



SOUTHERN JEWISH HERITAGE

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Two Great Careers

Medicine and Business

by Dr. Selma Lewis

This is the eighth in a series of biographical sketches of Jewish community leaders included in our forthcoming book, "Chronicles of the Jewish Community of Memphis."

Although they chose different occupations, brothers Marcus and Charles Haase, each made significant contributions to the welfare of Memphis. Chronologically first, Marcus was born in Natchez, Mississippi on December 31, 1870, and moved to Memphis in 1882. Most of his higher education was obtained in the city, and his Doctor of Medicine Degree was awarded him by the Memphis Hospital Medical College in 1896. This institution later joined with the University of Tennessee, where he occupied the chair of Professor of Dermatology at the time of his death in 1924.

He was appointed Secretary of the City Board of Health in 1897. Having worked with the local yellow fever epidemics, the next year he went to Central America under the auspices of the United States government to help with an epidemic of the disease there. He received post-graduate training in dermatology in England, France, and Germany, following which he returned to Memphis to practice this specialty. He made numerous contributions to medical literature on a variety of dermatological problems.

Dr. Haase was Chief of the Medical Advisory Board of the Memphis General Hospital for twelve years. During a crucial time, when the hospital was without a superintendent, Haase voluntarily served, at considerable personal sacrifice, until one could be hired. Perhaps his most important contribution to the hospital was his organization of the medical records, which greatly facilitated patient treatment. The efficient Out-Patient department of the hospital is largely his creation. He worked to coordinate the activities of the hospital with those of the medical school of the Univ. of Tennessee. "He did not want the hospital used for the college alone, nor the college for the hospital. He wanted to use the talent, the forces, and the instrumentalities of both for the benefit of the sick and unfortunate."

Although he was well beyond draft age during World War I, he volunteered to serve, and was commissioned Major in the Medical Corps, United States Army, in 1917. His knowledge and skills as hospital expert were utilized by the army.

He was among the organizers of Social Agencies which was organized in 1920, and served as its President until his death. Among its projects is the Child Guidance Clinic. He also spent a great deal of time and effort in his work for the Associated Charities. Nationally, Haase was Chairman of the Section Dermatology of the American Medical Association in 1923.

Charles was the second of the Haase brothers to have a distinguished career, but his major activities were in the fields of real estate, insurance and loan businesses. He was also deeply involved in many charitable institutions of the city.

Born in 1873 in Collierville, he began work at Marx and Bensdorf at the age of fourteen as a "runner" after graduating from Memphis High School in 1891. The firm was eventually to tap him for its presidency in 1930, when it became a corporation. While he was an officer of the corporation, Marx and Bensdorf fi-



Dr. Marcus Haase



Charles Haase



*Recognition
of
Loyal Service*

Above, we have reproduced the cover of a 1943 publication by Lowenstein's dedicated to their 45 employees who had served twenty years or more and Mr. Henry Neff, 59 years and Mr. Thomas Currie, 53 years. On page 3, we have reprinted the brief history of Lowenstein's, titled "Album of Progress". We do not know who wrote the history, but reprint it as a follow-up to our biography of Elias Lowenstein published in our Sept., '92, issue of Southern Jewish Heritage.

Please see Haase, page 2

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MEMPHIS AND THE MID-SOUTH - FOUNDED IN 1986
P.O. BOX 17304, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38187

President's Message



David Schneider

We continue to reach out to the Memphis and Mid-South Jewish communities in our efforts to document our past while looking forward to our future. There are many fascinating stories to be told and much history to be researched. With each issue of Southern Jewish Heritage, we gain more knowl-

edge and greater insight into the efforts of those individuals who helped build the foundations for many of the institutions, businesses and organizations we often take for granted. As Past memory fades, our work helps us draw together the many facets of early Jewish life in the Mid-South and to better understand and appreciate their response to the needs of the times.

In this issue, we salute the Memphis Chapter of the NCJW, the Haase (pronounced Hayes) brothers, two early Memphians with distinguished careers. And, we have two excellent book reviews I know you will enjoy. From a brief stop at an antique mall, Lowenstein's 1943 booklet now becomes another interesting item in our archive. And, we join Paul Schwartz in "Reminiscing" about the early days of the Memphis Jewish Community Center.

