

NEWS LETTER

Vol. VI, No. 1

January, 1988

333 S. 132nd St, Omaha, NE

E. John Brandeis Fund established by Alan and Marcia Baer Foundation

The Nebraska Jewish Historical Society is pleased to announce the creation of the E. John Brandeis Fund by the Alan and Marcia Baer Foundation. A gift of \$5,000 has been received for the current year of 1987 and \$5,000 each year for 1988 and 1989. The fund has been designated to be used for the purpose of the development of the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society museum.



Boston Store
Northwest Corner, 16th & Douglas

E. John Brandeis, president of J.L. Brandeis and Sons stores from 1948 until his death in 1974, was known as a responsible civic leader, generous in efforts to help the less fortunate, an avid sportsman, a pioneer in retail shopping centers for the Omaha and extended area. In 1972 he was the recipient of the Herbert H. Lehman Humanities Award for service to Israel.

Brandeis was born in August, 1895, the only son of Arthur D. Brandeis who was the eldest son of Jonas L. Brandeis, founder of



E. John Brandeis

Omaha's biggest retailing venture at that time. He was the only grandson of Jonas L. Brandeis and the last of the founders descendants with the Brandeis name. When he was born the Brandeis "Boston Store" on the Northwest corner of 16th and Douglas was a 14 year old enterprise that had grown through three expansions and two moves and had survived a disastrous fire. Though the founder was still active, his sons Arthur, Emil and Hugo were assuming prominent roles.

In 1906, when E. John was only 11 years old, he was designated to lay the cornerstone of the eight story Brandeis store on the Southwest corner of 16th and Douglas. He became president of that company in May, 1948 after the death of a cousin, George

Brandeis, who was the president. E. John, at that time, had already convinced his sister's son Alan Baer to start learning the department store business. Baer moved to Omaha from his home in California shortly after service in the army.

In expressing the thanks of the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society to the Alan and Marcia Baer Foundation, Saranne Gitnick, president of the NJHS said, "We are extremely grateful to both Alan and Marcia for establishing this fund and for thus enabling us to keep the well known name of Brandeis alive in Omaha and Nebraska. The Brandeis name has always been one that was respected and honored for their business acumen and for the contributions they made to the well being of the Nebraska communities where they had department stores. We are especially pleased that they have chosen to establish a fund to enable the development of our museum and at the same time to share with us memorabilia and other items of historical interest and value about the Brandeis store and family".

The Brandeis stores in Omaha and throughout its retail system were recently sold to the Younkers stores.



Brandeis Store
Southwest Corner, 16th & Douglas

Growing Up Jewish...

In Dundee School

The year was 1922 and I, Ethelyn Kulakofsky, was nearly five years old. Every day I walked two blocks from the corner of 50th and Dodge to Dundee School. I felt I was a really big girl.

One day our kindergarten class went into a big room with many more seats and a stage in front. A nice lady asked if anyone wanted to give a Christmas tree to the school. She explained to all of us what a good thing it would be to give a Christmas tree. I had just found out that all those green trees at my father's store (the Central Market) were called Christmas trees. I had just found out that there was such a thing as Christmas in my radioless and TVless time. My Daddy had lots of trees at his store, and I was sure, since he had so many, he would like to do a good thing for my school. I put up my hand and offered a tree from my Daddy's store. Everybody seemed pleased with me. I gave the lady my name and phone number and told her about my father's store. I was quite pleased with myself and I forgot all about it.

Later, much later on kindergarten time, my Daddy asked me if it was really true that I had told the school that he could give them a Christmas tree. My mama had died and there was no one else but my Daddy to tell me what to do. He didn't seem pleased at all. I explained to him what the lady had said, and that I had seen all his trees. But somehow I had made a mistake. Daddy's trees weren't really his, and we weren't Christians, and we didn't have and/or like Christ-

mas trees, and it wasn't nice or necessary for me, a Jewish child, to give a Christmas tree. However, as a special favor to me, so that I wouldn't be embarrassed, he would give a tree that year. But never, never was I to give anything away without permission, and I was certainly not to have anything to do with Christmas trees.

Thus I learned that I was different than everyone else at Dundee school. Later, I found out that there were other Jewish children in my class. Bea Sommer was there from the beginning, and also Hubert Monsky. Later Josephine Rubnitz (Fraenkel) and Pearl Osoff (Gross) joined our class. We were the war babies of WWI, and so there was usually more than one class of our grade. I may have forgotten some of my Jewish classmates but at most I don't think that we were ever more than a few in each class of 40.

There was no overt Anti-Semitism at Dundee in those days. There also was no recognition of our being different. It was the time of the "Melting Pot" and I was quite happy not to be noticed as different. Nevertheless, I always knew that I was different.

by Ethelyn Kulakofsky Kaplan Simon

First Place - Adult Division
Morris C. Fellman
Memorial Essay Contest
1987

Let's Keep Former Nebraskans Informed

If you know of former Nebraska Jews living out of state or out of the country, please let us have their names and addresses to add to our fast growing Giant Address Book.

We would like to let them know about the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society and the work we do, and perhaps invite them to become part of our endeavor. Just jot down the name and address and mail to the NJHS Office at the JCC.

The Nebraska Jewish Historical Society is pleased to welcome the following new members, patrons and Life members:

NEW MEMBERS

Nancy Riekes Calderon
Susan Lipp Kentoff
Shirley Rosenblum Drooz
Mr. and Mrs. Mel Engel
Erwin Ferer
Marvin A. Hornstein
David Wohlner
Dr. and Mrs. Stephen Brookstein
Phyllis Freedman Joseph
Richard Slutzky
Mr. and Mrs. Jack G. Epstein
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Lieb
Naomi Gross Malsberg
Mr. and Mrs. Jule Newman
Mr. and Mrs. Hyman Polsky
Sandra Raznick Bryan
George Bryan
Shirley Fogel
Betty Kraus Heyman
Mr. and Mrs. Max Novak
Marion Liebowitz
Bernice Dym
Betty Sternhill
Dr. and Mrs. Ed Belzer
Gail Eisenstatt Machov
Mrs. Simon Galter
Deanne Markovitz Raffel

PATRONS

Dr. and Mrs. Stephen B. Guss
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Fink
Dr. and Mrs. Arnold Fellman

LIFE

Lois and Lloyd Friedman
Helen and Leo Meyerson
Marcia and Alan Baer
Adele Chasanov Wolf
Etta and Bay Epstein

(Life memberships are available at \$500.
Patrons are \$100 per membership annually.)

