

MuseumMatters

Winter 2008 / 5768

The Newsletter of the Jewish Museum of Maryland

Ours To Fight For Debuts at the Jewish Museum of Maryland

by Karen Falk, Curator

“As a Jew, it was Hitler and me. That’s the way I pictured the war.”

So says Theodore Diamant, in a vibrant and provocative new exhibition that highlights the contributions of American Jewish servicemen and women during World War II.

Ours to Fight For: American Jews in the Second World War, developed by New York City’s Museum of Jewish Heritage, starts its national tour at the JMM on February 24, with a gala exhibition opening from noon to 4 p.m. It will be on view in the Museum’s Samson, Rossetta, and Sadie B. Feldman Gallery through July 27.



Graduation day at Thunderbird Field. Collection of Philip Topiel.

Make “Ours to Fight For” Your Exhibition!

The JMM is collecting photos of Jewish men and women from Maryland in their World War II service uniforms. The images will be displayed on the exhibition’s “Wall of Honor.” Your photos will be digitally copied and returned to you. We are also interested in learning about three-dimensional objects and other memorabilia from World War II for possible inclusion in the exhibition.

To let us know that you have a photo or item of potential interest, please contact Jobi Zink, senior collections manager, at 410-732-6400, ext. 26, or jzink@jewishmuseummd.org by Friday February 1.

This award-winning exhibition is based on testimony gathered from more than 400 Jewish servicemen and women. Their moving words—brought to life through historic film footage and hundreds of photographs and objects—make it clear that the war had special meaning for American Jews. The war also put an end to the isolation of Jewish communities in American cities. As Jay M. Eidelman states in the companion book to the exhibition, *Ours To Fight For: American Jewish Voices from the Second World War*, “The war years introduced Jews to America and America to its Jews.”

Ours To Fight For was named the grand-prize winner of the American Association of Museums’ Excellence in Exhibition Competition in 2004. The judges felt that the innovative use of first-person testimony was especially engaging for museum visitors, allowing them to make connections with the experiences of both soldiers 60 years ago and troops serving today.

Major funding for this exhibition has been generously provided by Jack and Susan Rudin and Family in memory of Lewis Rudin; by Irving Schneider in memory of his friend, Lewis Rudin; and by Irving and June Paler in memory of June’s father, Duncan Robertson, who fought for justice in both World Wars. Additional support was provided by Verizon Foundation and Everyone Smile.com.

Funding for the installation of Ours to Fight For at the Jewish Museum of Maryland is made possible by the Hoffberger Family Exhibition Endowment, the Stanford Z. & Cory Rothschild Exhibition Endowment, and the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Exhibition Endowment.

Start your weekend with a visit to the JMM! New Friday Hours!
Starting in January, the Museum will be open every Friday from noon to 3 p.m.

STAFF AND BOARD



From the Director

Calendar year 2008 has been a banner year for the Museum. Our exhibitions, publications, programs, and educational outreach have won accolades here and across the country. Our officers and trustees provide us with exceptional leadership, and our many volunteers enrich our engagement on- and off-site. Meanwhile our remarkable collections continue to grow apace. And all of us are feeling that special sense of achievement that marks an effective organization.

But past success is no guarantor of future accomplishment. So, at multiple levels, we are working continuously to refine plans and projects for the Museum's future. Some of these are immediate: for example, development of a new core exhibition on the history of the Lloyd Street Synagogue. Others fall into the longer-term: preparing a menu of activities for our fiftieth Anniversary year in 2010. And still other efforts focus on long-term goals, including expansion of our facilities to enhance our programming and educational services or developing new capacity to use the internet.

Throughout our planning, we are mindful of a few core values. We want to interpret American Jewish life and experience in the context of mainstream culture and of other ethnic, religious, and cultural groups. We want to stress that everyone, even ordinary people like ourselves, have agency and influence the course of history. And we want to engage a diverse audience, Jewish and non-Jewish, young and old, residents and visitors, local and national, in learning about what it means to be Jewish.

While we go about the work of building community and enriching individual identity, we are also concerned to work in ways that are particular to a museum. We stress active, experiential learning. We immerse audiences in the story. We reach out to people where they live and work. We use art and drama and literature to make our narratives meaningful. In short, we are in the business of turning the prose of everyday life into poetry.