Many of you have interesting early family history waiting to be told. We have writers who will interview you and put your stories into an article for publication. Please call Leonid Saharovici, Marjean Kremer or me. Know that part of your family history will be preserved in our archive as another important link to the past history of Memphis and Mid-South Jewry. ☆

Haase *continued from page 1*

nanced many new subdivisions in the city. Among the many activities connected with his business interests, Haase was President of the Building and Loan Association before it became the Home Federal Savings and Loan Association. When this government program was established in the 1930's, he was called to Washington to advise federal officials. He was named a director of the Fifth District Home Loan Bank at Cincinnati in 1932, and held that post for many years.

Haase was a director of the Bank of Commerce and Trust Company, and Vice-President and Director of the Manhattan Savings Bank and Trust Company. He was Chairman of the Committee on Farm Development for the Rotary Club, which was the first group to advocate diversification and improvement in this area. The work was later taken over by the Chamber of Commerce and Haase again headed

the committee. He also served a term as president of the Tennessee Building and Loan League.

At one time Haase served on the Board of Directors of the Memphis Power and Light Company, the Memphis Hotel Company and was a director of Lowenstein's at the time of his death in 1950.

Haase was associated with many philanthropic endeavors in the city. He was one of the oldest active members in the seven Southern states of District Seven of B'nai B'rith, and served it as President. He was the first President of the Leo N. Levi Hospital at Hot Springs, Arkansas, a national hospital maintained by B'nai B'rith. When the B'nai B'rith Home for the Aged was established in 1927, Haase became first Chairman of the Board of Governors, a position he held for over forty-five years, until he was succeeded by attorney Leo Bearman.

A twenty-year term as President of the Memphis Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat

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Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Massion (Encino, CA)
Ms. Susan F. Wynne (Chevy Chase, MD)

Thanks To Our Contributors

Bensdorf Foundation

Association, which built the hospital at 1060 Madison, was begun by Haase in 1925. He was charter member of the Memphis Rotary Club, served as President of the Rex Club and of Ridgeway Country Club, when it adopted the latter name. During World War I he was Food Administrator for Shelby County.

Like his brother, Marcus, Haase was a bachelor, living on Peabody with his nephew, Gus. ☆

The Southern Jewish Historical Society has scheduled its 18th Annual Conference for Friday, Nov. 5 through Sunday, Nov. 6 in Atlanta, GA. Headquarters will be at the elegant Doubletree Hotel. For details about the program and sightseeing tour of interesting "Jewish Atlanta" contact:

Beryl Weiner, Esq.
P.O. Box 5024
Atlanta, GA 30302-5024

Lowenstein's

A Memphis Tradition in 1943



(A small room on main floor of this building was original home of Lowenstein's)

ALBUM of PROGRESS

Rich in tradition is the history of Lowenstein's and mellow with the flavor of the Old South, out of which this modern institution has grown. Yellowed newspaper files, faded photographs, dramatic memories tell its story during Memphis' pre-Civil War days, the terrible conflict, the rigors of Reconstruction, the battles against yellow fever, the lush Twenties, the current Forties.

There was a Lowenstein's when Memphis was a sprawling river town of 12,687 inhabitants; when the business life of Memphis centered around Court Square; when Main Street was a sea of mud in winter, a cloud of dust in summer. It is interesting to know that only twelve Memphis firms, in existence today, share with Lowenstein's the honor of being "first in Memphis," and Lowenstein's is the only department store, women's wear or men's store in the group.

Benedict Lowenstein foresaw a great future for our beloved Mid-South. As an early peddler, forerunner of the modern store, he sold his wares in Mississippi and South Arkansas in winter; in Tennessee, Kentucky and North Arkansas in summer. From a meager stock, which he carried with him, was sold fine laces, linens and shawls. We are proud of the fact that many of these fine things are today treasured possessions of fami-

lies in this area.

Mr. Lowenstein had such faith in the Mid-South, and particularly in Memphis, that, in 1855, his savings were invested in a small stock of merchandise, housed in an unpretentious room, at what was then 242 North Main Street, just a few doors north of Court Square. His capital was limited, but this disadvantage was more than offset by his ability as a merchant and his honesty of principles.

