

# JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CENTRAL JERSEY



Winter 2011

NEWSLETTER

Adar/Nisan

## Come Aboard Our Next Jewish Heritage Trip

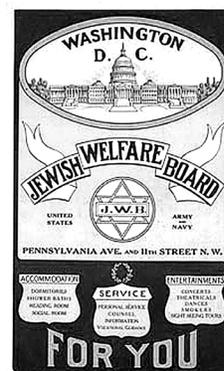
..... Join with other JHSCJ members on .....  
Tuesday, June 14, 2011

*when we travel to Philadelphia to visit the new*

## National Museum of American Jewish History

Building on the dynamic interaction between the Museum's location on Independence Mall, the history and traditions of the Jewish people, and the broader national experience, the core exhibition of the National Museum of American Jewish History highlights the diverse backgrounds, expectations, and experiences of Jews who came to and made their homes in the United States. Visitors to the exhibition explore how and when Jews immigrated to America, the choices they faced, the challenges they confronted, and the ways in which they shaped, and were shaped by, their American home.

This museum has been honored with a U.S. Senate resolution as "the only museum in the United States dedicated exclusively to exploring and preserving the American Jewish experience."



Visitors will encounter people, episodes, ideas, and experiences that highlight the religious, social, political, and economic lives of American Jews. They will see historical objects, enter period environments, and experience cutting-edge interactive technology. The *Only in America*® Gallery/Hall of Fame, an innovative combination of multimedia, original artifacts and interactive experiences, features the choices, challenges and opportunities eighteen Jewish Americans encountered on their path to remarkable achievement.



Itinerary: Meet the bus at 8:30 a.m. in the Sears parking lot in New Brunswick or at the Concordia Shopping Center lot at 9:00 a.m. We will travel to the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia for a guided tour of all three floors of the museum's core exhibition and the Only In America Gallery/Hall of Fame. We will have some free time after lunch to spend in the exhibits or to browse in the gift shop. Arrival back to NJ at approximately 5 p.m. This trip is co-sponsored by Hadassah of Raritan Valley. Cost of \$50 (members), \$55 (non-members) includes transportation to Philadelphia, parking, museum admission, guided tour, and kosher catered lunch. **Please fill out the reservation coupon found on page 4 and return by May 20.**

## President's Message

Based on my informal poll of those who took part in our recent trip to the *Provocative Textiles* exhibit at Hebrew Union College and to the *Houdini* exhibit at the Jewish Museum, the trip was very successful. Both exhibits were fascinating and informative. At Hebrew Union College, we were privileged to receive a personal tour from the exhibit's curator, Laura Kruger. At the Jewish Museum, we received free use of tour group headsets, enabling each person to peruse the exhibit and listen to the commentary at their own pace. Our comfortable bus provided convenient service from the parking lots in Monroe and New Brunswick to the museum entrances.



I'm sharing this information with you in such detail because on June 14 we have scheduled another trip – this time to the new National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia. Because the museum opened just recently, your participation could make you the first person on your block to experience it. As you'll see elsewhere in this Newsletter, we'll again be providing convenient and comfortable transportation and other amenities. We very much hope that you'll be able to participate!

*Nathan Reiss*

## Lecture Series

Don't miss our American Jewish Experience Lecture Series, which will begin it's 14th year at 10:00 a.m, April 11, at the Monroe Township Jewish Center. A complete list of dates and lectures will be included in the next Newsletter.

## Membership News

**WELCOME to NEW MEMBERS**  
Barbara and Bert Lenoble

**Thank You to Murray Sternberg**  
for renewing at the Patron Level

## Speakers Bureau

Don't forget our Society's speakers bureau. We have a group of excellent speakers on a variety of interesting topics who are available to travel to locations in Central New Jersey. The JHSCJ thanks Phil Cantor for speaking to the Alisa Chapter of Hadassah (Monroe Township) and to the Clearbrook B'nai Brith about Jewish Pirates. Harvey Hauptman gave his lecture on William S. Paley to the JCC of Middlesex County in Edison. And Nat Reiss spoke to the Raritan Valley Chapter of Hadassah on "Am I My Brother's Cousin", as well as traveling up to the Westchester County Genealogical Society to speak on "Finding People, Living or Dead, on the Internet."

A complete list of speakers and their topics can be seen at our Web site, <http://www.jewishgen.org/jhscj/SpeakersBureau.html>. Ask the events planner at your synagogue or Jewish organization to consider how we might be able to enhance their meetings!

