

## Editor's Note

Austin, TX -- September 1, 2014

Dear Readers,

As you probably know by now, the AJL has a new President, Yaffa Weisman. Yaffa is starting up with a new column titled "The President's Corner", where she can brag (and rightly so) about all the wonderful things Board and Council members are doing for our organization and its members.

This time around we feature two articles that have to do with Yiddish culture. Yermiyahu Ahron Taub writes about Cecile Esther Kuznitz and her book *YIVO* and the making of modern Jewish culture: scholarship for the Yiddish nation (article on [page 3](#)). Amanda Seigel interviews Faith Jones, one of the three co-translators of Celia Dropkin's (1887-1956) work, about *The Acrobat: selected poems of Celia Dropkin* - a first translation of this remarkable Yiddish poet (article on [page 6](#)).

Rachel Leket-Mor celebrates the 'first digital year' of our own *Judaica Librarianship*, with a report from the reception in the Las Vegas 2014 conference. Rachel also includes a call for papers for issue 19, to be published in 2015.

I do hope you would find this issue an interesting read. I wish you all Shanah Tova u-Metukah, full with health, love and happiness!

Yours,

Uri Kolodney

Editor-in-chief

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## President's Corner

YAFFA WEISMAN, AJL PRESIDENT, 2014-2016

As I was putting together this quarterly report, **Sheryl Stahl**, our VP/Membership handed me the interim report about the Membership Survey most of you responded to lately. The complete report, and the ideas and issues that all 292 of you responded to will be published at a later date, but what impressed me at first glance was the level of engagement reflected in the results. You took time to articulate comments in addition to providing data; you offered ideas, you expressed concerns, you vented and kvetched, you praised and complained...You did YOUR job, so now let me tell you how we, your Executive Board, your Council and the committee chairs are doing theirs. So what have we done for you lately?

With the guidance of a newly hired web design company and with the hard work of **Nancy Sack**, **Heidi Estrin** and **Sheryl Stahl**, we are close to launching a new and improved web site for AJL. Stay tuned for an announcement on *ha-Safran* about the launch date!

### AJL Online



Visit the AJL Web site at <http://www.jewishlibraries.org>.

To subscribe to *Hasafran*, please see instructions at <https://lists.service.ohio-state.edu/mailman/listinfo/hasafran>

AJL is now on [Facebook](#). Become a fan.

## President's Corner, continued

**Aileen Grossberg**, Chair of the Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award Competition, has reached out to some organizations to publicize the award, followed up on a couple of inquiries, worked with Heidi to update the webpage and updated some of the listings in writers' resources.

**Diane Rauchwerger**, Chair of the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee reports that the committee has received 54 books to review, and that the committee members have been busily reading and reviewing these books.

**Joyce Levine**, our Publications Chair, has been busy updating and totally overhauling the publications page on the website, in preparation for our transition to the new platform, and work is ongoing on revision of two monographs, *Creating a Collection* and *How to Organize a Jewish Library*.

**Rebecca Jefferson**, the VP/RAS division is busy researching reference and bibliographical works to put forward as candidates for the RAS Bibliography and Reference Awards in 2015. In her role as co-editor for the Adult Reviews section of the Reviews Newsletter, she just finished editing 62 reviews that you can read in the current issue of AJL Reviews.

**Debbie Stern**, our Treasurer, spent her time since the Las Vegas Conference working on concluding the finances for the 2014 conference, both collecting payments and paying bills, and working with Suzi Dubin, conference chair, to make sure that all expenses and income are recorded accurately and in the correct budget categories. Debbie regularly monitors our finances, our credit card purchases and payment, our merchant account expenses, and our PayPal account. And then there is the renewal of insurance for AJL, and submitting forms to the Maryland state government to hopefully receive state sales tax exemption for our next conference in June 2015.

Past President **Heidi Estrin** is working on the content of our new website, and started organizing volunteers to edit the audio recordings made in Las Vegas to turn them into podcasts.

**Rachel Leket-Mor**, Judaica Librarianship editor, uploaded another back issue online (Vol. 14), posted Vol. 19 Call for Papers (on ha-safran, H-Judaic, ATLA, forums for Digital Humanities, Facebook, Twitter...), communicated with potential contributors to next volume, requested permission from authors to upload content of another back issue (Vol. 13), resolved access issues on behalf of individual and institutional AJL members, and wrote an article in the issue you are reading right now!

**Joy Kingsolver**, our Parliamentarian, is busy scrutinizing our Constitution and By-Laws and offering revisions that would bring them up to date.

**Jackie Ben-Efraim** assumed the leadership of our Strategic Planning Committee, and you probably saw by now the brief report she published recently on ha-Safran. If you haven't read it, please do; this is a map of the future of AJL, and I hope you would respond, ask, suggest, and contribute your share to our Vision.

In the past two years we have worked on streamlining our organizational structure and our best practices. The result is a governing body of twenty five Council members, 12 of which serve on the Executive Board. In addition, twelve non-voting volunteers report to the Council on work they do on behalf of AJL in Accreditation, Advertising, serving as liaisons to other professional organizations, and so much more! We hope to post the new organizational chart, WITH PICTURES (!) on the new website soon.

These achievements are but the tip of the iceberg of the dedication of our volunteer leadership that makes us the unique organization that we are. My hope is that when you see the "job descriptions" - the urge to jump in and offer your expertise in a particular area would become irresistible!

Wishing you a great start of the school year, a Happy New Year, and wishing all of us a Year of Peace.

Yaffa

August 15, 2014

# The People's Scholars: on Charting the History of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

Cecile Esther Kuznitz and her book *YIVO and the Making of Modern Jewish Culture: Scholarship for the Yiddish Nation*.

BY YERMIYAHU AHRON TAUB



As a child and young adult growing up in the Howard Beach section of Queens, New York, Cecile Esther Kuznitz did not speak Yiddish. Her father spoke Yiddish as a child, and when she visited her grandparents, Kuznitz heard Yiddish. She only came to study Yiddish language and culture as an undergraduate in American history at Harvard University when she realized its importance in understanding the world of East European Jewish immigrants to the United States. As she explained to me in a wide-ranging interview conducted entirely in Yiddish, that fateful decision led to a decades-long engagement with the language culminating recently in the publication of her pioneering first book, *YIVO and the Making of Modern Jewish Culture: Scholarship for the Yiddish Nation*

(Cambridge University Press, 2014). Kuznitz took Yiddish classes at the Harvard-Radcliffe Hillel, where her instructors included Rabbi Ben Zion Gold and Harry Bochner, co-author of the *Comprehensive Yiddish-English Dictionary* (Indiana University Press, 2013), which was recently awarded the 2014 AJL Reference Award.

Shortly after her graduation from Harvard, Kuznitz began to work at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. In fact, in an anecdote about her initial YIVO job interview related in the book's opening paragraph, Chief Archivist Marek Web asked her, "Do you mind working in dust?" Clearly, Kuznitz's answer was in the negative, both literally and figuratively. Kuznitz worked in the YIVO Archives from 1990-1992, where she prepared a number of collections for microfilming, including the papers of longtime *Yiddish Daily Forward* editor Abraham Cahan. She also served at the Reading Room reference desk, responding to numerous patron queries regarding archival materials, in consultation with archivists Fruma Mohrer and Marek Web. The memory of this dust would remain with Kuznitz these many years. She recalled that the former Vanderbilt mansion at 1048 Fifth Avenue that was then the YIVO headquarters was indeed elegant—replete with marble floors and crystal chandeliers—but also quite dusty and dirty. But for Kuznitz, it was always "*hey mish*," a word not easy to translate connoting home but also existential ease, a place where one can be one's true self. In those pre-9/11 days, of course, there was less need for security, and notable guests, including the Yiddish linguist Dr. Mordkhe Schaechter and the poet Avrom Sutzkever, were not uncommon. Kuznitz recalls being asked to sit near Sutzkever to help him make photocopies during his visit to YIVO, where he examined rare books and documents he had risked his life to save as a slave laborer in the Vilna Ghetto.

