Educational Experience
Reaching Out to CAJE
by Joyce Levine, Librarian, North Shore Hebrew Academy, & Shelly Feit, Librarian, Moriah School

This summer, teachers were on the receiving end of learning, at the first Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE) Conference for Day School and Early Childhood Educators, held June 22-25, 2003, at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY.

The program included two workshops presented by NYMA librarians. The elementary school panel, organized by Shelly Feit, librarian of the Moriah School in Englewood, NJ, also included Beth Anshen Braunstein of the SAR Academy in Riverdale, NY, and Rachel Glasser of the Yavneh Academy in Paramus, NJ. Their session, Presenting the Wealth: Enhancing Teaching and Learning Through the Day School Library, focused on tangible ways in which the day school library and librarian, as a partner in the educational program, offers critical support for the classroom teacher.

The high school panel, organized by Joyce Levine of North Shore Hebrew Academy High School in Great Neck, NY, included Faya Cohen of Manhattan High School for Girls in New York City, Anne Jaron of the Hebrew Academy in Nassau County (HANC) in Uniondale, NY, and Rachail Kurtz of the Yeshiva of Flatbush High School in Brooklyn. In their presentation, Enriching the High School Curriculum: Your Librarian as a Partner in Teaching, they discussed how the librarian can work with school personnel by increasing awareness of interpersonal relationships, enriching special programming in the day school and teaching research skills through

(Cont'd on Pg. 8)
Treasure Hunt
Archive Perks & Quirks @ Ref Workshop
by Steven Bernstein, Hebraic Catalog Librarian, Yale University

Finding and cataloging archives is like shopping at an antique store: you never know what will turn up.

The fine art of Jewish archives was the topic of this year’s Reference Workshop, held Thursday, May 1, 2003, at the Yeshiva of Flatbush High School. Presenters were Shuli Berger, curator of Special Collections at Yeshiva University; Ellen Kastel, archivist at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and the Ratner Center for the Study of Conservative Judaism; and Bob Sink, Chief Archivist and Project Director at the Center for Jewish History. The program was coordinated by Rachail Kurtz of Yeshiva of Flatbush Library and Ina Rubin Cohen, of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Both Shuli Berger and Ellen Kastel highlighted a few of the “treasures” that can be found in each of their archive collections. Here are some of the more interesting examples:

- Letter signed by George Gershwin on his performance at the first annual Yeshiva University Women’s Organization Concert in 1930;
- Audio recording of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., speaking on behalf of Soviet Jewry;
- Postcard from Solomon Schechter to his son, written during his famous expedition to the Cairo Genizah;
- Cyrus Adler’s Freemason regalia.

What is the most fun about working with an archive? “You never know what you’re going to come up with,” remarked Shuli and Ellen.

In The Basics of Starting an Archive to Preserve Your Institution’s History, Bob Sink explained how working with archives requires that “you unlearn basic librarianship.” However, archiving is quite exciting because “you get to play with good stuff.” The session covered the basic principles, including arrangement, description, and preservation.

Arrangement – the process of bringing together sets of records derived from a common source which have common characteristics and a common file structure – should be done according to provenance, original order, context, and permanence. Once items are arranged they need to be described. Description should cover four primary aspects: title, date, quantity (in linear feet of shelf space), and contents.

Finally, and most importantly, an archive needs to be preserved. This requires awareness of certain “plagues,” including acidic paper, environment (i.e. temperature, humidity, vermin, light, and pollution), disasters, and people. While it is important to protect the collection from all of these elements, it is not always financially practical to do so. The simplest and most inexpensive way to protect an archive, said Bob Sink, is to use acid-free paper and folders for collections.

While some of us may never have to get our hands dirty, so to speak, by discovering and restoring old or fragile materials, those who do can pride themselves on the craftsmanship which itself is a tremendous contribution to history. Yasher kochach to this year’s Reference Workshop, for a “true find” of a presentation.
"Your Tired, Your Poor, Your Huddled Masses . . ."
& Other Wonders of Jewish Americana
@Spring 2003 Conference
by Susan (Shaindy) Kurzmann, Reference &
Cataloging Resource Librarian, Ramapo College

We can't boast to being on the Mayflower, but Jews had
been a presence in America long before the ink on the
Declarations of Independence was dry.

