

The NEWSLETTER of the FERN & MANFRED STEINFELD Program in Judaic Studies

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE



Dear Friends of Judaic Studies,

In 2001–2002 Judaic Studies at the University of Tennessee had an exciting year with excellent programming.

I would like to especially thank Prof. J. P. Dessel, Department of History, who organized both of our lectures in the spring while I was in Israel. Organizing lectures with publicity and hospitality is a daunting, demanding task in addition to all one's other daily responsibilities. I would also like to welcome Prof. Heather Hirschfeld from the Department of English as a member of the Judaic Studies Advisory Committee. We look forward to Heather's participation in our Judaic Studies activities. Also because of my absence in the spring, Linda Bennet Elder, a colleague from Valdosta State University, agreed to chair two sessions for the regional AAR meeting in March. I thank Linda very much for her generosity in helping with this important effort. My graduate assistant, Daniel Headrick, also deserves kudos for staying on top of things and meeting some tight deadlines.

The 2002–2003 academic year will conclude 10 years of Jewish

education and programming at the University of Tennessee. Looking back, I gratefully recall the tremendous spadework for an endowed position in Judaic Studies that preceded my arrival at the university in 1993. The joint planning effort of university and community laid the foundation for a congenial and mutually supportive relationship during the past decade. The financial support of Diane and Guilford Glazer and Fern and Manny Steinfeld, as well as of members of the Knoxville Jewish community, helped to make the dream a reality. A tremendous loss for all of us was the death of Mitchell Robinson in January. May his memory be for a blessing. Mitchell and Natalie were part of the planning team for a Judaic Studies professorship and have always been strong and active supporters of Judaic Studies and of my work. We mourn the loss of this fine human being and miss Mitchell's presence among us.

Despite the state's financial situation we continue to hope for another endowment in yet another department besides History and Religious Studies to further strengthen the academic quality of

the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies.

As of August 1, 2002, I am also serving as head of the Department of Religious Studies, succeeding Jim Fitzgerald, our very competent interim head, and Charlie Reynolds, who is a legend in his own time. I am proud to be part of such a strong department with creative and productive colleagues, and I look forward to the new challenges and responsibilities and to working with my colleagues, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the university administration.

For the new year, we keep hoping for a resolution to the Middle East conflict, for a de-escalation of the worldwide threat of terror, and for a lasting peace for all humanity.

B'Shalom,

Gilya G. Schmidt, Ph.D.
Professor and Head, Department
of Religious Studies
Chair, Fern and Manfred Steinfeld
Program in Judaic Studies

A Tribute to Mitchell Robinson

Mitchell Lazarus Robinson (1924–2001) was a person who left a lasting impression on those who were privileged to know him. From the day I came to Knoxville, Mitchell would always expect his peck on the cheek and then he would ask, "How are you doing, honey?" It wasn't just a casual greeting but a genuine interest in my well-being and my work. He waited and listened to the answer and often offered a piece of advice.

Mitchell was well known for his empathy and, as Bernie Bernstein said in his eulogy, while he "told you exactly how he felt about you and his views on any subject, he was interested in you." Mitchell always closed our conversation with the offer to help if needed. And he meant that too. Mitchell and Natalie are among the most generous donors to the Judaic Studies Program because they believe in its importance. And that was just one of their causes. To them, most Jewish causes were deserving, be it an individual who needed financial assistance, an organization, or a special event.

Mitchell, the founder of Modern Supply Company, was well-known in the Jewish community for his leadership and for his generosity. He also worked quietly behind the scenes, surely one of the 36 *lamed vavniks*, or righteous individuals, in each generation who help to hold up the world but who are not revealed to us in that capacity. With Mitchell, though, one had at least an inkling. Every spring for many years he and Natalie, in conjunction with the community, hosted the AIPAC fundraising dinner for Israel. Mitchell had been chairman of the board of Heska Amuna Synagogue and had served as building fund chairman; he was instrumental in the construction of the sanctuary on Kingston Pike.

One of Mitchell's favorite worship services was the Neilah service on Yom Kippur. He always had something complimentary to say afterwards. His absence was a glaring void in the congregation this year.

Mitchell left behind a good name. He will always have a place among us. We are grateful for the time he spent on this earth, and we will endeavor to follow in his footsteps of caring and sharing. He would want us to. ☆

Judaic Studies Advisory Committee

■ Marilyn Kallet

Marilyn Kallet chaired the Knoxville Jewish Alliance Yom HaShoah Committee for the 2002 Yom HaShoah commemoration and participated in the planning of the program.