And yet the question of dust is, in fact, also quite figurative, a metaphor for a monumental task. After beginning her doctoral program in history in 1992 at Stanford University under the mentorship of Steven J. Zipperstein, Kuznitz would return to the YIVO many times. Given her background, her historical interests, her language skills, and the gap in the historiography, YIVO and its Vilna location were natural topics of exploration. Over the years, she excavated through the dust and documents--years of old periodicals, microfilms, minutes of meetings, and letters—to craft a dramatic narrative of the YIVO's founding against enormous odds and its centrality in the life of East European Jewry. She examines the high cultural and political stakes behind seemingly esoteric linguistic and scholarly questions. Kuznitz makes it clear that for its founders, YIVO was not simply a language institute with a range of collections and publications but a cultural symbol with deep connections to the Jewish people that they hoped to serve.

Although it was founded in 1925 in Vilna (then Wilno, Poland and now Vilnius, Lithuania), YIVO's origins extend considerably earlier. Kuznitz traces YIVO's antecedents to the calls for collecting put forth in the 1890's by the historian Simon Dubnow, who argued that East European Jews were quite ignorant of their own heritage. In 1912 the writer and ethnographer S. An-ski led expeditions to *shtetlekh* [small towns] throughout the provinces

of Kiev, Volhynia, and Podolia, where participants recorded thousands of hours of Yiddish folksongs, folktales, and proverbs and took countless photographs. This collecting was seen as crucial first step towards the writing of a new scholarship. In 1913 Yiddish scholar and Labor Zionist Ber Borochov argued for an academy that could institute Yiddish language reforms. Similarly, Chaim Zhitlowsky argued for the need for developing a high culture in the Yiddish language.

Building on this movement for advanced Yiddish scholarship and study, Yiddish linguist and literary historian Nokhem Shtif was one of the individuals most instrumental in YIVO's founding. Born in Rovno (now Rivne, Ukraine) to a prosperous family, Shtif did not originally think of Yiddish as a tongue for sophisticated literature or higher education. It was while in Switzerland, where he met followers of An-ski and Zhitlowsky, that his commitment to the language took root. Shtif struggled tirelessly to found an institute for Yiddish-language scholarship, and lived the life of an impoverished itinerant in a variety of cities, including Berlin and St. Petersburg, to make ends meet as a teacher and scholar. In October 1924 Shtif authored a memorandum entitled "*Vegn a yidishn akademishn institut*" ["On a Yiddish Academic Institute"], in which he made his case for the need to establish a center for Yiddish research with four sections (Philology, History, Social-Economic Problems, and Pedagogy) as well as an archives and library. With some variations, Shtif's overall blueprint would be adopted by YIVO's founders. Tragically, Shtif would never really participate in the flowering years of the Institute. In 1926, he accepted a post in the Department for Jewish Culture at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kiev. He immigrated not out of any commitment to Communism but rather a longing for a salaried research position and some financial security. After several productive years, Shtif fell victim to increasing Soviet censorship and was forced to renounce his earlier scholarship. He died prematurely in 1933.

One of the central issues facing the YIVO in its initial stages and throughout its history was amassing the financing for the institute's work. Lacking the financial support of a government, activists argued that the YIVO would nevertheless be a national institute for the Jewish people. It drew upon the rhetoric of peoplehood and nationhood to garner support from a wide variety of donors across several continents, principally the United States, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. If the largest total dollar amount actually came from the U.S., Eastern European donors were the most numerous. YIVO conducted a number of crucial international fundraising campaigns, including ones by Max Weinreich in North America in 1929 and Zalman Reisen in South America in 1931. Additional support came from the Jewish community in Vienna and communities in Germany. Some support also came from Polish city governments that had significant Jewish representation, as a result of the Minority Treaties signed by the Polish government after World War I. However, as anti-Semitism grew in the inter-war period, these commitments were no longer honored and this source of funding evaporated.

Throughout its history, YIVO sought to remain unaffiliated with any particular political movement. At a time when Eastern Europe was rife with a plethora of political movements, including Zionism (with all its many variants), the Jewish Labor Bund, and Folkism, as well as the many Polish movements, YIVO steadfastly refused to take sides. This was particularly challenging from the political Left, as numerous YIVO activists were Bundists (e.g. Anna Rosental) or Left Labor Zionists (e.g. Joseph Lestchinsky, Raphael Mahler). This pressure from the political street only increased in the late 1930's as the political and economic situation for Jews sharply deteriorated. While some previous scholars have argued that the difference of opinion within YIVO was between those who wanted no politics at all and others who wanted YIVO to be political, Kuznitz elaborated in our conversation that in fact none of the YIVO leaders believed it should be a pure ivory tower utterly divorced from the populace. All argued that YIVO should be a part of the street and for the people. The question was what would it mean to serve the people? The Left argued that the YIVO should serve the workers through socialism. Max Weinreich, YIVO's leading scholar and administrator, argued that the YIVO had to serve the people as a whole and that YIVO always had to be for and from all of the people. In fact, it was Weinreich's path that would be followed.

YIVO's founders would build on this populist impulse, drawing primary source material from the people, analyzing this material in scholarship, and then giving back to the people the fruits of their scholarly labor. This imperative was captured in a dictum coined by YIVO advocate Yudel Mark, "From the Folk, For the Folk, With the Folk." And the people were deeply involved in many of YIVO's initiatives. Heeding its earliest calls for materials, *zamlers* [collectors] combed far and wide for primary source materials for the Institute's holdings. Much of this work was done at the grassroots level by largely untrained *zamlers*. As Kuznitz indicates, all sections of the

institute benefited from this collecting. For example, vocabulary was collected for the Terminological Commission, historical documents for the Historical Section and Archives, and current publications for the Bibliographic Commission. The latter was rapidly able to compile a complete bibliography of all contemporary publications in Yiddish and had correspondents in New York, Kaunas, Buenos Aires, Moscow, and numerous other cities. Kuznitz cites some of the moving letters of *zamlers*, many living in dire poverty and having minimal education, in which they express their pride and joy in their work for YIVO. She argues that it was through the widespread popularity of its collecting initiatives that YIVO found its most concrete connection to the masses.

However, YIVO did not simply rely on material brought in by *zamlers*; its leaders played an active role in setting the collecting agenda. In the 1930's, as part of the newly created Division of Youth Research (1934), it invited detailed autobiography submissions from Jewish young people aged 16 to 22 years old. The three contests generated 627 autobiographies from at least a dozen countries, providing a rich source of documentation on the lives of Jewish young people in a time of constricting opportunity and mounting danger. The Psychological-Pedagogical Section sent on a variety of questionnaires, including ones to elderly adults on their memories of the *kheyder* [religious school] as well as other others dealing with children's sense of color. Additionally, in a technique pioneered by Roza Simkhovitch, YIVO scholars collected data through direct observation of schoolchildren and also by encouraging the participation of teachers and schoolchildren alike.

The scholarship and academic training that utilized the fruits of this collecting was no less groundbreaking. Each of the four sections published numerous volumes of scholarly journals. In 1926, the Philological Section produced the institute's first publication, *Filologishe shriftn* [Philological Writings], and in 1929, the first volume of the Historical Section's *Historishe shriftn* [Historical Writings] appeared. More than half of the publication's articles discussed periods prior to the nineteenth century. This was just the beginning of a long period of scholarly production for the YIVO. YIVO also established its own rigorous academic training programs for graduate and undergraduate education, which generated numerous scholars, albeit with diminishing opportunities for employment in their fields.

