The Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest is on the verge of a major milestone in its 27-year history. Over the next few months, the board of directors will consider the extraordinary opportunity to formally gift the Nathan and Theresa Berman Upper Midwest Jewish Archives collection to the University of Minnesota Libraries. The invitation by the University to unite our collections in the world-class Elmer L. Andersen Library on the west bank campus is a measure of our maturity as a historical society and the next step in our evolution. Jews make up less than one percent of Minnesota’s population, yet the Jewish community has made a much greater impact in the region than our numbers would lead one to believe. To have our story housed shoulder-to-shoulder with other holdings of such a great Minnesota institution as the University is a phenomenal testament to the work of our founders.

 Appropriately, a bit of history is in order to understand how this came about. Ten years ago, when JHSUM needed a new home, we were invited to be part of the expanded Barry Family Campus of M inneapolis. Although we were very pleased to be recognized as an important community institution there was room for only half of our collections. Around the same time, through a connection made by Rabbi Bernard Raskas, of blessed memory, former Governor Elmer L. Andersen, of blessed memory, extended an invitation to JHSUM to place the other half of our collections at the library bearing his name.

In 2002, JHSUM founders Nathan and Theresa Berman created an endowment for the collections at the Andersen Library, and the archives were named for them as a permanent memorial to their vision. We know our Berman Upper Midwest Jewish Archive materials experience continually increasing use daily, by authors, scholars, documentarians, and students from around the world, because they are housed in a state-of-the-art archival space staffed by professional librarians and archivists six days a week, at the University of Minnesota.

Continued on p. 3
CHANGING TIMES

Our first 27 years have been spent creating one of the finest archives of local Jewish History in the country. We consistently receive accolades from across the country commending our exhibits, programs, research material and web site. You can read about our many activities of just the past 12 months in this newsletter.

The current economic environment has created challenges for many small nonprofit organizations and JH SUM has not been spared. This organization has thrived on the generosity of our members and a small group of very dedicated supporters. It may surprise some to know that we benefit very little from our community Federated giving efforts. What dollars we do receive from the community organizations overall has been declining year after year. At our current level of community support we cannot sustain all our activities. JH SUM’s Board is working hard to create a new vision for our next 25 years focusing on what activities we do best and can’t be done by any other organization.

SO WHAT’S NEXT?

We are working with the University of Minnesota Andersen Library to have our collections permanently housed at the University. JH SUM would be relieved of the costs related to housing our nearly 3000 item collection and making our materials available to users. Securing a permanent home for our archival materials allows JH SUM to focus on interpretation, education and programming along with more public displays of our unique materials.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE A JEWISH HISTORY GALLERY?

We are working to turn our location at the Kaplan Family Jewish History Center into an interpretive gallery that will be open to the public. Our new space will showcase many of JH SUM’s artifacts and photos that tell the story of Upper Midwest Jewish life.

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP US MOVING FORWARD

Our upcoming campaign to raise the funds necessary to achieve our goals and making this museum a reality is a crucial step in keeping our stories alive. Please watch for more information to come regarding the details of this exciting new chapter in the life of your historical society! And take a moment to renew your membership so you continue to receive all our latest news!

Jamie Heilicher
Ten years later, along with JHSUM, the University faces funding challenges, leading it to reevaluate how their resources are used. With the passing of Gov. Andersen, our patron, it has become more difficult for the University to justify using scarce resources on a collection they don’t own. Consequently, they have offered JHSUM the opportunity to consolidate the JHSUM holdings now located at the Barry Family Campus with the Berman UMJA at Andersen Library by gifting them to the University Libraries.

To maintain our collections and make them accessible for use we expend two-thirds of our funds annually on an archivist’s salary, archival space rental, equipment and supplies. With so many competing urgent needs in our community we have watched community support dwindle year after year. It is financially prudent for our board to consider the University’s offer to steward our history. As trustees of these resources, the board has a responsibility and obligation to create a permanent, safe, accessible place for these materials. If this history is not available, talked about, being used, then the vision of the founders of the JHSUM will be extinguished.