The history of Jews in the new republic was the topic of
the Spring 2003 Conference. At Jewish Americana: Exploring
our Resources, held May 29, at the Jewish Theological
Seminary together with the Professional Development and
Continuing Education Committee of AJL, New York academic
and synagogue librarians joined with colleagues from
Connecticut, New Jersey, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. A
panel of three presented the background on library and
archival collections and acquainted the audience with a
treasure trove of material available through the Internet.

Roaming the Past

Lyn Slome, Director of the Library and Archives at the
American Jewish Historical Society, addressed Patterns of
Immigration, Social and Cultural Change and Collecting in
the Archives of the American Jewish Historical Society. Her
overview of the AJHS began with its founding in 1892 amid
an atmosphere of anti-Semitism in the United States,
coinciding with rising levels of immigration. At its inception,
the Society's mission was to promote patriotism. Its current
focus, as stated on its website: "to foster awareness and
appreciation of the American Jewish past and to serve as a
national scholarly resource for research through the
collection, preservation and dissemination of materials
relating to American Jewish History."

American Jewish History (originally titled American
Jewish Historical Quarterly), published by the Society, also
reflects this evolving focus. Debuting in 1893, the journal's
content was based on the Society's annual meetings.
Articles of contemporary historical interest were featured in
the early 1900s. Despite financial setbacks, the journal
continued to grow, and book reviews and scholarly articles
were introduced. Originally, the Society concentrated on pre-
Civil War materials and did not accept 20th century materials
until the 1930s. Similarly, although it took longer, American
Jewish History added articles on community history in the
1950s. The relationship between the United States and Israel
was examined in the late 1970s. Today, the quarterly issues
are often dedicated to a specific topic.

The American Jewish Historical Society's Industrial
Removal Office, which existed from 1901 until 1921, when
immigration was curtailed, endeavored to assimilate new
Jewish immigrants, many of whom had settled on the Lower
East Side of Manhattan, and to assist them to find
employment. In the process, many of these immigrants were
relocated far and wide across the country and found
themselves in such unlikely destinations as Sheboygan, WI;
Sioux City, IA; and Cripple Creek, CO. Records from the
Industrial Removal Office offer much information, not only
about the Jewish communities themselves, but also about
relations between Jews and non-Jews throughout the U.S.

Ms. Slome touched upon the holdings of the AJHS-
Archives, whose oldest document, dated 1590, is from the
(Cont'd on Pg. 9)

Up to Par

Guide to Everything
@Day School/High School Workshop
by Roz Friedman, Librarian, Ma'ayanot

A taste of the library. And the web. Who can ask for
anything more?

NYMA's Day School and High School Workshop, held
March 5, 2003, at the Joseph Kushner Academy, offered three
kinds of guides. The workshop, hosted by Leslie Monchar,
included a tour through the academy's magnificent library,
which services grades Pre-K through 12. Along the way she
stopped to explain some of the architectural decisions that
went into the design of her facility.

Rachel Glasser, Librarian at the Yavneh Academy in
Paramus, NJ, spoke about standards for accreditation by the
AJL. She stressed how this process helps to enhance the pro-
fessionalism of the Jewish library. Her talk led to discussion
of the self-study process some of us have undertaken when our
respective schools have been candidates for Middle States
accreditation. Certainly, for many of us, AJL accreditation is
an additional way to further our goal of peer recognition.

Joyce Levine, librarian at the New Shere Academy in
Great Neck, spoke about online sources. The exposure to both
electronic resources and library web sites is crucial for
today's information specialists. Joyce eagerly shared her
knowledge with those who are still computer-shy or ignorant
of the vast world of the cyber-library.

The workshop was well attended, with 22 attendees,
none of whom minded the traveling. Indeed, in addition to the
New York crowd, the conference attracted a number of our
Central New Jersey colleagues, who had never attended
previously. It just goes to show how an above-average
conference deserves "special credit."
Look What's Happening . . . .

UP TO GRADE

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY upgraded its YULIS catalog to the VTLS Virtua system. The new YULIS is a Unicode-based system, thus offering correct display of Hebrew characters and of letters with diacritic marks. YULIS is now Z39.50 version 3 compliant and supports broadcast searching and data transfer.