Kuznitz has been active in promoting her book recently. In March 2014, on her fourth trip to Vilnius, Kuznitz gave her first talk for her book, even before the book was actually published. She found it particularly poignant to speak about YIVO in the city of its founding. Her visit was organized by the European Humanities University, which is a Belarussian university in exile with ties to Bard College, Kuznitz's academic home. She also spoke at the University of Vilnius as well as (in Yiddish) at the Jewish Community building. Kuznitz made a pilgrimage to 18 Wiwulski Street, the site of the YIVO building, whose efforts to be built are so vividly described in her book. There is currently an apartment building and garage on the site. Although there are a number of Jewish historical sites with plaques (including the sites of the homes of YIVO leaders such as Max Weinreich and Zalman Reisen as well as a statue of Tsemakh Szabad), there are none for the YIVO building. Kuznitz is hopeful that this lack can be remedied soon. A book party and a well-attended panel discussion, including the participation of Sam Kassow, Simon Rabinovitch, and Steven Zipperstein, was held at YIVO in New York in May 2014. In June Kuznitz was also pleased to discuss her book at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, which today bears the name of Emmanuel Ringelblum, a member of YIVO's Historical Section who organized an underground archive in the Warsaw Ghetto.

Built upon years of meticulous research and written in precise, clear prose, Kuznitz's book is a lively work of scholarship about ... scholars. She judiciously weighs the YIVO's many accomplishments against its enormous challenges and makes major contributions to Jewish intellectual history, Yiddish cultural history, and -- of special interest to readers of the *Association of Jewish Libraries Reviews* -- to the history of Jewish archives and libraries. Her outstanding book would surely have made the YIVO founders, *zamlers*, and many adherents in the Yiddish nation and beyond, proud.

Yermiyahu Ahron Taub is the author of four books of poetry, including most recently *Prayers of a Heretic/Tfiles fun an apikoyres* (Plain View Press, 2013). Please visit his website at [www.yataub.net](http://www.yataub.net).

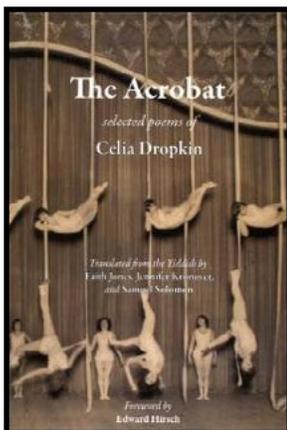
Cecile Esther Kuznitz is an Associate Professor of Jewish History and Director of the Jewish Studies program at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY.

“She was a difficult person. And he liked that”.

## The Acrobat: Selected Poems of Celia Dropkin (2014, Tebot Bach).

Interview with translator Faith Jones

Interviewed by Amanda Seigel, Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library



Faith Jones is a librarian in Vancouver, Canada, and a longtime member of AJL. A former Librarian in the Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library (NYPL), she also headed the Language and Literature Division of NYPL's Mid-Manhattan Library. Faith studied Yiddish at YIVO's Uriel Weinreich Program in Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture and also served as the Yiddish editor for *Bridges: A Jewish Feminist Journal*. She's currently working on a Master's Degree from the University of British Columbia about Yiddish culture in Winnipeg.

Jones, along with Samuel Solomon and Jennifer Kronovet, has just published a new book of their English translations of Celia Dropkin's Yiddish poetry: *The Acrobat: Selected Poems of Celia Dropkin* (2014, Tebot Bach).

The project began more than 10 years ago, when Jones and her co-translators, Samuel Solomon and Jennifer Kronovet, were students in the YIVO summer Yiddish program at Columbia University. They often ate lunch together on the lawn, seeking a shady spot to chat. "Various people had mentioned Celia Dropkin, but I had never read her", recalls Faith. "Jenny had heard about her in Sheva Zucker's class and from another student. We got Celia Dropkin's 1959 book, 'In heysn vint' ['In hot wind', published posthumously by Dropkin's family] from the Columbia library. We were reading the poems out loud on the lawn in halting Yiddish. I said to Jenny, 'has anyone translated these? Look at these amazing poems.'" Most of them had never been translated in English. "I'd love to translate them and translate the whole book", she decided.

Celia Dropkin (1887-1956) was a Yiddish poet born in Bobruisk who came to New York in 1912. She was especially active in the 1920's and 30's. Her poems were noted, according to Kathryn Hellerstein, for their "explicit sexuality, whether about love, motherhood, or death". Her work appeared in journals such as *Onheyb*, *Poezye*, *Shriftn*, and *Tsukunft*, and she also published a collection (*In heysn vint*, 1935) which was published in an expanded edition in 1959 after her death.<sup>1</sup> According to Jones, Dropkin was heavily influenced by Russian Symbolist literature and, although she came from quite a poor family, read very widely. Dropkin is known for her fearless look at women's lives and is credited to having brought new things into Yiddish literature, writing in a graphic and subversive way about women and the female body, childbirth, motherhood, and love.



Amanda Seigel (r) and Faith Jones (l)

The translation project grew out of the group's "sheer love of the poems", and was also, Jones notes, "a great way to improve our Yiddish and learn more". They began by picking the ones they liked best, and then meeting regularly. "We divided up the poems and each worked on the literal meaning and then on making it into a poem. We would read the poems and try to make them really good. One person would work on it, then we'd work together, then another person would take it away [to work further]". Although they translated all of the poems, not all are included in the book.

There are many challenges involved in translation work, among them capturing a poem's rhythm and structure as well as pure meaning. Jones notes, "We were concerned with pure meaning when we started, with our knowledge of our own Yiddish, and as we gained more knowledge we became less

1 Hellerstein, Kathryn. "Dropkin, Celia." *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik. 2nd ed. Vol. 6. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007. 24. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. Web. 26 Aug. 2014.

committed to an exact literal translation. We became much freer in letting ourselves take the spirit of original poem, and the priority became making a good poem in English." They decided not to stick with rhyme, instead repeating a certain sound. Although they argued at times, it was very respectful. "We were very good at fighting productively, good at listening to each other (not rancorous) and could have a knock-down, drag-out fight about the work. It made us very close friends also. It's really a very joyful process in many ways. This is where the collective process can be really fruitful. We had the time to work through these decisions in detail, and share thoughts and ideas with others."

Jones notes that Dropkin's work "is still pretty shocking...and people wonder why we translated it". In Dropkin's time, she was not translated because it was "very scary to translate", and much of the criticism of her back then (by an all-male group of critics) was "patronizing and encourages the reader to discount what she was writing about...people were not used to seeing a women in her generation writing about sadomasochism, hating her body and finding it in some ways disgusting and pathetic, and grappling with it -- it is very timeless. For many, it is quite validating to see that women were aware of these issues."

Readers may also be surprised by Dropkin's free use of Christian, pagan, and classical European images, as well as the occasional Jewish image. "That confuses people. What makes her a Yiddish writer? She could have used Russian or German. Yiddish had to do with her being in a Yiddish literary community in New York. She had gone to Russian high school, but in America she did Yiddish. That's how she become a Yiddish poet."



Faith Jones (l) and Samuel Solomon (r)

At a packed book launch at New York's Eldridge Street Shul (co-sponsored by the Yiddish Book Center and YIVO), many members of Dropkin's extended family attended. Faith Jones and one of her co-translators, Samuel Solomon (now a literature professor at the University of Sussex) read poems in the Yiddish original and in translation. The third co-translator, poet Jennifer Kronovet, was unable to attend as she is now living in China. When I asked her about her experience working with Dropkin's heirs, Jones noted that they have been "so lucky with this particular family. John Dropkin (OBM) [one of Celia's children],

was always extremely supportive and always gave permission for people to translate her work." The intimate and sometimes sexual nature of the poems, and her bohemian life, remain a source of pride to the family. Dropkin's marriage with her husband, a union organizer, was characterized as happy, although far from typical. As one relative noted, "She was a difficult person. And he liked that".

Amanda (Miryem-Khaye Seigel) is a Yiddish singer, songwriter, actor, and researcher in Yiddish culture. By day, she is a Librarian in the Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library.