What is the primary advantage to this offer? Precious artifacts and documents, amassed over the past 27 years and representing an investment of hundreds of thousands of community dollars, will be preserved in perpetuity. The University has an infrastructure we could never match, from up to the minute archival practices to student archivists who can process new collections in days what would take months for us to accomplish. The collections will have a dedicated archivist connecting our Upper Midwest Jewish stories to users everywhere.

Brandeis University Professor Dr. Jonathan Sarna has called us “one of America’s best local Jewish historical societies.” He goes on to say “Thanks, to them, all of us have a far greater appreciation for the texture of Jewish life in the Upper Midwest.” This extraordinary offer from the University of Minnesota Andersen Libraries will allow us to maintain our status as one of the best local historical societies in the country and with your support, expand our programming and interpretation.
PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT US!

Jews and Baseball

We hit one out of the park during the Minneapolis Jewish Film Festival! JHSUM and the Sabes and St. Paul JCC’s partnered to present Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story at the Theatres at Mall of America. The sold-out screening was so popular that a second showing was quickly scheduled. The documentary features a rare interview with Hall of Famer LA Dodger’s pitcher Sandy Koufax. He talks about the day he contributed to Minnesota Jewish history by sitting out game one of the 1965 World Series against the Twins at the old Met Stadium because it was Yom Kippur.

World War II Weekend at Fort Snelling

JHSUM and Minneapolis Federation’s VOICE Community Building Initiative sponsored a unique panel and accompanying exhibit as part of the Minnesota Historical Society’s World War II weekend at Fort Snelling. This is the second year we have been invited to participate. The Soviet Union was America’s ally in World War II and it had its own Greatest Generation. A trio of Jewish Soviet veterans, now residing in the Twin Cities—Vladimir Posse, Yakov Rabinovich, and Maria Borisovna Reznik—told their remarkable, and until recently, largely overlooked stories, adding a new perspective to the American World War II story we are familiar with.

More than 20 million Soviet citizens died in what they called The Great Patriot War—about 50 times the number of American deaths—including well over one million Jews. Soviet soldiers contributed to the defeat of fascism, but did not enjoy the freedoms of democracy; victory was soon followed by horrific Stalinist purges and authoritarian rule. Jews, in particular, experienced significant discrimination after the war, and most were unable to leave for decades. To read more about our newest community members go to jhsum.org/exhibits/ and click on Russian Veterans Oral History Project.
Nearly 75 people joined our volunteer tour guides Bob Roscoe and Iric Nathanson along with our partner, Preserve Minneapolis, on walks through the North Side neighborhood. “My parents owned the Homewood Theater.” “I was an usher at the Homewood.” “Ha who wasn’t?” “Your parents owned the theater? I was just telling my friend about how we would sneak in there without paying; I think I might owe you 10-15 cents?” The child of the owners laughed and said, “I am thinking that might be 15 cents with 50 years of interest.” Just a few of the comments from visitors! Read the entire blog post at jhsum.org/2011/10/guest-contributor-jodi-elowitz/

**JHSUM DEBUTS ON INDEPENDENCE MALL**

Philadelphia’s National Museum of American Jewish History tells the story of more than 350 years of American Jewish history including our Upper Midwest Jewish experience homesteading in the Dakotas. JHSUM materials are part of their permanent video depicting the diverse backgrounds, expectations, and experiences of Jews who came and made their homes in the United States. Photographs of Rachel Calof’s family’s homestead are featured prominently in the Dreams of Freedom, 1880-1945 exhibition chronicling the migration of millions of immigrants who came to the United States beginning in the late 19th century. JHSUM fulfills many requests nationally and internationally to use our materials in exhibits, publications, and documentary films.
Dr. Babe Shragg has donated a fascinating 80th birthday tribute booklet put together in 1980 to honor his father, Moshe (Morris) Shragowitz, the “Noted Chazan from Kletsk.”