Grateful acknowledgment is extended to METRO, the Metropolitan New York Library Council, for partial support of the upgrade through its Z39.50 Grant under the auspices of the New York State Regional Bibliographic Databases Program.

Adds LIZA STABLER: "YULIS was already a huge help to countless small Judaica libraries and their librarians. We are deeply indebted to PEARL BERGER for sharing YU’s’ trove of Judaica knowledge with us. YU’s super cataloging will be even more helpful now that we are able to download the MARC records."

BEFORE 9/11

Late February 2003 marked the 10th anniversary of the first attack on the World Trade Center. Little did anyone know that it was only the beginning, and what the end would be.

Writing in early March on HaSafrai, ESTHER NUSSSBAUM remembers that event quite well:

"For AJL-NYMA, hosts of the 1993 convention in New York, it had additional impact. EDITH LUBETSKI and I, the co-chairs, and our wonderful committee were suddenly faced with having to find an alternative site for the convention. The original contract was with the Vista Hotel in a high-rise that was part of the World Trade Center complex.

"The first mailings were about to go out with all the hotel details. The Vista’s premises were badly damaged, but it was more than a week before the hotel managers confirmed that they would not be able to reopen for many, many months. It reopened over a year later with a different name and never did thrive.

"Edith and I and our committee were in a panic, and NAOMI STEINBERGER, our hotel arrangements chair, was unavailable due to [Tamar, her then eleven-year-old] daughter’s being ill (with pneumonia.) With much scrambling about, and with the support of the Mayor’s office, we were able to secure the NY Hilton at the same charge – their normal charge would have been unaffordable – and we went on to have a smashing success.

"AJL/NYMA were a phenomenal group. I couldn’t help thinking about and reliving those moments last week."

STERLING PRESENTATION

RACHEL GLASSER was a panel member at the AJL 2003 Convention in Toronto. Topic: Freshman Seminar II: More Information on the Fundamentals of Judaica Librarian, Part 4, Cataloging Principles. This session included an explanation of the MARC record and an overview of the different classification systems for a Judaica library (Library of Congress, Dewey, Weine, and Elazar. Participants had the opportunity to do some hands-on cataloging of actual books and figure out where they should be cataloged in their own library.

YASHER KOACH!

To ROBERTA SALTZMAN (left) for her Bibliographic Book Award, and EDITH LUBETSKI (center) for her Life Membership Award. Both awards were presented at the AJL National Convention 2003 in Toronto, by PEARL BERGER (right), AJL National President & fellow NYMA member.
NOW PLAYING


The JTS library is located at 3080 Broadway, at 122nd Street in New York City. Exhibition hours are Sunday from 12-7, Monday-Thursday, 9-6, and Friday 9-5.

WANTED: VOLUNTEERS

Got time? Ideas? AJL-NYMA is looking for participants for next year’s AJL convention, to be held in New York City. Already in the wings Those interested may contact ELANA GENSLER: egensler@aol.com; or LIZA STABLER: lizastabler@yahoo.com.

CONGRATULATIONS

To FRUMA MOHRER, new Chief Archivist at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. Formerly Acting Chief Archivist, Ms. Mohrer succeeds Mr. Marek Web, who has been appointed Senior Research Scholar at YIVO’s Max Weinreich Center for Advanced Jewish Studies.

To HALLIE (CHAYA SARA) CANTOR, on her latest editorial achievement: Illuminating Life’s Journey, published by Otsar Sifrei Lubavitch.

UPDATE

The e-mail address of INA RUBIN COHEN, Access Services Library at the Jewish Theological Seminary, has been changed: incohen@jtsa.edu.

MAZEL TOV!

To TZIVIA & ABRAHAM ATIK, on the birth of their granddaughters:
Galia Bruriah (May 10), parents Riva Atlas & David Atik;
Tal Kinneret (Aug. 8), parents Shira Atik & Michael Rothberg.

To EDITH & MEIR LUBETSKI on the wedding of their daughter Leah to Ari Feldman.

To SHAINDY (SUSAN) & MOISHE KURZMANN, on the birth of their granddaughter, Daniella Hinda. Parents Hillel & Michal Kurzmann.