On April 17 and 18 Marilyn was invited by the Colorado Hillels

(Colorado State University, University of Colorado, Boulder, and University of Colorado, Denver) to read poems about Jewish family, identity, and history for their Holocaust Awareness Week programs. Marilyn reported that she "loved meeting the Hillel directors and students; it was all very moving."

Marilyn was also honored by receiving the University of

Tennessee's Research and Creative Achievement Award for 2002, in part for her poems about the Holocaust that she wrote for our 2001 Holocaust Conference. One of her most recent poems is printed here, with Marilyn's permission.

We are so proud of you, Marilyn, and grateful for your presence among us, for your wonderful spirit, and for being just the nicest person to know. Congratulations!

Horb

*Now you are a city etched in glass
at the Holocaust Museum.
Your name offers the roundness
of a planet,*

*curves of an hourglass
running out.
Your name still beautiful
though your Jews were herded off.*

*Horb, centuries, a moment,
no more. Out of a hundred Jews,
forty could not emigrate.
Easy to track in 1939*

*after the German minority census.
Ernestine Sara Schwarz
Berta Sara Schwarz
The humiliation of Sara*

*added to each Jewish woman's
name according to 1938 racial law.
Hermann Israel Schwarz
Richard Israel Schwarz.*

*My uncles stamped with Israel.
"The Nazi regime emulated
segregation laws then current
in the U.S."*

*In the beginning there were benches
and bathrooms "FOR JEWS ONLY!"
All this frenzied purity and Horb
restricted its country air.*

*The forest did not disappear.
At its heart, the Jewish cemetery
stands,
the stones of earlier generations
overgrown:*

Ernestine, Berthe, Richard, Louis . . .

*Horb spat out her living Jews.
Not even ghosts stick around.*

(Forthcoming in *Prairie Schooner*)

■ Peter Höyng

Our colleague Peter Höyng received the University of Tennessee's Jefferson Prize for future research. Congratulations Peter! Peter is in Austria, spending the summer and fall of 2002 in Vienna. He sent the following report.

This past academic year Dr. Peter Höyng offered for the first time at UT a truly interdisciplinary course on the cultural history of Berlin in the 20th century. With the help of his colleagues from art, theater, music, film history, architecture, history, and Judaic Studies, he organized a two-semester course (German 415, "The City with Scars—Berlin in the 20th Century") limited to 15 students. Though one year of German language was suggested, the course was taught in English. (For further information see www.berlin.de).

Even though during the fall term students heard, read about, and saw the complex Jewish life in Berlin, they only truly sensed the magnitude of achievements by

Jews in Berlin and their brutal persecution and murder by the Nazi regime when they toured Berlin during spring break. Students visited the partially reconstructed New Synagogue, the former Jewish quarter, the concentration camp Sachsenhausen outside of Berlin, and the Jewish Museum, by Daniel Libeskind. However, the highlight of the entire tour was when one student gave an inspiring and well-informed lecture at the site of the soon-to-be-built Memorial to the Murdered Jews in Europe by architect Peter Eisenman. The tour was followed by a discussion that showed the students' deep engagement and acquired knowledge about Jewish Berlin. (For further information on matters Jewish in Berlin see www.juedisches-berlin.de or www.berlin-judentum.de; both are offered also in English). The course was such a success that it has been offered again this academic year, including the 10-day trip to Berlin for which Dr. Höyng was able to secure generous funding from the Max Kade Foundation in New York.

In addition to this Berlin-specific course, Dr. Höyng again taught German-Jewish Culture (German 350) in the spring term, this time with an emphasis on Jewish life in

