



# Jewish Historical Society of Memphis & The Mid-South

Founded in 1986

163 Beale Street

Memphis, TN 38103

NEWSLETTER  
NEWSLETTER  
NEWSLETTER  
NEWSLETTER  
NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 1988

Volume 1 Number 2

## Message from our President

Evidence of historic preservation is encouragingly all around us. Temple Israel, under the leadership of Shirley Feibelman and the assistance of Laura Spiegler, has established a congregational archive beginning with records, photographs and vintage religious school texts - all exhumed with heroic efforts from a basement accumulation of many years.

In Port Gibson, MS, the oldest synagogue in the state, Temple Gemiluth Chassed, has been purchased by a local couple and will be restored to its original 1891 design, even to its gold onion-shaped dome, after years of disuse and disrepair.

Meanwhile, artifacts from Port Gibson and other southern synagogues which no longer have functioning congregations will now acquire a meaningful home at the Henry S. Jacobs Camp in Utica, MS. A museum/synagogue funded in part by the Memphis Plough Foundation, has been built and dedicated there. Jewish youth will worship surrounded by artifacts from former congregations of the area, thereby creating a setting which links past and future. Jack A. Belz, President of Baron Hirsch Congregation, has made a special endowment for an oral history of the Holocaust survivors who reside in Memphis. Interviews with the survivors, conducted by Judy Peiser, will be recorded on cassette as another important source of research information.

Our historical society has also been thinking in a similar vein. Annette Levy Ratkin of the Nashville Jewish Federation and Archives kindly accepted an invitation to speak to our membership last fall. She gave us both encouragement and first-hand down-to-earth information about the establishment of a local archive. As we move toward that goal, we can realize that we are part of a widespread impetus in many communities toward the preservation of our heritage.

Harriet Stern

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Dr. Stephen D. Benin, Director of the Bornblum Judaic Studies at Memphis State University will be our Guest Speaker on Wednesday, May 4, 1988 at 7:30 P.M. at the Jewish Community Center.

The topic of his lecture will be, "Jews, Christians and The Bible, a Historical Overview".



## MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY FEATURED IN CITY HALL EXHIBIT

BY Judy Peiser, Executive Director  
Center for Southern Folklore

On October 21, 1987 the Hall of Mayors in Memphis' City Hall was transformed into an arena celebrating the history and culture of Memphis' Jewish community. The occasion was the premiere of the first in a series of monthly exhibits showcasing the diverse ethnic communities who call Memphis home. Memphis's Mayor Richard C. Hackett headlined the speakers who were on hand to salute the exhibit, called MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY: 1840 - PRESENT.



Over 400 people attended the opening and enjoyed traditional food and music. The exhibit contained historic and contemporary photographs and numerous artifacts representing secular and religious traditions. As Executive Director of the Center for Southern Folklore I served as curator and was assisted by a committee drawn from all segments of Memphis' Jewish Community who helped the development of this project and the organization of the month long exhibit. The Center for Southern Folklore has spent several years documenting the Jewish Community of Memphis and the Mid South and was pleased to be able to present many of the photographs and artifacts that we had located during that time.

The exhibit was the first comprehensive overview of Memphis' Jewish Community and we believe that it marked the beginning of important research into its people, traditions and history. Hopefully the continued work of the Center for Southern Folklore, the Bornblum Program in Judaic Studies, and the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid South will form a broad base of scholarship in future years.

The exhibit was two fold. On one hand it was used to explain about local Jewish history and lifestyles, ceremonies and celebrations to a general Memphis audience. On the other hand it was meant to spur the Memphis Jewish community to continue to research and learn more about its own history. Time will tell how well it accomplished these goals.

The exhibit contained over 100 historic and contemporary photographs and numerous religious and secular artifacts ranging from Synagogue burial records during the Yellow Fever epidemic to photographs of recent Russian immigrants. Display cases were arranged to present the history of

Continued on Page 2



JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of  
MEMPHIS & THE MID-SOUTH

Officers 1986-88

President: Harriet Stern  
Vice-Pres: Leonid Saharovici  
Sect.Pro Tem: Laura Spiegler  
Treasurer: Abe Schwab

Newsletter Editor:  
David Schneider

Directors

Rabbi James A. Wax  
Marx J. Borod  
Judy Peiser  
Elias Goldsmith, Jr.  
Lester Sewel  
Laura Spiegler  
Judge Irving M. Strauch  
Harry J. Jaffee

