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**HERITAGE**

Spring 2011

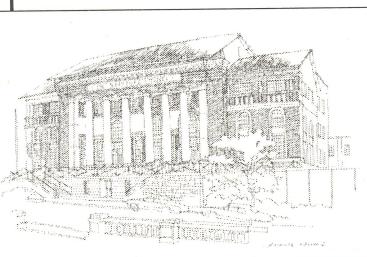
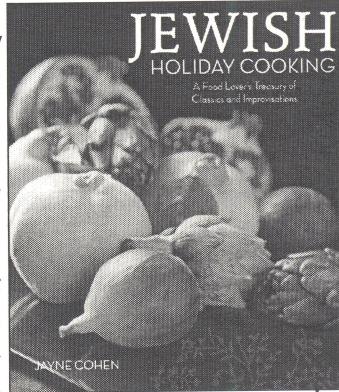
**A Journey to the New Passover Table**

with cookbook author Jayne Cohen

**Wednesday, April 6, 2011 7:00 P.M., Congregation Tikvoh Chadoshoh Sisterhood, 180 Still Rd., Bloomfield**

The Society and the Sisterhood of Congregation Tikvoh Chadoshoh want to help you liven up your family's Passover experience with new dishes and innovative takes on the classics. Join us for an evening with Jayne Cohen, the author of *Jewish Holiday Cooking: A Food Lover's Treasury of Classics and Improvisations*. Cohen has made guest appearances on radio and TV, including NBC's Weekend Today. She believes that "food is truly magical. Through the simple act of eating, Jews partake of a mystical but very real community with their families, their traditions and the world itself."

Cohen's new book contains more than 200 kosher recipes for the holidays that are sure to become part of your own family's tradition. The dishes come from around the world and emphasize the use of fresh vegetables, fruits and herbs. For this evening, she will draw on Jewish history and lore, as well as memories of her own family's celebrations to discuss Passover and ways of enlivening and enhancing your family's celebration. In addition, Tikvoh Chadoshoh's Sisterhood will be preparing some of her recipes for tasting. Copies of her cookbook will be available for purchase. Register online at our website: [www.jhsgh.org](http://www.jhsgh.org), or contact Bea at (860) 727-6170, [bbrodie@jewishhartford.org](mailto:bbrodie@jewishhartford.org).



**History Around Town: Tour the Hartford History Center & Watkinson Library's Judaic Collection, Trinity College**

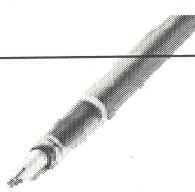
**Wednesday, April 27, 2011, 10 A.M.**

The Hartford History Center is a specialized collection within the Hartford Public Library that focuses on Hartford's history. It includes city archives dating from 1639, the Hartford Times photographic collection, the Marc-Yves Regis photographic collection of Hartford's North End, and much more.

The Watkinson Library holds a very interesting collection of Judaica and Hebraica dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It also includes early examples of Hebrew printing of classic Jewish texts, American Judaica, and works in Hebrew, English and Yiddish.

The group will be carpooling. If you are willing to drive (directions will be provided), please let us know. We will take a short break at the Trinity cafeteria. Cost is \$5 per person. Register by calling our office, or at our website: [www.jhsgh.org](http://www.jhsgh.org). Registrations must be received by April 21, 2011. For further information contact Bea Brodie at (860) 727-6170 or [bbrodie@jewishhartford.org](mailto:bbrodie@jewishhartford.org)

# President's Message



Hopefully you are all weathering the storms of this most unusual and difficult winter—and that you are looking forward to spring. And what a spring our wonderful Executive Director, Estelle Kafer, has planned for us, with several interesting programs that you will see highlighted in this bulletin. Two that I would like to mention are a program with Jayne Cohen, a noted cookbook author, who will help us prepare for Passover, and an afternoon workshop in May by past president and historian, Dr. Leon Chameides, for those who have an interest in genealogy and would like to learn how to get started and what resources are available.