I take this opportunity to thank our thoughtful lay leaders, generous donors, dedicated volunteers, and outstanding staff for a great year, and I look forward with anticipation to the years yet to come.

Avi Y. Decter, *Executive Director*

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Photos, Photos, and More Photos

“Once Upon A Time” Photos

The Museum’s “Once Upon A Time” photo collaboration project with the *Jewish Times* continues to be tremendously successful. Each week, a photo from the Museum’s collection runs in the *Jewish Times* so that readers can supply missing information about sitters and setting.

Many of our “Once Upon A Time” photos are now posted on the *Jewish Times*’ website, www.jewishtimes.com. You can find them by clicking on “History” in the left column of the *JT* home page or entering <http://www.jewishtimes.com/index.php/jewishtimes/history/jt/history/> into the browser. The photos are in the right-hand column.

Thanks to the following people for identifying “Once Upon A Time” photographs: Betty Aaron, Herman Blenchikoff, Bernie Cohen, Gil Cohen, Marilyn Dickman, Howard Friedel, Lois Gammerman, Molly Goldstein, Shirley Goodman, Sibyl Gordon, Naomi Ginzberg, Mildred Grabstald, Stanley I. Greenebaum, Adele Greile, Sylvia Grosshandler, Arthur Hoffman, Barbara Hoffman, Sarah Klein, Dr. Richard Lamb, Sandy Levy, Bill Lewis, Peggy Lewis, Roz Lisberger, Lisa Lockwood, Doris Crane Margolis, Marcia Markowitz, Florence Pass, Frieda Pertman, Dr. Irvin Pollack, Royal Parker Pollokoff, Marshall Rief, Leslie Romm, Mark Rosenfield, Rita Rubin, Helene Levitt Scheer, Wendy Schnitzer, Bryline Schwartz, Morton Shapiro, Sandy Seltzer Silberman, Estelle Silverman, Helen Sollins, Bob Steinberg, Barbara Steinhart, Bernie Stern, Helen Surosky, Sylvia Schneider, Debbie and Scott Tabb, Frieda Tompakov, Stanley and Evelyn Wagner, Morty Weiner, Rosemary Weiner, Froma Tucker Willen, Judy Wolff, Norma Livov Wolod, and Hilda Yankelov.

Do You Remember Bonnie View?

Don’t let history disappear! Although the Bonnie View Country Club is gone, it’s not forgotten. The JMM is looking for items that demonstrate Bonnie View’s importance in the community. If you have photographs, objects, ephemera, or wonderful memories from Bonnie View, please contact Jobi Zink, senior collections manager, at 410-732-6400, ext. 26, or jzink@jewishmuseummd.org.



Harry Cohen in his East Baltimore delicatessen, 1919.
JMM 1988.132.1, gift of Sidney Cohen.

decided to continue collecting stories and images. We plan to incorporate the photos into an album that will become part of the exhibition. If you would like to share your photos, please contact Rachel Kassman, photo archivist, at 410-732-6400, ext. 25, or rkassman@jewishmuseummd.org.

Here’s Looking at You!

Do you have photos of yourself, your family, or your family’s business in the old Lombard Street neighborhood? If so, we’d like to know about them.

When *Voices of Lombard Street* opened on October 14, it was an immediate hit. The original exhibition, a hundred-year history of the neighborhood surrounding the Museum, has been called “marvelous” by the *Baltimore Examiner*’s Michael Olesker.

The response from visitors has been so overwhelming that we



JMM 1996.138.8.
Jewish Times readers identified many members of the Queen Anne Lodge Seniors at Krieger Eye Institute (left to right): unidentified, Florence Pass, Harriet Spear, Dr. Irvin Pollack (chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at the Krieger Eye Institute), Ethel Steinberg, Blanche Carmel, Esther Romm, Florence Shreiber, Molly Pollekoff, Frieda Tabor, Shirley Paul (behind Mollye), Mary Tabor, Rita Beth Friedman.

Correction

We mistakenly identified a photograph of Ella Oppenheim Miller as Ella Gutman Hutzler in our fall 2007 newsletter. Ms. Miller was Ms. Hutzler’s granddaughter. We apologize for the mistake.

Jewish Museum of Maryland Winter 2008 Program Calendar

Ours to Fight For: American Jews in the Second World War

Exhibition Opening

Sunday February 24 / noon–4 p.m.