Archives and Oral History

Chairpersons: Judy Peiser Laura Spiegler  
Shirley Feibelman Gloria Felsenthal Harry Jaffee  
Oral History Subcommittee  
Ruth Kahn Lynn Mirvis Leo Goldberger

Resource Advisors

Rabbi James A. Wax  
Dr. Berekeley Kalin

Selma Lewis  
Marjean Kremer

Program

Chairpersons: Dessie Sewel Leonid Saharovici  
Frida Saharovici Marcus Katz Marsha Bicks  
David Schneider Sandy Lewis Madelyn Atkins  
Harriet Alperin Ed Morris

Membership

Chairperson: Lester Sewel  
Abe Schwab Nancy Sissman  
Herschel Feibelman Ben Sissman

Nominating

Chairperson: Elias Goldsmith, Jr.  
Lynn Mirvis Marx Borod

Budget and Finance

Judge Irving M. Strauch Joseph Liebovitz  
Jack Lieberman Bob Goldsmith Aaron Shankman

EXHIBIT - Continued from Page 1

community institutions, the development of service organizations and the education, musical and literary areas of the community as they relate to Jewish life and culture. The remaining cases focused on the ceremonies, celebrations, and holidays in Jewish life. Original art work by Rabbi Cantor David Skopp, Milton and Sarah Bluestein and Meinike Gold were used to show religious art related to the holidays. The exhibit even included a sukkah owned by Joel and Laura Speigler and decorated by Tirzah Goldstein.

Throughout the month long exhibit the Mayor's office reported large crowds of people viewing it. And because of this interest the Center plans to make the exhibit available on a rental basis in regional schools, libraries and religious institutions.

The exhibit would never have been produced had it not been for the work of Barbara Bisno who convinced an outstanding group of volunteers to work on the project and the following organizations, foundations and individuals who gave the necessary financial support: Anshei-Sphard-Beth El Emeth Congregation, Baron Hirsch Congregation, Belz Foundation, Beth Sholom Synagogue, Fogelman Properties, Friends, Goldsmith Foundation, Hadassah, Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South, Memphis Council of B'nai B'rith Lodges, Lichterman-Lowenberg Foundation, Mr. & Mrs. Sanford Lichterman, Margolin Brothers Foundation, Memphis Jewish Federation, Stella S. and Hubert S. Menke Foundation, Moreh-Morah Teacher Center, National Council of Jewish Women, Seessel's, Inc. and Temple Israel.

See Pictures, Page 3

JOIN US - SERVE ON A COMMITTEE

Archives & Oral History	Program
Budget & Finance	Membership
Public Relations/Publicity	Special Projects
Call Laura Spiegler	767-5924

IN MEMORIAM

Eric Cornell, the first secretary of the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South, died on December 26, 1987. A prolific writer of poetry and prose, Eric had a vital interest in history as history significantly shaped his life. His desire to share the influence of history with his family and friends led him to write his autobiography, which he entitled, The Lord Is My Shepherd.



Eric left his native Berlin, Germany, for the United States in 1938, joining his sister and her family in New York. Feeling that the ethnicity of the immigrants in New York would prevent him from becoming a bona fide American citizen, he applied for a job through an office of the National Council of Jewish Women and was offered an opportunity to come to Memphis through the good will of Mr. Leo Levy, owner of Levy's Specialty Store. Although he was in his 30's when he arrived in Memphis, he mastered his new language and worked his way up to a managerial position and a member of the Board of Directors at Levy's. In 1942 he married the former Helga Robins, his wife of 45 years. They have two daughters, Gloria Felsenthal and Bunny Burson, and five grandchildren, Edward, Marty and David Felsenthal and Clare and Kate Burson.

Through the years he established a reputation as a poet laureate, writing poems to mark special occasions at Levy's as well as noteworthy events and everyday occurrences in the lives of his family and friends. These poems mixed a whimsical quality with a fervent appreciation of life and his good fortune in having the opportunity to become a contributing citizen of the United States of America.

REFLECTION

It tears the strings of people's heart,  
That death pulls dear relationships apart.  
As our very being misses a person beloved and dear,  
Such loss of a living connection precipitates a tear.

No use to complain, as clearly we are seeing:  
As life, so death is part of our being.  
And so it is axiomatic, that one thinks  
Of all the good times and pleasant things.  
And that in our mind we must equate  
The good and bad inherent in fate.