The people of Memphis were quick to recognize and reward this honesty and courtesy to the extent that the business grew by leaps and bounds. Benedict Lowenstein saw his business was becoming more than a "one-man stand." So he called in brothers Bernard, Elias and Abraham, whose talents as merchants quickly made themselves apparent. Their constant and unfaltering endeavors to serve the public better were soon reflected in the need for larger quarters and the entire building at 242-246 North Main Street was occupied. Early in the life of this fast-growing business there was evident the loyalty of the store to its employees, and the loyalty of the employees to the store. In an account of the growth of the business, John Leisk Tate, one of Memphis' foremost early day newspaper reporters, wrote in the Commercial Appeal:

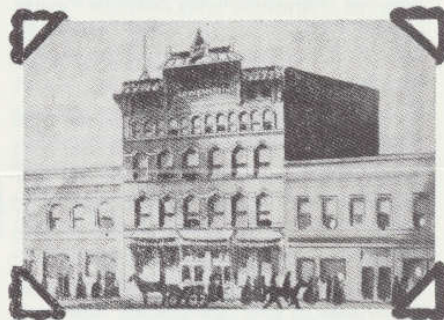
"For Lowenstein's is more than a store; it is an institution. In it men have begun as beardless youths, and have grown to middle age and started down the western slope of the hill with no thought of entering upon another line of work or of seeking employment from another house. Loyalty to Lowenstein's is one of the most marked characteristics of its force. There is a sort of pride, a quiet consciousness of worth, which creeps into the attitude and into the soul of the man or woman who belongs to this house, which is as much a part of the organization as the firm name upon the door or the firm monogram upon the stationery. It is due, largely, to the treatment which the house has always accorded its employees. Their rights, their feelings, their self-respect, are as sacred to the firm as the entries upon the big ledger, or as the rights, feelings and self-respect of its customers. It is due to what is demanded by the firm, for absolute honesty, absolute courtesy and unfailing cleanliness in life, the employee of Lowenstein's must have if he desires

to hold his place."

In 1873, and again in 1878, Memphis was scourged by the dreaded epidemics of yellow fever. Many firms were forced to give up or face destruction. But not Benedict Lowenstein; his business emerged virile and strong, enjoying the confidence of the people of Memphis and surrounding area... with a volume of business that called for more space. This resulted in the acquisition of the Goodlett Building in 1883.

Henry Neff and Thomas Currie, the two members of our "FIFTY YEAR CLUB," recall the Lowenstein store of that era. The Goodlett Building was four stories in height, with an open skylight that ran from main floor to roof. The store was lighted by electric arc lamps, predecessors of our modern Mazda lamps; these were housed in elaborate glass chandeliers which were the marvel of the age.

Many are the interesting stories Mr.



(This building was occupied by Lowenstein's from 1883 to 1906)

Neff and Mr. Currie tell of Lowenstein's during the gay Nineties. They recall that, at the time they started to work at the store, the city limits of Memphis extended 'way out to East Street. Mule-drawn cars afforded transportation. Memphis aristocracy rode to Lowenstein's in carriages and the ladies of the era were interested in buying fine lace parasols, fans of Cluny, exquisite curtains of Swiss Brussels laces, and handsome silks for which this store built such a wonderful reputation. Within a few years, the Rogers Building was added, giving the store much more space and an L-shaped arrangement with an entrance on Jefferson Avenue.

Mr. Neff began his apprenticeship in the carpet department in 1884 and worked in that department for the greater part of his half-century connection with the store. Mr. Neff retired from active

Please see Lowenstein's, page 4

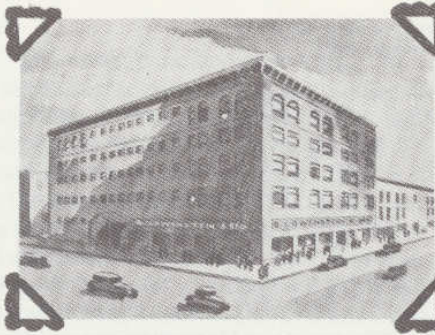
duty two years ago, after 57 years of loyal service at Lowenstein's... a record of which any man and any institution might be proud.