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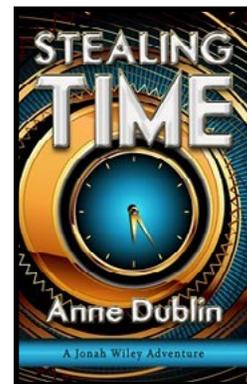
## Member News

*AJL members do not rest.....*

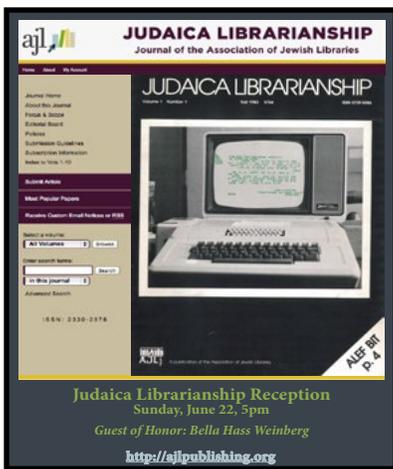
Anne Dublin, AJL member and co-editor of reviews for children and teens, will



participate in the first annual Vaughan (Ontario) Public Libraries' Bookfest on Sun. Sept. 28, 1-4 p.m. at the Dufferin-Clark branch. Bookfest is a celebration of books for people who write them and people who read them. It will feature local authors, writing workshops, a children's corner, book swap, edible books exhibit and much, much more. Anne will also do a presentation about her latest historical novel, *Stealing Time* (Dundurn, 2014), at the Vancouver Jewish Book Festival in November.



# Celebrating *Judaica Librarianship* Online



*Judaica Librarianship* reception flier

During the 2014 AJL conference in Las Vegas we celebrated the inauguration of *Judaica Librarianship* online. Indeed, AJL's peer-reviewed journal found a new electronic home on the Digital Commons platform. The June 22 reception was attended by AJL members, Board and Council members, Editorial Board members Jim Rosenbloom and Annette Goldsmith, past Associate Editor Leah Adler, and three generations of editors:

Editor Rachel Leket-Mor (2013–present), past Editor Zachary Baker (2006–2012), and Founding Editor Bella Hass Weinberg (1983–2000), our guest of honor.



Rachel Leket-Mor, Bella Hass Weinberg, and Zachary Baker

*Judaica Librarianship* became an online journal last summer, after twenty years of being published in print (ISSN: 0739-5086). The platform was launched August 7, 2013, featuring the content of the last print issue, Volume 16/17 (2011) in the form of electronic articles (PDFs). Since then, four additional back issues have been uploaded online: Vols. 15, 14, and 13. The remaining print back issues will be uploaded in a reversible order until all past content is available online. Thanks to Laurel Wolfson and her team of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, OH the content of Volumes 1–10 is scanned and ready for being uploaded to the website as well.



Council member Jackie Ben-Efraim reads *Judaica Librarianship* on a tablet

The website features a list of “Top 10 Downloads” (based on the average number of full-text downloads per day since the paper was posted), “Recent Additions” on the site, and an alternating “Paper of the Day”. Articles may be searched by keywords, volume, or author, and are also included in related discipline “commons” on the Digital Commons network, such as Jewish Studies, Library and Information Science, and more – according to their topics.

The Editorial Board of *Judaica Librarianship* decided to make all past content of the journal freely available on the Internet.

We adopted the “green” Open Access model, releasing to the public all articles twelve months after their publication. Thanks to this policy, and to the wide dissemination of their metadata on discovery platforms as well as Google Scholar and other search engines, the articles have been widely read and shared. At the time of writing these words in Mid-August 2014, the number of full-text downloads from the website comes to 6,916; users from seventy-two countries around the world have been accessing AJL's journal. This mass exposure extends way beyond the journal's established readership and is instrumental in spreading the word about AJL and its professional and scholarly accomplishments.



VP for Publications Joyce Levine reads *Judaica Librarianship* on a laptop

Volume 18 (*hai* in Hebrew, or “alive”), the first digitally born issue of the e-journal (ISSN 2330-2976), was published June 16, 2014, with 13 articles totaling over 180 pages. The Call for Papers for Volume 19 was posted in early July (deadline is December 31, 2014). Stepping in the footsteps of my exemplary predecessors – Zachary Baker, Bella Hass Weinberg, and Leah Adler who attended the reception; and Marcia Posner, Linda Lerman, and Barry Dov Walfish who couldn't attend – I wish the journal and its readers many more years of shared wisdom and scholarly achievements. *Mazal tov*, AJL!

Rachel Leket-Mor  
Editor-in-Chief, *Judaica Librarianship*  
[ajlpublishing.org](http://ajlpublishing.org)

## Judaica Librarianship Call for Papers

Situated in the field of Library and Information Science and international in scope, *Judaica Librarianship* (peer-reviewed) provides a forum for scholarship on the theory and practice of Jewish Studies and Information Studies. The journal seeks to publish research articles and essays related to the development, management, and/or digital curation of Judaica and Hebraica collections in all types of libraries and archives, the creation and dissemination of information resources in all formats, the promotion of Jewish information literacy, and Jewish booklore in general. A special area of interest for this forthcoming issue is Digital Humanities in Jewish Studies, including theoretical perspectives or applied prospects and descriptive articles on actual projects. The editorial board welcomes research articles and essays (double-blind peer reviewed) and review essays of reference works and electronic resources. Submission deadline for the journal's next issue (2015) is December 31, 2014.

These are some of the relevant topics for article submissions:

- Digital Humanities projects relevant to Jewish Studies.
- Theoretical or empirical studies integrating Library and Information Science with aspects of Jewish Studies and related fields. Possible areas of connection include: the History of the Book, Bibliometrics, Literary Studies, Media Studies, Jewish languages and Linguistics, Information Technology, Literacy Studies, or Social History, to name a few.
- Best practices and policies for Jewish libraries of all kinds: school libraries (all levels); community center libraries; public libraries; Judaica collections in religious institutions; archival collections; museum and historical society libraries; research libraries; and special libraries.
- Innovative approaches to data curation, discovery tools, or preservation of library materials in the digital age.
- Surveys of noteworthy library collections.
- Historical or bibliographical studies pertaining to Hebraica and/or Judaica materials, libraries, or librarians.
- Library services for users, including but not limited to reference tools and instruction guidelines for teaching Jewish literacy, cultural programming, or any other outreach programs.
- Collaborative collection development initiatives across library networks.

For online submission and guidelines, see <http://ajlpublishing.org>.

### Editorial Board

Rachel Leket-Mor, Arizona State University Libraries (Editor-in-Chief)

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<http://ajlpublishing.org>

**DON'T FORGET TO READ THE SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2014 ISSUE OF AJL REVIEWS!**

**OVER 50 PAGES OF REVIEWS!**

## In Memoriam: Lee Wixman, 1920-2014

SUBMITTED BY HEIDI ESTRIN, PAST PRESIDENT OF AJL, 2012-2014

AJL Friends, I recently learned that longtime AJL member Lee Wixman passed away. Lee was the husband of librarian Irene Levin Wixman, who helped establish the AJL Newsletter. Though not a librarian himself, he was passionately supportive of the profession and our organization, and attended many annual conferences.

I first met Lee in 1998. I was a brand new librarian at Congregation B'nai Israel in Boca Raton, FL. Lee marched into my library and announced that there was a South Florida AJL chapter meeting coming up in Miami (an hour south) and that he would drive me to it. He also informed me that I'd be helping to put on a convention in Boca in 1999! He was right on both counts, and for years he took an avuncular pride in my AJL successes, since he'd gotten me started.

Lee could be abrasive and impatient, and didn't always show good sense, but he was the hardest worker you ever saw, and his heart was in the right place. May his memory be for a blessing.