What's Up?

...in the Corridor of

Jewish History Museum

Come see wonderful pictures of our 80 year olds + who were honored at the Fifth Anniversary Celebration on October 12. The exhibit is now up and will be until the next exhibit is "hung" sometime around the first of April. Bring your friends and relatives, bring your children to see the pictures of those fine devoted members of our Omaha, Lincoln and Council Bluffs communities who gave so much of themselves through a variety of services.

The museum is open when the JCC is open.

And Start Now To Help Us Prepare For Our Next Exhibit...

Nebraska Jewry in 1948.

This exhibit will tie in with the 40th anniversary of the state of Israel which is being observed in our Omaha and Lincoln communities in a variety of ways. We are looking for the names of children born in 1948 and their pictures... we are looking for the same involving Bar and Bat Mitzvahs in 1948, marriages, the names of persons who died in 1948. We are looking for much more! Pictures, stories and memorabilia about the Jewish Community Center, the Philip Sher Home, the Philanthropies campaign, politics, elections, the movies you saw, the books you read, the theater and concerts you attended, the music you listened to, the magazines you read, your favorite radio programs, the cars you drove, the technology you used.

In other words where were you, what were you doing, what was your Jewish life like and what were your involvements and do you have pictures, stories and memorabilia related to it. *Let Us Hear From You. We Are Beginning To Collect Material On The Subject Of: Jewish Life In Nebraska-1948.*

LOOKING FOR DUPLICATES?

Some of the pictures we use in our exhibits and stories have had duplicates made which are available to you at a very reasonable price, thanks to Kevee Kirshenbaum, board member. Let us hear from you if you would like a copy of any of our pictures or if you want us to copy one of the pictures you wish to share with us.

Call NJHS office, 334-8200, Ext. 277.

JEWISH MEMBERS OF LINCOLN BAR REMEMBERED BY COLLEAGUES

At Memorial Services on May 22, 1987, tribute was paid to Dale Deborah (DeDe) Brodkey and Joseph Ginsburg, together with other members of the Lincoln Bar who had died since May 22, 1986.

In speaking of Ms. Brodkey, who died August 14, 1986 at the age of 40, Judy Vitamvas praised her academic excellence both in the field of anthropology, which she taught for several years at Eastern Kentucky University, and later, law. At the time of her death, Ms. Brodkey was working in the Nebraska Attorney General's office where she specialized in handling environmental and energy issues.

"As a member of a minority religion and as a woman... she was particularly sensitive to First Amendment rights... she considered the First Amendment as the most important of the Bill of Rights", Ms. Vitamvas said.

In describing her, Ms. Vitamvas spoke of DeDe's sense of humor, commitment to the preservation of the environment, her interest in China and Chinese studies and warmth to friends and colleagues. Closing, Ms. Vitamvas quoted Attorney General Bob

Spire who said that DeDe was "good lawyer and a good person."

DeDe Brodkey is survived by her mother, Bess Brodkey of Omaha and brother, Dr. Mark Brodkey of Kansas City.

Rodney P. Cathcart paid tribute to his partner of 20 years, Joseph Ginsburg, who died January 15, 1987, at the age of 79.

A graduate of the University of Nebraska College of Law, Ginsburg was active in the Democratic Party and served as Lancaster County Democratic Chairman. He also served on the City-County Planning Commission and was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Lincoln Bar Association 1972-1974. During World War II, he served in field artillery and later as a lawyer in the army.

In describing Ginsburg as a friend, a teacher and a partner, Mr. Cathcart shared several warm and funny anecdotes which illustrated his late partner's gracious, gentle and unique personality. He thanked him for "setting an example and for giving us the highest professional standards."



Thama Lee Krasne
and
Norma Seldin

Betty Grossman
and
Marilyn Saltzman



FROM OUR ARCHIVES

Thanks to Lorraine Meyerson Silverman for sharing with NJHS the program for the 1938 EMESEL production of "The Drama of Emesel" and "Dinner at Six, Please James".

Florence Meyerson was the "Master" of Ceremonies and presenting the history of the girls group were Ida Lerner, June Meyerson, Lorraine Meyerson, Sylvia Endelman and Shirley Gershun. The club took its name

from founders Meyerson, Saltzman and Lerner MSL or EMESEL!

The cast also included charter members: Pearl Meyerson, Dorothe Saltzman, Florence Meyerson, Thelma Passer and Miriam Saks. Also in the show were Pledges: Rhoda Krasne, Libbie Grossman, Ruth Seldin, Edith Bubb, Lucille Abrahamson, Norma Seldin, Arlene Krasne, Betty Grossman and Marilyn Saltzman.