Mr. Currie started in the drapery and upholstery department at Lowenstein's on Oct. 1, 1890, and has remained in that department for all his 54 years with the store. In his early days he became an expert in "free-hand draping," which he says is now a lost art. He was famous for his ideas in draping and the gorgeous window-hangings in many of the finest homes in Memphis were created by him. Mr. Currie's window treatments won many prizes in national contests. About retiring, "Well, not yet," says Mr. Currie, who is wonderfully active in spite of 54 years of loyal service at Lowenstein's.

On New Year's Day in 1906, Memphians read in the Commercial Appeal that fire had practically destroyed the Lowenstein store. Hurried conferences brought about the purchase of the Hunter Building on the corner of Main and Court Streets. Keeping step with the growth of Memphis, and modern merchandising principles, no expense was spared to make the new Lowenstein store the finest in the South... In 1910, the Arnold Building on Front Street, immediately to the rear of the store, was added and, in the words of the newspaper article of the period--

"From park to park, from Court Square upon the east to Confederate Park on the west--this mammoth store now spreads across this twin building. Rich carpets and mahogany woodwork combine with the most elegant furniture and fixtures to make it a retail palace. On the second floor at the western end of the building is the ladies' lounging room, fitted up with apparent recklessness of expenditure, in old ivory and gray. The room is of truly palatial proportions, and overlooks Confederate Park and the Mississippi River at a point which gives possibly the most beautiful view in Memphis of the Father of the Waters."

All through the years, the successors of Benedict Lowenstein have endeavored to live up to the ideals which he established; ideals which call for honesty, integrity and faithful service; ideals which have become the very cornerstone of this business. The pres-



(The home of Lowenstein's from 1906 to 1924)

ent realization of these endeavors is reflected in the present home of Lowenstein's built in 1924 for Lowenstein's and embodying every modern detail in architecture and equipment... truly one of the outstanding stores in America.

Thus we have, in a few words, traced



(Present home of Lowenstein's)

the history of Lowenstein's. It is a history of which we can be proud. It is a history that should spur us on to greater achievements, to better service. Time has changed our building from a single-story room to a huge department store of nine great floors, but time will never change our love of friendship, our tradition of old-fashioned courtesy. Only upon a history, such as ours, can one build the solid hopes of a happy future; only with such a tradition can one take the radiant words of Robert Browning for one's own--"Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be." ☆

You Can Help !

Our Archives Committee would like to know about any material you have relating to early Jewish History in Memphis. Pictures, books, synagogue and temple publications, family histories and early documents.

PLEASE CALL - LAURA SPIEGLER

767-5924

Pauline Tenzel:

The Life Story of a Lady Doctor

A Book Review . . . by Gloria Felsenthal

Before Betty Friedan wrote *The Feminine Mystique*, before the National Organization of Women championed women's liberations, there was Pauline Korenblat Tenzel. Her story is lovingly told by her daughter, Doris Tenzel Fleischer, and her granddaughter, Sherrie Fleischer Davidson, in *Pauline Tenzel: The Life Story of a Lady Doctor*, recently published by Impact Media of Nashville.

Dr. Tenzel is of interest to Tennesseans and Mid-Southerners because of her Arkansas and Nashville roots. She received her medical training in Little Rock and practiced obstetrics and gynecology in Nashville from 1932 to 1978.

Her earliest roots, however, can be traced to what is today Moldova, where she was born in 1900. Two aunts who were doctors were strong role models, and by the time she was a teenager she knew that she too wanted to become a doctor. Although the family suffered huge financial losses as a result of the Russian Revolution, Pauline would not give up her dream. Her father managed to arrange for her to study medicine in Cluj, Romania where she was one of six women in a class of twenty. At the end of her first year of medical school she fell in love with Jack Tenzel, an American cousin who had returned to his homeland for a visit. He went back to Little Rock, Arkansas, determined to bring his beloved to America and marry her. After close to a year of letters and attempts to make enough money to pay for her travel, Jack sent for Pauline, who had by then spent much of another year studying medicine in Romania.