From Lee's obituary in The Broward Sun-Sentinel (published May 22, 2014):

"Leo (Lee) Wixman, 94, of Delray Beach, FL died peacefully Tuesday, May 20, 2014 at Florida Medical Center. He was born and raised in New Haven, CT, and was the son of the late Nathan and Bessie Wixman. Lee was a veteran of WWII. He worked in sales most of his life but after retirement, he worked at his true passion, the theater. He was a member of the Stagehands Union and actively worked until his early nineties. Lee led a very active life right up until he died. He was an avid golfer, a voracious reader and a wonderful family man. He volunteered for many groups including the Veterans, elderly with transport needs and the Jewish Library Association [sic]." See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/sunsentinel/obituary.aspx?pid=171097465>

## Upcoming Vote to Amend the AJL Constitution, Nov. 3-17, 2014

Our constitution was written in 1972, and we have often needed to make adjustments to bring it up to date. Once again, this year we need to amend it to reflect the way AJL carries out its mission. The changes we are proposing fall into 3 categories:

1. The AJL Board and Council have traditionally met in December or January for midwinter business meetings. These are important mid-year meetings where updates are shared, progress on tasks is checked, and decisions are made relating to the annual meeting in June. But these meetings have always required expensive travel and hotel arrangements. We would like to take advantage of technology that allows us to meet by phone or online in virtual meetings. This would free up more of our resources to spend on our core mission. This would not affect our annual conferences; we are still committed to holding an annual meeting every year.

We must authorize our Board, our Council, and our committees to hold virtual meetings between annual meetings, when needed. This requires changes to the Constitution, Article V (Administration) and in the Bylaws, Article II (Committees).

2. To give our leaders more flexibility in meeting their financial commitments, we need to increase the amount that they are able to spend above their budget lines in an emergency. This change occurs in our Bylaws, Art. V (Fiscal Policy)

3. Due to an oversight, the word "or" was omitted from Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution. Special meetings of the Board are called by the president when needed, OR by petition of its members. This is the case for special meetings of Council and of the Association as well. The omission of the word "or" happened years ago, and wasn't spotted until recently. This change corrects the error.



Revision history:

Adopted: June, 1973

Revised: June, 1998; June, 2006; June 2009, June 2011, Dec. 2013; **WITH PROPOSED CHANGES, 2014**

#### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

This organization shall be known as the Association of Jewish Libraries, Incorporated, herein referred to as the Association.

#### **ARTICLE II - MISSION AND GOALS**

The mission and goals of the Association are stated in the Corporate Charter.

#### **ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Any person, library or other organization interested in promoting the goals of the Association may become a member upon payment of specified dues.

Section 2. Honorary life membership may be conferred upon an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to Judaic library service. This person shall be a non-dues paying member with voting privileges.

#### **ARTICLE IV - STRUCTURE**

Section 1. The Association shall be structured to include divisions representing major types of library service. The local chapters represent different geographic locations.

Section 2. Applications for establishment of divisions or chapters shall be made to the Executive Board in accordance with the BY-LAWS.

#### **ARTICLE V - ADMINISTRATION**

Section 1. The governing body of the Association shall be the Council which shall consist of the Executive Board, the webmaster, the editors of *Judaica Librarianship* and the *AJL Newsletter*, the coordinator of *Hasafran*, the parliamentarian, the public relations chair, the professional development/continuing education chair, the publications chair, the national conference chair, and the local conference chairs for the current year and the following year. In addition, the mentoring/member support chair and two members-at-large, appointed by the president, will serve on the Council.

a. The Council shall determine policy for the Association and its decisions shall be binding upon the Association.

b. Any action of the Council may be set aside by a three-fourths vote at any meeting of the Association or by a majority vote by mail, email, or other electronic means in which one-fourth of the members of the Association have voted. Such vote shall be held upon petition of twenty members of the Association.

c. The Association by a vote at a meeting held during the annual conference may refer any matter to the Council with recommendations and may require the Council to report on such matters at any specified meeting of the Association.

d. Any questions of policy may, by a majority of the Council, be submitted to the Association to be voted on either at an annual conference or by mail, email or other electronic means as the Council may determine.

e. The Council shall hold at least one meeting each year at the time and place of the annual conference of the Association. Other meetings may be called by the president or upon the request of seven members of the council; **these meetings may be held electronically using any technology which is consistent with guidelines set forth in the current edition of Robert's Rules.**

f. Officers of the Association shall serve as officers of the Council. The presiding officer may vote only in the case of a tie.

g. A member of Council may serve simultaneously in more than one capacity but only has one vote.

h. All elected or appointed Councilors shall serve for terms of two years or until their successors take office.

Section 2. The administrative body of the Association shall be the Executive Board, which shall consist of the elected officers and immediate past president of the Association and the president and vice-president of each division.

a. The Executive Board shall act for the Council in the administration of established policies and programs. It shall serve as the central management board for the Association subject to review by Council, and shall make recommendations with respect to matters of policy and operations. The Parliamentarian shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Board.

b. The Executive Board shall report not later than the next meeting of the Council.

c. The Executive Board shall hold at least one meeting each year at the time and place of the annual conference of the Association. Other meetings may be called by the president or upon request of the majority of the Board; **these meetings may be held electronically using any technology which is consistent with guidelines set forth in the current edition of Robert's Rules.**

#### **ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS**

Section 1. The officers of the Association shall be a president, a vice-president/ president-elect, a vice-president of membership, a vice-president of development, a secretary, and a treasurer.

Section 2. All officers and elected members of the Executive Board shall take office at the adjournment of the annual conference and serve for a two year term or until their successors take office.

a. The secretary, treasurer, vice-president of membership and vice-president of development may stand for reelection and serve up to three consecutive terms.

b. All other officers shall not serve consecutive full terms in office.

Section 3. Officers shall perform the duties of their respective office and such other duties as may be approved by the Executive Board.

Section 4. Vacancy in an office may be filled for the period of the unexpired terms by appointment by the Executive Board with the exception that should the vacancy occur in the office of the president, the vice-president (president-elect) will succeed to the office of the president, to complete that term. He or she will automatically succeed himself or herself to serve his or her regular term as president.

#### **ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS**

Section 1. There shall be an annual conference of the Association at such time and place as may be determined by the Executive Board.

Section 2. Special meetings of the Association may be called by the Executive Board, the president or upon request of no less than twenty members. At least two weeks notice shall be given.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - VOTING**

Section 1. Each individual and life members shall be entitled to one vote.

Section 2. Votes by mail, email or other electronic means as decided by Council, both of the Association and of the Council, may be authorized by the Executive Board between meetings for exceptional matters that should not be postponed until the next annual meeting. Such mail, email or electronic votes shall be conducted under the same requirements as votes at meetings, except that for votes by Council, a fifty per cent of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum and a three-fourths majority of those voting shall be required to carry.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall have authority to set the time limit during which votes will be recorded; but if no such time limit is set, no vote shall be counted unless received within thirty days from the day the text of the ballot or question voted upon was mailed properly addressed to those entitled to vote on the matter involved. In the case of a vote by mail, email or electronic means by the Association, the Executive Board may designate publication of the ballot or question submitted in the official newsletter of the Association as the appropriate method of submitting the matter to the membership.

#### **ARTICLE IX - PROVISION FOR BYLAWS**

Bylaws may be adopted, amended or rescinded by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular meeting of the Association, or by mail, email, or other electronic means, providing the entire membership has received ten days prior written notification.

## **ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Proposals for amending the Constitution may originate in the Council or from any member who presents a petition signed by not fewer than seven members.

Section 2. A proposed amendment shall become effective when it shall have been approved by a majority of the members of the Council present and voting, followed by ratification of the membership either by a mail, email, or other electronic vote of the majority of the members voting, or by a majority vote of the membership present and voting at a special meeting of the Association.