It is a matter of common sense and pride,  
That we take the inevitable sad events in stride.  
When I awake, to myself I am confessing:  
Looking out at nature --- I count my blessing.

ERIC CORNELL May 25, 1987





Segal's Delicatessen on corner of Second & Beale, c.1938. Halpern Collection Center for Southern Folklore Archives.



First Memphis AZA Chapter. Leo Goldberger Collection, Center for Southern Folklore Archives.



Rosen's Delicatessen, c.1915.



Arbeiter Ring School Band 1929. Lakee Brooks Collection Center for Southern Folklore Archives.

## MEMPHIS' JEWISH COMMUNITY 1840 - PRESENT

HALL OF MAYORS  
CITY HALL  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE  
OCTOBER 22 - NOVEMBER 20  
1987



Young Judea Convention, c.1915. Photograph by C.H. Poland. Harry Jaffe Collection, Center for Southern Folklore Archives.



B'nai B'rith International is the oldest Jewish membership organization in the USA. Established in 1843, it has today over 500,000 members, being one of the largest and most representative Jewish organizations.

As Rabbi James Wax writes in "Our First Century", the first B'nai B'rith Lodge in Memphis was founded in 1858. Rabbi Isaac M. Wise came to Memphis and "organized lodge number 35 of the B'nai B'rith, originally called Euphrates, which exists today as the Sam Schloss Lodge".

It is interesting to note that Harriet Stern, a charter member, organizer and first president of the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South, is a great granddaughter of the late Rabbi Isaac M. Wise.

Sam Shankman, Memphis Jewish author and former president of the lodge, wrote the first history of the Sam Schloss Lodge. It was published in 1958 on the occasion of the Centennial of the Lodge. He has provided an interesting historic analysis, a meaningful and a useful source of information concerning the history of the Jews in Memphis. Sam Shankman describes the beginning of the organization as follows, "In January, 1858, Euphrates Lodge Number 35 was organized in Memphis at the home of Mr. Mark Bloom, at the corner of Market and Front Street. About 30 men including Sam Schloss, Hart Judah, A. E. Frank and Julius Nathan were present at the historical meeting where the first B'nai B'rith Lodge in the Southern states was formed. Isaac M. Wise of Cincinnati, who was then in Memphis to dedicate the first local synagogue at the corner of Main and Exchange addressed the meeting. Eighteen months later, Abraham Abrahams, Grand Secretary and Sigmund Levy, Vice President of District Grand Lodge Number 2, came here with a charter and instituted Euphrates Lodge Number 35".

During its 130 years of existence, the Sam Schloss Lodge has been very successful. Through many diverse programs the membership has contributed to the development of Judaism and Jewish public awareness in Memphis. Beginning with 25 members the organization reached a "golden age", when in 1927, under the presidency of Leo Bearman Sr., the lodge reached 1100 members, the largest membership in its history. Today, as one of 3 lodges in the city, it has 383 members.

On the occasion of its 130th anniversary, we congratulate the Sam Schloss Lodge members and wish them continued success in their great work.

Leonid Saharovici



A menorah, given to the Sam Schloss Lodge as an award in 1926, has been recently found at Temple Israel in Memphis. Now, over 60 years old, it is being restored and will be displayed at the 130th anniversary banquet in March, 1988.



**NASHVILLE ARCHIVES COMPLETE  
SLIDE-CASSETT PROGRAM**

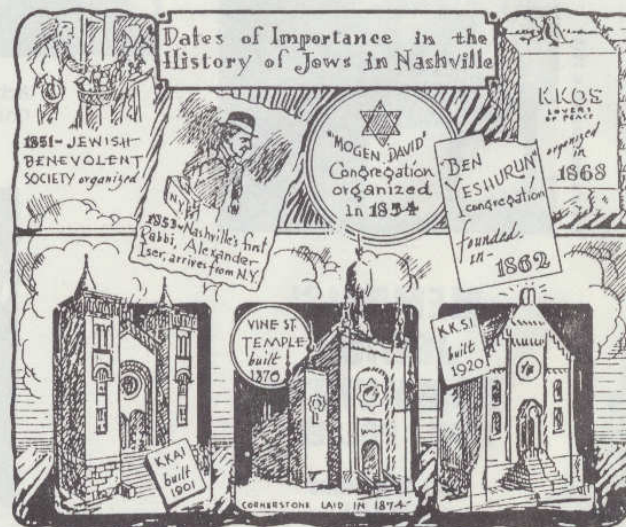
The Archives of the Jewish Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee collects and preserves historical material pertaining to the five thousand individuals, and their predecessors, who comprise the Nashville Jewish Community. Founded in 1979, with the help of a one-year grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the Archives is now funded by the Jewish Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

The Archives has completed a slide-cassette program titled, "The History of the Jewish Community of Nashville". The history of the Jewish community of Nashville begins with "five families and eight young men" in 1851, and grows steadily to a population of almost five thousand in 1983.