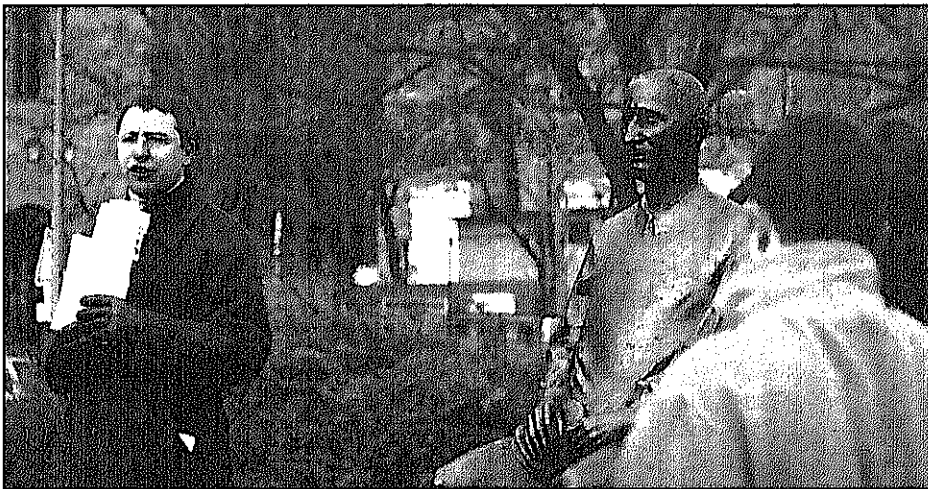
Berlin dating from 1681 to the present. After providing a political and historical overview of the history of Prussia and Germany, Dr. Höyng used multiple media to present the difficult but rich Jewish cultural life of Berlin by focusing on the biographies of, among others, Moses Mendelssohn, Rahel Varnhagen, Alfred Doeblin, Albert Einstein, and W. Michael Blumenthal.

Blumenthal grew up in Berlin, had to flee Nazi Germany, and eventually became secretary of the treasury under Jimmy Carter. Thanks to his integrity and dedication, last September the Jewish Museum in Berlin opened its permanent exhibit on Jewish life in Germany from the Middle Ages to the present. Today, Blumenthal is a highly respected director of the museum, and his book *Invisible Wall* served as one of the basic books for the class.

Since the demand for this course on German-Jewish life has been so great, it will be offered again next spring. This time Dr. Höyng will focus on modern Jewish life in Vienna, where he is currently working on a new research project. In his lectures he will focus on the lives of Gustav Mahler, Sigmund Freud, Theodor Herzl, Joseph Roth, Arthur Schnitzler, Stefan Zweig, Ruth Klüger, and Bruno Kreisky. The course is taught in English and limited to 25 students.

■ Amy Neff

This past year Dr. Amy Neff has enjoyed a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities that allowed her to focus entirely on her art-history research. She spent the year working on two long-term projects: The first is a study of a beautifully illustrated late-13th-century manuscript made in northern Italy. In past years Dr. Neff has written an analysis of this manuscript's artistic style and place in the



Prof. Peter Höyng (left) lectures by the Bertolt Brecht statue in Berlin for the "Berlin in the 20th Century" course.

complex cultural exchanges of late-13th-century Italy. This year, she focused on the book's significance as a vehicle of religious devotion. Its texts and artistic images were intended to stimulate and aid the reader to advance on a mystical path leading to personal redemption. Her book-length study should be completed within the next year.

Dr. Neff's second project involves late medieval images of the Virgin Mary, who, for Christians of the middle ages and beyond, epitomized an ideal for womanhood. In particular, Dr. Neff is studying the imagery of Mary at the crucifixion of her son. This image bears many underlying messages about medieval and later ideologies of women, in which there is a strong link between maternity and suffering. While both of her projects concern monuments of medieval Christian

art, both are of potential interest to Judaic Studies, as well. The 13th century was a period in which—through trade, pilgrimage, and crusades—Christianity came into increased contact with other cultures, spurring a need for stronger self-identification. This process of cultural self-identification included, on one hand, an unprecedented expansion of Christian piety and devotion to Mary and, on the other, separation from "others," such as Moslems and Jews. Anti-Semitic imagery, therefore, becomes more pronounced in this period and is an issue in both topics of Dr. Neff's research.

■ Heather Hirschfeld

Dr. Heather Hirschfeld, an assistant professor in the English Department, has been on the University of Tennessee faculty for two years. She specializes in

Shakespearean drama and Renaissance studies, and her first project, on collaborative drama and issues of authorship, is forthcoming from the University of Massachusetts Press. Her current research is taking her into new territory, as it focuses on metaphoric tropes and real practices of inheritance during the period; she spent part of the summer in London working on this material. Dr. Hirschfeld hopes that this subject will allow her to engage with psychoanalytical approaches to literature, a strong interest of hers. She has lectured at Park Synagogue in Cleveland, Ohio, where she was a member before coming to Knoxville. She is now a member of Heska Amuna Synagogue. She runs regularly (she has completed one marathon and is looking forward to another in November) and tries to spend quality time with her cat. ✧