To BRUCHIE (BETTY) & SAM WEINSTEIN, on the wedding of their daughter Cheva to Chaim Tessler, AND the birth of their granddaughter Nechama. Parents Eli & Soroh Leah Weinstein.

May they all schep nachas.

CONDOLENCES

To LINDA LERMAN, on the death of her mother Arlene Lerman (Rachel bat Avraham ve-Tziporrah), z”l, 28 Adar 1.

To SHULI BERGER, on the death of her father Bernard (Dov) Berger, 10 Sivan.

May they all be comforted among the mourners of Zion & Jerusalem.

CORRECTION

In the last issue of NYMA News the full names of the deceased parents of LEAH MOSKOWITZ were not printed: Solomon & Sarah Novogrodsky. NYMA News regrets the omission.

LIVE FROM TORONTO

Left to right: AVIVA ASTRINSKI, PEARL BERGER, RACHEL GLASSER, ESTHER NUSSBAUM, ROBERTA SALTMAN, CHAYA WIESMAN, LIZA STABLER, SHAINDY KURZMANN, LEAH ADLER, ELANA GENSLER, MARLENE SCHIFFMAN, STANLEY NECHAMIE, EDITH LUBETSKI, FAITH JONES.
The ABCs of KBM
Jewish & Civil Law @ Cataloging Workshop
by Daniel Lovins, Cataloger, Yale University

Librarians got plenty of legal aid and more at NYMA’s Spring 2003 Cataloging Workshop, It’s the Law! A “KBM” Production, held Monday, March 31st, at NYU School of Law.

Opening the program was George Prager, Head of Cataloging, NYU School of Law. In his topic ClassWebPlus: Methodology for Using LC’s Classification and Subject Headings, he urged catalogers who want to continue using LC’s electronic classification schedules to make the transition to LC’s Classification Web (“ClassWeb,” for short). The CD-ROM project “Classification Plus” is no longer supported, having received its final update in November 2002. While still considered a work in progress, ClassWeb is now the single most authoritative and up-to-date source for librarians to consult when making classification decisions.

Added Features
The new web version offers some significant advantages over the print and CD-ROM:
- Mounted on a Web server, ClassWeb is accessible from any web-enabled PC.
- There is no longer a need for special client software or manually-loaded patches and updates.
- It is now possible to submit broadcast searches across all schedules simultaneously.
- ClassWeb’s “enhanced browser” can automatically combine schedule numbers with table numbers to generate fully-realized classification numbers.
- Catalogers can add local notes to schedules, and have them saved to a site-specific “cookie.”
- Institutional subscribers can link their OPACs to ClassWeb, with hyperlinks between them to facilitate navigation. However, since the Library of Congress has not yet linked its own OPAC to the database, this feature may be of limited use.

For those interested in trying out the service, a free one-month trial subscription is available from the CDS website. Annual subscriptions are $375 for individual users with 20 hours per month online, $570 for up to four concurrent users with unlimited hours, and $700 for up to nine users, again with unlimited hours of access. A license agreement and order form are available on the CDS website. It is important to set up one’s site-specific preferences. These settings will determine the defaults for all users at that site, though individuals may override these settings on a session-by-session basis. To change settings, go to Main Menu and select “Preferences.” Specify, for example how many records you want to have displayed per page. Also, consider which of the available library OPACs should be hyperlinked to the ClassWeb databases. Under “Classification Browser Options,” select something other than “Standard Browser,” since this is too limited for cataloging purposes. You may find that the “Hierarchy browser” works best for searching through multiple levels of classification. Also, you are encouraged to select “Frames” rather than “non-Frames” for display of Web pages.

Legal Ease
Part Two, Law and Religion: LC’s New Schedule for Jewish Law, featured panelists Aaron Kuperman, Subject Cataloger, Law Team, Social Sciences Cataloging Division, Library Congress;
and Elisheva Schwartz, Cataloger, NYU School of Law. While the distinction between civil law and ritual law does not appear — indeed, does not make sense — in classical Jewish sources, it has, for the past hundred years or so, proven useful to scholars of the Western legal tradition. This division places halakhic literature into categories analogous to those used for Western Europe and other legal traditions, and therefore facilitates the study of comparative law, as well as source analysis for American law.