In August, 1921, Pauline and Jack were married in America, and in September the young bride who spoke only a modicum of English, presented herself at the University of Arkansas medical school admissions office and requested admission. Her persistence finally wore down the resistance of the committee, and she entered medical school in an age when women were not often granted admittance to medical schools. The story of the obstacles she confronted in pursuit of her degree is

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The National Council of Jewish Women was founded in 1893 by Hannah G. Solomon. One of two Jewish members of the powerful Chicago Women's



Susan Edelman

Club, she was asked to organize the participation of Jewish women under whatever division she thought best. She felt that "our place should be with the Parliament of Religions, which would be a great feature." Having appointed speakers such as Henrietta Szold and Josephine Lazarus, Hannah Solomon met with the committee of Jewish men to discuss the plans. Informing them of her work, Ms. Solomon agreed to join with the men if accorded active participation in their program. The men met, and placed no woman's name on their program. They suggested that the women pour tea and serve as hostesses. Ms. Solomon then declined to participate with the men, and organized the women, 93 delegates from 29 communities, into the Congress of Jewish Women, renamed one year later, the National Council of Jewish Women.

Three years later, at NCJW's first Triennial Convention, Hannah Solomon spoke of herself and her purpose, mirroring that of many women of the time: "Who is this new women, who has become such an old subject? She is the woman who dares to go into the world and do what her convictions demand." The goals for NCJW were created as a set of resolutions:

"seek to unite women interested in the work of Religion, Philanthropy, and Education;

"organize and encourage study of principles of Judaism; the history, literature, and customs of the Jews, and their bearing on world history;

"apply knowledge gained in this duty to the improvement of Sabbath Schools (started by NCJW in 1894), and in the work of social reform;

"secure the interest and aid of influential persons to prevent persecutions."

Working from these goals, NCJW sections across the country began their social service work, helping mothers and their children, primarily through training and education. Sixteen vocational schools and an array of free libraries, employment bureaus, kindergartens, day nurseries, and projects providing summer outings for children were established. Additionally, with the Spanish American war in process, NCJW members visited military camps and met troop trains, providing food and other materials in work with anticipated USO service.

Beginning in 1903, waves of immigrants came to this country, and the United States government asked NCJW to help protect the welfare of those incoming, particularly the young Jewish women who were in danger of becoming victims of what was then termed the White Slave Trade. NCJW established its Port and Dock Department to help these newcomers. NCJW established a permanent immigrant aid station on Ellis Island (photos can be seen in the museum there now), as well as greeting immigrants at other entry ports. From 1904 to 1907, NCJW helped 20,000 Jewish women and girls settle in Amer-



Jeanne Dreifus became a recipient of the Hannah G. Solomon Award, the highest honor of NCJW, and one that is bestowed rarely.

ica. By 1911, the NCJW immigrant assistance network reached 250 cities, and spread to European ports, where leaflets advising girls of dangers posed to them were handed out. These leaflets let the girls know that NCJW was there to assist them in beginning their new lives, and they should not fall prey to "many evil men and women who have led girls to destruction."

By 1914, the U.S. government had closed many Ellis Island aid stations, but allowed NCJW's to remain. With World War one in progress, NCJW helped the Red Cross raise cash and materials, and sent social service experts to Holland and Latvia to assist Jewish refugees. Additionally, it worked against laws limiting immigrations, thus earning it the suspicion of the FBI!

In 1909, President Taft convened the first White House Conference on Child Welfare, in which NCJW participated. The Conference resulted in a lobbying effort supporting child, labor laws and protective legislation for women. NCJW Sections, meanwhile, had established penny lunch stations in schools for poor children, school medical exams, and probation officers who cooperated closely with the courts to rehabilitate delinquent children. In 1908, NCJW appealed for federal anti-lynching laws, having been stunned by prejudice against Jewish families in rural areas, and established a Farm and Rural Work program to bring nurses, Jewish education, and homemaking support to rural families.

With the crash of the Stock Market in 1929, more people than ever came to NCJW for help. Reporting to the Women's Division of President Hoover's Emergency Committee for Employment, NCJW members engaged in job soliciting and placement, creation of employment, and financial relief. They also continued to provide milk and lunch for undernourished children, and began a number of special activities such as scholarships and stay-in-school drives.

In 1930, the Memphis Section of NCJW was established, and Mrs. Neuton Stern was elected president. The group's first

Please see NCJW, page 6

project was a summer play school for underprivileged children. Additional projects were testing for the deaf and hard of hearing, and work for many community causes. The local section also gave its support to the National program to alleviate the suffering of German Jews, which culminated in the National organizations's co-establishment of the German-Jewish Children's Aid Society. NCJW brought 250 German Jewish children to the US through this agency, the total number of children the United States agreed to accept.