Acquisitions: June - November 1987

- David Wohlner:** "Growing up in Omaha" Autobiographical essay.
- Iz Bogdanoff:** Assorted Athletic photos.
- Abe Faier :** 1940 photo Scout master.
- Margaret Yudelson:** Two photos: Camp Esther K. Newman
- Mandy Frost/Marcy Frost:** Group convention photos.
- Sally M. Venger:** Certificate of naturalization: Joseph Morgan Proclamation: Epstein Morgan Day; Certificate of graduation- Benjamin Charles Morgan.
- Ethel Bleiweiss:** Photo of great grandfather.
- Kathy Walker & Sandra Topper:** Omaha Federation Welfare Seal; Esther K. Newman Camp blue prints.
- Helen Rifkin:** Two photographs: 1960 B.B. Women's convention.
- Betty Studna:** Documents related to naming B.B. Council Bluffs Lodge Irving Cohen Lodge.
- Babe Dobrofsky:** Four photos of annual conclaves of National Order of IVRE.
- Adele Hornstein:** B.B. Ritual Booklet, AZA Passport to FAR-A-Way Places (Sweet Heart Dance): 1963
- Irv & Sol Yaffe:** Family photos, correspondence, business contracts, bonds, family papers, clippings, OH club const. and bylaws, business booklets.
- Sylvia Ross:** Two photos of Nathan Bernstein.
- Abe & Freeda Gendler:** 1945 Central High School graduation book.
- Jerry Freeman:** 1951 Mail Order Catalogue: Saxe - Freeman Com.
- Dr. Abe D. Faier:** Letters & clippings related to veterans' activities & to dentistry, scouting & AZA.
- Donald Goldstein:** Letters & bulletin related to B.B. and Omaha Hebrew Club.
- Lois Friedman:** Photo: Group of Ladies performing at Highland Country Club.
- Al Sorkin:** Two photos of family members in Russia 1922.
- Ida Zoorwill:** Four family photos.
- Lorraine Silverman:** Clippings, booklets, programs & photos related to Jewish organizations.
- Mickey Malashock:** Clippings related to Rosenblatt family. Ruben Lippett - clippings, BB & Talmud Torah certificates; B.B. photos.
- Alan Baer:** Memorial Booklet in honor of E. John Brandeis.
- Lois & Gerald Bernstien:** Year Book 1919 High School of Commerce;
- Ketuba:** Dave & Mary Bernstien; 1916 newspaper.
- Sadie Kohn:** Creighton University magazines containing articles about Phil Klutznick

Don't Throw Away Your Past Your "Trash" Could be a TREASURE

Please help us add to our expanding collection of historical memorabilia and artifacts. The Nebraska Jewish Historical Society archives collects letters, photos, postcards, diaries, keepsakes, newspaper clippings, documents, records, memorabilia, organization material, programs, diplomas, deeds, minutes, chronicles, scrolls, journals, bulletins, plaques, playbills, tributes, posters, passports, immigration and immunization papers, boarding passes, marriage contracts and ceremonial art.

Please check to see if you, your relatives or friends have anything similar to those items listed and would consider donating or lending them to the NJHS. Each piece of the past adds a thread to the tapestry that makes up the history of the Jews of our state.

**PLEASE REMEMBER
DON'T TRASH IT, IT'S TREASURE!**



Picture of a section of NJHS office
Taken by David Goldware of Riverside, California

Welcome to NJHS Office

Members of the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society are always welcome at the NJHS office at the Jewish Community Center. Please drop in and visit or call us at 334-8200, Ext. 277. The office is open Monday - Thursday • 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Our NJHS Profile...

Anne Cohen Kaufman Remembers

Anna Cohen Kaufman, the oldest of 9 children (she had 5 brothers and 3 sisters), was born at home ...the corner of 10th and Center ...on March 20, 1896. Her parents, Sholem and Fannie Weinstein Cohen, met and married in Omaha. Sholem originally came from Warsaw. Fannie's father had come here alone from Kolno, became a fruit peddler, then sent for his family. While Anna was growing up Sholem had a grocery store at 13th and Dorcas, later moving to 16th and Burt. He subsequently went into the commission business.

Anna enrolled in Kindergarten at Mason School, then transferred to Cass School where she graduated from 8th grade. After one year at Central High she attended Mosher-Lampman Business School, from which she graduated after a year and a half. Her first job was at Martin Brothers Insurance Company, a large office at 15th and Farnam. Anna did typing and shorthand, her salary being about \$25 or \$30 per month. While working at Martin Brothers she was told of an excellent job opening at the Court House ...she should go there and see Mr. Smith. Anna was very nervous about applying, and when she asked where in the Court House Mr. Smith was located, the reply was, "If you haven't got guts enough to find him, you needn't apply!" She did find him, applied and got the job with a starting salary of \$50 per month. When she left there six and a half years later, Anna was earning \$75 per month, a very handsome salary in those days.

It was while Anna was working at the Court House that she was invited to a friend's home for dinner and there met a young traveling salesman from Minneapolis, Jack Kaufman. Later that evening they went dancing at the Henshaw Hotel. When Jack asked Anna where she lived, which was 2429 Decatur, he anticipated having to take her home in a taxi ...he told her that "the Jewish girls always expected that kind of treatment." But Anna, a very independent lady, insisted on his escorting her on the streetcar. And when they arrived at her house and Jack asked, "Aren't you going to kiss me good-night?", Anna's quick response was, "I'm not in the habit of paying for an evenings entertainment with kisses!"

After that Anna assumed she would never hear from him again.

But Jack was taken with Anna and intrigued with her snappy retort. As Anna puts it "...He liked a gal with zip!" So they continued seeing each other whenever Jack came to town, which was every week or two, while he worked for Thiele-Schaarf Wholesale Milliners. Meanwhile he moved from Minneapolis to Sioux City, then Omaha and worked for Spiesberger's Wholesale Milliners and later Sam Kaplan, who owned a wholesale ladies' ready-to-wear and millinery business.



Jack and Anne - 1919

In 1919, after a year of courtship, Anna and Jack were married. Her father had died the previous year; so Anna was helping to support her mother. During the first years of marriage they lived with Fannie; then they built a duplex on Lincoln Boulevard ... Ann, Jack and son Sheldon, born in September of 1921, in one half, and Anna's mother in the other.

Since Jack didn't approve of married women working, Anna had quit her job and started doing volunteer work. Hadassah was the first organization she joined and remained active for many years, holding nu-

merous positions including secretary and treasurer. Anna and Jack were charter members of Beth El Synagogue, and she became active in the Sisterhood, serving as secretary as well as in other capacities.

At the same time, the Kaufmans lived a very social life. Anna played mah-jong and bridge with women and Jack played poker and bridge with the men. Their real passion, however, was dancing, and their waltzes, two-steps and fox-trots won them many prizes. They danced at Krug Park frequently, where they also rode the roller coaster several times a year, screaming their heads off.

Meanwhile Sheldon was growing up. After graduation from Central High School he attended the University of Nebraska where he affiliated with Zeta Beta Tau fraternity. His college education was interrupted by World War II, and he went into the Air Force as an officer, serving in the Pacific and advancing to Lieutenant-Colonel. After the war he returned to the university for his degree. Sheldon is married and lives in Bettendorf, Iowa with his wife, Phyllis. They have two married daughters: Shelly, with sons Jason and Blake, lives in Washington, D. C.; Laurie lives in Davenport, Iowa.

In later years Anna and Jack moved to an apartment at 48th and Dodge, and it was while they lived there that Jack died. Anna continued her volunteer work and bridge and subsequently came to the Dr. Philip Sher Home a few months prior to the move to the Rose Blumkin Home. After settling into the new Home, Anna worked as a volunteer at the reception desk for two years ...until she broke her hip. Now, although her health no longer permits her to participate in activities, you can be sure she rarely misses an appointment to get her hair done. And when you walk into her room, you will find her dressed, wearing make-up and looking like she's ready to go. She's a gutsy lady, and with her, nothing is halfway ...it's either "yes" or "no". Always outspoken ...and never regretting it. ...Anna Kaufman tells it like it is!

Written by Miriam Simon
Aug 1987

Four Score Plus Recognition Awards

Letters of Appreciation

Please extend my thanks to all for that lovely evening and the reception you gave us award winners of the 80 Plus Recognition. It was so nice of you to do that for us.

Also thanks to that little lady for the beautiful speech she made to us.

Min Cutler



President Saranne Gitnick Presiding



Lois Friedman Presents Plaques to Founders, Oliver Pollak and Mary Fellman

*A warm Thanks to
Esther Canar, Chrm., Rocky Stern,
Louise Abrahamson, Shirley Berman,
Phyllis Roffman, Jerry Freeman
for a super job of planning this...
Beautiful Evening!*

Last night was very special, you were wonderful and I was proud to be part of it.
Jeanette Ban



Guest Speaker Miriam Weiner,
Genealogist - Author

*Our sincerest thanks to Pennie
Z. Davis for his generosity
which made possible the publi-
cation of the latest 'Memories
of the Jewish Midwest' Journal*

The Nebraska Jewish is proud and ho "Four Score Plus R

to the following members of the Omaha, L
nities who have in some large or small w
doing have added life and vigor to the ge

OMAHA & COUNCIL BLUFFS

Milton Abrahams	Abe Gendler
Ida Arkin	Paul Goldstein
Abe Baker	Herbert Goldsten
Jeanette Ban	Fanny Gordon
Jennie Bear	Lena Grossman
Eli Bittner	Charles Guss
Rose Blumkin	Ricklie Hoyt
Ceil Cherniss	Nellie Kadis
Fannie Chunovic	Edward Kahn
Anne Cohen	Harold Kasin
Jack E. Cohen	Esther Kaplan
Ruth Cohen	Ben Kaslow
Min Cutler	Rose Katelman
Sarah Dansky	Rabbi Alex Katz
Esther Duboff	Nettie Katzman
Cantor Aaron Edgar	Rose Katzman
Ethel Edgar	Sam Katzman
Elsie Eisenberg	Anna Kaufman
Abe Epstein	Dora Kirshenbaum
Morris Epstein	Phil Klutznick
Harold Farber	Dorothy Kooper
Lillian Farber	Abe Krantz
Charlie Fellman	Bess Krasne
Barney Fink	Sara Kranse
Alfred Frank	Mary Kubby
Tee Frank	Helen Kulakofsky
Rose Frankel	Sol Lagman
Harry Freed	Carl Lagman
Rebecca Friedman	Ruth Levine
	Anne Levinson
	Lou Lipp
	Mollye Marcus
	Jack Marer

Presentation NJHS "Fifth A

Presented at NJHS Fifth Anniversary

Jewish Historical Society pleased to present Recognition Awards"

Lincoln and Council Bluffs Jewish community given service to their people and by so generations which follow and emulate them.

Rose Marer	Jake Wine
Betty Marx	Mary Wine
Shirley Meyerson	Anita Wintroub
Gertrude Mozer	Sid Wintroub
Gertrude Newman	Bessie Witkin
Jule Newman	Molly Wohlner
Rose Newman	Rebecca Wolf
Ruth Nogg	Judah Wolfson
Keith Peltz	I. B. Ziegman
Ida Potash	Sonya Zorinsky
Joe Rice	Sam Zweiback

LINCOLN

Jennie Richman	Ruth Bricker
Rose Roffman	Min Davidson
Jake Rosenberg	Ella Ellis
Dora Rosenblatt	Ben Ellis
Abe Rosenthal	Dorothy Evnen
Sara Rubin	Marion Graetz
Jack Saylan	Celia Grosman
Celia Saltzman	Bernice Katskee
Sam Saltzman	Charles Keller
Sara Saltzman	Dorothy Kushner
Ruth Seldin	Sam Mozer
Sarah Shrago	Rose Novicoff
Harry Sidman	George Novicoff
Ida Stein	Lucille Rapaport
Bess Stern	Irene Rosenberg
Betty Sternhill	Joseph Rosenberg
Sol Suvalsky	Sam Rosenblatt
Ed Tepperman	Mich Tavlin
Vera Tepperman	Paula Williams
Sally Venger	
Betty Weisman	

of Awards at Anniversary Gala"



Honorees Joe and Ruth Rice



Honoree Ann Levinson



Honoree Jennie Richman

Tribute To Honorees

...presentation speech at "Four Score Plus Recognition Award" night October 12, 1987 by Mary Fellman.

"Those of you who are being honored tonight for the service you have given to the Jewish communities of Omaha, Lincoln and Council Bluffs are a very special group of people. You are the builders of these communities. You are the people who were the workers, the dreamers the visionaries that helped create the Jewish communities in which we live today. You were the presidents of synagogues and various Jewish organizations, you were the members of the Jewish Free Loan Society and the Omaha Hebrew Club and the Jewish War Veterans, you were the founders of A.Z.A. and other Jewish organizations that have gone on to affect the lives of many young people. You did the big jobs and you did the little jobs, always with a smile, always with the joy of knowing you were serving your people and community.

When we began planning to honor those over 80 who had given service to our Jewish communities we fully expected that if there were as many as 50 men and women we would have a great many honorees. We have now surpassed 120 of you who are 80 years old and over and each of you in your own way, with your own interests, with your own hard work and determination have given of yourselves to make Judaism and Jewish life flourish in this Midwest.

Between you there are about 10,000 years of Jewish life and service and good deeds. We are proud of this opportunity to thank you for what you have accomplished and to promise you that we will continue to carry on in the generations to come that which your generations did. This is a Jewish community that has not "cast off its elderly in their old age" but has chosen instead to make your lives beautiful and fulfilling. We do this out of gratitude and love for all you have been and done, and with our love goes our best wishes to you for good health in the years ahead, good deeds in those years for others as you have done in the past."

Growing Up Jewish ... In Council Bluffs

There must be hundreds of ways of growing up Jewish. Mine was, to use a double entendre, quite unorthodox.

The first four years of my life were reputedly happy and affluent. We were lavished with love and toys. Then came the depression.

Living with poverty was not so difficult. It was the poverty of the soul that was really painful.

Unlike other Jewish homes education was not encouraged in ours. In the absence of other assets the threat of removing me from school was the only discipline available to my parents aside from physical punishment. Consequently, education was very important to me and I worked diligently for high grades and teacher approval.

I did attend Sunday School for a brief time in my early years. Apparently it was not long enough to learn much about Judaism. Enroute to the Sunday School picnic we all placed our sandwiches from home in a common container. At lunchtime when they distributed the food I refused to claim my tongue sandwich, fearing it wasn't kosher. Then my brother decided he didn't want to go to Sunday School anymore. So I was withdrawn as well.

There were several Jewish families in Council Bluffs. In my eyes they were all well-to-do. The Jewish kids all bought their lunch in the school cafeteria. I brought a brown bag and ate in the locker room. My friends were all poor - most of them on relief (welfare). That way I didn't have to worry about my unattractive clothes or that I didn't have a dime to go to a movie or the malt shop.

I did have one Jewish friend for a short time in elementary school. Council Bluffs had a resident rabbi only sporadically. Rabbi Stadlin was our orthodox rabbi for this brief period. Sarah, his daughter, was in my class. She probably attracted more taunts and racial slurs to us than I would have drawn by myself, but sharing the burden of anti-semitism with her lessened it considerably. Sarah and I were very different from each other, but I felt an identification with her that was not there with my other friends.

Perhaps if the Stadlins had remained in town for a more substantial period of time I would have developed a knowledge and pride in Judaism to shield me from bigotry.

But both my parents were born in the United States and had already shed most of the rituals of their ancestors. Still we did have matzo ball soup on the Sunday nearest to Passover and were allowed to take a day off from school for Rosh Hashonah and one for Yom Kippur. My classmates always wanted to know why I was in school on the second day of Rosh Hashonah when the other Jewish kids were still off. My mother said it was because we were reformed. I always thought she made that up. Imagine my surprise years later when I found out it was true.

I graduated from high school with honors and went to work for the Union Pacific Railroad to earn money to continue my education, we were at war and the economy was improving, but manpower on the homefront was negligible. I was promoted on Saturday of my first week and on the following Monday I was promoted again. I had three promotions in the year I worked there.

**Entry in Adult Division.
Morris C. Fellman
Memorial Essay Contest 1987**

Then I applied for admission to an Omaha school of nursing. I was told that they had "had one Jewish student and it didn't work out. She didn't like to work." I took my nurses' training at Jennie Edmundson in Council Bluffs and made sure that my willingness to work was always apparent. I was the first Jewish R.N. in the Omaha-Council Bluffs area.

That ended my formal education for the time being, but eventually I was able to resume classes on a part time basis, although it would be another thirty-three years before I would finally earn a B.S. degree.

On two occasions I was very much in love with men who were not Jewish, but because duty to parents was still paramount in those years, I broke off with both of them. Even though my parents didn't practice their religion they would have been humiliated if I had married a non-Jew.

Then I was in love again. And this time he measured up to the requirements my parents had laid down. He was a "nice Jewish boy from a good family." And so we were married - under a chupa by an orthodox

rabbi - and lived miserably for eighteen years thereafter.

But not all that emanated from that marriage was bad. And one of the optimal things that resulted from it was the birth of my Jewish identity. In the beginning it was, at best, ambiguous. I could not justify being forbidden to have pork in the house when the forbiddener would tell me about the wonderful bacon and tomato sandwich he had for lunch. Ditto at Pesach. I would carry a hard boiled egg and matzo to work for lunch while he ate out and had bread. But when the children started going to "cheder" I began to willingly carry out the rituals and enjoyed cooking traditional Jewish foods.

Six years of living in Jewish neighborhoods in Chicago rounded out my Jewish "education." I learned that, like the gentiles, I had stereotypical ideas about the Jewish people. But I found that Jews are tall and short, blond and brunette - even red-headed, blue-eyed, brown-eyed and green-eyed, Poor, middle class and wealthy, orthodox, conservative, reform and atheist, Zionist and anti-Zionist, smart and dumb, honest and dishonest, immigrant, first generation American and those that trace their American roots back several generations. There are probably no two Jews that are alike. But I discovered that whatever our beliefs or practices, however we were reared, we all grew up Jewish.

My Jewish identity was now set. Never again would I consider intermarriage or even serious interdating. Even though the children are grown and no longer live with me, I continue to observe Pesach and the high holidays and to feel a strong identity and bond with Jews around the world and through the ages.

I went through a period of in-depth exploration of the history and beliefs of Judaism and my own feelings and beliefs. Through extensive reading and two trips to Israel I adopted a system of beliefs and values compatible with Judaism and my own individuality. I developed a deep sense of respect and pride in that wonderful heritage handed down over 5000 years. Now I understood the common bond that unites all Jews through the ages and around the world. Because of this heritage I am able to say that, even though I grew up in a home devoid of religious practices and traditional Jewish values, I too grew up Jewish.

Cary Sommer, Omaha

Do You Remember When?

During World War II a newsletter "J. C. C. Around the Globe" was issued from the JCC to our Jewish personnel in the Armed Service. The following is a column from the May, 1945 issue which was edited by Harriett Geifman, Marian Lipsman, Rose Kirshenbaum, Annette Ostrowsky through YANCS, the Youth Army-Navy Committee Service. Do you have memories to share with us?

We quote bits from:

BELGIUM—Cpl. Lee Bernstein—I enjoy the "J. C. C. Around the Globe" very much and have sent it on to some of the other boys who aren't as fortunate to have a swell J. C. C. as we have.

ENGLAND—Pfc. Morrie Ruder-man—While in the hospital in England have had an opportunity to attend Jewish services on Friday nite. I hope to be able to attend more in the future. **S/Sgt. Leo Meyerson—**I met **Sol Mann** the other night at my 8th AAF base. Spent a few hours swapping stories and during the course of the conversation discovered "**Chuck**" Stein is at a base four miles from here. I'm planning to see him soon, if possible. **Sgt. Leo Blacker—**I would very much like to run into some of the fellows from Omaha, but so far no such luck; her's hoping I see some of them soon around the J. C. C. I've been to London several times—also visited Scotland on my last furlough. **Sgt. Charles Rubin—**Since being in the army I've been overseas for the past two and one-half years. Most of the time I've been in London and met some Omaha fellows, former members of the Center. Just recently I happened to meet **Hascall Lazere** who, in addition to his army work, is quite active in B'nai B'rith work over here.

FRANCE—Pvt. Jerome P. Grossman—I have seen quite a bit of Europe and lived in everything from a barn to a chateau to a city hall, and talk a pseudo French and German to everything from a farmer to his honor, a mayor; and hear everything from a concert in London to the deafening explosion of artillery near the front, but have yet to hear Jewish services by a Jewish rabbi. **S/Sgt. Leo Sherman—**My best regards to **Manny Segal** and the rest of the gang.

Growing Up Jewish... Six Generations

Growing Up Jewish ...Growing Up Jewish ...Growing Up Jewish...

The words ran through my mind over and over, like a song refrain does sometimes. I don't recall anyone specifically telling me I was Jewish. Perhaps it was always being surrounded by a loving family — Mother, Father, brother and when I was ten years old, the thrill of a baby sister. There were grandparents — I remember proudly telling my friends I had a "full set" plus a great grandmother until I was fifteen. To keep everyone straight, we had a "pretty" Bobi, a "big" Bobi, and a "little" Bobi. Aunts and uncles, great aunts and uncles and lots of cousins.

Perhaps it was my Dad having to gently explain what it meant when I ran home in tears because someone had made a derogatory remark toward me. He had to tell me it had nothing to do with my not being clean nor my clothes either. Many years later, I was to hear the words "move over guys - the Jew lady is driving by." I never could figure out why it was - I never knew what church they went to - or cared!

Perhaps it was being with all the family at holiday time. Seders, when my mother would spend hours at her mother-in-law's helping a dear lady get ready. How I marveled at the fact of just eating dinner when the clock said it was already ten o'clock!

Perhaps it was receiving Chanukah gelt and seeing the orange candles glowing in the menorah that took away the disappointment a small child felt when the other children had Christmas trees and Santa Claus. It didn't matter.

Perhaps it was my father's pride in the fact that he had graduated from the High School of Commerce - which was to become Tech High that made me feel how important school was. I do not know; I only know I always loved school and tried to do my best.

Perhaps it was having Daddy drop me off at the downtown library to spend an hour or so while he went to the office. Miss Proulx - I may not have the correct spelling - was the Children's Department head librarian. I love looking at the stereoptican slides ...and does anyone else remember the model of the Taj Mahal under its glass cover? At one time I vowed to read my way, shelf by shelf, around the room! I still love

to read. Years later I met an elderly Jewish man on the steps of that library. He shook my hand and said, "It's a pleasure to see a young person going into the library instead of a bar."

Perhaps it was seeing my mother light the Shabbos candles. Or was it going to the butcher shop or the delicatessen where a nice lady gave me a taste of corned beef ...it never has tasted as good since. In later years I was to have her as a loving part of my husband's family. The bakery was another stop with its mouth-watering smells of bread and other goodies. Mr. Nogg's columns in the Jewish Press really take me back to those days.

Entry in Adult Division.
Morris C. Fellman
Memorial Essay Contest 1987

Perhaps it was good friends. What drew me to one particular brown-eyed little girl - I was the new girl in class? It started in the second or third grade and even though her family moved away, we always kept our friendship going - how wonderful it was to finally get to Central High School where we could be together - locker mates - confidants - dear loving friends to this day - and we are both grandmothers now. And another dear friendship which started in high school and it will be there for me always.

I could go on and on. A dear husband - three children or should I say five, for I am blessed with a dear daughter-in-law and son-in-law and two beautiful grandsons. My grandmother said grandchildren were the dividends on your investment. What a dear lady she was. Every summer I would spend a wonderful week with her and my grandfather. But that's another story some day.

I like to stop and look at the wonderful photograph of the Louis Wintroub family in the Jewish Community Center's Nebraska Jewish Historical Society display. Great grandparents, aunts and uncles. My mother and her sister and my grandparents are inset because they were still in Europe. I can look back and remember my great grandmother, my grandmother, my dear mother who is sharing my life with me, myself, of course, my children and my grandchildren - six generations.

Growing Up Jewish ...Growing Up Jewish ...Growing Up Jewish...

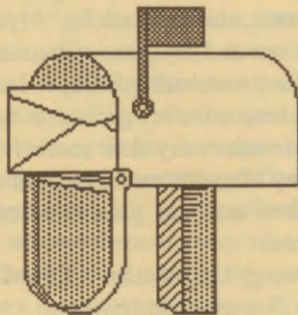
by Lois Wintroub Bernstein

From Our Mailbag...

"Thank you so very much for submitting my letter concerning the family of Barney Drevitch to the "Jewish Press". We received a letter in reply and the information was relayed promptly to my friend Bessie Schwartz in Jerusalem. Am enclosing copy of a letter from "The Jerusalem Times" regarding the Grodzinsky family who were former residents of Omaha. Sincerely, Dorothy Brandt, Jerusalem, Israel. To quote the article: The Jewish Press reporting of the funeral of Rabbi Ruderman of New Yeshiva, Baltimore, Md. mentions a Rabbi Avrohom Grodzinsky. I heard of a Rabbi Grodzinski in Omaha, and someone wrote that a book was being written about this Nebraska Grodzinski". Signed by Salu Purvin and we are sending this letter on to Rabbi Jonathan Rosenbaum, formerly of Omaha, who is writing a book about the former Rabbi Grodzinski (Grodinsky) of Omaha.

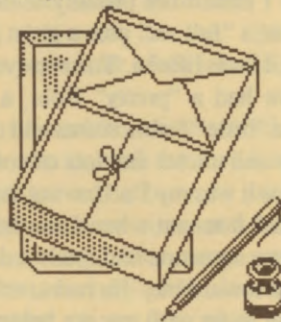
My name is Jacob Pesachowitz, age 83, came to the United States at age of 6 months. I was the only Pesachowitz in the New York telephone book. My father was an orphan at an early age and his mother remarried. He had only half-brothers and sisters. His grandfather, I was informed came from "Kappulier" in Russia. I am anxious to learn if I may have family in the United States. Enclosing an article (about the Torah from the Kapulier synagogue in Omaha which was sent to Iceland) which explains why I contacted you. Could you please contact people who formerly belonged to the Kapulier shul and have them write me.

Sincerely, Jacob Pesachowitz, Prospect Hill Apt. 11-6B, Flemington, N.J. 08822



Selma and Eddie Chait tell me you are trying to get information about the Jewish community in Grand Island. I am probably one of the oldest living Jewish ex-residents of Grand Island now and I may be able to help somewhat. Let me know what kind of information you would like to have and what questions you want answered and I will do what I can.

Henry Greenberger, 5174 Selmaraine Dr. Culver City, CA 90230



Jo Frankel(Rubnitz) has suggested that I write you. My cousins in Milwaukee are descendants of Gedaliah Klutchnik from the Suwalk-Krasnopol-Sejny area of Poland/Lithuania. In talking with my cousin Joe, who is 85 years young, he recalls hearing that some member of the family moved to Nebraska but there has been no contact for many years. I am anxious to hear if any one knows if the Klutchnik family comes from this area of Europe.

Eugene Alpern, 5636 W. Lyons St., Morton Grove, IL 60053-1546 (312-966-9449)

I am inclosing some information regarding the "Sheel" at 25th and Seward St. The synagogue was incorporated on May 28th, 1916 and as you will notice my father, Jules Finkel was secretary. I do not recall the date when the new building was actually built.

In order to raise money for the building fund, Lifetime Seats were sold. My father's seat was in Mizrah next to the Ark, facing the congregation. My mother's seat was upstairs in the front row as I have indicated on the photo.

I recall Joe Kirshenbaum and his entire family as they lived next door to the "Sheel" and they were always available for a Minyan.

We conducted services twice a day, in the morning and late afternoon, regardless of

the inclement weather. At that time our family lived at 2218 Grace St. and believe me it was quite a distance to walk on Saturday, especially when it was zero weather.

Although we were a small congregation, we had our own spiritual leader, Rabbi Feldman.

When the interior needed redecorating one of our own members Mr. Shrier painted murals on all of the walls. At that time I thought it was the most beautiful synagogue in Omaha.

I have been gone from Omaha for over 35 years...27 years in Lincoln and 8 years in Florida. During all this time I subscribed to the Jewish Press.

It's a great paper, Keep up the Good Work.
S. A. Finkel, 1511 SW 22nd Way, Deerfield, FL 33441

Want to add the names of World War I Vets Leo Gotsdiner and Leo Hershorn to your list. We enjoy the Newsletter and pass it around to other former Omahans. Jean Kraft, Atherton, CA.

I have received a list of names, of the Rosenblooms that are buried at the Pleasant Hill Cemetery, from Mr. Delbert Scholting.

It was a most welcome list, this was not a simple undertaking for him, and I am very grateful to him for his effort in my behalf.

I am again asking for his further help. I am asking him to transcribe whatever information is engraved on the tombstones of the Rosenbloom's.

I now know that my two uncles, Philip and Jake Rosenbloom, are buried with their father. I am in hope that Hattie Rosenbloom is my step-grandmother, which would make the record of the Rosenbloom's burial in Omaha complete.

I wish to say thanks to you for your help in this research.

Ben Rosenblum, Apt # 316, 1350 Atlantic Shores Boulevard, Hallandale, Florida 33009

Help your Historical Society grow! If you have friends or relatives who are not members of NJHS, ask them to join us... sign up a new member for the new year!



On January 5, 1926, Nathan S. Yaffe, of 512 South 16th St in Omaha received a letter from the American Zion Commonwealth (Inc) acknowledging the sale of five dunam (about one and one quarter acres) of land in the Garden City Zone of Balfouria.

That same year, with a gift of \$500, Mr. Yaffe became the 75th member of the Omaha Jewish Community Center Building Fund.



Omaha, circa 1926 — This picture of Phillip Crandell standing in front of his first fur store on Farnam Street between 39th and 40th streets was given to the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society by his son Sol Crandell. If any of you have pictures of this type showing any of your relatives in the early years in their business locations we would be very pleased to have a copy or the original for our files. Our thanks to Sol Crandell. The store was next to a Piggly Wiggly grocery store and the location is now occupied by the Kaufman bakery.

Send Donor Cards Through NJHS

Donor Cards and Morris C. Fellman Memorial Cards are the way to go when you want to make a contribution in honor of, in memory of, or to remember someone special. Call Dorothy Kaplan, 330-0747 or Barbara Taxman, 391-4661 to send out a card or two or three for you. The minimum on the Donor Cards is \$5.00 each. The minimum on Fellman Memorial Cards is \$3.00 each. (Ask Dorothy or Barbara about purchasing a group of the cards for a "special" price.)

Every Nebraska Jewish Historical Society card you send out helps us maintain the many projects we are involved in to collect, preserve and publish material dealing with the life of Jews in Nebraska and Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Partial List of Donations made since July, 1987

In honor of Mary Fellman, Humanitarian award: Mary Fellman, birthday: Andrew Epstein, Bar Mitzvah; Nann Gitnick, graduation; Mr. and Mrs I. Grossman, anniversary.

In Memory of: Senator Ed Zorinsky, Nate Nogg, Millard Krasne, Mac Blank, Dr. Lou Yager, Oscar Diamond, Maureen Karp.

Recovery of: Rosalie Saltzman, Jack Marer, Julia Zucker, Seymour Goldston.

Contributions

Contributions continue to be made to the NJHS Morris C. Fellman Memorial Fund and our NJHS General Fund at a slow but steady pace. Contributions made since June, 1987 include the following:

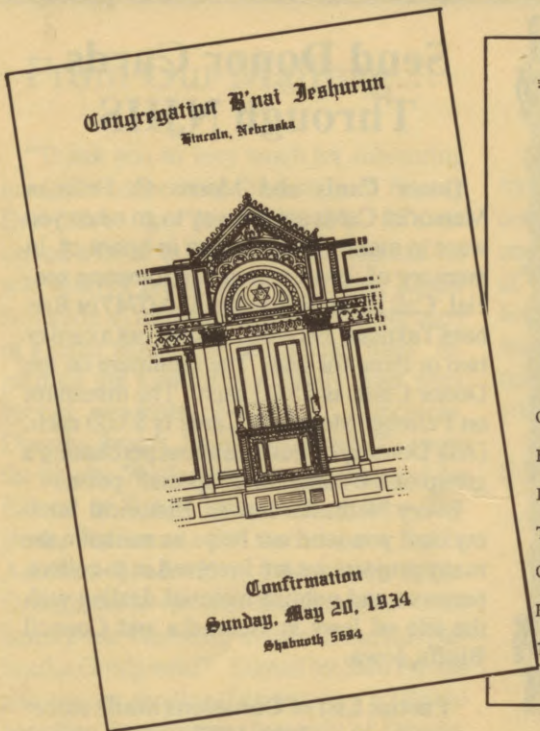
In Memory of: Rabbi and Mrs. F. Cohn, Ben Silver, Bev Seldin's brother, Ben Slutzky, Bennett Cohn, Harry Rubenstein, Edith Krantz, Orvel Milder, Morris Kirshenbaum, Al Schwartz, Seymour Goldston, Gary Gross, Angela Lohrman.

In Honor of Birthdays: Ralph Nogg, Jerry Milder, Abe Rosenthal, Paul Sachs

In Honor of Anniversaries and other happy occasions: Ophira and Ezekiel Bahar, Esther and Herbert Weil, Matthew Clark Fellman, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Fellman

In Honor of Recovery of Saranne Gitnick, Ernie Saltzman, Joe Rice,

Special Donations: from Mary Fellman, Jacob Rosenberg, Rose Cohen, Gertrude Mozer



Text		
"The inheritance of the congregation of Jacob"		
—Jewish Liturgy		
• •		
Order of Service		
Opening Prayer	• • • •	JEAN SANDLOVICH
Flower Offering	• • • •	SHIRLEY POLSKY
Dedication	• • • •	ELAINE ABRAMS
To Our Parents	• • • •	JEAN SANDLOVICH
Our Faith	• • • •	EDWARD WITTENBERG
Reading of the Commandments	• • • •	CLASS
The Blessings	• • • •	EDWARD WITTENBERG
		INTERPRETATION OF COMMANDMENTS—
		First Commandment • • ELAINE ABRAMS
		Second Commandment • SAMUEL DAVIDSON
		Third Commandment • JEAN SANDLOVICH
		Fourth Commandment • EDWARD WITTENBERG
		Fifth Commandment • SHIRLEY POLSKY
		Sixth Commandment • EDWARD WITTENBERG
		Seventh Commandment • ELAINE ABRAMS
		Eighth Commandment • SAMUEL DAVIDSON
		Ninth Commandment • JEAN SANDLOVICH
		Tenth Commandment • SHIRLEY POLSKY
		The Jewish People • • • SHIRLEY POLSKY
		Jew and Non-Jew • • • SAMUEL DAVIDSON
		The Future of Judaism • • ELAINE ABRAMS
		Pledge of Faith • • • • • CLASS
		Sermon • • • • • RABBI OGLE
		Presentation of Certificates
		MR. NATHAN GOLD, President
		Blessing of Confirmants • • • RABBI OGLE
		Closing Prayer • • • • SAMUEL DAVIDSON

The original confirmation program for May 20, 1934 at B'nai Beshurun Temple in Lincoln was submitted to the NJHS by Elaine Abrams Clearfield of Denver, Colorado and formerly of Lincoln, Nebraska. Elaine is the author of a recent book called "Our Colorado Immortals in Stained Glass" which includes two Jewish pioneers who are reflected in the stained glass windows in the Colorado State Capitol building. One is Frances Wisebart Jacobs who was the inspiration for the founding of National Jewish Center for Immunology and Respiratory Medicine in Denver. The other is Otto Mears who was a pioneer railroad builder. Benefits from the sale of the book go to the non-profit organization called the Denver Association for Retarded Citizens. Persons interested in purchasing the book may do so by writing to Elaine Clearfield, 310 So. Jersey Street, Denver, Colorado, 80224.

Start the New Year Off With a Gift of "re-Membership"

Here's a way to show someone special that you care...about them and about their heritage. Give the gift of a membership in the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society. With each Gift Membership, we will send copies of "Memories of the Jewish Midwest" Journals, the current Newsletter and a card from you. During the coming year, the recipient of your gift will receive the latest Journal and Newsletter. Please complete the coupon below and send it to the NJHS office together with your check to the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society for any of the amounts listed below.

Nebraska Jewish Historical Society	
333 South 132nd Street	Omaha, Nebraska 68154
<i>Gift for Membership</i>	
Name of recipient _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor\$1000
Address _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Life Member 500
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Business250
Your Name _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron 100
Address _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Donor50
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Organization30
	<input type="checkbox"/> Family 15
	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual 10
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student 5