Jewish civil law, also known as Mishpat Ivri, has been defined by Menachem Elon as “those aspects of halakhah that a Western-trained lawyer says is law.” According to the knowledgeable and entertaining Aaron Kuperman, the term Mishpat Ivri has been established as an LC subject heading, and serves as a de facto caption for the KBM schedule. Moreover, since the Library of Congress is beholden mostly to the needs of American legislators, rather than those of rabbis and theologians, this admittedly artificial distinction is useful for LC’s mission.

The KBM class was designed to be as non-disruptive as possible. BM and KBM have been synchronized up to number 524, so that, for example, BM50, “Encyclopedia and Dictionaries on Judaism” (under “Judaism”), can be reclassified ABM50, “Encyclopedias and dictionaries on Judaism” (under Jewish law”), changing perhaps the local bibliographic context of the work, but not exactly the meaning of its classification. This harmonization of the schedules has been done for the sake of LC and institutions such as the NYU law library, for whom general Judaica holdings have but an ancillary role to their collections of Mishpat Ivri.

For law libraries, the ability to class all Judaic texts in KBM allows for a single integrated collection of Judaic law and its sources. For non-law libraries receiving LC copy, however, the advent of KBM may have the opposite (i.e. dis-integrating) effect. General Judaica will continue to be classed in BM while Mishpat Ivri items will now be classified in KBM. The result may be a physical separation of materials that have closely related subjects.

Le’Havdil!

From KBM524 onward, class numbers are largely arranged parallel with schedules from other religious traditions. For example, “KBM3000 Police and Public Safety [in Jewish law]” is parallel to “KBP3000 Police and Public safety [in Islamic law].” This kind of class number arrangement, along with the harmonization of captions, should prove useful to those studying comparative law.

It is important to distinguish Israeli law (KMK), from non-jurisdictional Jewish civil law (KBM), Jewish ritual law (BM [or KBM]), and Western-American law based on halakhah. The New York State get (religious divorce) laws, for example, should be classified somewhere in KFN6001-6199.5 (laws for the State of New York), not in BM or KMK. If a state law validates a halakhic law, then materials about it should be classified by that place. In other words, its identity as “law of the land” should take precedence over its other functions. In general, classification decisions for law books should follow the perspective and interest of an American or Western-oriented lawyer.

Code of Jewish Law

There are a few additional points to keep in mind:

The term “code” means different things in different contexts. In the Western legal tradition, a code is a list of all currently valid laws for a given jurisdiction. Since Jewish law theoretically never changes, it can be said to possess only one such code. The works of Jacob ben Asher and Joseph Caro, then, would be considered merely “digests” or “restatements” of a single unchanging code. It is also worth remembering that the law of Israel prior to 70 CE is considered “ancient Biblical” and therefore gets classified in KBM (rather than KMK). Also keep in mind that if a subject heading includes “— Biblical teaching” or “— Religious life,” the item in hand is probably not a candidate for KBM.

When applying Western legal categories to Jewish literature, the word “code” can become problematic. For the Roman legalist Justinian, and so too for the modern State of New York, “code” means the “law of the empire,” and as such can be completely rewritten if so desired. By contrast, the “code” in Jewish law, e.g. Joseph Caro’s Shulhan Arukh, is merely an unofficial restatement of a theoretically unchanging and unchangeable doctrine. Care must be taken, therefore, that classification language is used consistently across the different legal traditions.

“Choice” Matters

Outside of LC, libraries are making their own decisions about how much of KBM, if any, should be applied to their collection. Elisheva Schwartz mentioned the earlier policy at NYU of putting all Jewish law in either KMK (Laws of State of Israel) or BM (Judaism), rather than using the inchoate KBM numbers. This is now changing, as NYU and UC Berkeley law libraries have become something like “implementation sites” for the new class. Moreover, a certain portion of NYU’s materials on ancient Israeli law will be reclassified from BS (e.g. Law in the Bible) to KBM.