Section 3. The Council, on approving a proposed amendment shall specify whether a vote on ratification shall be taken at a meeting of the Association or by mail, email, or other electronic means. If a mail or electronic vote is ordered, the Council shall fix the time for the beginning and closing of the balloting. If a vote at a meeting is ordered, at least thirty days written notice shall be given to the membership of the text of the proposed amendment.

## **BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I - NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

Section 1. a. Prior to the annual conference, held in odd years, the president shall appoint a Nominating Committee of at least three members, representative of the general membership, including at least one member of each division.

b. Such committee shall nominate candidates from among the general membership for the positions of president-elect, vice-president for membership, vice-president for development, secretary, and treasurer.

Section 2. a. The nominating committee shall report its nominations in the official newsletter of the Association not less than three months before the annual conference.

b. In any national election, additional names may be placed in nomination for any office by any member in good standing. These nominations must be submitted to the chair of the nominating committee no later than two weeks after the proposed slate of officers is officially transmitted to the membership. Nominations must have the support of five members in good standing, and the consent of the nominee.

Section 3. The elections shall be held by mail, email, or other electronic means and the candidate receiving a majority of the votes for each office shall be elected to that office.

### **ARTICLE II - COMMITTEES**

Section 1. a. The standing committees of the Association shall be: Constitution and Bylaws, Finance, and Membership.

b. Chairpersons of the above mentioned committees shall be appointed by the president.

Section 2. Special Committees may be authorized by the Council or the Executive Board. Chairpersons of such committees shall be appointed by the president with approval of the Board.

Section 3. No committee shall incur expense on behalf of the Association except as authorized, nor shall any committee commit the Association by any declaration of policy.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall be a permanent member of the Finance Committee.

Section 5. The president and/or vice-president/president-elect shall be ex-officio members of all committees.

**Section 6. Committees of AJL may, when appropriate, hold meetings electronically using any technology which is consistent with guidelines set forth in the current edition of Robert's Rules.**

### **ARTICLE III - QUORUM**

Section 1. Twenty members shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special meeting of the Association.

Section 2. A majority shall constitute a quorum for meetings of the Executive Board and eleven members shall constitute a quorum for Council.

### **ARTICLE IV - DUES**

Section 1. The Council of the Association shall have the power to determine various classes of membership and to set the annual dues.

Section 2. Members whose dues are unpaid on February 1 of each year and who shall continue such

delinquency for one month after notice of the same has been sent, shall be dropped from membership. Lapsed members may be reinstated upon payment of dues for the current year.

Section 3. Membership year of the Association shall be October 1 - September 30.

Section 4. Dues remitted after July 1 shall be applicable to the following year.

#### **ARTICLE V - FISCAL POLICY**

Section 1. The fiscal year of the Association shall be October 1 - September 30.

Section 2. A review of all accounts shall be made biennially by a professional accountant.

Section 3. A report shall be made annually to the membership, by a duly authorized member of the Executive Board, detailing receipts and expenditures, explaining the Association's fiscal status and, when appropriate, reporting on the review.

Section 4. A budget must be approved by Executive Board no later than the annual meeting preceding the new fiscal year.

Section 5. Any expenditure not allocated in the budget exceeding ~~\$100.00~~ **\$350 or 25% of the budget line, whichever is less**, must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 6. In the event that the Association is dissolved, all funds and property belonging to the Association, shall be transferred in accordance with the wishes of the Council to institutions or organizations which qualify for tax exemption under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Section 7. In no event shall any of the funds of the Association inure to the benefit of any individual.

#### **ARTICLE VI - DIVISIONS**

Section 1. The purpose of a division is to promote library service and librarianship of a particular type or interest. Each division shall represent a field of activity clearly and distinctly different from that of other divisions.

Section 2. a. Any group of not fewer than fifteen members of the Association may petition the Council for division status. Applications must be in writing accompanied by signatures of prospective members and a statement of goals and objectives.

b. The Council by a vote taken at two consecutive meetings may discontinue division status when in the opinion of the Council the usefulness of that division has ceased.

Section 3. Each division may establish its own bylaws, structure and program, providing that these in no way conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Association.

Section 4. The officers of each division shall serve on the Executive Board.

#### **ARTICLE VII - CHAPTERS**

Section 1. The purpose of a chapter is to promote Jewish library service and librarianship within a specific geographic area.

Section 2. Any group of not fewer than five members of the Association may petition the Executive Board for Chapter status. Applications must be in writing accompanied by signatures of prospective members and a statement of goals and objectives. All chapter officers must be members of National AJL.

Section 3. Each chapter may establish its own bylaws, structure and program, providing these areas in no way conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Association.

Section 4. Each Chapter President shall serve on the Chapter Presidents Council.

Section 5. Any chapter may withdraw from chapter status provided the withdrawal has been submitted to a vote of the chapter membership and is favored by a majority of the members voting.

Section 6. Chapter status may be withdrawn by the Executive Board if the chapter becomes inactive or fails to comply with the provisions of this article.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - PAST PRESIDENTS COUNCIL**

All past Association presidents automatically become members of the Past Presidents Council.

#### **ARTICLE IX - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Business shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order unless otherwise specified in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association.

#### **ARTICLE X - DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

These duties shall be defined in a procedure manual to be adopted by the Council.

# AJL Constitution – changes approved June 25, 2014

Council meeting, Las Vegas conference

One change was approved online, July 24, 2014. This was the addition of the word “or” in Art. V, Section 2.

## New wording in bold

Constitution

### ARTICLE V - ADMINISTRATION

#### Section 1.

e. The Council shall hold at least one meeting each year at the time and place of the annual conference of the Association. Other meetings may be called by the president or upon the request of seven members of the council; **these meetings may be held electronically using any technology which is consistent with guidelines set forth in the current edition of Robert’s Rules.**

#### Section 2.

c. The Executive Board shall hold at least one meeting each year at the time and place of the annual conference of the Association. Other meetings may be called by the president or upon request of the majority of the Board; **these meetings may be held electronically using any technology which is consistent with guidelines set forth in the current edition of Robert’s Rules.**

Bylaws

### Article II - COMMITTEES

#### NEW SECTION ADDED

**Section 6. Committees of AJL may, when appropriate, hold meetings electronically using any technology which is consistent with guidelines set forth in the current edition of Robert’s Rules.**

### ARTICLE V - FISCAL POLICY

Section 5. Any expenditure not allocated in the budget exceeding ~~\$100.00~~ **\$350 or 25% of the budget line, whichever is less**, must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

#### Keep Up to Date with Hasafran

Hasafran is the electronic discussion list of the Association of Jewish Libraries. It was created in 1991 to provide a forum for the discussion of Judaica librarianship. The list is moderated by Joseph (Yossi) Galron, Jewish studies librarian at The Ohio State University. The views expressed in the list are the opinions of the participants and not necessarily the views of the moderator or of AJL.

To subscribe to Hasafran, please see instructions at <https://lists.service.ohio-state.edu/mailman/listinfo/hasafran>

To post a message to Hasafran, send your message to: [hasafran@lists.osu.edu](mailto:hasafran@lists.osu.edu)

You will receive a confirmation message.

A keyword-searchable [archive](#) of Hasafran messages posted since June 12, 2003 is now available.

# The Strategic Planning committee of the Association of Jewish Libraries is proud to present the Strategic Plan for 2014-2017

SUBMITTED BY JACKIE BEN-EFRAIM, ADVERTISING AND EXHIBITS MANAGER

Association of Jewish Libraries

Strategic Plan

2014-2017

## Our Vision

A world where reliable resources are made available in all formats and at all levels to anyone who seeks to study and understand the Jewish experience.

## Our Mission

The Association of Jewish Libraries is an international professional organization that fosters access to information and research resources, in all formats, relating to all things Jewish. The Association promotes Jewish literacy and scholarship and provides a community for peer support and professional development.