During the early days of Hitler's reign, the stream of refugees to the US again swelled. NCJW's Port and Dock volunteers continued their service, meeting immigrants day and night, handling emergency problems and locating relatives. After the war, NCJW continued its work with refugees, establishing resettlement programs, English classes, and assistance in providing jobs and homes. To help those still in Europe, NCJW granted fellowships to educational and welfare specialists who agreed to return to Europe to use their new skills. NCJW also established its Ship-A-Box program, sending toys, books, and educational materials to children in Europe, most of whom had been orphaned and were in institutions. This program continues today, with the shipment of toys and educational materials to immigrant children in Israel from Sections all over the country, including Memphis.

During the time of WWII, the Memphis Section was busy with local and international concerns. It began the Leath School Lunch Program; provided parties and an occupational therapy program at the B'nai B'rith Home; took a census of the Memphis Jewish population; cooperated with Family Welfare in establishing a nursery school in Orange Mound, and assisted Play School children in receiving dental attention. They also coordinated the indexing of local Jewish families to unite them with European relatives at the end of the war, and adopted a policy of paying for citizenship papers for new Jewish citizens of Memphis.

During the second half of the 1940's NCJW began its involvement with senior citizens, launching Golden Age Clubs,

and becoming the first national Jewish Women's organization to offer Meals on Wheels. This work continued with participation in the first White House Conference on Aging in 1961, and the creation of the Senior Service Corps, which was later adopted by the government and became the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). In Memphis, the Fun over Fifty Club was established in cooperation with the Jewish Community Center. Ten years later, NCJW funded the Senior Needs Assessment Project, and then served on the planning committee for the Highrise Apartments for the Jewish Elderly (now Plough Towers). As a result of the survey, NCJW, Memphis Section created JETS (Jewish Elderly Transportation System) to take Jewish seniors to doctors and the grocery.

In the 1950's the threat of McCarthyism was recognized as the greatest domestic problem in the US. In conjunction with the YWCA, Senators Herbert Lehman, and Margaret Chase Smith, NCJW launched a campaign with the slogan: "Speak Up! Freedom Needs Exercise!" It sponsored a college essay contest on academic freedom, and created a traveling exhibit of great books that had been banned through the ages. A campaign to protect freedom to read in the public libraries was mounted jointly by NCJW, the National Council of Negro Women, Church Women United, and the YWCA.

In Memphis, the focus was on literacy. The Memphis Section established the first educational television program teaching illiterates in the United States. By 1956, there were 800 pupils in 32 centers, plus 1,000 TV viewers. The Section also began study groups on Segregation and Integration, Jews in the South, and "What has been done for negroes in the field of social welfare". As the Civil Rights movement grew, NCJW national leaders, with the leaders of other national women's organizations, gathered in Atlanta to determine how they could help young African-American women, peacefully demonstrating in the south, who were being thrown into jail and abused. From this meeting, "Wednesdays in Mississippi" were created. Women visited jails, discussed barriers and helped to set the stage for Women in Community Service, Inc., an interracial, interreligious,

intercultural coalitions whose job was to screen and recruit young women for the Job Corps. The Memphis Section was the local group leading Memphis Job Corps recruitment.

NCJW was a vital member of the National Coalition for Civil Rights which lobbied for the passage of the 1964-68 Civil Rights Acts. On the International front, as Israel became established as a State, NCJW increased its involvement with that country. In 1959, it built Hebrew University High School in Jerusalem as a model teaching school. In 1968, NCJW established the Research Institute for Innovation in Education at Hebrew University. This Institute developed the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), now used to train mothers to teach their preschool children in a number of countries, including Israel, The Netherlands, Mexico, and the United States. Efforts to begin a HIPPY program in Memphis are well underway.

Beginning in 1972, the research efforts of NCJW increased. That year, Windows on Daycare, the first definitive national study of daycare services was published. In 1975, "Children without Justice", a national survey of the juvenile justice system was published. Three years later, NCJW published "Innocent Victims", a comprehensive manual on child abuse prevention and detection. Finally, in 1986, NCJW published "Mothers in the Workplace", a study in which the research was done by one thousand NCJW volunteers in Sections across the Country, including those in Memphis.