While some may find this alphabet soup hard to swallow, the change in cataloging laws reflect the growing complexity and interdependence of Jewish and secular worlds. A yasher koach to the workshop panel, for helping to bring catalogers up to date.
**Little Man, Big Mission** Founder of NYPL Jewish Division Honored

By Reva G. Kirschberg, Secretary of the Harry G. Friedman Society of Judaica Collectors

If it takes an extraordinary man to create an extraordinary institution, then the New York Public Library is not only honored but supported by the memory of many giants.

One of them was Abraham Solomon Freidus. On May 11, 2003, Michael Terry, Librarian of the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library, gave a passionate talk on Freidus, Librarian and Founder of the Jewish Book Division at the New York Public Library. Born in 1867 in Riga, the capital of Latvia and home to a rare assortment of contemporary Jewish scholars and authors, Freidus was a protégé at the yeshiva he attended as a small boy and the first Jew to attend university in Russia.

Freidus emigrated first to Paris, where he peddled candy and served as a reporter of Haaretz. He then traveled to Zikhrun Yaakov, a Palestinian agricultural settlement established by Lord Rothschild as a place to learn practical Zionism. He returned to Paris, then went to London, and finally arrived in New York, in 1889. Still bitterly poor, Freidus peddled keys for his locksmith brother on the East Side streets, then went to live at a Baron De Hirsch agricultural community in Woodbine, N.J.

He returned to New York and attended Pratt Institute, the first library school in New York, where he was professionally certified. In 1894, Freidus became librarian of the Calumet Society, an upper-class private club on Fifth Avenue, and then at the General Theological Seminary before being appointed chief librarian in 1897 of the Jewish Division at the newly merged Astor and Lenox Libraries, now known as the New York Public Library.

For the next 25 years, Terry claimed that New York was the center of Jewish studies, as Eastern Europe Jewry was preoccupied due to the chaos of pogroms, emigration, World War I, and the aliyah of young Jews to Palestine. Freidus, with his voluminous bibliographic knowledge, made the New York Public Library reading room the center of activity and study. It was a place where everyone met to talk, read, and write. Social life was continued at the nearby Astor Library.

Freidus was personally modest and well liked by everyone. His work was central to everything that was done there, including the production of the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, published in 1906. He was described as a peculiar-looking man, one who was always poor, yet who smiled all of the time and spoke little. He kept clippings in his pockets about every celebrity of the day, which he always had on hand whenever he met someone famous.

The area of the library — and Freidus’ domain — were guarded and promoted by Colonel John Shaw Billings, who after a brilliant military career became head of the New York Public Library. Freidus funneled contributions from Jacob Schiff into the Jewish Division, and kept it specifically as a library of Judaica and Hebraica, including Yiddish works, as opposed to a general Semitics and Near Eastern section. During this period, the library grew to over 20,000 books and papers. Freidus created the classification system for Judaica that was used universally by libraries until the modern period. It is still used in many areas.

After his death in 1923, very large amounts of material about Freidus were published in memorial books and various articles, including in 1929 *Studies in Jewish Bibliography*, dedicated to the memory of Abraham Solomon Freidus.

The Judaica world lost a great figure. But the New York Public Library lives on, the Jewish Division a testament to this leader’s achievement. A *yasber kochach* to Michael Terry, for honoring the memory of a professional giant.

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Reaching Out, Cont’d from Pg. 1

Internet databases and school library websites.

In both programs, the presenters cited particular examples of services they have directed through which the quality of education was enhanced and enriched. The panelists were gratified by the high interest exhibited by members of the audience and the questions and responses generated.

This outreach to educators was initiated by Pearl Berger, Dean of Libraries at Yeshiva University and President of AJL. Both panels were coordinated by Edith Lubetski, Head Librarian, Yeshiva University, Stern College for Women.
American editions of the Talmud, one of which was published complete 18-volume folio set was finally completed, and when many European printing houses were closed, Hebrew publishing began to burgeon in the United States. In 1918, the American eagle hovering overhead, ready to defend all Americans. The tobacco cards on display depicted boxers, several of whom were Jewish.

These mementos, together with the information garnered from the speakers’ presentation on resources real and virtual, were a fitting prelude to next year’s anticipated celebration of the 350th anniversary of Jewish settlement in America.