There are also some long-term projects in the works that I would like to share. We are still collecting stories for a second volume on Hartford's neighborhoods, which will include the South End and the West End, as well as the North End. If you grew up in any of these communities, please share your story and your photos with us. Another exciting undertaking is still in the planning stages, but it is one that we hope will be in place by this Fall. We are working with several local organizations and institutions to develop a guided bus tour of Hartford that will focus on the Jewish immigrant experience. Participants will have an opportunity to learn how these first settlers were changed by this community and how they themselves impacted their surroundings. The route will include some buildings that no longer exist, and there will be stops at several important sites. This significant collaborative effort exemplifies the mission and goals of the Society, and I believe strongly that it will add immensely to the pride we all take in our Jewish heritage. We are counting on the support and generosity of our donors to help provide the necessary funding for these initiatives.

Our Jewish farming journal, *A Life of the Land: Connecticut's Jewish Farmers*, has been selling briskly and is full of fascinating stories and anecdotes. The latest book by Betty Hoffman, *A History of Jewish Connecticut: Mensches, Merchants and Mitzvahs*, has essays by authors from throughout the state, and is also a wonderful read.

The year will culminate with our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner to be held on Sunday, October 30, 2011. A dedicated committee is hard at work planning this very special event and we will keep you informed.

As you can see, your JHSGH is very busy and active and I am so proud to be a part of it all!

Sincerely,

*Barbara Gordon*

## SPRING 2011 CALENDAR

### March 6, 2011 – 2:00 P.M.

“Remembering the Old Neighborhood,” Hartford Public Library

### March 17, 2011 – 7:00 P.M.

JHSGH Board Meeting, CSB

### March 27, 2011 – 12:00 P.M.

Film – *The Brothers Warner*, Hartford Jewish Film Festival, K & G Theatres, Bloomfield, Co-sponsored by JHSGH

### April 6, 2011 – 7:00 P.M.

“A Journey to the New Passover Table,” a talk by cookbook author Jayne Cohen, at Congregation Tikvoh Chadoshoh

### April 10, 2011 – 10:00 A.M.

“Pride, Honor and Courage: Jewish Women Remember World War II” at the Jewish Historical Society of Greater New Haven

### April 27, 2011 – 10:00 A.M.

History Around Town—visit to the Hartford History Center and Watkinson Library Judaica Collection, Trinity College

### May 18, 2011 - 2:00 - 4:00 P.M., Board Room

Getting started in Genealogy—workshop led by Dr. Leon Chameides, CSB

### May 6, 2011- 7:00 P.M.

JHSGH Board Meeting, CSB

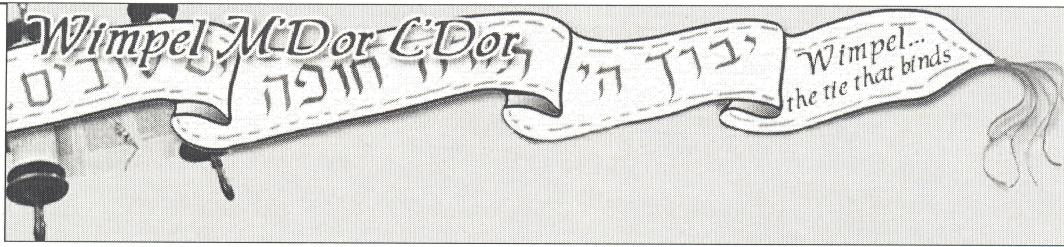
### June 6, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.

JHSGH Annual Meeting with speaker Professor Magda Teter, Director Of Jewish and Israel Studies, Wesleyan University

Save the date for our Gala Event  
celebrating our 40<sup>TH</sup> anniversary!

Sunday, October 30, 2011

More details will be coming soon!