The Federation Archives slide-cassette program traces the development of this community through the use of original source material. Personal narratives are interspersed with factual accounts which combine to reveal a panorama of important historical events: the initial influx of German immigrants to Nashville; the Civil War; the arrival of large numbers of Eastern European refugees in the first years of the twentieth century; the mushrooming of Jewish community institutions as a direct consequence; the responses to two World Wars and the Holocaust; and the efforts to establish the State of Israel.

The slide-cassette program graphically demonstrates how a small group of southern Jews organized itself to respond to the local, national and international events that shaped its 130 year history.

Also available is a publication, "A Guide for Teaching the History of the Jews of Nashville". The guide is designed for use by students of high school age and for adult study groups. It is available for \$2.00 from the Jewish Federation Archives, 801 Percy Warner Blvd., Nashville, TN 37205.



Courtesy, The Archives of the Jewish Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee.





## AN EARLY PRESCRIPTION

### FOR SUCCESS

On Sunday morning, November 25th, 1945, the Memphis Commercial Appeal selected Mrs. Yetta F. Manis as their Career Woman of the Week. Mrs. Manis, formerly Yetta Fineberg, was the only Jewish woman pharmacist in Memphis, with a degree from the University of Tennessee, who owned her own drugstore. Yetta Fineberg grew up in New York City and moved with her family to Memphis after her graduation from high school. She entered the University of Tennessee in 1924 and was the only woman in her 32 member graduating class of 1926. And, she had the highest average of anyone taking the Tennessee Board of Pharmacy examinations at that time.

When asked how she happened to follow this career, Mrs. Manis replied, "We all have ideals as children about the occupation we want to follow. My goal was to do something to help people who needed medicine they couldn't afford, an ambition springing from my childhood days." After graduation, Yetta Fineberg took a position as Pharmacist at the Eye, Ear, Nose & Throat Hospital. In 1927, she married Charles Manis and thought perhaps she might become a housewife. However, shortly after her first child, Ruth (Mrs. Jay Kahn of Germantown) was born, she opened her Pharmacy and Drugstore at 651 S. Parkway E. As did many others, the Manis family lived behind the store, later moving to a house next door to the store. Calls for medication came at all hours of the day and night and Mrs. Yetta F. Manis was always there to help. She dispensed medicine to anyone who needed it, whether they could pay or not. In her years as a pharmacist, she never turned away a person who needed a prescription filled. Mrs. Manis, the pharmacist, took care of the medicines while Mr. Manis handled the business details. The small business grew and soon became a gathering place for the neighborhood. In 1945, in her newspaper interview, Mrs. Manis recalled, "I filled prescriptions for boys in our neighborhood who have grown up to wear their country's uniform. Now, many of them are married and coming to me for the same medicine for their children that their parents use to get for them."

**The Trustees  
of the  
University of Tennessee**

on the nomination of the Faculty

have admitted

**Yetta Feinberg**

to the degree of

**Graduate in Pharmacy**

and have conferred on her all the Honors, Rights, and Privileges to that degree appertaining.

In witness whereof, this diploma is granted and the Seal of the University and the signatures of the President of the University and the Secretary of the Board of Trustees are hereunto affixed.



Given at Memphis, in the State of Tennessee, this seventh day of June in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and forty-six and of the University the one hundred and thirty-second.

*John R. ...*  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

*W. A. ...*  
President of the University of Tennessee



Three daughters, Ruth Kahn of Germantown, Betty Friedman of Knoxville and Laura Osofski of Jacksonville, Florida have fond memories of their parents drugstore where they all spent time working before going to college. Mrs. Manis was very proud of her 9 grandchildren and we know she would have had a special "nachas" if she could have filled prescriptions from her grandsons, Drs. Charles and Jay Friedman.