Celebrate the achievements of the Jewish men and women who served America during World War II, both on and off the battlefield. This riveting new exhibition tells what the war meant to the Jews of the “Greatest Generation” in their own voices and through their own objects, letters, and photographs. *The exhibition was developed by the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust.*

ADMISSION IS FREE



Above: Seamen Sid Schiffman and Phil Scholssberg in Brooklyn, New York, en route to advanced naval training in Illinois, June 1942. Collection of Sidney and Ethel Schiffman.

Top right: Collection of Sidney and Ethel Schiffman.

Kinder Day in the Golden Land Family Program Monday March 10 10–11:30 a.m.

Bring your favorite preschooler to the JMM for a visit to our colorful hands-on exhibition, *The Golden Land*. The morning's activities include music, games, stories, and snacks.

Reservations: 410-732-6400, ext. 14 or idadackmanalon@jewishmuseummd.org.

You are encouraged to bring a Judaic item that the children will be able to touch and explore.
ADMISSION IS FREE.

Right: JMM Institutional Archives.



Purim Pandemonium Young Adult Event

Thursday March 20 / 8:30–11:30 p.m.

Put on your zoot suit and jitterbug your way to the JMM for a U.S.O.-themed Young Adult Purim Party. Enjoy refreshments and libations, join in some boogie-woogie lessons with Charm City Swing, and dance the night away. *This event is co-sponsored with BAYITT, Beth Am's Initiative for 20s and 30s.*

Reservations: 410-732-6400, ext. 14 or idadackmanalon@jewishmuseummd.org.
Tickets: \$15 in advance/\$20 at the door.

All programs will be held at the JMM unless otherwise noted.

Those Were the Days, My Friends
Oral History Theater Project
Sunday March 30 / 3-5 p.m.

Long-time Baltimore City residents from diverse backgrounds and neighborhoods will share their recollections of growing up in the City. Come hear their stories, share your own—and make some new memories. *This program is co-sponsored by the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks Senior Division.*

Reservations recommended: 410-732-6400, ext. 14 or idadmanalon@jewishmuseummd.org.
ADMISSION IS FREE



Herbert H. & Irma B. Risch

Coming to America:
Immigrant Stories
The Second Annual Herbert H. & Irma B. Risch Memorial Program
Monday, April 7 / 7 p.m.
7 p.m. cocktails and live music by Caleb Stine and the Brakemen;
8 p.m. show

Seven storytellers get seven minutes each to tell modern day immigration tales about leaving, arriving, and struggling to make a new home in this strange land called America. This program is part of the *The Stoop Storytelling Series*.

The program will take place at Centerstage, 700 N. Calvert Street.

Reservations recommended: Purchase tickets online at www.centerstage.org/page.php?pageID=380 or call 410-332-0333.

Tickets: \$12 in advance/\$15 at the door.

Map It!

Family History and Archival Exploration Day
Sunday April 13, 2008 / 1-4 p.m.

Be a sleuth for a day! Learn from the experts how to uncover evidence of the past through historic maps and official records, letters, personal mementos, photographs, material objects, and oral histories. “Meet” some of the colorful personalities who have lived in the historic neighborhood surrounding the Museum and then use your newfound skills to learn about your own neighborhood. *This program is supported by the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance.*

JMM member families: \$5.00/non-member families: \$10.00



“Brownsville: The Jewish Years”
Discussion and Book-signing
Sunday April 13 / 2-4 p.m.

Meet local Yiddish expert and historian Sylvia Schildt, author of *Brownsville: The Jewish Years*. Ms. Schildt will recapture a cherished moment in Jewish American life as she speaks about growing up in an immigrant neighborhood in Brooklyn where Yiddish was spoken at home, on the street, in the store, and even on the radio. Ms. Schildt’s book will be available for purchase at the event. *This program is co-sponsored by Baltimore Hebrew University and Chizuk Amuno Congregation and is part of “On the Same Page—Baltimore.”*

The program will take place at Baltimore Hebrew University, 5800 Park Heights Avenue.

Reservations: Elaine Eckstein at 410-578-6905 or eckstein@bhu.edu.

ADMISSION IS FREE

Top left: Courtesy of Historic Jonestown.
Above: East Baltimore, 1906. Bromley and Company, JMM 1992.164.11.