## A New Exhibit: The Wimpel in Jewish Tradition

This wimpel collection is on loan courtesy of Congregation Tikvoh Chadoshoh in Bloomfield, CT. The wimpels were collected by Rabbi Hans Bodenheimer and were discovered in a closet by Rabbi Lily Kaufman. Many of the wimpels made after World War II were designed by Senta Brown and Hamsie Wolf. The first public exhibit was curated by Gloria Bein at The Emanuel Synagogue. The wimpels will be on display in the JHSGH office through May 2011.

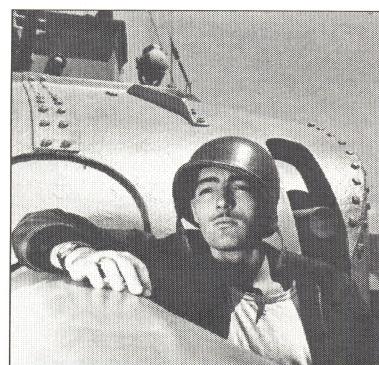
In German, the word “wimpel” means banner. In Jewish tradition, a *wimpel* is a narrow sash that is used to bind Torah scrolls. It is usually about seven inches high and at least seven feet long. Traditionally, they were made from the linen cloths used to swaddle baby boys during their *brit milah* (ritual circumcision ceremony), then cleaned, and cut into strips that were sewn together to make a long sash. This would then be beautifully decorated with needlework or paint and include colorful images and wording. Typically, the wording would include the child’s Hebrew name, the father’s name, date of birth and a verse expressing hope of a rich and fulfilling life surrounded by the ways of the Torah, *chuppah* and good deeds. Illustrations generally focused on Biblical or holiday themes, or have some relationship to the meaning of the child’s name.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, after the individual wimpel was created, it would be stored in the synagogue until the young man’s *bar mitzvah*. At that time, he would use his own wimpel to bind the Torah during the ceremony. It might also be used as part of the *chuppah* (wedding canopy) at his marriage. Another German custom was *Shulenträgen*. The wimpel would be used on the first Shabbat after the child’s third birthday. The child would be brought to the synagogue and, with assistance, put his own wimpel on the Torah.

Today, the tradition of the wimpel has been revived in some communities for both boys and girls, and they are made either by the families, or by artists who are commissioned to create this meaningful keepsake. The wimpel symbolizes the passing of tradition from parent to child, and also represents the binding of the child to a life of Torah. In addition, it physically connects the life of the family with home based rituals, with the life of the community through the synagogue.

## JEWISH VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

The Society is proud to be part of a national Veterans History Project being done in conjunction with Central Connecticut State University and the Library of Congress. The University is working with the Library to collect and archive oral histories of veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Their goal is to “collect, preserve and make accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war.” Through the Society, we will be videotaping the oral histories of Jewish veterans, archiving them here, and sharing them with CCSU which will, in turn, send them to the Library. All those who participate will receive a personal copy of the DVD for themselves and their family.



*Irwin Robinson standing at his battle station on the USS Bibb, Atlantic (Library of Congress)*

We’re grateful to Rich Sperber and David Brandwein who have already begun the process of interviewing some local veterans. David runs the camera while Rich asks the questions. Rich schedules a preliminary meeting with the veteran to complete informational forms and to examine documents, photos and other memorabilia that may be used to highlight the interview.

Don’t let these memories be lost! If you are a veteran, or know someone who is, contact us at (860) 727-6170.

## New Book Planned About Hartford's Neighborhoods

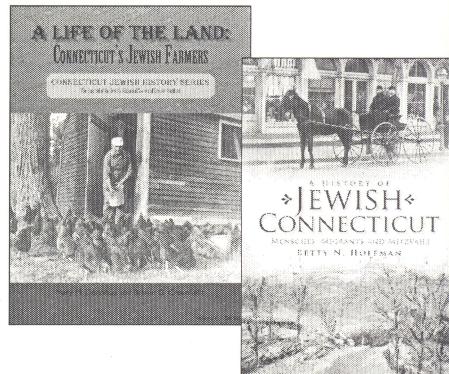
Did you grow up in the North End? Have you read *Remembering the Old Neighborhood: Stories from Hartford's North End*? We're still receiving orders from all over the country, as word spreads! If it brought back memories, then now is the time to share your own stories with us for a second and final volume being planned by the Society. We're including all of Hartford's neighborhoods, and we'd love to have your reminiscences and your photos (we will scan them and return). If you need some help getting started—don't worry. We have volunteers ready to assist you. For further information, go to [www.jhsgh.org](http://www.jhsgh.org), contact the Society at (860) 727-6171, or email [bbrodie@jewishhartford.org](mailto:bbrodie@jewishhartford.org), or project chair Susan Juster Viner at [pharmate@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pharmate@sbcglobal.net).