Over the years, both nationally and internationally, NCJW has dedicated itself to helping people of all races, religions, and economic background through a combined approach of advocacy, community service, education, and research. As the first 100 years of this work ends, and the next century begins, NCJW has dedicated itself, in the words of Hannah G. Solomon, to "Dare to Make a Difference". Through the establishment of community programs such as HIPPY, the training of Wonders volunteers, work with our adopt-a-school, Peabody Elementary, and the management of the Russian emigre clothes closet, the Memphis Section continues its tradition of community service and

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Jews Among The Indians

By M.L. Marks

A Book Review by Joel Felt

In the epic comic Western, "Blazing Saddles," Mel Brooks arrives with a howling pack of Indian warriors at a railroad construction site being built by black prisoners. Chief Brooks yells, "Schwarzes (Blacks). Luz ihm gehen (Let them go)." The real world of the old West was very different. Jewish peddlers and traders spoke no Yiddish to the Indians but rather learned to speak fluently the languages of the Pawnees, Apaches, Utes, Navajos, and many others. Jewish linguistic skills enabled peddlers to become successful in dealing with the Indians, to interpret between them and whites, and to establish pervasive relationships with Indians throughout the West.

Melvin L. Marks has done extensive research to produce seven factual and fascinating stories about the Jewish-Indian connection. Somewhat surprisingly, he denies the existence of any spiritual, genetic or philosophical bond, stressing primarily the differences between Jews and Indians.

Young Sigmund Schlesinger signed on as the 50th man in the Indian Scout detail commanded by General George Forsyth. Soon this tiny force was attacked at the Battle of Beecher Island (1868) by a force of 1,000 warriors led by Chief Roman Nose. Although a raw tenderfoot, Schlesinger fought ferociously and so impressed General James Fry that the General wrote a poem about him including these lines:

When the weary dozed on duty,
And the wounded needed care,
When another shot was called for,
The little Jew was there.

With the festering dead around them,
Shedding poison in the air,
When the crippled chieftain ordered,
The little Jew was there.

Schlesinger became active in religious and philanthropic causes in Cleveland until his death in 1928; Jack Peate, the sole remaining survivor from the Battle of Beecher Island attended the funeral.

Solomon Nunes Carvalho, a brilliant writer and artist, signed on with John C. Fremont as official photographer to the

exploration party commissioned in 1853 to stake out the best route across the mountains for the trans-continental railroad. It was necessary to prove that Cochetopa Pass at the continental divide could be crossed in the dead of winter. Along the way, Carvalho correctly diagnosed Delaware Chief Wolff's headaches and back pains as indigestion and cured the Chief with calomel, epsom salts, and arrowroot: the triumph of a Jewish mother over a medicine man. He spent time with Brigham Young, the Mormons, and the Ute Indians. This incredibly arduous and dangerous mission finally succeeded, and Carvalho triumphantly returned to the East. Later he invented steam heat as a heating system, thereby securing wealth as well as fame.

Alleged anti-semitic President U.S. Grant appointed a Jewish ophthalmologist, Herman Bendel, Superintendent of Indian affairs for the Arizona Territory (1871-1873). Bendel tried valiantly to suppress the ongoing genocidal attacks on Indian villages to foster their independence, education, and self-reliance, to teach them agricultural expertise instead of giving them handouts. He himself became the victim of settlers' prejudice and was even accused of trying to convert the Indians to Judaism. It could be that author Melvin Marks missed the sense of exclusion, persecution, and prejudice that connected the redmen with the sons of the covenant. Perhaps the apparent affinity between Jew and Indian was based on material sturdier than mere coincidence.

Most of the remaining stories concern the exploits of Jewish traders and peddlers. Julius Meyer, one of several brothers who were prominent retailers in Onaha, used to go to Indian reservations to buy goods for the family store at 16th and Farnam. Once, a group of unfriendly Indians seized his pack and were about to scalp him when Pawnee Chief Standing Bear happened by and saved him. His reputation for total integrity served him well on this and other occasions. Another report concerns Solomon Bibb, who married Juana Valle, an Indian princess; he himself became a Chief and governor of the Acoma reservation.