Judaic Studies Lecture Series

■ Solomon/Schwartz Distinguished Lecture

In 2000 I was invited to participate in a three-day conference in Highlands, North Carolina, that focused on Prof. Richard Bernstein of New York's New School University and



Dr. Alan Solomon (left) and Prof. Richard Bernstein

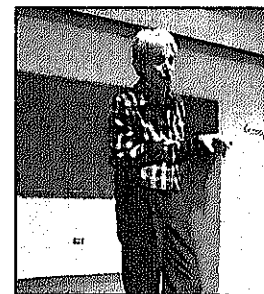
pragmatism. I had to do a fair amount of preparation, as I know little about pragmatism and was quite intimidated by my own daring to write about Richard Bernstein and Judaism and to read the paper to an audience in his

presence. The program went well. I managed not to offend Prof. Bernstein with my observations and deductions and asked him if he would consider coming to UT to give a lecture. He happily agreed. Our Judaic Studies Advisory Committee approved the idea, and on October 29, Prof. Bernstein gave an interesting lecture, "Levinas: Evil and the Temptation of Theodicy," which was well attended. The program and subsequent reception were co-sponsored by the Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Fund, the Judaic Studies Support Fund, the Department of Religious Studies, the History Department, and the Knoxville Jewish Alliance.

■ All About Eve: The Latest Word on the First Lady

On February 20, 2002, Prof. Carol Meyers from the Religious Studies

Department at Duke University visited the UT campus and presented a



Duke University's Prof. Carol Meyers answers questions after her February 20 lecture.

lecture titled "All About Eve: The Latest Word on the First Lady." The topic created much interest with faculty and students, and the lecture was very well

attended. A reception honoring Prof. Meyers followed. The program was sponsored by the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies, the Department of Religious Studies, Women's Studies, the History Department, and the Knoxville Jewish Alliance.

■ Two Talks on Middle Eastern Politics and Policy

As part of our agreement with Emory University to share in one of their visiting scholars who focus on Israel, Prof. Kenneth W. Stein, who organizes the program and chooses these scholars, came to Knoxville himself this past spring



Prof. Ken Stein of Emory University makes a point to his Hodges Library audience.

to speak on "The Bush Doctrine Toward the Middle East: Continuity or Change?" Prof. Stein is William E. Schatten Prof. of Contemporary Middle Eastern History and Israeli Studies at Emory University in Atlanta. The lecture took place on March 25 in Hodges Library Auditorium.

The previous day, Prof. Stein spoke to the Jewish community at the Arnstein Jewish Community Center. His presentation was "The Status of Israel-Arab Negotiations: Shattering Myths with Realities." This program was very well attended and generated much discussion among those present.

Both programs were presented under the auspices of the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies and were co-sponsored by the Annual Robinson Family Lecture Series on Modern Israel, the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, the Jewish Student Center of the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, the Department of History, the Department of Religious Studies, the Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Fund, and the Emory Institute for the Study of Modern Israel.

I would especially like to thank Prof. J. P. Dessel, History Department, for taking charge of both programs and taking care of all the planning, publicity, and

hospitality. I am very grateful for the superb collegiality!

■ Symposium on Radical Evil

When we knew that Prof. Richard Bernstein would be coming to Knoxville, I approached Allen Dunn to see if he would be willing to help organize a symposium with him. Allen graciously agreed. This was much before September 11, yet when we discussed ideas for topics and asked Dick Bernstein for ideas, he suggested—among others—the topic of radical evil. The date was set for October 29, and of course, when the time came, we were all still under the influence of the terrible events of September 11. The topic was very timely, indeed.

The symposium, "Facing Radical Evil," was based on Richard Bernstein's paper "Reflections on Radical Evil: Arendt and Kant." In the paper, Bernstein states that "There is only one thing that seems to be discernable: we may say that radical evil has emerged in connection with a system in which all men have become equally superfluous. The manipulators of this system believe in their own superfluousness as much as in that of all others, and the totalitarian murderers are all the more dangerous because they do not care if they themselves are alive or dead, if they ever lived or never were born." (Quoted with permission.) Three respondents commented on the paper: Prof. John Hardwig, head of Philosophy; Prof. Owen Bradley, from the History Department; and Prof. Allen Dunn, of the English Department, editor of *Soundings*, an interdisciplinary journal.