Mrs. Manis was very active in professional associations such as The Drug Club, Temple Israel, Hadassah and other organizations.

After the death of her husband in December, 1946, Mrs. Manis continued the drugstore until 1949 when it was sold. The building still stands at 651 S. Parkway E., at the corner of South Orleans Street and is now a neighborhood sundries store.

David Schneider

#### Exhibit From The Vatican Library

"I want that for Memphis", Honey Scheidt declared more than two years ago when she viewed Rabbi Phillip Hiatts' slides of Hebrew manuscripts from the Vatican Library at a Board meeting of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Even before she had acquired the Ramesses exhibit for Memphis, Honey had arranged for the Judaica exhibit from the Vatican Library, which will be displayed at Memphis Brooks Museum in May. Refusing to be on a national committee for the exhibit in order to concentrate her fund raising efforts on the Memphis showing, Mrs. Scheidt undertook a campaign to seek local sponsors which is underway at the present time.

The manuscripts, dating from the 8th to the 18th centuries, show an exchange of scholarship among Jew, Arab and Christian. They also reflect the fact that during the Renaissance, a knowledge of the Hebrew language was considered one mark of an educated person.

Mrs. Scheidt's husband, Rudi, cites as some of his favorite among the over 50 items in the exhibit, the largest book in the Vatican library, Popes' homilies in Hebrew, as well as in Latin, Arabic and Greek and a Hebrew manuscript Bible of Queen Christina of

continued on page 8



To the Honorable Legislature  
of the State of Tennessee at Nashville  
Assembled.

Your petitioners would  
respectfully state to your body that they  
are members of the Jewish Church,  
and they differing from the protestant  
religion in relation to the wholly  
Sabbath day, they conscientiously believ-  
ing that Saturday, should be the  
Sabbath day, on which day they  
proffer to close their houses, and  
keep said "holly", and refrain from  
all business transactions, they  
therefore ask your Hon Body to  
grant them the preverledge of keep  
in their houses open on the day that  
the protestants term their Sunday.  
As they are advised this act  
would and is actually constitutional

The premises considered  
we submit ourselves  
Respectfully &c

Memphis Nov er  
the 7th 1853

M. Bamberger  
A.R. Reinach  
A.B. Reinach  
J. Reinach  
M. Reinach  
J/I Bamberger  
T. Folz  
B. Moyser/S  
H. Levy  
J. Levy

E. Adler  
M. Caro  
J.H. Lehman  
A. Baker  
C. Stone  
S. Shloss  
E. Hohn  
M. Bloom  
D. Wolff  
Sam Hesse (Hefe)  
Sol Hesse (Hefe)  
O. H. Cohn (A.)

To the Honorable Legislature of the State of Tennessee at Nashville Assembled

Your petitioners would respectfully state unto your body that they are members  
of the Jewish Church and they differing from the protestant religion in relation  
to the wholly Sabbath day, they conscinsiously believing that Saturday should be  
the Sabbath day, on which day they proffer to close their houses and keep said  
day wholly, and refrain from all business transactions. They therefore ask your  
Hon Boddy to grantthem the preverledge of keepin their houses open on the day  
that the protestants term their Sunday. As they are advised this act would be  
and is actually constitutional. The premises considered we submit ourselves

Respectfully &c

Memphis Nov er  
the 7th 1853

M. Bamberger  
A.R. Reinach  
A.B. Reinach  
J. Reinach  
M. Reinach  
J/I Bamberger  
T. Folz  
B. Moyser/S  
H. Levy  
J. Levy

E. Adler  
H. Caro  
J.H. Lehman  
A. Baker  
C. Stone  
S. Shloss  
E. Hohn  
M. Bloom  
D. Wolff  
Sam Hesse (Hefe)  
Sol Hesse (Hefe)  
O. H. Cohn (A.)

M. Caro  
J. Cohn  
D. Frank  
D. Levy  
A. Anyer  
L. Bauer  
B. Walker

Petition from the  
Jews of Memphis

Nov 11 1853 Read  
the 1st time and  
referred to Com. on  
Judiciary

Asking to keep their  
business houses open on  
Sunday  
Petition to Legislature

1853  
Shelby Co  
The Committee recommends  
the rejection of the prayer  
of this petition  
J.B. Cooke

Nov 11 1853

Petition from the  
Jews of Memphis  
Nov 11th 1853 Read  
the 1st time and  
referred to Com. on  
Judiciary

Asking to keep their  
business houses open on  
Sunday

Petition to Legislature  
1853 Shelby Co

The Committee recommends  
the rejection of the prayer  
of this petition

J.B. Cooke (Chm)  
F ington

" REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY,  
TO KEEP IT HOLY."  
Exodus XX, 8



## PETITION SIGNERS ?

The names, addresses and business information below was taken from the 1855 Memphis City Directory. The petition was signed in 1853. Hopefully additional research will verify or correct this listing of the petition signers.

