



JHSD

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DELAWARE

PRESIDENTS' LETTER

GERRY RESNICK AND PETER GRUMBACHER, CO-PRESIDENTS

Dear Friends,

Preserving the Past. Although this is not the official motto of the Jewish Historical Society of Delaware, it is our mission. And with our new facility, namely the Coxe House, we will not only have more room to fulfill that mission but also have a venue in which the community can learn about the past and participate in our activities. It's something wonderful to anticipate; we hope you will show your confidence in this exciting enterprise by contributing generously to the project.

But that's in the near future, so let's focus for a moment on the past, on our history in the First State.

Our 2019 Annual Meeting featured an enlightening presentation by Richard Levin on the Jewish judges of Delaware. Indeed, our contribution to the cause of justice has been far beyond our numbers. We have always taken to heart the Torah's admonition "Justice, justice shalt thou pursue." So many Delawareans, Jewish and otherwise, learned so much from Richard but his presentation was only a summary of his research. When it became clear that he could not cover all Delaware's Jewish judges in his presentation, the JHSD decided to publish a book about them. See page 2 for information about purchasing a copy for your library.

We remember our past by listening to our citizens remember their past. Through our Oral History Project we are able to get more than a hint of what it was like to be a Jew in our State. This is exciting, and it hasn't ended with those who have already been interviewed. The project continues, and we plan to post the interviews online so you can hear those voices, to bring yesterday back to life today—and tomorrow.

Just think what future Delawareans will be able to glean from your life, our lives, because of the work of JHSD. Won't you join in our efforts for the sake of your children and grandchildren?

GIVING THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY ITS OWN HOME

RABBI DR. DAVID GEFFEN

Toni Young is the visionary who has continually infused the Society with literary historical works and historical programming. She has written an academic work on the Jews of Delaware from their beginnings until 1925. She has edited and written other works using the materials in the Archives and prepared informative and well-researched presentations at JHSD annual meetings. And her determination that the Delaware Jewish Historical Society be a permanent entity has led the leadership of the JHSD to an opportunity to acquire its own building.

Now the JHSD is being offered its own home, the Coxe House, one of the historic homes and properties on Market Street in the care of the Delaware Historical Society. In this building will be the archives of the Society, with a reading room in which researchers can work. This building will be a place where lectures and exhibits can be held. The hope is that the Jewish Historical Society will be able to contribute to ongoing development of the history of Delaware.

As one of the founders of this Society, I am very proud that I will be able to see the JHSD realize a long held dream, a facility which the Society can call its own.

First State Jewry should receive its home. This historic property needs renovations to make the building a safe and secure home for our archival materials. Your generous support is most appreciated. Visit <http://coxehouse.org> to help this dream come true.



CY LUBITSH— A WILMINGTON SCULPTOR

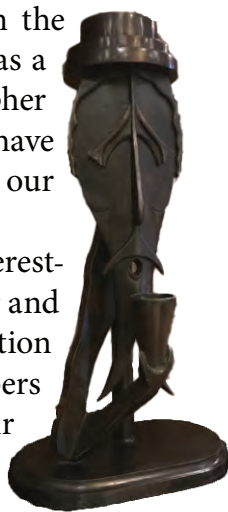
GAIL PIETRZYK

The researchers who come to the JHSD have fascinating interests — they come with questions about people, places, business, literature, education, the arts — even aircraft! Members of Delaware's Jewish community have been active and made a mark in virtually every type of endeavor imaginable. For many, the desire to learn more about a topic or subject leads to the JHSD collections.

One such researcher came seeking more information about Aron Cypen Lubitsh, who was most widely known as a Wilmington photographer and WWII veteran whose wartime photographs are poignant and memorable. Lubitsh was born in the Grodno, Belarus. He immigrated to Canada and subsequently immigrated to the United States in 1937. In 1943 Lubitsh was drafted into the U.S. Army assigned to the 166th Signal Photographic Company. His unit was sent to France in 1944 and landed at Normandy while the D-Day invasion was still underway. The unit was assigned to the Third Army throughout campaigns in France and Germany. Lubitsh received the Bronze Star and was honorably discharged in the fall of 1945. He went on to work as a commercial artist and photographer in Wilmington. We are proud to have an album of these photographs in our collection.

Our researcher, however, is interested in Lubitsh's career as a sculptor and our collections hold little information on this topic. We hope our members and readers might help with their own recollections and information.

This is the piece that has sparked our researcher's interest in Cy Lubitsh. If you can help with information and remembrances about this aspect of Lubitsh's artistic oeuvre, please contact the JHSD at 302 622-6232 or jhsdel@yahoo.com. Thank you.



EXAMPLES OF CONGREGATION BETH SHALOM HISTORY IN THE CBS ARCHIVES: 1966-1968

DIANE WOLF

In May of 1966, Congregation Beth Shalom (CBS) celebrated the tenth anniversary of the dedication of the “new temple building.” Not long after that, the CBS leadership decided to refurbish the bima, an effort that culminated in the mounting of the new doors for the ark, ner tamid and menorahs. These works by renowned sculptor Luise Kaish continue to enhance worship in the sanctuary today.

The archives hold the 1966 specifications for remodeling and the blueprints of the bima drawn up by Richard Chalfant, the project architect. Morris Leibowitz initiated the remodeling with a gift. Commitments were made in early 1967, but the advent of the 1967 war in Israel delayed the effort. With permission from Mr. Leibowitz, CBS diverted all uncommitted funds for the remodeling to support Israel. Fortunately, the 1967 War was brief. By July 1967, a Bimah Committee had been formed, chaired by Isaac Budovitch. Committee members included Irving and Doris Morris; other people mentioned frequently in the archives were Ben Stolper and Bernard Raphaelson. Also that July, a contract with Luise Kaish was signed.