This slim volume is an excellent quick read, superbly researched and enthusiastically presented. Interested adven-

Tenzel

continued from page 4

lovingly and humorously told by the authors.

The bulk of Pauline's career was spent in practice in Nashville, where she was affectionately designated "the lady doctor." In the early days of her practice, babies were delivered at home, and Pauline was often called during the night to attend patients in distant rural areas. She lectured frequently and for many years volunteered medical services at the National Council of Jewish Women Settlement House. Jack was always proud of his wife and supportive. Did Pauline succeed in pursuing a demanding career and simultaneously caring for a family which eventually included two children? It is not necessary to read between the lines to find the answer to this question. The love, devotion, and admiration of daughter and granddaughter in creating this work provide the answer. ☆

NCJW continued from page 6

education. With our support of freedom of religion and speech, freedom of choice, motor voter legislation, better funding for education, support for the State of Israel, and strong healthcare and child care legislation, the Memphis Section continues a tradition of advocacy. NCJW, Memphis Section, welcomes the membership of anyone interested.

In commemoration of the first 100 years of the National Council of Jewish Women, a Centennial Quilt was created, with any interested section making a square. This quilt, in which the Memphis Section as a square, will be on display in Memphis at the National Civil Rights Museum during the month of May.

Sources:

NCHW at 100: *Threads of Our Past - Patterns for Our Future*
National Council of Jewish Women Triennial Report 1990-1993
The NCJW Chronicle: National Council of Jewish Women - 100 Years - Daring to Make a Difference
Fifty Years of Service; Memphis Section, National Council of Jewish Women ☆

turers can borrow the book from Temple Israel Library in Memphis or purchase it from Benison Books, 520 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 60611. ☆

Reminiscing with

PAUL SCHWARTZ

1st Director Of The Memphis Jewish Community Center

The Center is now undergoing extensive renovation and expansion, conjuring up recollections of its growth as an idea through the 1940's and the early years of its actual existence, 1950-1960.

Of particular interest are the philosophy and ideals which called it into being-the attitudes and values of time and place. Both the Jewish community, and the Memphis world of which it was a part, were substantially different from what they are today.

The concept of a Center developed in the 1940's and came to fruition with its 1949 charter and formal opening in 1950. That era in Memphis was perhaps a simpler time of living, but not necessarily a kinder, gentler time; it was just more orderly. Social-cultural-ethnic barriers were firmly in place; economic class, ethnic derivation, and religious affiliation played roles in defining the social structure; issues of race and rights were rumbles on a distant horizon. People pretty much knew their place and if some challenged the fences most did not.

The Jewish community reflected this. While many of its leaders were comfortably involved in key roles in philanthropic and business activities in the general community-and were respected for it-social activities were largely circumscribed. This could be seen most particularly among Jewish youth. This was the golden age of high school fraternities and sororities, exclusively for Jewish youth and to a great degree separated by Orthodox or Reform affiliation of their families. In that era, the key social activities of Jewish youth-parties, dances, athletics-were



Paul Schwartz

similarly separated. "Inter-dating" was sometimes a family issue, but referred then to dating across congregations-social lines. Further, there were few facilities available for youth activities except the social halls of the congregations.

The idea of a Center developed in reaction to these patterns. It crystallized around two concepts: a "common meeting ground: for all Jewish youth, and a service to the general community which reflected the Jewish community's sharing in communal responsibility. Throughout the 1940's this philosophy engaged the interest of more and more members of the Jewish community, and was a central focus of Center activities when it opened.

This development was not without resistance as it grew. Would the Center be open on Shabbas? Why should it observe kashruth? Will my kids lose their religious identity? Will they lose touch with "their own kind?" What are the implications of supporting or not supporting Israel? Will it be "too Jewish" or "not Jewish enough?" Will this be an agency of Jewish segregation?

The detailed story of the philosophical differences and practical conflicts of that era remains to be told at length and in detail. But today's Jewish Community Center still mirrors the ideals which gave it birth, broadly expanded and enriched far beyond the imaginings of those two early decades.

Author's Note: It will be readily noted that this brief memoir identifies none of the individuals who provided the charisma and excitement of leadership to what was essentially a movement rather than an organization. Space regrettably does not allow tribute to them; focusing on a few would be a disservice to literally hundreds who came to play key roles in the early years. ✽



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