Richard Bernstein was born in New York's borough of Brooklyn. He received undergraduate degrees from the University of Chicago and Columbia, an M.A. from Yale, and in 1958 a Ph.D. from

Yale. His dissertation was "John Dewey's Metaphysics of Experience." Richard Bernstein has published numerous articles and more than 10 books, among them *Hannah Arendt and the Jewish Question* (1996), *Freud and the Legacy of Moses* (1998), *The New Constellation* (1992), and a monograph on John Dewey in The Great American Thinkers Series (1966). His most recent book, *Radical Evil: A Philosophical Interpretation*, was just published by Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Prof. Bernstein spent the academic year 2000-01 at the *Wissenschaftskolleg* in Berlin. He has received a number of honors, including various teaching awards. He has been a visiting professor at Hebrew University, Catholic University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Frankfurt.

The symposium, under the auspices of the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies, was made possible by financial support from the Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Fund, University Studies, the Philosophy Department, and the Judaic Studies Support Fund.

Prof. Dunn will publish the proceedings of the symposium in *Soundings*, and my paper on Richard Bernstein and Judaism will soon be published by SUNY Press in a volume of the 2000 conference proceedings.

■ Simon Speaks on Libyan Jews

On Monday, October 21, 2002, Dr. Rachel Simon, a research fellow at Princeton University, presented a lecture in the Hodges Library Auditorium. She spoke about the Jews of Libya in her lecture, titled "How New Were the 'New Jews' of Libya? Girls in the Jewish Youth Movement in Libya." ✧

Gilya Schmidt Activities

The fall semester kept me busy with teaching, University Senate activities, the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, a symposium and lecture with philosopher Richard Bernstein on the faces of radical evil, revisions on Mira Kimmelman's second book, and writing a paper on Jewish life in rural southern Germany. In the spring semester I was on research assignment, but before leaving for Israel at the beginning of February, I headed a departmental search for a new colleague in Bible. Due to my research commitments in Israel in February and March, it was necessary to ask a colleague to take over and continue the search process in my absence. I would very much like to thank Charlie Reynolds for helping out and heading the search until my return in April. At that point, we conducted interviews and by early May concluded the search. I am happy to report that we were fortunate in being able to make an offer to Johanna Stiebert, who is of German-New Zealand background, was trained in Great Britain, and is currently teaching in Botswana. Prof. Stiebert will join us in December.

In May I headed off to Germany for the second part of my research, returning from there in July.

Teaching

In fall of 2001, I taught RS 381, Introduction to Judaism, with about 45 students, and RS 102, Comparative World Religions, with 100 students. I also contributed slide lectures on Jewish art and Holocaust memorials in Berlin to German 415, a course on Berlin, designed by Peter Höyng. Due to my research activities in the spring, I

did not teach.

This fall I am teaching RS 381, Introduction to Judaism, and RS 385, Contemporary Jewish Thought, on the history of Zionism from the 1880s to 1948. Both are at capacity. In the spring I will teach RS 386, Voices of the Holocaust, and RS 405, Modern Jewish Thinkers, a seminar on modern Israel. I will again participate in the Berlin course, taught this fall by Prof. David Lee.

Research: Publications

■ Kimmelman Book

As previously mentioned, a revision of Mira Kimmelman's sequel to *Echoes from the Holocaust* kept me busy for much of the fall 2001 semester. While I was away, my graduate assistant, with the help of one of our work-study students, made all of the corrections and sent me the manuscript in Germany. I am very pleased with the result. The manuscript will be submitted to a publisher for consideration this fall. We will ask a Holocaust scholar to write a preface, and I will write an introduction and provide a chronology of the Holocaust. *Echoes from the Holocaust* to date has sold nearly 6,000 copies. The proceeds are all going to the Judaic Studies Endowment. Thank you, Mira!

■ Heralds of a New Age:

The Art and Artists of the Fifth Zionist Congress

Also last fall, I made additional adjustments to the art manuscript which has been at the publisher for some time. The technical adjustments needed were extremely time-consuming and taxed everyone's patience. My thanks to my graduate assistant, Daniel Headrick, for the extensive work he did to complete these changes. While I was in Israel, I was able to locate the final missing pieces, and we expect the manuscript to go into production

this fall.

■ Siezzun—

No Grazing Land for Jews

For the past three years, I have been working on analyzing the data that I brought back from Germany in 1999 on the Lang family in Süssen (*Siezzun* is an old spelling). I wrote and read two papers at professional conferences on the Langs. I have also explored material I collected on rural Jewish life in Swabia and last fall wrote and read a paper on *Landjudentum*, or rural Jewish life in southern Germany, where the cities of Süssen and Göppingen, as well as a number of the other Jewish *Landgemeinden*, are located. Rural Jewish life was particularly plentiful in this part of Germany since the 17th century because of the abundance of dukes, counts, earls, and other nobles who, for a price, allowed Jews to live within their respective territories.