Remembering the Riots Lecture and Discussion

Tuesday April 15 / 5–7 p.m.

For two weeks in April 1968, beginning in the dark hours following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., the city of Baltimore was devastated by a series of civil disturbances that left six dead, dozens injured, and hundreds of properties burned, shattered, or in ruins. Professor Jessica Elfenbein, director of the Center of Baltimore Studies at the University of Baltimore, will speak about the Jewish experience during this tumultuous time, exploring their roles as mediators and victims.

Reservations recommended: 410-732-6400, ext. 14
or idackmanalon@jewishmuseummd.org.
ADMISSION IS FREE



East Lombard Street during the April 1968 riots. Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Maryland Libraries.

Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth

Conference

April 3–5, 2008

The University of Baltimore hosts a three-day conference exploring the causes and effects of social unrest in April 1968 and the efforts at civic healing that followed and still continue. Sponsored by the Maryland Humanities Council, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Baltimore Collegetown Network, this public conference marks the fortieth anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarly presentations will be accompanied by sessions featuring witnesses to the riots and leaders of efforts to revitalize Baltimore in the months and decades that followed. For information about location, schedules, and registration, visit www.ubalt.edu/baltimore68.

The Red Hot Days of Radio A Radio Re- Creation of "The Goldbergs" and "Abby's Irish Rose"

Sunday May 4
3:30–5 p.m.

Join Royal Parker Pollakoff, Gene Leitner, and The Golden Radio Buffs of Maryland for a rousing re-creation of *The Goldbergs* and *Abby's Irish Rose*, two popular radio shows that aired from the 1920s through the '50s and explored Jewish themes. These radio broadcasts will be recreated at the Museum—complete with vintage commercials—by some of Baltimore's liveliest performing personalities.

Reservations recommended: 410-732-6400, ext. 14
or idackmanalon@jewishmuseummd.org.
JMM members: \$5.00/non-members: \$10.00



FILM SCREENINGS



"Columbia: The Tragic Loss"

Thursday January 31 / 4:30–6:30 p.m.

Two months after the tragic loss of the space shuttle *Columbia* in 2003, the personal diary of Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon was found at one of the crash sites. The diary, in which Ramon recorded observations and musings during the journey, was the starting point for *Columbia*, a moving portrayal of one astronaut's bravery and love of mankind.

*Reservations recommended: 410-732-6400, ext. 14 or idackmanalon@jewishmuseummd.org.
JMM members: \$5.00/non-members: \$10.00*

"From Philadelphia to the Front"

Sunday March 2 / 4–5:30 p.m.

One of the few documentaries to explore the experiences of Jewish-American veterans of World War II, *From Philadelphia to the Front* focuses on six Philadelphia veterans, now in their 80s. The vets reflect on their individual experiences and on the personal significance of the "war to defeat Hitler." The film artfully incorporates personal photographs and rare archival footage, including Jewish soldiers celebrating Shabbat and Passover during wartime and the first Jewish service at Dachau after it was liberated.

*Reservations recommended: 410-732-6400, ext. 14 or idackmanalon@jewishmuseummd.org.
JMM members: \$5.00/non-members: \$10.00*



"The Ritchie Boys"

Sunday April 6 / 4–6 p.m.

The Ritchie Boys tells the story of a group of young men who fled Nazi Germany and returned to Europe as soldiers in U.S. uniforms. At Camp Ritchie, Maryland, these men—who knew the psychology and the language of the enemy better than anybody else—were trained in intelligence and psychological warfare. Determined, bright, and inventive, they fought their own kind of war.

*Reservations recommended: 410-732-6400, ext. 14 or idackmanalon@jewishmuseummd.org.
JMM members: \$5.00/non-members: \$10.00*

THE Jewish Museum OF MARYLAND

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410-732-6400
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www.jewishmuseummd.org

Museum Hours:

Tuesday through Friday
and Sunday
12 noon–4 p.m.

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Membership is Sweet!

Have you heard about the Museum's Refer-a-Friend Program?

Tell a friend you care for about the benefits of membership at the JMM and sweeten someone's day. This spring, when you refer a new member, you will automatically be entered in a drawing for a special gift from the Museum Shop. Don't miss out. Joining the JMM is easier than ever. For information, contact Sue Foard at 410-732-6400, ext. 20, or visit our website at www.jewishmuseummd.org, and click on "Membership."



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