During 1968, there was much correspondence about the remodeling project. In addition to Richard Chalfant and Luise Kaish, there are records of vendors such as Modern Art Foundry, City Electric, George Snyder (contractor), Arthur Bruce Hoheb (mold and model maker) and others. One letter to a vendor from 1966 discusses the requirements for a “rolling device that will permit both [ark doors to roll] smoothly... and easily.”

The new bima was dedicated during Rosh Hashana in 1968. The reconstruction was made possible through the generosity of Morris Leibowitz and dedicated to Aaron Finger. Mr. Leibowitz died in August 1968 just before completion of the project, and Mr. Finger died the following year.

A brochure about the ark doors was published by CBS with an essay by Rabbi Emeritus Jacob Kraft about the artist’s “...interpretation of the Ten Commandments based

SAVE THE DATE—SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020

The Jewish Historical Society of Delaware will hold its 2020 Annual Meeting on Sunday afternoon, April 26, 2020, at Hagley Museum and Library's Soda House Auditorium. We are pleased to welcome students from the University of Delaware who have been conducting oral history interviews with members of the Delaware Jewish community to share their experiences and insights at the JHSD annual meeting.

The JHSD has a remarkable collection of oral history interviews from the 1970s, '80s and '90s. But interviews for this century are fewer. We are delighted to have Dr. Roger Horowitz working with UD students to revitalize this significant program in cooperation with the JHSD.

Our 2019 summer intern, Dalia Handelman, conducted interviews with Yetta Chaiken, Connie Kreshtool, Faith and Lou Brown, Helen Gordon, Anne Jaffe, Frances Stein, and Norman “Buddy” and Phyllis Aerenson. This fall, Dr. Horowitz's class gathered seven additional oral history interviews with Marty and Shelley Mand, Marilyn

Levin, Diane Sklut, Richard and Marcy Margolin, Danna and Roger Levy and Judy Zucker. We are so grateful for everyone's cooperation in making these interviews possible.

These programs receive substantial financial and practical support from the University of Delaware, and we hope that the project will continue with a new UD intern in the summer of 2020. The completed interviews will be posted on the JHSD website, <http://jhsdelaware.org/collections/digital/>.

There are many ways that our members can support this exciting venture. Volunteer to be an interview candidate. It's fun and rewarding! Serve on our Oral History Committee. You don't need to be a board member to serve on the committee.

We would love to be able to interview more members of Delaware's Jewish community. If your organization is looking for a rewarding mitzvah opportunity, contact the JHSD about oral history interviews. We will help you get organized and trained to conduct oral history interviews that will help preserve the memories of our community.

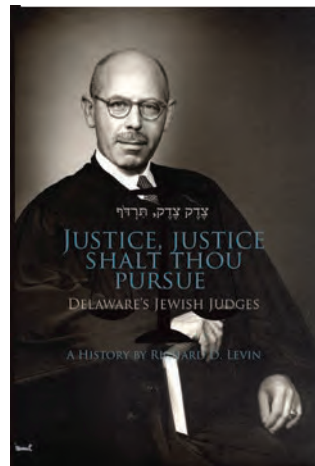
CBS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

on the medieval conception of God as En Soph, the Infinite.”

Thanks to former CBS Rabbi David Geffen, we also know that when the Jewish Museum (NYC) held an exhibition of Luise Kaish sculpture in 1973, our ark doors were featured on the cover of the exhibition catalog.



JUSTICE, JUSTICE SHALT THOU PURSUE



The Jewish Historical Society of Delaware is pleased to offer this informative, illustrated, 112-page paperback covering the impact that Delaware's Jewish judges have had on justice in the First State. Please call 302 655-6232 or visit <https://jhsdelaware.org/product/justice/> to order a copy for \$10.00.

JHSD also has video recordings of the presentation by Richard Levin at our 2019 annual meeting. This presentation, and others from past annual meetings, are well-researched and informative. Please contact us for more information about obtaining video recordings of these programs for your library or organization.



JHSD
JEWISH HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF DELAWARE
505 NORTH MARKET STREET
WILMINGTON, DE 19801

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME

The JHSD Oral History Project conducts interviews documenting the Jewish community in Delaware.

Interviewing a community leader or chatting with family members about their life and

experiences can be a most rewarding and enjoyable way to get involved and explore the history of Delaware's Jewish community.

Please contact the JHSD to learn more about the Oral History Project and other ways you can share in preserving the history of

the Delaware Jewish community. We have other volunteer opportunities and invite you to contact the archivist to discover how you can help. Email us at jhsdel@yahoo.com or phone (302) 655-6232 for more information.



LEND US YOUR SUPPORT! If you have not already made an annual membership contribution, or if you want to lend your financial support to this vibrant, active organization, please return this coupon with your check to: Jewish Historical Society of Delaware, 505 North Market Street, Wilmington, DE 19801

- | | | | |
|---|---------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$15.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor | \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (over 65) | \$15.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$250.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$30.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$500.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family/Household | \$35.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional | \$75.00 | | |

Please make your check payable to the Jewish Historical Society of Delaware. Your contribution is fully tax-deductible under applicable IRS guidelines.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

E-mail _____

☐ Please do not publish my name as a member.