Research: Field Notes

■ In Search of a Star

During my research trip in May, June, and July of this year, I collected additional material that has become available since 1999 in the various archives and visited many former Jewish communities, photographing existing houses that used to belong to Jews and tombstones in Jewish cemeteries, where available. The Jewish cemeteries are truly sources of peace and tranquility, as well as of inspiration and learning, and I thoroughly enjoyed my visits to these historic cultural monuments. Having in most cases studied some of the local history beforehand, the burial sites came alive for me, and an individual's fate often was discernible from the inscription—instances such as death at a young age, of a woman in childbirth, or of a young father with many children were especially moving. Uplifting were testimonies to community leaders, who were lauded for their

wisdom, or to women who lived to a ripe old age and were praised for their generosity and kindness to the poor.

Just as the houses varied from palace—or even a castle—to tiny modest ghetto-type dwellings, so the tombstones differed in style. Older tombstones were much more uniform and simple, in keeping with Jewish tradition, while later stones were quite elaborate, some to the point of becoming massive monuments. Most impressive was the burial site of Madame Kaulla, the court Jew of the House of Württemberg, who was one of only two Jews (Jud Süß Oppenheim was the other) who were allowed to do business with the royal court in Stuttgart, although Madame Kaulla was not allowed to reside there. She lived and is buried in Hechingen, Hohenzollern. What an impressive woman she was!

Several other highlights included finds that I did not expect. Marilyn Kallet, whose family came from Horb at the edge of the Black Forest, asked me if I could check on the fate of her grandmother's family. When I asked the man who was in charge of the Jewish archive, he right away nodded his head and told me the story of Hedwig Schwarz. How surprised was I, when we visited the Jewish cemetery in Horb-Rexingen, to be led immediately to the tomb of Marilyn's relative. She is buried next to the memorial stone for the victims of the Holocaust, and her story is a most unusual and sad one. I'll let Marilyn tell the story, but I was happy that I could say kaddish for her and that this survivor of the Shoah has a grave, which so many victims of the Holocaust do not have.

Another moving and totally unexpected experience happened in Bad Buchau am Federsee. Once a large and thriving Jewish

community, home of the family of Albert Einstein, it is today entirely devoid of Jews, as are all the other former *Landgemeinden* in this region. We were able to purchase a small book on the Jews of Buchau from the tourist office. In it, they showed a *Betsaal*, or *shtiebl*, common in communities that either could not obtain permission to build a synagogue or were too small or too poor to afford one. This *shtiebl* is today in the upstairs part of a shoe store. I took the book with me and asked if I could see the owner. He was very kind and not only showed me the room and let me photograph it, but then offered to take my friends upstairs as well. It is a beautiful example of *Bauernmalerei*, or rustic painting, in mellow browns, yellows, and greens, with floral patterns.

A unique example of Polish wood painting can be found in the museum in Schwäbisch Hall, where the remains of the Unterlimpurger Synagogue have been reinstated. The synagogue was another *Betsaal*, this one of the Jews of Steinbach, who lived below the castle Comburg and under the protection of the count. These Jews were not allowed to enter the city of Schwäbisch Hall, a Reich city directly under the jurisdiction of the emperor. However, they began to build their houses along the Unterlimpurger Strasse of Steinbach, right outside the city. The *shtiebl*, painted by Eliezer Sussmann in 1738, was located in the home of Moses Maier Seeligmann and was dismantled when he sold the house in 1782. The panels were stored in the attic and forgotten until 1904. I found the house, as well as an inn next door with a large metal Magen David sign outside.

The cemetery in Steinbach was the most heartbreaking site. As I said, most of the cemeteries gave me such peace; in this cemetery, the Holocaust was palpable.

Horribly desecrated by the Nazis, this cemetery has many stones missing, and at the bottom of a steep hill there is a row of 50 or more tombstones lined up against the fence—all stones that cannot be returned to their proper site. At the top of the hill is a memorial said to be the site of two mass graves of victims from the nearby Hesselthal concentration camp, a satellite camp of Dachau. In the closing days of the war, these poor people were sent back to Dachau, at first by train, then forced on a death march when allied bombers attacked the train, killing 14 of the prisoners. The survivors had to walk the rest of the way on foot, leading of course to many more deaths. Some of these may be buried in the mass graves, as well. There are also the graves of members of a family who tried to get to Eretz Israel after liberation and didn't make it. This was the most haunting of the cemeteries that I visited, and I could feel the victims reaching out for help even today. I could not get through the kaddish without weeping for them and their suffering.

