

Look to the rock from which you were hewn

הביטו אל-צור חצבתם



chicago jewish historical society

618 South Michigan • Chicago, Illinois 60605 • Telephone: (312) 663-5634

society news

VOLUME VI - NUMBER 2

JANUARY, 1983

OPEN MEETING

JANUARY 30, 1983

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

PROGRAM

EMIL G. HIRSCH: A RABBI FOR ALL PEOPLE

Learn more about a great Chicago rabbi who was a pioneer and organizer of Reform Judaism in America. An important and colorful figure in the civic and religious life of our community

presented by

HOWARD A. BERMAN

Rabbi, Chicago Sinai Congregation

ADMISSION FREE

PUBLIC IS WELCOME

BEDERMAN HALL

SPERTUS COLLEGE OF JUDAICA

618 South Michigan Avenue

1:30 PM - REFRESHMENTS

2:00 PM PROGRAM

President's MessageANNIVERSARIES AND ECONOMICS
DURING THE NEW YEAR

In this first issue of Society News in 1983, I will write of two things: first, a triple toast of congratulations and, second, a message of concern about the state of economics as it affects our Society.

During the new year it will be particularly fitting that our Society recognize three anniversaries which have particular significance for both the Chicago and the American Jewish communities. These are the foundings of the National Council of Jewish Women (1893), the Anti-Defamation League (1913), and the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation (1923).

Women's Group Outgrowth of 1893 Fair

Ninety years ago Chicago hosted the World Parliament of Religions which was held concurrent with the World's Columbian Exposition. Among the ancillary sessions to the World Parliament was the Jewish Women's Congress chaired by Chicagoan Hannah Greenebaum Solomon. Out of this first convening of Jewish women from all over the United States came the creation of the National Council of Jewish Women.

Twenty years later, in 1913, A Chicago lawyer from downstate Bloomington grew increasingly alarmed about anti-Semitism sweeping the United States. The spirit of hate that he saw was acerbated by the arrest and lynching of Leo Frank, a Jew, accused unjustly of murdering a gentile girl in Georgia. Sigmund Livingston began the Anti-Defamation League in his one-room law office. Soon the B'nai B'rith took the ADL under its wing.

Hillel Movement Began in Urbana

B'nai B'rith also stepped forth to assist the new Hillel movement that was born on the campus of the University of Illinois in Urbana. Chicagoans were among those who worked for the founding of the first Hillel in 1923.

The Society hopes to publish more detailed accounts of these histories in future issues.

When we honor NCJW, ADL and Hillel, we pay tribute not only to their founding

but, more importantly, to their innumerable contributions throughout their history and especially today. And if there is a real purpose to working in history and working for historical societies, it is to be an ever-strengthened bridge from the past to the future.

Facing the Financial Facts

The future of our Society depends upon our recognizing the effect of bad economic times on our efforts. Our Society has always prided itself in being able to maintain low membership dues. We have tried to keep our old friends on our mailing list, even though some of them have not paid dues for several years. We have never engaged in fund-raising nor in any "hard sell".

Unfortunately, we have growing expenses. Since last summer, for the first time, our Society has had to pay rent for our small office. We have found it necessary to engage some part-time office help. Postage and duplicating costs keep rising. Projects in oral history and archives, our programs and tours all have related expenses.

That is why, regretfully, we have had to increase dues for our least expensive membership categories. Seniors and students will now be asked to pay \$10 a year, and other individuals and families a minimum of \$15. The institutional and organization membership remains at \$25. We will also be revamping our mailing list. This detailed work is actually under way. Our mailings, including notices of meetings and issues of our Society News, will be sent only to those persons who are current in their membership.

If any of you readers, in months ahead, realize that you are no longer receiving our mailings, please check your membership status. Membership solicitations are sent out in January for the calendar year. New members who join after July 1 of any year will be carried through the following year (up to 18 months).

We look to you to help guarantee the future of our Society. Please continue to support our work. And please, invite your friends to become members of our society.

- Rachel B. Heimovics

SET NEW DUES SCHEDULE

RENEW NOW TO CONTINUE YOUR MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

A new dues schedule for membership in the Chicago Jewish Historical Society was adopted by the board of directors at its November meeting. Regular annual dues will be \$15 per year, with dues for senior citizens and students set at \$10. Sustaining members and institutions will pay at least \$25 yearly. Patrons and sponsors will pay at least \$50 and \$100 respectively.

This represents the first dues increase since the organization was founded in 1977. President Rachel Heimovics indicated that the board action was taken with great reluctance but was inevitable due to increases in rental for office space, printing, mailing, summer tour costs, and the society's policy of providing free refreshments at meetings. "Membership in the society still is one of the best bargains around when one considers the knowledge, the fellowship, and the pleasure provided for a very small sum," said Mrs. Heimovics.

Memberships expire as of December 31 except those of new members who joined since last July 1. An application for renewal of membership appears on page 11 of this issue. Mail it now and continue to be included in all CJHS activities.

OFFER AWARDS FOR JEWISH LABOR HISTORY PROJECTS

Two hundred dollars in awards are available for high school students who do projects related to Jewish labor in Chicago for the 1983 Chicago Metro History Fair. Offered by the Jewish Labor Committee, the awards will go to students who develop a project on the role of Jewish labor in a "turning point" in local history.