1855 MEMPHIS CITY DIRECTORY (MEMPHIS/SHELBY CO LIBRARY AND INFO CENTER)

M. Bamberg - grocer, 63 Main e (corner Winchester); (E. Bamberg, clerk, 63 Main)  
 A. R. Reinach - not listed  
 A. B. Reinach - A.B. Reinach, clothing, 112 Front Row  
 J. Reinach - not listed (L. Reinach, 84 Jefferson)  
 M. Reinach - not listed  
 J/I Bamberg - not listed (1856 Dir. J. Bamberg, clerk, 36 Main)  
 T. Fols - clothier, 82 Front Row  
 B. Moyser - not listed  
 H. Levy - r (residence) Market Square (Chas. Levy, peddler 187 Second; E. Levy & Co, dry goods, 213 Main; Catharine Levy, ea (east side) Shelby bt (between Beal & Linden)  
 J. Levy - J. Levy & Co, clothiers, 25 Front Row (S. Levy, clothier, 25 Front Row, r NW cor Beal & Second; Jonas, watchmaker, 12 Union; John, jeweler, Union, b Main & Front; M.A. & A. S., auction commercial merchant, 28 Front Row  
 E. Adler - not listed  
 H. Caro - clothier, 106 Front Row (H. Caro, 106 Front Row) (H. Caro Jr., 24 Front Row  
 J. H. Lehman - I.H. Lehman, clothier, 32 Front Row b (business) Commercial; Lehman & Co dry goods, 206 Main e Jefferson; Strauss, Lehman & Co  
 A. Baker - Allen Baker, carpenter, b ns Hernando bt Beal & Linden  
 C. Stone - not listed; (Peter Stone, shoemaker, 12 Washington)  
 S. Shloss - not listed (1856 George Shloss, clerk cor Washington & Front)  
 E. Hohn - not listed  
 M. Bloom - not listed  
 D. Wolff - not listed (E. Wolff, gunsmith, 32 Washington; Franz Wolff, grocer, 159 Adams; Adam Wolff, clerk, 159 Adams)  
 Sam Hesse - not listed (Michael Hesse, clerk, 61 Front Row)  
 Sol Hesse - Solomon Hesse, clothier, 29 Front Row, Hess & Co, 29 Front Row)  
 O. H. Cohn - A. Cohn, clothier, 57 Front Row  
 M. Caro - clothier, 59 Front Row, r e Second & Beal (H. Caro, 26 Front Row; S. Caro, same)  
 J. Cohn - John Cohn, clothier, 60 Front Row  
 D. Levy - clothing, 189 Main; D. Levy & Co p.24 (full page ad)  
 A. Anyer - not listed  
 L. Bauer - not listed (1856 Miss Louisa Bauer, dressmaker, ne cor Shelby & Beal)  
 B. Walker - Walker & Bros, clothiers & dry goods, 79 Front Row (John & William)  
 M. Simon - Moses Simon r 83 Second (J. Simon b SE cor Madison & Second) (1856 M. Simons, clothier, 63 Front Row r e Second & Exchange; Jos. Simons, engraver, Clark's Marble Block; Simon & Seessel, man're of clothing, dealers in dry goods, 63 Front Row; Seessel, A, clothier, cor Jefferson & Front Row); (James Simon, carpenter, bds Poplar e of Bayou, 1856)

We wish to thank Ms. Mary Louise Nazor for this information. Ms. Nazor is a retired school teacher with a great interest in Memphis history and genealogy. While doing volunteer work at Cossitt Library in Memphis for the Tennessee Genealogical Society, she found the Petition listed as being in the Tennessee State Archives in Nashville. Later she had a friend in Nashville go to the Archives and make a copy for her. Once having the copy, she researched the Memphis City Directories of 1855, to find the information to possibly identify the signers of the Petition. She then called the Jewish Community Center who put her in touch with our President, Harriet Stern. We deeply appreciate Ms. Nazor taking the time to do this research and so graciously furnish this important historical document to our Society.

