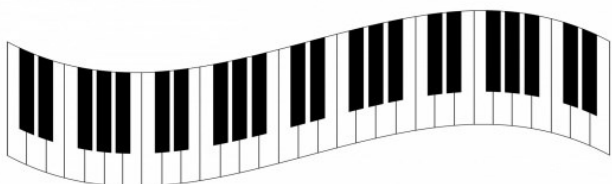
\$8 members, \$12 non-members

Sunday, March 19, 2023 at 2 PM

Itay Goren in Concert

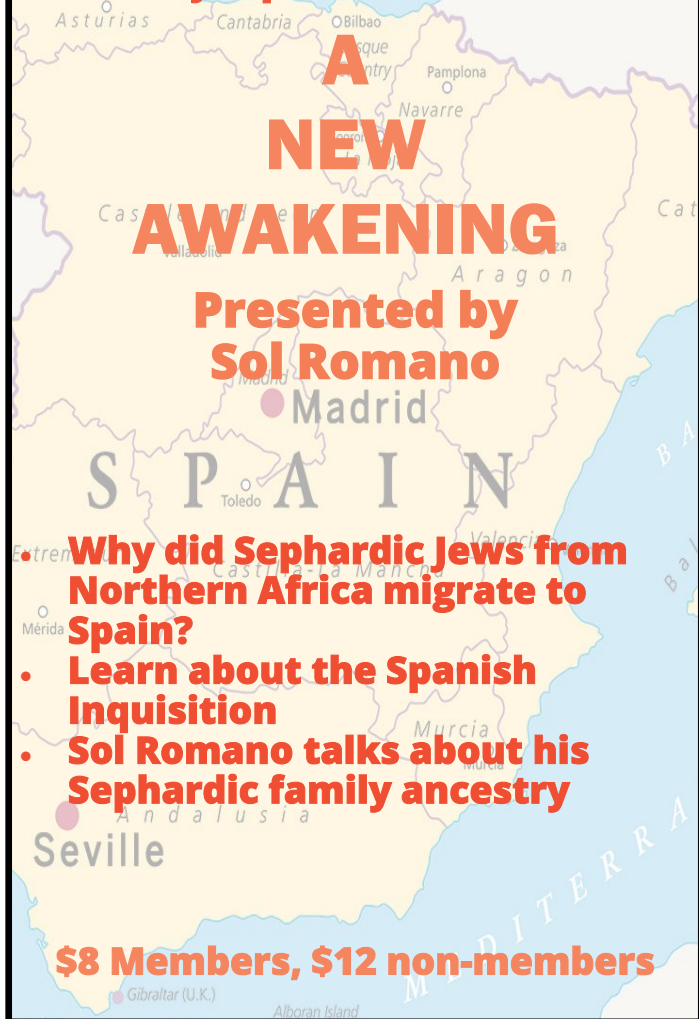


Pianist Itay Goren's playing is described as "an evocative journey from shimmering excitement to calm contemplation." His performances touch the heart and magically transport the listener's imagination. Mr Goren's concert will include pieces by Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Milhaud, and Ravel.



\$15 members, \$18 non-members

Sunday, April 16, 2023 at 2 PM



- **Learn about the Spanish Inquisition**
- **Sol Romano talks about his Sephardic family ancestry**

\$8 Members, \$12 non-members

Remembering ClaraGee Stamaty Ziment (1919-2022)



Book of Numbers
Verses 24-26
By ClaraGee Stamaty

In the spring of 2012, the Jewish Heritage Museum hosted an exhibit of artwork by renowned Monmouth County artist ClaraGee [nee. Kastner] Stamaty Ziment, which also included works by her late husband Stanley and son Mark. ClaraGee passed away on October 8th at the age of 103. Born in Ohio, she attended Cincinnati Art Academy and met and married Stanley Stamaty, who was a cartoonist. She, too, proved to be an effective cartoonist, and her work was published in major magazines including *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Collier's*, and *Seventeen*. She created cartoon characters "Sitter Sue" and "Ginny" for cartoons about teenagers. "Ginny" cartoons were collected into a popular book by the same name, and published by Scholastic, children's book publisher. The Stamatys moved from Ohio to Connecticut, Brooklyn, and finally Elberon in the late 1940s. In addition to cartoons, ClaraGee was a painter and art teacher. A charter member of the Guild of Fine Arts in Shrewsbury, her paintings and watercolors have been exhibited in galleries and museums, and are in private collections in Monmouth County and around the country. She has received numerous awards and accolades for all of her work, many of which had a distinct Jewish theme. She was a member of Temple Beth Miriam and the Monmouth Center for World Religions. The Museum extends condolences to ClaraGee's family. May her memory be a blessing.



PJ LIBRARY

Hamantaschen Bake

Make-your-own Hamantaschen and learn about the history behind these triangle cookies.
Perfect event for school-aged children to attend.

SUNDAY, MARCH 12TH, 2023 @ 2:30 PM

At the Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County

The Jewish Heritage Museum proudly presents
its upcoming exhibit:

**The Eisner Family: *From Stitching
Military Uniforms to Stitching Together
the Red Bank Jewish Community***



Beginning with two sewing machines in his Red Bank house, Sigmund Eisner built a booming family business which provided enormous opportunities for him and his descendants to employ hundreds of Jewish immigrants, support the founding of two synagogues, and serve the Jewish community in a myriad of ways. Eisner committed to ensuring the continuity of the Jewish community even as he and his children honorably provided military uniforms for the United States government, and later the Boy Scouts of America. This exhibit will include items on loan from the Eisner collection at the Red Bank Public Library.

Coming early Spring

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, Winter / Early Spring 2023

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 at home.

Winter Film Festival

Sunday Jan. 22 2 PM Film: *Dough*
Sunday Feb. 19 2 PM Film: *Farewell Mr Haffman*
Sunday Mar. 26 2 PM Film: *Valiant Hearts (Coeurs Viallants)*
\$10 per film \$25 for all three

Thursday Jan. 26 11 AM *Managing Stress in a Stressful World*
A Talk by Rita Sason
\$8 members, \$12 non-members

Sunday Feb. 5 2 PM *Gleaning Genealogical Clues from Jewish Food: You Are What You Eat*
A Talk by Caryn Alter and Stephen Cohen
\$8 members, \$12 non-members

Sunday Feb. 26 2 PM An Afternoon with Artist, David Levy
\$8 members, \$12 non-members

Sunday Mar. 19 2 PM Pianist *Itay Goren in Concert*
\$15 members, \$18 non-members

Sunday Apr. 16 2 PM *A New Awakening*
Presented by Sol Romano
\$8 members, \$12 non-members

Upcoming Programs in May and June

Sunday May 21 2 PM *Differences Between Sephardic & Ashkenazi Jews*
A Talk by Arie Levy

Sunday Jun. 4 2 PM *Monmouth Folk Dancers*

Sunday Jun. 11 11 AM Annual Meeting

Sunday Jun. 11 2 PM *Irving Berlin Retrospective*
A Concert by Singer Cheryl Parker, and Pianist Joe Accurso,

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

Jewish Heritage Museum Of
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