*Be sure to visit our Web site at [www.jewishgen.org/jhscj](http://www.jewishgen.org/jhscj) for an expanding list of archival materials to be found in our collection.*

Jewish Historical Society of Central Jersey continues to build its collection of original photographs, documents, and artifacts relating to Jewish life in Central New Jersey. We also accept letters, diaries, clothing, and original works of art and music with a local connection. The Jewish Historical Society assumes full responsibility for its long-term care and storage and commits itself to making this material accessible to the community. Please call Debbie Cohn at 732-249-4894 if you have something that you think we might be interested in for our collection.

EDITORIAL STAFF		CONTENTS	JHSCJ OFFICERS	
<b>Editor</b>	Deborah Cohn	Archives Corner.....Page 2	<b>President</b>	Nathan M. Reiss
<b>Contributors</b>	Deborah Cohn	Donations/Tributes.....Page 4	<b>Vice President</b>	Harvey Hauptman
	Nathan Reiss	Editorial Page.....Page 2		<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Graphic Artist</b>	Deborah Cohn	Heritage Trip .....Page 1		
		JHSCJ Officers.....Page 2		
		Membership News.....Page 2		
		From Ashes of Tragedy.....Page 5		
		Preserve Your Life Story.....Page 3		
		Speakers Bureau.....Page 2		

# Preserving Your Life Story: Part 2

By Dr. Nathan Reiss

In the first installment of this article (see the Fall 2010 Newsletter), I discussed the motivation for creating a practical plan to name and archive your photos and documents by scanning them into a computer. One positive aspect of storing photos on your computer is that you're forced to provide a name for each item that you store. Creating an archive this way can dramatically improve your ability to find your old photos and documents when you need them. However, your ability to find them is only as good as the filenames that you attach to them. The purpose of this article is to discuss the important role of filenames, and how to use them to maximize your ability to locate materials that you have stored. The naming system should be planned in advance so that you'll be able to use it consistently throughout your scanning project. Before starting this discussion, I want to briefly discuss the difference between a **filename** and a **label**.

The **filename** is the identifying name that you give to your photo or document when you store it in your computer. It is the name by which it is known to your computer. Depending on your computer's operating system, there are different constraints on the filenames that you may use. Many computer operating systems prohibit using certain "special" characters in filenames (e.g. "#", "?", "!"), but the most important consideration from the point of view of storing photos and documents is the length of the name. Determining what the actual length limitation is for your particular situation is beyond the scope of this article, but suffice it to say that names as long as 255 characters may be allowed. So, generally speaking, a filename like "Mom and Dad at the Beach" would be perfectly acceptable. Your computer will let you know if a filename that you try to use is too long or if it contains prohibited characters. You could encounter problems, for example, if you're trying to create a name for a family photo that has 20 persons in it and you want to identify each person by name.

A **label** is optional explanatory material that some types of photo archiving software allow you to attach to a photo, separately from the **filename**. Generally, the label allows you to enter as much text as you want, including characters that are prohibited in filenames. Some modern cameras, in fact, can automatically enter identifying information (e.g. GPS coordinates) and allow you to enter the text for a label at the same time that you take the photo.

The file naming system that I describe here is designed to be as software-independent as possible. In fact, if you don't mind the limitations on the filenames, it can be used without any special software. Here are the essentials:

- Begin each filename with the date (exact or approximate) of the item, written in the format:

"yyyymmdd-", where "yyyy" is the year, "mm" is the number of the month, and "dd" is the number of the day. Thus, the name of an item dated March 15, 2011 would begin with "20110315-". If the exact date isn't known, you can use "00" to mean "before", "99" to mean "after", "33" to mean "completely unknown", or "44" to mean "approximately". Here are some examples:

<u>Date Code</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
33333333 -	Date unknown
20110000 -	Before 2011
20113333 -	On an unknown date in 2011
20114444 -	Around 2011
20119999 -	After 2011
20110300 -	Before March, 2011
20110333 -	On an unknown day in March, 2011
20110344 -	Around March, 2011
20110399 -	After March, 2011

- For the remainder of the filename – that is, the text that follows the date -, you should, if possible, include the names of all the persons to whom the item pertains, plus any other words that could be important for retrieving the item.

