

**Lewis Allen**  
**President: 1811-1821**

When this head of the congregation arrived from London, the membership was only 26 members. At the outset of Allen's leadership, RS sent \$52 to help build a new synagogue in Richmond, VA. In 1811, Michael Levy, father of Uriah Levy, Commodore in the US Navy, became an RS member. That family once owned Monticello. In 1812, prayers were conducted according to German and Dutch rules, and RS became the first synagogue in PA to receive a corporate charter. Taverns played important roles in the life of the synagogue. Meetings were often held in Steerhead's Inn, and at Reid's tavern the leaders hired Jacob Lipman from Charleston, known as Rabbi Jakey, as their first paid Hazan at \$50 yearly. He resigned in 1833 and the subscription to RS shrunk to 8 people. At an earlier meeting in a tavern, a member was so intoxicated and noisy he was fined \$5 after refusing to be orderly.

Between 1813-15, a large portion of RS charter members returned to the well-established Mikveh Israel. They were unhappy with the lack of a regular reader and inadequate rented quarters, and Mikveh Israel had a beautiful building and a higher status in the community. At least five of the original ten Dutch signers of RS transferred to Mikveh Israel. Minutes were kept in English by 1815, and membership was a whopping \$4 yearly. In 1817, the property and lot of the Hebrew German Society was mysteriously and unlawfully sold. The congregation moved to Bread Street (Moravian) in 1820. A different Lewis Allen, namely the son of the RS president with the same name, became president of Mikveh Israel in 1834.

*Written by Jerry Silverman*