**Facts & Artifacts**

The second speaker, Ari Kinsberg, Research Associate of the Special Collections of the Library of the JTS, discussed Early Hebrew Culture in America in the Special Collections of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Mr. Kinsberg displayed slides of selected items from the Special Collections, including a 1650 poem by Rabbi Aboah of Brazil, extolling the defeat of the Portuguese by the Dutch; a 1761-1766 English translation of the prayer book by Isaac Pinto of New York; and items from the Cohen collection of Baltimore, whose family members were advocates of Jewish rights in Maryland in the 19th century.

In conjunction with the images displayed, Mr. Kinsberg interjected many fascinating details about Jewish life in America, from the surprisingly high level of Hebrew literacy in New York in the 1700s, to information about Jewish immigrants to the United States, among whom were Hebraists, Zionists, and even, unfortunately, common criminals. A minuscule traveler’s prayer-book, just 1½” in size, was reprinted in Europe in 1849 and 1860, specifically for those about to cross the Atlantic. Judah Vistinevsky, a native of Lithuania, mailed a letter written in Hebrew to President Grover Cleveland in the late 1800s. Joseph Rubin, of Dallas, wrote a 35-page letter, also in Hebrew, to “the President and Parliament.”

As Mr. Kinsberg pointed out, the state of Hebrew culture, which was fairly dismal in the 1800s, showed a marked improvement in the 20th century. During the First World War, when many European printing houses were closed, Hebrew publishing began to burgeon in the United States. In 1918, the Igud HaRabanim, Union of Rabbis of the United States and Canada, collaborated to publish a new edition of the Talmud. Although this project proved to be a financial failure, the complete 18-volume folio set was finally completed, and hundreds of copies were disseminated. The next two complete American editions of the Talmud, one of which was published by the United States Army, appeared during World War II.

**Web Research & Resources**

The viewing of these items from the JTS Special Collections primed AJL members to find out about research on the Web. In Jewish Americana: Hidden Treasures on the Internet, Diane Romm, author of The Jewish Guide to the Internet, distributed a list of online resources which were divided into three categories: general reference resources, online exhibits, and biographical information. In addition, Ms. Romm made several recommendations for libraries to obtain space online to post their own website.

The Jewish Virtual Library, previously known as the Jewish Student Online Research Center (www.us-israel.org/), offers a wide variety of searchable material, with links to numerous subject areas such as history, the Holocaust, Israel, and Judaic treasures at the Library of Congress. Statistical information, compiled from the 1971, 1990, and 2000-2001 National Jewish Population Surveys, is also available through the North American Jewish Data Bank (www.jewishdatabank.com/index.html), a joint project of the United Jewish Communities and City University of New York.

Second Avenue Online (www.yap.eat.nyu.edu), the Yiddish Theater Digital Archives, did not display properly on the day of our conference but is a wonderful site, full of information about the American Yiddish theater. The Fenster Museum of Jewish Art, in Tulsa, OK, with its emphasis on Jews in the West, offers various online exhibits. The Virtual Archive of the Jewish Women’s Archive (www.jwa.org/archive), has a user-friendly interface, and is, as stated on their website, “the centerpiece of JWA’s effort to recover and make accessible the rich history of Jewish women.”

**Of Special Interest**

Returning from cyberspace, AJL members were offered a tour of the JTS Special Collections by its librarian, Rabbi Jerry Schwarzbard. The oldest item is a 15th century astronomical table, a translation of which is purported to have been used by Christopher Columbus. Also shown were European books from the 16th and 17th centuries that mention America, and South Carolina paper currency from 1777 that had some Hebrew lettering, possibly used as an anti-counterfeiting measure. A letter from Hayim Solomon, one of the financiers of the American Revolution, requesting permission for Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Lazarus, the great-grandparents of Emma Lazarus, to come ashore, is a poignant reminder of the difficulties of Jewish immigration.

Some examples of ephemera depicting political and social life in the United States are greeting and tobacco cards. One greeting card portrayed Jews already on the shores of the United States, welcoming East European Jews, with the American eagle hovering overhead, ready to defend all Americans. The tobacco cards on display depicted boxers, several of whom were Jewish.

These mementos, together with the information garnered from the speakers’ presentation on resources real and virtual, were a fitting prelude to next year’s anticipated celebration of the 350th anniversary of Jewish settlement in America.