This is an excerpt from a longer essay by Marvin Berkowitz about life in the North End of Hartford.

*"How can one analyze their growing up in the North End of Hartford without first looking at the generation that proceeded. My father was a 'milk man'. Yes in those days everything you needed could be procured from merchants that came to your door. Dad worked for R.G. Miller Dairy in the North End, delivering milk. At some point he made arrangements to buy milk products from the dairy and deliver them to his own customers as an independent distributor. This became a family affair. Mom kept the books and Dad delivered the milk. The key member of the team was actually Nellie, my father's horse. While Dad was bringing milk to a house, Nellie was already pulling the wagon to the next customer's house. It was not necessary to write out the stops for Nellie; she learned after the first try. Now you know where the idea for GPS came from. When modernity hit the industry, my father bought a nice white truck, not that it could ever replace Nellie."*

## Two New Books on Connecticut's Jewish History

November and December were busy months as the Society launched two new books dealing with Connecticut's Jewish past. *A Life of the Land: Connecticut's Jewish Farmers* (\$24.95) is the fourth journal in the Society's Connecticut Jewish History Series. Co-edited by Mary M. Donohue, Architectural Historian, Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism and Briann G. Greenfield, Associate Professor of Public History, Central Connecticut State University, the book explains why Jews came here to farm, the difficulties they encountered, the support that was available, and how several of those farms were later transformed into hotels and resorts.



Using oral histories and first person accounts from the Society's archives, their stories are told in their own words. Photos from farming families, our archives, and from the collections of the Farm Securities Agency and the Office of War Information paint a vivid picture of life in Connecticut's rural communities.

*A History of Jewish Connecticut: Mensches, Migrants and Mitzvahs* (\$19.99) edited by Betty N. Hoffman, is a collection of essays by historians and community members from across the state. It begins with an historical overview and then follows the Jewish story through different sections of the state. It includes information about many businesses, prominent individuals, and important events and how they impacted residents. There is a short biographical sketch by former governor, Abraham Ribicoff, along with a humorous look at Marlow's Department Store in Manchester ("Marlow's for Everything"), the history of Waterbury's early Jewish settlers, the poignant reminiscences of a Holocaust survivor who came to New Haven for a new life, and much, much more.

To order any of our publications, please go to our website, [www.jhsgh.org](http://www.jhsgh.org), or call our office at (860) 727-6170.



Weaver High School Class of 1933 (courtesy of Roslyn Elston)  
For further information, go to [www.jhsgh.org](http://www.jhsgh.org), contact the Society at (860) 727-6171, or email [bbrodie@jewishhartford.org](mailto:bbrodie@jewishhartford.org), or project chair Susan Juster Viner at [pharmate@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pharmate@sbcglobal.net).