Moshe Shragowitz, a tailor, immigrated from Russia to New York in 1923 with his wife, Eva, and their infant daughter, who died there. Morris and Eva came to Minneapolis in 1924, where their first son, Harry, was born. Robert (“Babe”), Esser, and Sam followed.

On Mother’s Day, 1939, Eva died, leaving Morris with four children, ages 7 to 14, to raise. He worked in his tailor shop by day and came home to cook, wash, and clean. In 1945, Morris married Esther Wittles, and her daughter Barbara, age 7, joined the family. Morris then gave up his tailor shop and became a shamas, at the Morgan Street Shul, Shaarei Zedek. He also worked as a chazzan at High Holy Days services in St. Paul, Superior, Wisconsin; and Edmonton, Alberta.

He opened a second tailor shop in Golden Valley but in 1964 moved to Los Angeles, where all his children, except Babe, had settled. The Shragg children have prospered in fields such as medicine, computer science, and library science.

At the time of his 80th birthday in 1975, Morris had 13 grandchildren and was still actively davening and tailoring.

This charming family history, available to researchers at the Kaplan Family History Center in our Lyle Berman Archives, is full of photographs, beginning in 1910 in Russia. A photograph captioned “The handsome soldier” shows Morris in uniform in 1917. There are pictures of family homes in north Minneapolis and family reunions throughout the years. The booklet is not only a tribute to Moshe Shragowitz, but is also the American story of a family that grew and prospered on the north side of Minneapolis.
A major focus of JHSUM preservation activities over the past two years was applying for Minnesota Historical and Cultural Grants, funded by the Arts and Culture Heritage Fund. JHSUM’s track record obtaining these very competitive grants, known as Legacy Grants, was stellar. With nearly $17 million in eligible projects vying for $6 million in funding, competition was very stiff. JHSUM beat the odds and secured project funding three times!

Success in obtaining Legacy Grants is evidence that our efforts are recognized outside the Jewish community. The funded projects are crucial toward advancing our ability to successfully carry out our threefold mission of preservation, interpretation, and education about Jewish culture in the Upper Midwest. Legacy Funds are becoming a key source of revenue, allowing JHSUM to continue to collect stories of Upper Midwest Jewish experience.

DATABASE ENHANCEMENT AND CLEANUP
Visitors to JHSUM website can now seamlessly search the entire database inventory of our collection’s holdings. This grant allowed us to work with a database consultant and funded staff needed to create an improved search experience for users. By making content available through a more powerful, nuanced search interface, containing consistent, controlled terms and more searchable fields users can find what is most helpful in our holdings. The collections catalogue was updated for the first time in five years. New accessions data now appears instantly as it is entered. Since April 2011, over 1,100 hits to our database were received generating 118 archival requests that we filled in record speed, a testament to the world-wide accessibility and improved quality of our database. We are very grateful for support received from the Oren and Sharron Steinfeldt Foundation that leveraged our Legacy funding and allowed us to undertake our very complicated database project.

ST. LOUIS PARK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
The genesis of the St. Louis Park Oral History Project was a request back in 2007 from a production assistant for the Coen brothers’ movie, A Serious Man, asking for information about Jewish life in 1960s St. Louis Park. While we were able to provide some period photos of Jewish teens in St. Paul, the request made us realize that we had virtually nothing in the collection documenting Jewish life in the 1960s. The information gleaned in the St. Louis Park oral history interviews, conducted by California-based oral historian and St. Louis Park native Jeff Norman, will illuminate the nuances of the move of the largest Jewish community in the Upper Midwest from Minneapolis’ urban North Side to post-war suburbia. Phase one interviews for this project are complete. We are applying in the current round of Legacy Funding for phase two.