## Summary

The rapidly changing world of librarianship in general, and Jewish librarianship in particular, has prompted the AJL Council in early 2013 to authorize the development of a strategic plan to guide AJL in addressing such changes as the impact of the Internet, electronic publishing, mobile and other technologies, and the evolving roles of libraries in the school and synagogue environments, as well as academic institutions, archives and community centers. The committee was led by Dr. Yaffa Weisman and includes Jackie Ben-Efraim, Suzi Dubin, Heidi Estrin, Fred Isaac, Rachel Leket-Mor, Daniel Scheide, Rose Shoshanah Seidman and Amalia Warshenbrot. Dick Fishman and Fred Samulon of the Executive Service Corps ([www.escsc.org](http://www.escsc.org)) were asked to facilitate the development of the plan.

## Goals and Objectives

**Goal I: Dramatically increase AJL's relevance to key constituents and communicate the Association's capabilities to them.**

Objectives:

A. Identify the key constituents and determine how AJL can best benefit them. Key constituents may include, in addition to librarians and library workers, educators, religious leaders, philanthropists, publishers, academics, vendors, etc. Leader: Etta Gold.

B. Take stock of what the membership and the association as a whole have to offer in terms of programs and expertise. Leader: Tina Weiss.

C. Determine how other library associations make themselves relevant to and communicate with their constituents. Leader: Amalia Warshenbrot.

D. Develop a plan to enhance the relevance to constituents based on the research done above. Leader: Heidi Estrin.

E. Communicate current capabilities and the plan to stakeholders on an ongoing, regular basis. Leader: Danielle Winter.

**Goal II: Strengthen connections with and among membership to build a sense of professional community that engages current members and attracts new members.**

Objectives:

A. Determine how we currently interact with members and how members interact with each other. Leader: Tina Weiss.

B. Identify and implement ways to improve communications with members. Leader: Sheryl Stahl.

C. Determine what the membership is seeking in terms of benefits of membership. Leader: Tina Weiss.

D. Design and implement benefits to members based on the results of the assessment. Leader: Sheryl Stahl.

E. Sustain and grow the membership by 10%. Leader: VP Membership.

***Goal III: Ensure that AJL's management is efficient, consistent, effective and transparent.***

Objectives:

- A. Document and communicate organizational processes, responsibilities, meetings and deadlines. Leader: Joy Kingsolver.
- B. Provide Leadership Training to Council and Membership. Leader: Aimee Lurie.
- C. Regularly evaluate processes and improve as needed. Leader: AJL President.

***Goal IV: Establish a robust development function to ensure a vibrant and sustainable organization.***

Objectives:

- A. Provide fund development training to council members. Leader: AJL President.
- B. Establish the structure of the Development function. Leader: AJL President.
- C. Institute the fundamentals of fundraising. Leaders: James Rosenbloom, AJL President.
- D. Cultivate donors. Leaders: James Rosenbloom, Fred Isaac.

***Process for Ensuring Implementation of the Strategic Plan***

- Charging a small committee, the Strategic Plan Oversight Committee (SPOC) with monitoring progress of the plan. This committee consists of Fred Isaac, Amalia Warshenbrot and Jackie Ben-Efraim, who assumed the responsibility of leading the implementation of the plan in June of 2014.
- Objective leaders providing a plan for achieving their objective.
- Objective leaders reporting status to the SPOC on a quarterly basis.
- SPOC reporting progress on a quarterly basis to the Council.
- Convening the Strategic Planning Committee at least yearly to review and revise the plan.

Strategic Plan committee members: Ben-Efraim, Jackie; Estrin, Heidi; Isaac, Fred; Leket-Mor, Rachel; Marcus, Rebecca; Rosenbloom, James; Scheide, Daniel; Seidman, Shoshanah Rose; Warshenbrot, Amalia; Weisman, Yaffa.

## Chapter Chatter

TOBY ROSSNER, CHAPTER RELATIONS COMMITTEE

### ATLANTA CHAPTER (AJL-ATLANTA)

*Submitted by Stacy Brown (The Alfred and Adele Davis Academy), President*

The Atlanta AJL chapter has enjoyed many opportunities for professional growth this summer. In June, several members of the Atlanta AJL chapter were recently given the opportunity to attend the International Society of Technology Educators Conference (ISTE) in Atlanta. We were rewarded with many learning and networking opportunities supported by a Marcus Foundation grant to the Jewish Day School Council. Day school media center personnel had an opportunity to consult with Susan Dubin in May and will have an opportunity to consult with Peggy Pearlstein in the Fall. Adelle Salmenson of Temple Sinai and Michelle Epstein of The Epstein School received support to attend the Los Vegas AJL Conference this summer.

We look forward to growing our chapter this upcoming year and anticipate a rewarding kick off meeting at The Davis Academy.

## CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER (AJL-CAC)

*Submitted by Galina Teverovsky, Co-President*

Since September 2013, the AJL/Capital Area Chapter (AJL/CAC) has been focused on the planning of the 50th Anniversary AJL Conference 2015. We have been meeting regularly and have established numerous committees, including Finance and Development and Programming. Led by Conference Co-Chairs Aaron Taub, Dina Herbert, and Ellen Share, members of the AJL 2015 Conference Organizing Committee have been involved in all aspects of conference planning. For example, Ann Brener designed the beautiful conference flyer, which was featured on the back of the 2014 AJL Las Vegas conference program book. Irene Munster, Gail Shirazi, and Galina Teverovsky have been active on the Finance and Development Committee. A first round of fundraising letters has been sent; follow-up and new letters will take place shortly. Irene has set up a Google Drive where key conference documentation is stored. The drive is regularly updated by Irene and Dina. Aaron, Dina, and Irene drafted a conference budget, which was presented to the AJL Council at the AJL conference in Las Vegas. Ellen Share brought the first conference donations (!) The Programming Committee, consisting of Michlean Amir, Yelena Luckert (Program Committee Chair), Peggy Pearlstein and Gail Shirazi compiled preliminary list of speakers. Aaron has compiled a list of sponsorship opportunities, based on previous AJL conference documents. A preliminary tour of the conference facilities for the Organizing Committee will take place in the near future. We will keep you updated on further developments in our preparation for the Conference.

## SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER (SFAJL)

*Submitted by Etta Gold*



Florida Chapter members with Jo Taylor Marshall at the 2014 AJL Conference

## LONG ISLAND CHAPTER (LI-AJL)

*Submitted by Wendy A. Marx, Chapter President*

The five members of The Long Island Chapter who attended the AJL Conference in Las Vegas had a wonderful time meeting up with AJL members from across the country. Learning about the successful programs of other chapters gave our program chairperson, Arlene Ratzabi, some excellent ideas for our LIAJL programming year 2014-2015.

On July 15 our members visited the summer home of our past-president Don Wilson in Greenport, Long Island. Don arranged for us to tour Long Island's oldest synagogue, Congregation Tifereth Israel. Micah Kaplan, MD, whose forebears were among the area's original settlers, told us about the first Jewish settlers on the North Fork of Long Island when the congregation was established and how the synagogue was built. The synagogue is listed on the New York State Register and National Register of Historic Places. Despite the overcast weather, it was a wonderful "daycation". And during the road trip, our programming for the year was planned!

We look forward to a great year for 2014-2015 and to seeing our AJL members next June in D.C.

## NEW YORK METROPOLITAN AREA (AJL-NYMA)

*Submitted by Rita Lifton and Shuli Berger*

NYMA's 2014 Spring Conference, held at The Library of The Jewish Theological Seminary on June 11th, focused on three major archival collections – the Iraqi Jewish Archive, the Johanna L. Spector Project, and the archival collections of The Library of The Jewish Theological Seminary.