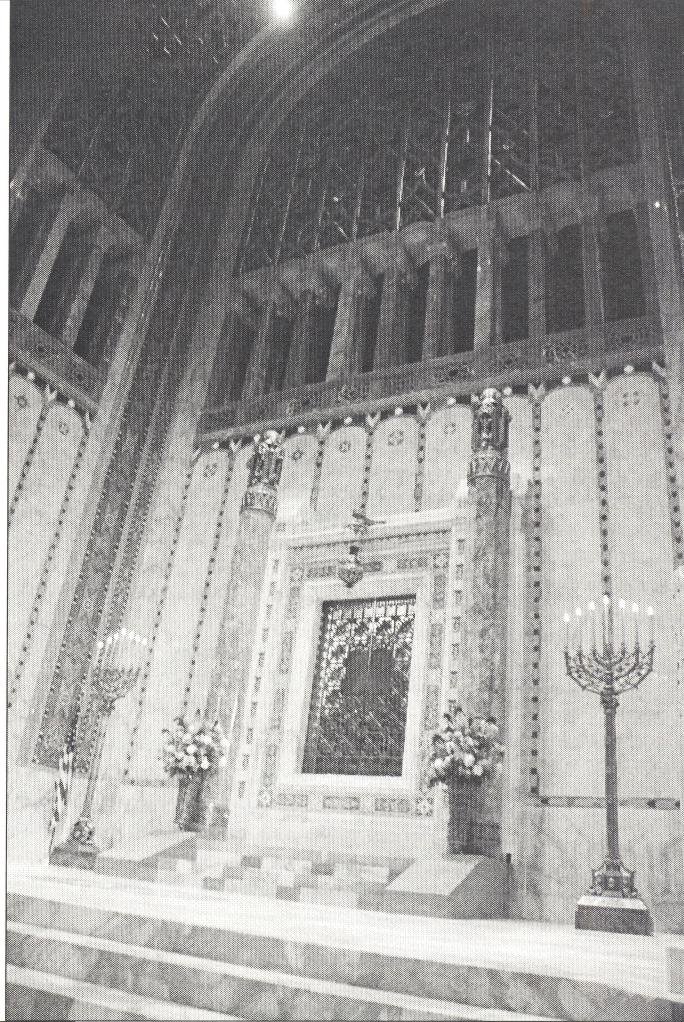
## Fall Trip to New York City a Great Success

In November, the Society and the Senior Adult Department of the Mandell Jewish Community Center co-sponsored a trip to the Jewish Museum and Temple Emanu-El in New York City. The Jewish Museum, always a worthwhile stop, was hosting a special exhibit on Harry Houdini, the world famous magician. Led by a museum guide, the group had a private tour for this absorbing look at the man and his life. There was also time to visit other galleries and have lunch in the lovely cafeteria. From there, it was on to beautiful Temple Emanu-El, the largest synagogue in the world, where a docent led the group through the sanctuary and the museum, sharing information and insight about this historically significant building and its congregation. It was a busy, but stimulating day and the intrepid travelers returned to West Hartford with many sights, sounds and images to remember.



*Trip participants at Temple Emanu-El, NYC (left)*

*Bimah at Temple Emanu-El (right)*



## The Jews of Cuba

The Society's popular "Jews Around the World" series continued on October 24, 2010, with a fascinating lecture on the "Jews of Cuba: Past and Present." The engaging speaker, Enrique Levy, was born in Cuba to parents of Turkish origin. Although he left Cuba when the University of Havana was closed due to political unrest, he has remained in constant contact with the island. He now leads humanitarian missions to Cuba sponsored by the Jewish Museum of New York and the Jewish Theological Seminary. Mr. Levy illustrated his talk with slides from his many trips that showed an aging community that is historic and proud, but struggling to survive. It was a fascinating look at a very unique Sephardic community.



*Speaker Enrique Levy*

## Getting Started in Genealogy

May 18, 2011 – 2:00 – 4:00 P.M.,  
Community Services Building  
led by Dr. Leon Chameides

Dr. Leon Chameides has researched his family genealogy for over 25 years and is currently writing a book about his findings. During this introductory session, he will share some of his research experiences with you, including how to get started, how to incorporate photographs, how to record your findings, hints you can derive from names, how to use the internet for genealogy research, and how to access and use data bases such as the Mormon Church records, Yad Vashem, Yizkor Books, etc. The fee is \$5.00 for members and \$7.00 for non-members. More information will be coming to you shortly.