MINNESOTA JEWISH HISTORY ON PLACEOGRAPHY
The largest volume of reference requests we receive is for historic photographs that showcase Jewish life in the Upper Midwest. To expand access to the photo collection, this grant allowed JHSUM to partner with the Placeography wiki www.placeography.org. (A wiki is a collaborative web site that anyone can edit.) Some 150 JHSUM photos were selected, researched, and uploaded to the site, along with extensive new descriptions. Using an existing platform like Placeography means we don't have to develop the technology ourselves. JHSUM has its own portal on the site with seven virtual tours, expanding our tour capacity beyond one Twin Cities-focused “live” tour each year our resources allow for. You don’t have to leave home to tour historic Jewish Duluth, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Minneapolis’ North Side, West, Central and Southern Minnesota, and the Iron Range, as well as the synagogues of the Upper Midwest. Start your tour by going to www.jhsum.org/programming/ and click on placeography.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
PARTNERSHIPS WITH TWO OTHER GRANTS

JH SUM was also a partner on two additional Legacy grants, both involving oral history. Our partnership on these grants was cited by evaluators as a factor in their success. The first partnership was with Susan Weinberg, project director, and Sholom Community Alliance residents. She interviewed elders about their Jewish identity and legacy. The second partnership was with the Sabes Jewish Community Center, Jewish Community Action, and Lyudmyla Petrenko, project director, who created a film and photo exhibit based on interviews about the common struggles and challenges faced by recent immigrants to Minnesota including former Soviet Union Jewish immigrants. Interviews from both projects have been placed in our collections. JH SUM welcomes partnerships with other organizations that expand our reach and allow us to add stories of Upper Midwestern Jewish community members without having to invest our own resources.

About the grants: Minnesota voters approved the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment in November 2008. Funded through the sales tax, the Legacy Amendment supports outdoor heritage, clean water, parks and trails, and arts, history and cultural heritage. Historical and cultural grants are administered by the Minnesota Historical Society through its statewide Historical and Cultural Grants program. The program’s goals are to preserve and enhance access to Minnesota’s cultural and historical resources and to support projects of enduring value—a legacy—for the cause of history and historic preservation statewide.

ACQUISITIONS

Contributions to the archives from August 18, 2010 to

ELIZABETH APPELBAUM: Isabel Berman’s memoir

JANELLE BOHROD: Family photograph of son Joe’s Bar Mitzvah.

SHEILA BRAUFAMN: Talmud Torah graduating class, 1931 (Meyer Landsberg gift to Harry Breitman); Talmud Torah Centennial book (both items from the family of Harry Breitman).


WENDY ENGEL: Embroidered Matzah cover, 1910;

Dick Harris: Letter to members of “Northwood Operating Committee”; $100 ticket to fund raising dinner for the St Paul Jewish Educational Center.

TAMAR FENTON: Family photos.


JUDITH BRIN INGBER: “Let My People Go” poster for Russian Jews; poem by Ruth Brin; Women’s Section of Jewish War Relief (WWI) recounting with women’s names; notebooks, prayer services, accounting, letters of Howard Brin of the Reconstructionist movement; digital scans of Howard Brin while attending Harvard; West High yearbook with Brin info and graduation picture.


MORT KANE: Minneapolis Talmud Torah diploma and report cards; 1969 dedication book, JCC of Minneapolis; two Hebrew and Russian documents; Beth David synagogue Assn., loan document for $80; marriage document (Ketubah) from 1929, Fred Robinson and Rae Hershkovitz; blank Ketubah; Hebrew Ketubah; Temple of Aaron book, December 14th, 1956; Minnesota Jewish Life Magazines, 1988-1989.


STEVEN KLONER: Stein and Diamond Seder, late 1930s on DVD.

CONTINUED FROM ARCHIVES ALIVE

STEVE ROBIN: Two Minneapolis North High School Yearbooks, 1923 and 1924.

MARY ROWLEY: Remembrances of a former neighbor, Jake Levin.

SARA SUDIT PRESS: Two photos: Beth El confirmation (no date, participants identified on back); Lincoln Jr. High 9th grade graduation class 1944.

ROBERT SHRAGG: Photo of Morris Shragowitz in Knox Cleaner and Tailor shop; Book of family history: “Happy 80th Birthday: Moshe Shragowitz”.