In June 2004, at the Annual Convention of the Association of Jewish Libraries, hosted by AJL-NYMA and held in Brooklyn, New York, Doris Hamburg and Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler of the National Archives spoke about the books, documents and scrolls pertaining to the Iraqi Jewish community that had been discovered by American soldiers in May 2003 in the flooded basement of Saddam Hussein's intelligence headquarters in Baghdad. Mss. Hamburg and Ritzenthaler described the enormous task that lay before them and others at the National Archives in the effort to preserve what came to be called the Iraqi Jewish Archive. Fast forward ten years and that effort has come full circle. AJL-NYMA was thrilled to have Dina Herbert, Project Librarian, Iraqi Jewish Archive, National Archives, speak about Baghdadi Jewish Life Seen Through the Iraqi Jewish Archive.

Ms. Herbert explained that even now it is not known how the material ended up in Mukhabarat, i.e. Iraqi intelligence headquarters. The collection consists of more than 2,700 published books; the earliest book is a Bomberg edition of the Bible from 1525. Early on, the military team received a tip that there was a 7th century edition of the Babylonian Talmud among the items in the basement but it was never found. In addition to the published books, there are tens of thousands of unpublished archival materials including handwritten books, booklets, official correspondence, school records, financial records, telegrams, and more, with dates ranging from the mid-16th century to the late 20th century. However, there are no diaries or personal letters among the archival materials.

The work to preserve the archive occurred in three phases:

Phase I – Initial recovery, freezing and shipping to the U.S.; then, vacuum freeze-drying once the materials were in the U.S.

Phase II – Identification and assessment, photographing title pages and covers, creation of a database, preliminary cataloging.

Phase III – The current phase. Completion of cataloging, stabilization of materials, digitization, boxing and exhibiting. Thus far, 100% of the archival materials have been digitized as well as 13% of the books.

Further information about the Iraqi Jewish Archive can be found at its website, [www.ija.archives.gov](http://www.ija.archives.gov).

The next major archival collection, the Johanna L. Spector Project, was described in Johanna Spector's *Life and Work: From Latvia to the World*. The presenters included Michala Biondi, Archivist/Project Manager and Processing Archivists, Shira Bistricher, Nicole Greenhouse and Cynthia Schwartz.

In 2012, The Library of The Jewish Theological Seminary received a Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation through a program administered by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR). This grant enabled JTS Library to make the archives of Dr. Johanna L. Spector available for research.

Dr. Spector (1915-2008) was a professor of ethnomusicology at The Jewish Theological Seminary, the first woman to be granted the title of full professor at that institution. A native of Latvia who survived the Holocaust, she was a world-renowned scholar in her field, an author of books and articles, and a producer of documentary films. The team of archivists working on the Johanna L. Spector Project, housed at JTS Library, discussed this rich archive, which includes material in the fields of ethnography, history, anthropology, and music. In particular, the collection documents the native liturgical and folk music from the nearly extinct Jewish communities of India, Yemen, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Armenia and the Samaritan people, offering a window into these communities before they were influenced by modern cultures and melodies.

The range of items in this collection is extraordinary, encompassing research notes, drafts of lectures, photographs and slides, reels of film taken during Dr. Spector's travels, rough cuts of her documentaries, audio field recordings, and a number of musical instruments that she also collected during her travels. Some of these items were on display during the Conference.

Further information about the Johanna L. Spector Project can be found at <http://jts-spectorarchives.tumblr.com>. A digital recording of this presentation as well as the presentation about the Iraqi Jewish Archive will be available in several months at [www.ajlnyma.org](http://www.ajlnyma.org).

The final segment of the Conference consisted of two presentations: the first was on JTS Library's archival collections by Dr. Sarah Diamant, Administrative Librarian for Special Collections, and the second was about the JTS Music Archives by Dr. Elliott Kahn, Music Archivist.

Dr. Diamant utilized the diaries of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan as a springboard to discuss famous personalities and events in the history of JTS as well as world events. The PowerPoint presentation showed images from the JTS collections of Rabbi Solomon Schechter, Albert Einstein, the Brooklyn Jewish Center, Camp Cejwin, and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and Rabbi Dr. Abraham Joshua Heschel's work in the civil rights movement.

Dr. Kahn presented an overview and history of Ashkenazi liturgical and popular/theater music in Central and Eastern Europe and in the United States. He explained that the JTS music archives consist of two major groups: archives, which have finding aids available on the web, and music scores and recordings which may be accessed through OCLC and ALEPH. He succeeded in providing an in-depth introduction to 19th and 20th century Jewish musical history for the audience of non-musicians.

Drs. Diamant and Kahn's presentations were interesting, informative as well as being visual treats.

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER (AJLSC)

*Submitted by Ellen Cole*

AJLSC had a large group at the AJL National Conference, chaired by our own Suzi Dubin. We are so proud of her success. Three members of AJLSC are national officers for AJL for 2014-2016: Yaffa Weisman is President, Sheryl Stahl is Vice President/Membership, and Sharon Benamou is the RAS Division President.



Special, wonderful, news: On June 9th, on what would have been her 90th birthday, we had the thrill of participating in the dedication of the Fairfax Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library in honor of Grace Friedman, our chapter's founding member and AJL dedicated member. Many local and state dignitaries honored Grace with speeches and a moving plaque unveiling. This special dedication of a public library honors her work for the Fairfax Branch as well as her contributions to the profession. Please see our pictures of this grand program.



Our Spring General Meeting was held at Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School. We toured the renovated Library, heard an informative talk by member Leslie Friedman, who heads the new Southern California Office of JBI and enjoyed our annual book share. These captivating volumes for children and adults are now on Pinterest as is our list of books about the Jewish blind. Refer to <http://www.pinterest.com/hasafranit/recommended-books-from-may-ajlsc-meeting/>. Don't forget, AJLSC is now on Facebook! Look for "AJLSC" and "like" us. Visit our fabulous AJLSC website run by member Barbara Leff! We look forward to our annual board dinner and planning meeting in late summer.



## AJL SCHOLARSHIP

The Association of Jewish Libraries is pleased to announce a scholarship of \$1000 to a student enrolled or accepted in a graduate school of library and information science.

Prospective candidates should have knowledge of and interest in Jewish Studies, and demonstrate the potential, ability and intention of pursuing a career in Judaica Librarianship.

"In order to encourage students to train for, and enter, the field of Judaica librarianship, the Association of Jewish Libraries awards a scholarship to a student attending or planning to attend a graduate school of library and information science. Prospective candidates should have an interest in, and demonstrate a potential for, pursuing a career in Judaica librarianship."

Information about the scholarships and the application form are available at: [www.jewishlibraries.org](http://www.jewishlibraries.org)

### Scholarship Fund Needs Your Help

Previous winners of the AJL Scholarships for aspiring Judaica librarians have been and are still active in AJL and in the profession as a whole. We all know about the greying of our profession and the need for younger and able professionals to step up to the plate as we older ones retire or take on new challenges. The Scholarship Fund helps significantly in this regard. We offer up to two scholarships annually of \$1000 each to students in Library and Information Science programs who demonstrate an interest in entering the profession as Judaica librarians. In order to insure that we will be able to continue to offer the scholarships, we need to raise some money for the Scholarship Fund. The main way we have of raising money is through our tribute cards and through straight donations. For a donation in the amount of your choice, we can send a tribute card to the person or people you designate. It is a thoughtful way of remembering or honoring someone you care about. Just remember to include all the relevant names and addresses with your donation and card request. You can also donate for no reason at all. Please send donations and card requests to:

Sarah M. Barnard  
Hebrew Union College-Klau Library,  
3101 Clifton Avenue,  
Cincinnati, OH 45220

### AJL Scholarship Donation Form

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### Recent Donations to the Scholarship Fund

From Merry Firschein in memory of her mother Sylvia Firschein

From Susan Dubin in honor of Peggy Pearlstein's retirement, Yaffa Weisman's wedding and in memory of Lisa Silverman's father.

From Aimee Lurie and Diane Rauchwerger in memory of Barbara Beitz's father.

## Credits and Contact

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All links to online resources were checked for accuracy on September 12, 2014.

We cannot be responsible for broken links to those resources in the future.

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