# From the Director

Dear Friends,

I have just returned from the CAJM (Council of American Jewish Museums, [www.cajm.net](http://www.cajm.net)) conference held in Philadelphia at the recently opened National Museum of American Jewish History ([www.nmajh.org](http://www.nmajh.org)). As part of the conference theme of *Our Stories, Our Museums: New Chapters for Jewish Culture*, I was asked to participate in a panel discussion entitled “Turning Stories into History: Transforming the Narrative through Oral History.” Presenting to an audience of over 400 attendees, I proudly shared the two year process of collecting Hartford women’s WWII experiences to create our documentary and exhibit “*Pride, Honor and Courage; Jewish Women Remember WWII*,” and was delighted to have this special opportunity to show the film. In addition, I watched a permanent exhibition film clip that included a Society image, the Touro Club Washington’s Birthday Celebration, c.1910, borrowed from our archives last spring for this installation.

It was very exhilarating to be able to exchange ideas, new technology, exciting resources and initiatives with esteemed scholars and museum professionals from across the country! A Society committee is now considering planning a future trip to this amazing institution.

As we all look toward milder temperatures and sunny spring days, the Society staff and Board of Directors are focusing on “honoring the past and enriching the future”, the theme of our fortieth anniversary year. On October 30, we will honor our founders, past presidents and lifelong volunteers as well as acknowledge our many impressive accomplishments and successes. We look forward to celebrating with you, our supportive members and donors, who have helped make these forty years possible!

Although a little early, I wish you all a very Happy and Healthy Passover,

*Estelle*

## Preservation Society

We would like to thank the following for their generous support of the Preservation Society this year. The Preservation Society is a special membership level of a \$1,000 donation (or \$1,800 Chai donation) to the Society. We are very grateful for these special funds that enable us to provide valuable services and programs to the community.

### Members:

Eleanor Caplan  
Frances and Philip Feltman  
Rochelle and David Fierston  
Hinda Fisher  
Louise and Todd Kaufman  
Joan Kemler  
Muriel and Martin Kesten  
Deborah and Steven Kleinman  
Reba and Arthur Nassau  
Eileen and Elliott B. Pollack  
Sylvia and Lewis Sheketoff  
Frances and Dr. Irving Waltman  
The Zachs Family Fund

## Create Your Jewish Legacy

Jewish tradition teaches that one of our key responsibilities is to make the world a better place for those who come after us. Your legacy can reflect what is most important and meaningful to you and your family.

Everyone has a unique family and financial situation. Your legacy gift of any size can be designed to match your personal circumstances. Bequests, retirement plan assets, life insurance gifts, charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts are some of the ways you can use to make a lasting gift to the Jewish Historical Society.

With legacy giving, anyone can be a philanthropist. For more information, call Estelle Kafer at (860) 727-6171.

Leave a Jewish  
Legacy™

An Initiative of the  
Jewish Community Foundation

## THOUGHTFUL CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions to the Jewish Historical Society are a thoughtful way of honoring or memorializing an individual, or commemorating an event, and at the same time supporting the Society. All contributions of \$18.00 or more will be printed.

### *In honor of:*

*Barbara and David Klau on their 50th Wedding Anniversary*

Natalie and Peter Bess  
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Karl Fleischmann  
Ava and Harold Geetter  
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Janet Wallans

*Lillian Marlow:*

Marilyn and Marvin Weil

*Betty Hoffman's Birthday:*

Susan Rubenstein Finitis

### *Wishing a speedy recovery to:*

*David Klau*  
Martin Epstein  
JHSGH Board of Directors

*Gloria Bein*  
Susan and Allan Viner  
JHSGH Board of Directors

### *In memory of:*

*Alfred Weisel*  
Martin Epstein  
JHSGH Board of Directors  
Dr. and Mrs. Irving Waltman  
Helen Weisel

*Andrew Sheketoff*  
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Estelle Kafer

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## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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Barbara Wolf and Andy Schatz  
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## IN MEMORIAM



Arthur Gittleman  
David Katz  
Joseph Korzenik  
Louis Ludgin  
Gloria Rulnick  
Harry Smith  
Alfred Weisel