### CAN YOU ADD TO THIS INFORMATION ?

If you have any early family records, papers or know of possible relatives from any of these petition signer families, please contact David Schneider, (O)362-3193 (H)754-5766.

## OUR PAST - OUR FUTURE

Recently there has been a great resurgence of interest in the early history of the Jewish Community of Memphis. And, the recent exhibit, Memphis' Jewish Community 1840 - Present, has helped generate new interest in our past history. Those of us who are active in the Jewish Historical Society are receiving more calls and information than ever before. However, as a Historical Society, we are in our infancy and will need great support from our members and the Memphis Jewish Community. This support will take different forms. First, we need family histories, pictures, factual information on individuals and the businesses that made us what we are today. Secondly, we will need people to devote the necessary time and energy to help build our archives. Last, and most certainly, we will need financial support. To those of you reading this newsletter who have not joined our Society, please become a member. Complete the membership application in the newsletter and send it with your check. Become a part of this important effort to document our past history and its relationship to the growth of Memphis and the Mid South. The Jewish Community of Memphis has a great future which we know will be strengthened by our research of the many contributions of the past.

David Schneider, Editor

# SHALOM

JOIN NOW ... Become a Member of the  
 JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of  
 MEMPHIS & THE MID-SOUTH

...Encourage Research  
 ...Create an Archive  
 ...Present Educational Programs  
 ...Promote Pride in our Heritage

Attach Your Check for 1988 Dues

( ) \$15 Individual Member ( ) \$50 Donor  
 ( ) \$25 Family Membership ( ) \$100 Patron

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

### COMPLETE & MAIL TO

Mr. Abe Schwab, Treasurer  
 Jewish Historical Society of  
 Memphis & The Mid-South  
 163 Beale Street  
 Memphis, Tn. 38103



## MEETING NOTES

A regular meeting of the Jewish Historical Society of Memphis and the Mid-South was held on Wednesday evening, November 18, 1987, at the Jewish Community Center. Invited guests included presidents or designated representatives of various Jewish organizations, especially those who participated in the exhibit at City Hall.

President Harriet Stern welcomed the sizeable audience who had come to hear the guest speaker. Laura Spiegler introduced Annette Levy Ratkin, Director of Libraries and Archives for the Jewish Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

Mrs. Ratkin was instrumental in developing Jewish libraries in Nashville. She established and directs a cooperative Jewish libraries project and a union catalog which lists the holdings of all the cooperating synagogues and schools.

In 1978 she initiated a community archives project with the encouragement of the Tenn State Library and Archives. Twenty-five Jewish organizations were mobilized to obtain a broad-based community representation. They applied for a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission of the General Services Administration. A one year grant was received from the GSA and Federation has funded the archives since then. A professional archivist was hired to establish the project which is now directed by Mrs. Ratkin. She detailed the various procedures, goals and activities of this exciting, ongoing collection which is housed at the Nashville Jewish Community Center. It emphasizes both past and contemporary history of the community and includes archival

materials, a slide show of the history of the Jewish community of Nashville, the Nashville Jewish Observer on microfilm and in collections; the first done by the Council of Jewish Women interviewing older citizens and the second, by Federation which interviewed Holocaust survivors, liberators and members of the second generation.

Annette Ratkin discussed archival problems such as storage of materials, shelving, humidity and temperature control, the development of a computerized index, donor agreements, restrictions in use of the materials and the need to start an archives fund. She distributed materials which explained the operation of the archives.

A question and answer period followed this very informative talk. In closing, Judy Peiser announced to the organizational representatives that a follow-up meeting will be called to deal with the specifics of starting a Jewish archives in Memphis.

Laura Spiegler

Vatican-continued from page 7

Sweden. Another intriguing manuscript shows the work of Greek and Roman scholars in Sicily, who interpreted the Bible and compared the rhetorical styles of Cicero and Isaiah.

Lectures, acoustaguides and docents are scheduled to elucidate the exhibit. Our Jewish Historical Society will participate in the sponsorship of a lecture by Dr. Steve Benin, Chairman of the Judaic Studies Program at Memphis State. A specialist in medieval history, Dr. Benin will speak at the Jewish Community Center on April 6.

Harriet Stern



JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of  
MEMPHIS & THE MID-SOUTH  
163 Beale St. Memphis, Tn. 38103

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED