

## FANNIE GOLDSTEIN AWARD INTRODUCTION

By Libby White

I am pleased to introduce Ellen Cole, winner of the Fannie Goldstein Merit Award. Fannie Goldstein was a pioneer of Judaica librarianship in America. Brought to this country as a young child, she was imbued with a desire for learning. As a librarian at the Boston Public Library, Fannie sought to educate Jewish immigrants in American culture, while bringing to the larger community an awareness of the riches of Jewish literature. She is remembered today as the founder of Jewish Book Month.

Ellen Cole is my dear friend and valued colleague. Ellen is a daughter of the Middle States. She was born and grew up in Philadelphia. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Goucher College in Baltimore and received an MA from Johns Hopkins' Nitze School of Advanced International Studies in Washington DC. Eventually, she and her young family made that Jewishly historic trek to Southern California, where she received her library training at HUC-JIR and at UCLA.

Along the way to library land, Ellen made some interesting and enriching detours. For a time she worked for Wayne Morse and Jacob Javits of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Later, in California, Ellen served as planning commissioner for the city of Irvine. Indeed, it's amazing how many twists and turns the road to library land has entailed for Ellen and a good portion of us.

Today Ellen is the librarian of the Eugene Levine Library of Temple Isaiah in Los Angeles. She describes the library in this way, "It developed as a haven, a bit of serendipity, an intellectual resource, an educational tool, and a source of pleasure." Some of you have served synagogues and synagogue schools. I do not have to tell you of Ellen's many roles at Temple Isaiah.. One example is her annual reading contest—an event that has become legendary. And Ellen has nerves of steel; she reports that she personally automated the library catalog entry by entry.

Ellen is a long-time AJL member. If I was to list the offices she has held and her activities, the time police would remove me from this podium. Therefore, let me be selective. Ellen is past chair of the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee, past co-editor of the children's review section of the *AJL Newsletter*, a contributor to *Judaica Librarianship*. Ellen has presented at ten conventions. Her memorable CEU course on colonial Jewry was a highlight of AJL's celebration of the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Jewish community. Ellen is also a past-president of the Southern California Chapter of AJL. That chapter honored her with the Dorothy Schroeder Award for Outstanding Service to Judaic Librarianship.

Despite her professional achievements, Ellen knows her priorities well. She has the unique gift of nurturing human relationships among her friends and her core and extended families. Loving acceptance is her key. She was a caring and supportive daughter to her parents; she is a warm, concerned sister, a devoted wife to her "adorable husband" Marshall, who is here this afternoon, the proud

mother of three children and two step-children “all married and producing grandchildren.” There are five grandchildren now, and three more are on the way.

In the years I have known her, Ellen seems to have changed little. She remains energetic, an idea person who brings her ideas to fruition—a person to whom others are inevitably drawn. Full of humor and purpose, she remains the person that everyone wants to hang out with and the person that everyone wants to be like.