LEONARD SOBOL: Family tree, 2.5 ft x 8.5 ft.

GARY TANKENOFF: “Of Thee I Write” about the St Paul West Side; Phillips Eye Institute publicity material; 1965 Four Seasons Ball; 1964 ADL Dinner program; Rabbi Shapiro sermon, 1978; 1991 Federation Vision paper; Bloomer, WI scenes and publicity; 1992 “Hennepin History” winter 1992 with article about Jewish community Teresa Victor; assorted magazines, newsletters, minutes of meetings and invitations.

SOPHIE TEENER: Digital scan of Junior Hadassah Manless Cabaret, Beth El Synagogue, 1930s.

SANDRA WASSERMAN: Lincoln Athletic letter “L”; The Polaris Yearbook, 1933; class list from North High, 1939; North High 50th Anniversary Diploma for Rosella Melmet Saltzman; North High Reunion, class of 1939; two key chain lights with “North High Class of ’39”.

SUSAN WEINBERG: DVD: Jewish Identity & Research: Interviews with residents of Sholom Community Alliance (copyright: Susan Weinberg); book: Jewish Identity & Legacy Project (Executed by Susan Weinberg and Carla Vogel); Oral histories from Sholom Community Alliance residents -- Jewish Identity & Legacy Project, supporting documentation.

JO WEINER: Confirmation certificate of Jo Weiner’s grandfather, Samuel Schlesinger, 1892 at Mt. Zion Temple.

George Kaplan materials (five boxes).
Collections from September 1, 2010 through November 2011.

ANDREA KLEIN BERGMAN
In honor of Julie Tarshish, for your hard work and dedication to JHSUM!
In honor of Katherine Tane to both JHSUM and its staff. You are a thoughtful and greatly appreciated leader in our community.

 SUSIE CHALOM
In honor of the hard work and dedication of Executive Director, Katherine Tane

JO DEVLIN
DAVID FEINBERG
BRUCE FINK
STEVEN FOLDES
MARGIE WASSERMAN AND NEIL GENDLER
NEAL GOSMAN
ARLIS AND ERWIN GROSSMAN
Wishing a speedy recovery to Buddy Pink
In memory of M arcus Hertz
In memory of Gary Klein’s 80th birthday
In memory of Ira Heilicher, Curtis Miller, and Herbert Smekins
JUDY HALPER
In memory of our fathers on Veteran’s Day,
And in honor of their service during WWII,
Ace Halper and Melvin Gould

DAVID HARRIS
PHYLLIS HEILICHER
JEREMY INGBER & JUDITH BRIN
INGBER
DR. STAN KAGIN
In honor of Jewish Dentists of MN as members of Alpha O mega International Dental Fraternity

JUDITH LISZT
BEATRICE MAGEE
DANNA AND JOEL MIRVISS
WENDY MORRIS
In appreciation of Katherine Tane

MICHELE O’KANE
In honor of Grandma Rose. The best of the best mother-in-laws in the whole universe!

ANN SHANEDLING PHILLIPS AND FELIX PHILLIPS
ANDREW RAPPORT
ADA RUBENSTEIN
PENNY SCHUMACHER
DEBBIE SLUTSKER
JEF RREY AND KATHERINE TANE
JULIE TARSHISH
In honor of Katherine Tane to both JHSUM and its staff. You are a thoughtful and greatly appreciated leader in our community.
RESTRICTED NAMED FUND

IDELL & EDWARD SILBERMAN EXHIBITS FUND

EDWARD SILBERMAN
In memory of Idell Silberman's would be 94th birthday

In memory of Frank Schochet
Enclosed is your 2011 Annual Report. It’s easy! Use the envelope enclosed or go to jhusm.org today! Support JHSUM.

Hence, services registered.

4330 South Cedar Lake Road, Minneapolis, MN 55416
Jay and Rose Phillips Building, Elise and Elliot Kaplan Family Jewish History Center

of the Upper Midwest

Jewish Historical Society