On a brighter note, I had read about a Jewish device that seems to have been unique to southern Germany. It is called a "chuppah stone." Chuppah stones were designed and placed on buildings so that the groom could smash the glass after the ceremony with his hand, not with his foot as is the custom today. There are very few chuppah stones to be found today because most Jewish buildings were destroyed by the Nazis. I knew of three and decided to visit the one in Eppingen, near Heilbronn, in Baden. I also picked the hottest day of the year. But I was rewarded with a beautifully restored old building, the old synagogue, which contained not only a well-preserved mikvah, but had a perfectly preserved wedding stone on the outside wall. How did

it survive the Nazis? The farmer who owned the house nailed it shut with a board, claiming that there was a hole in the wall. My thanks to Frau Scheel of the Babuschka Theater for her wonderful hospitality and assistance and to the Kulturstadt of the city of Eppingen.

The fruits of these labors will be developed and analyzed for an article for a German historical journal, papers for conferences and lectures, and the book-length study I have been working on.

■ The Sweet Singer of B'nai Israel

In a wholly different vein, one of my most cherished dreams came true in February. Not only was I able to return to Israel for two months, but I was able to study Jewish liturgy in a most interesting context. Some time ago I decided to write the life story of my hazzan and teacher in Pittsburgh, Mordecai G. Heiser. For years I have held on to the tapes his family and members of his congregation, B'nai Israel, had of his liturgy, always fragmentary, but nevertheless valuable for the understanding we get of his music—the sources, the style, the interpretation, the integration with his B'nai Israel congregation in the East End.

As I am not a musicologist, I needed help with this task. Graciously, my colleague and dear friend Prof. Elijah Schleifer, hazzan and director of cantorial studies at Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem, agreed to be my teacher. Eli is one of the foremost musicologists in the world, and studying with him was a dream I had had since 1996 when we first discussed this possibility.

While the political situation with its pain and suffering, not to mention its physical danger, proved to be very draining, the total immersion in this music that is so dear to me healed my emotional wounds on a daily basis, giving

me new strength to face another day. The Neilah service this year had an additional dimension for me—the knowledge of the sources of the music I learned naïvely and the background to the traditions that I find so moving. The long-range project, which is very fragile because of the poor quality of the tapes, will require some technical miracles. Eventually I hope that we will have a study of this primarily Eastern European hazzanut by a Western European cantor who, as a survivor of Sachsenhausen and Mauthausen, performed his art in the United States after the Holocaust. We hope it will be possible to produce a CD along with the book.



The two experiences, Israel and Germany, could not have been more different. In Israel, I was totally immersed in Yiddishkeit; in Germany I met only Rabbi Berger of Stuttgart, the rabbi for the state of Württemberg. In Israel, physical danger lurked at every corner; in Germany, the only danger came from driving on the German roads. In Israel, there was security everywhere—in stores, malls, the bus stations, even synagogues; in Germany, there was only minimal police presence. In Israel, I spent every day in the presence of the Tower of David; in Germany, an ancient castle towered over the town where I lived. In both countries, I had wonderful friends who hosted me and who helped me with my work. I would like to thank them with all my heart for their generosity.

In Jerusalem, I was invited to stay with Jo and David Morrison, dear friends who are Mary Linda Schwarzbart's relatives. Jo and David are kind, spiritual individuals who shared their home and life with me for two months. Highlights were Shabbat and Purim and, of course, Pesach. We studied together and sang together

and went to minyan together, and many times we agonized and worried together. Their spirit was uplifting and the experience, most rewarding.

Thank you, Jo and David, for everything you did for me to make my stay a success.

I already mentioned my friend and teacher, Elijah Schleifer from Hebrew Union College, without whom I could not have undertaken this research project. He and his wife, Aya, make the Shabbat services at HUC a lovely experience. Another dear friend is Rabbi Shaul Feinberg from HUC, who always makes me feel that I belong when I am in Jerusalem. And longtime friends and sometime hosts Jacob and Jo Milgrom add to the creative and spiritual environment I enjoy. My friends Carol Caplan and Mike Alter strengthened my spirit with their resolve to endure, no matter the political situation. When the security guard and customers apprehended the man who wanted to blow himself up in the corner café on Emek Refaim, I called Carol to see whether we should change our dinner plans. Her reply was "They caught him, didn't they?" I also was able to visit with Bezalel Narkiss, who came to Knoxville for a lecture in 1994, and with Pesach and Nomi Slabosky, Toby's son and daughter-in-law.