Your computer's operating system allows you to organize a list of filenames alphabetically, so if you have named the photos or documents according to the above procedure, alphabetizing them will cause the filenames to be listed according to the date code that you gave them, regardless of the order in which you entered them. In Windows operating systems, for example, you can assure that the computer does this by right-clicking your mouse when it is positioned somewhere inside the folder that contains the files you want to arrange. When you do this, a small menu appears on your screen in which one of the options is "Arrange icons by .....". If you click this option, one of the choices is "Name". If you choose this, it will arrange the icons in your file list either alphabetically or reverse-alphabetically. If the result is the reverse of what you want, repeat the process and it will arrange the icons in the opposite order.

You'll be able to use your computer's file search capabilities to look for a particular word or set of words in the filename.

*Continued on Page 4*

<b>TRIBUTES</b>		
<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Occasion</b>
Lillian Sokoloff	Ruth Marcus Patt	In memory of Helene Strauss
Sharon Karmazin & Dave Green	Ruth Marcus Patt and Adelaide Zagoren	In memory of Helene Strauss
George Lewin	Ruth Marcus Patt	In honor of Ruth Marcus Patt
Ruth Rosenthal	Ruth Marcus Patt	In memory of Evelyn Goldstein
Victoria Zagoren	Adelaide Zagoren	In memory of Evelyn Goldstein
Edith Neimark	Ruth Marcus Patt	In memory of Helene Strauss and Evelyn Goldstein
Bernice & Eugene Bernstein	Ruth Marcus Patt	In memory of Evelyn Goldstein
Dr. Barbara Reed	Ruth Marcus Patt	In honor of Ruth Marcus Patt
Dr. Barbara Reed	Adelaide Zagoren	In honor of Adelaide Zagoren
Jerry and Doris Kahn Gunsher	Muriel Klein	In honor of her special birthday
Bernice & Eugene Bernstein	The Milch Family	In memory of Bob Milch
Ruth Marcus Patt	Susan Marchand	For a Refuah Sh'laymah

*“Preserving Your Life Story” continued from Page 3*

To facilitate this, it's best to include the most likely key words in the file name (e.g. names of persons to whom the item pertains, locations, type of event, etc.). When creating filenames, it's also a good idea to always use the same name for a particular person. For example, if in some filenames you call a person "Robert", in others "Bob", and in others "Dad", you'll have to search three times to be certain that you've found all the items that pertain to him.

Most likely you'll find that your photos will fall into certain categories – for example, family, travel, work-related, etc. Depending on your own circumstances, you may wish to create separate folders for each major category. Each of these folders needs only to be identified with the name of the category (e.g. "Travel"). Within these folders, you'll

probably find major groupings of photos. For example, your "Travel" folder might include 200 photos that you took on a single vacation, and it might be best to group these photos together in a single sub-folder (e.g. "20110315 – Our Trip to Los Angeles") under the category of "Travel". For folders that hold activities that took place around a specific date (vacations, family events, etc.), I suggest that the name of the folder itself begin with the date, and the information in the folder's name does not need to be repeated in each of the filenames contained within that folder.

This series on archiving your photos and documents will continue in future Newsletters. In the meantime, we would be pleased to try and answer any questions that you may have, or to consider suggestions of material on this subject that you think should be covered.

**RESERVATION FORM for the trip to Philadelphia -- June 14, 2011**

*Return by May 20 to the JHSCJ, 222 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901*

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ reservations (\$50 for members, \$55 for non-members)

I will meet you at **Sears Lot at 8:30 am** \_\_\_\_\_ **Concordia Shopping Center Lot at 9:00 am** \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sandwich Selection:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bagel with Nova lox, cream cheese &amp; tomato</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White meat tuna salad, lettuce &amp; tomato on twist roll</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grilled salmon on black bread w/cucumber dill sauce</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grilled vegetable hoagie with red pepper mayo</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Side Selection:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tri-color Vegetable Slaw or <input type="checkbox"/> Pasta Salad</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Beverage Selection:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pepsj-Regular      <input type="checkbox"/> Pepsi Diet</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Iced Tea              <input type="checkbox"/> Bottled Water</p>
--	--

# From the Ashes of Tragedy

On Saturday, March 25, 1911, a devastating fire swept through the Triangle Shirtwaist Company at the corner of Green Street and Washington Place, near Washington Square in Greenwich Village. About 500 female garment workers were toiling on the upper floors of the allegedly fireproof, converted loft building. In less than 20 minutes, 146 of the women were dead, most of them young Jews who had recently immigrated to the United States.

The majority of the women escaped down the stairs or up to the roof, but those on the ninth floor were trapped high above the fire fighters' ladders, which reached only to the sixth floor. More than a third of those who died leaped from ninth floor windows, no longer able to bear the intense flames which quickly turned the loft into an inferno. Witnesses described the horror of bodies falling to the pavement, lying in piles and, in some places, breaking through the pavement.

The ninth floor had only one inadequate fire escape, which led to a narrow, smoke-filled courtyard. Under the crush of the fleeing workers and the heat of the inferno, the fire escape bent. All of the other escape exits had been chained shut by the owners of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company to discourage employees from stealing, prevent mass walkouts, and most notably, keep out union organizers.

A year earlier, the Triangle had been the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union's primary target in the great shirtwaist-makers strike. More than 75% of the industry's workers struck to support demands for union recognition, higher wages and better working conditions. Of the 30,000 workers who answered the call for an industry-wide strike, about 21,000 were Russian-born Jewish women. Virtually all the leadership of the labor movement in the garment industry was Jewish, and Jewish values of communal responsibility and social justice shaped the movement's vision.

The strike was mostly successful. The ILGWU signed recognition contracts with more than 300 manufacturers. But workers at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company held out for 13 weeks and then capitulated, returning to work without a union. One year later, the same working conditions the strikers had been protesting led to the death of many of them.

The Triangle tragedy galvanized public outrage as no other previous industrial accident had. New York City's tabloids ran harrowing stories of the victims' last moments. One reporter at the scene phoned in his story from across the street as the drama unfolded. Photographs of piles of bodies on the sidewalk and long rows of shrouded corpses laid out on

the 26<sup>th</sup> Street Pier fanned the fires of public opinion against Isaac Harris and Max Blank, the owners of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company.

The Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) immediately organized several mass protest meetings. At their first rally on the day after the fire, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, leader of the American Jewish Congress, whose papers reside at the American Jewish Historical Society, called for the creation of a citizen's committee to investigate the circumstances surrounding the fire. On April 2, at a meeting at the Metropolitan Opera House, Wise went further, demanding strong state legislation to ensure safety standards in the industrial workplace. But it was Rose Schneiderman, vice president of the WTUL and a leader of the Triangle Strike of 1910, whose impassioned speech aroused the audience. Schneiderman had little faith in public officials or upper-class reformers and every faith in labor. "I know from my experience," Schneiderman proclaimed, "it is up to the working people to save themselves. The only way they can save themselves is by a strong working-class movement." She received a wild ovation.

Within a month of the Triangle Fire, Governor John A. Dix appointed a New York State Committee on Safety. It included Rabbi Wise; Frances Perkins, who

later became secretary of labor under President Roosevelt; and Anne Morgan, daughter of conservative financier J. P. Morgan. On June 30, 1911, responding to the committee's recommendations and intense public pressure, the state legislature established the Factory Investigating Commission, whose findings led to the passage of 36 new laws improving safety and working conditions.

Three days after the fire, the Triangle's owners placed a help wanted ad for employees to work at a new location. This event triggered a new round of protests. The memory of the horror of the Triangle Fire would continue to reinforce the resolve of Jewish labor and communal leaders to pursue the battle for workers' rights. That legacy of Jewish moral leadership lives on in state and federal labor laws and in agencies such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The legacy persists in another sense as well: on March 25 each year, the Jewish Labor Committee, UNITE (the successor organization to the ILGWU) and other organizations gather to commemorate the anniversary of the Triangle Fire at the site of the original factory.

---

*Reprinted with permission from Chapters in American Jewish History published by the American Jewish Historical Society; Michael Feldberg, Ph.D., Executive Director and Series Editor.*

**This month marks  
the 100th  
Anniversary  
of the  
Triangle Fire.**

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage PAID  
New Brunswick, NJ  
Permit No. 217

Jewish Historical Society of Central Jersey  
222 Livingston Avenue  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
(732) 249-4894  
WWW.Jewishgen.Org/JHSCJ  
E-mail: info.jhscj@gmail.com

**For your convenience, this form is for your tributes.**

TO: Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

FROM: Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Major featured articles and events from this newsletter are available on our web site: [www.jewishgen.org/jhscj](http://www.jewishgen.org/jhscj) approximately two weeks before it reaches you by mail.*