Sadly, the danger from suicide bombers kept me from visiting my longtime friend Avraham Shapira from Tel Aviv University, who lives on Kibbutz Yizreel, which is surely Gan Eden. Unfortunately, I was too afraid to travel through Afula, site of many bombings and other incidents.

In Germany, I was once again



It's Purim! Gilya Schmidt at Megillah reading in Jerusalem.

invited to stay with my friends Werner and Bärbel Runschke in Süssen. Werner is the director of the city archive. I had already stayed with them three years ago, and it was again a most pleasant and rewarding experience. Bärbel looked out for my health by encouraging me to go for walks with her, and Werner cooked the most delicious vegetarian meals, truly an experience for the palate. But most important, they transported me a number of times to the very out-of-the-way district archive and to equally remote Jewish cemeteries and towns that cannot be reached by train or bus. Not only did I look for important graves for this project, but Bärbel and Werner did so, as well. When I got tired, they pointed out to me



Werner and Bärbel Runschke (above) took me to the remote Jewish cemetery of Bittenhausen.

symbols and shapes and other peculiarities that deserved attention. The inscriptions on the weathered stones were often difficult to decipher, and both helped me when I was at my wits' end. Thank you, Bärbel and Werner, for your friendship and for your valuable assistance.

Thanks are also due to my classmates Gerda Schwenger, Renate Koch, Inge Honold, and Beate Lehle, who arranged meetings for me, drove me to more out-of-the-way places, and found old pictures of the families I am researching.

In addition to Werner Runschke, I would like to thank Dr. Karl-Heinz Ruess, director of the city archive in Göppingen, and

Walter Ziegler of the district archive for their help and the help of their staff.

Technical support was graciously provided by the Mayor of Süssen, Mr. Wolfgang Lütznert, and the city hall staff.

To all, my profound thanks for contributing to the success of my research projects.

Service

■ Professional Service

In October 2001 I traveled to the University of Iowa to serve as one of the outside evaluators for the seven-year review of the university's School of Religion.

In November of 2001 I attended the American Academy of Religion's annual convention to participate in the Steering Committee and program of the Nineteenth Century Theology Group.

The Association for Jewish Studies met in Washington, D.C., in December of 2001. At that conference I read a paper on rural Judaism which is connected to the book-length study on which I am working.

■ University Service

As a member of the University Senate, I participated in senate meetings during fall 2001 and attended the senate retreat on September 23.

The University Development Council invited me to give a presentation on September 28 on the importance of private funding and the success of the Judaic Studies Program. One of our students, Brian Whitson, helped me prepare a PowerPoint presentation. Thank you, Brian!

During fall 2001 a university committee deliberated about reallocation of funds within the university. I participated in these deliberations for Religious Studies.

Although I was not able to give a great deal of time to the College of Education this past fall, I

participated in their interview process for interns for holistic education.

■ Public Service

I continue to serve as a commissioner on the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, which last fall involved meetings in Nashville, as well as telephone conference calls. I have agreed to be reappointed to another three-year term.

The Knoxville Jewish Alliance initiated a new educational institution, the Institute of Jewish Learning. I participated in last year's deliberations.

The Pomegranates, a group of Jewish women who raise funds for the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, invited me to give a slide presentation on Jewish art on September 10. Alexandra Rosen, who introduced me and the program, commented that we would live in a perfect world for the next hour or so. Little did she know how true that was, because the next morning, our world changed forever.

I continue to serve on Heska Amuna's Religious Service Committee and briefly participated in the discussions of the music in worship subcommittee.

In remembrance of *Kristallnacht*, Charles Davenport organized an educational program for the Knox County librarians on November 8, with Mira Kimmelman as the honored guest and speaker. I provided a historical introduction to *Kristallnacht* and introduced Mira to the audience.

On January 20, 2002, Central Baptist Church invited me to speak to their Sunday School class on Judaism. The invitation was extended to me by the father of one of my former students, and Lora Hicks, Meg Pattison, and Betsy Taylor, all former students, drove in from central Tennessee for the occasion. It was a wonderful reunion and a memorable Sunday. ☆