Assistance and consultation in the development of projects are available from the Jewish Labor Committee. Call either David Schacter at 642-3151 or Stanley Rosen at 996-2623. Applications must be submitted by February 21, 1983.

For further details concerning the

AN ADVANCE LOOK AT FUTURE CJHS PROGRAMS

CHAIRMAN BURT ROBIN RELEASES PLANS FOR MARCH, JUNE MEETINGS

Historical Society members can look forward to outstanding programs during the 1982-83 year as a result of the fine planning by Burt Robin, program chairman, and his associate, Mark Mandle. Set aside the dates now so that you won't miss any of them. The dates are January 30, March 20, and June 5.

On January 30, Howard A. Berman, rabbi of Chicago Sinai Congregation will speak on "Emil G. Hirsch: A Rabbi for All People." For more details, see page one.

Irving Cutler Appears in March

Irving Cutler will provide a visual presentation, "Chicago Jewry: From Maxwell Street to Highland Park," on March 20 at Emanuel Congregation. Dr. Cutler, professor at Chicago State University and author and authority on local Jewish history, is familiar to members as a founder of the society and conductor of some of its most popular summer tours.

The history of Jewish education in Chicago will be the topic of a panel discussion at the June 5 meeting at Spertus College. While membership on the panel is still not completely settled, Mr. Robin promises another informative and interesting program.

Two Earlier Programs

The above programs are in addition to the year's earlier two: the joint October meeting with the executive council of the American Jewish Historical Society (summarized on another page) and the December 19 Roundtable on Chicago Jewish History.

All members in good standing will of course continue to receive advance notices of meetings and will be able to read and preserve summaries of them as they appear in Society News.

I.J.S.

Chicago Metro History Fair and entry forms, write to the Fair at 60 East Walton Street, Chicago 60610 or consult high school history teachers.

CLASS REUNIONS AND ANNIVERSARIES OF INTEREST TO CJHS MEMBERS

The following reunions and anniversary celebrations may be of interest to CJHS members:

Hyde Park High School classes of January and June 1942 and 1943 and January 1944 will hold a joint reunion on April 30, 1983. Contact: Richard Levy at 467-9440 or 675-7492.

Marshall High School graduates of 1933 are being sought for a fifty-year reunion. Send your name, address, and phone number to Rose Rosenbaum Fisher at 3216 W. Victoria, Chicago 60659.

Tuley High School class of 1958 plans a twenty-fifth anniversary reunion in May, 1983. Contact: Tuley Reunion 58, 32 E. Northwest Highway, Des Plaines 60016.

Tuley High School classes of 1934, 1935 and 1936 are planning a reunion. Contacts: Maurice Lawrence at 342-4770 (days) or Esther Goldman at 328-0673 (evenings).

Roosevelt High School classes of June 1950 and February 1951 are planning for a thirty-fifth reunion. Contact: Jerry Wolf at 238-5560.

Bowen High School classes of 1933 are planning a fiftieth reunion. Contact: Sid Sorkin at 721-7870 (days).

Sachar Lodge of B'nai B'rith celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

Oak Park Temple B'nai Abraham Zion celebrated twenty-five years in Oak Park. The congregation, formerly Washington Boulevard Temple in Chicago, dates back to 1864.

Information concerning reunions and anniversaries should be sent to Dr. Irwin Suloway, Editor, 3500 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago 60657.

In a recent story about CJHS founder and leader Moselle Aison Schwartz being honored by the National College of Education, Society News inadvertently erred concerning her children. Mrs. Schwartz has two children, a son who is a neuro-physiologist, and a physician daughter who is married to a physician.

MORE ABOUT RABBI BERMAN, OUR JANUARY SPEAKER

Rabbi Howard A. Berman of Chicago Sinai Congregation, who will address the CJHS meeting on January 30, is a native of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, where he received his early religious and general education. After attaining his undergraduate degree in European History from the Universities of Cincinnati and London, England, he studied for the Rabbinate at the Leo Baeck College in London, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, where he received the degree of Master of Hebrew Letters and was ordained in 1974.

As a student, Rabbi Berman served Reform Congregations in London and Brussels, as well as in Baltimore; Petoskey, Michigan; and Rapid City, South Dakota.

After his ordination, Rabbi Berman was appointed Assistant Rabbi of Temple Emanu-El, New York City, where he served for five years. In 1979-81 he was Associate Rabbi of Temple Beth Israel, West Hartford, Connecticut. Rabbi Berman is currently a candidate for the doctorate at the University of Chicago.

His topic at the January 30 meeting will be "Emil G. Hirsch: A Rabbi for All People." The meeting will be held in Bederman Hall at Spertus College.

SOCIETY NEWS

Society News is published by the CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY at 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605. Telephone: (312)663-5634. Editorial inquiries should be directed to (312)348-2800.

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Editorial Board
Marion Cutler, Rachel Heimovics,
Mark Mandle, Burt Robin, Sidney Sorkin

WHITFIELD DISCUSSES JEWISH RADICALS AT OCTOBER MEETING

BRANDEIS PROFESSOR ADDRESSES SESSION WITH NATIONAL GROUP

By Mark Mandle

Dr. Stephen J. Whitfield, associate professor of American studies at Brandeis University, spoke at a joint meeting of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society and the American Jewish Historical Society Sunday, October 24, at the Park Synagogue in the Radisson Hotel. It was an historic occasion because it was the first time the historical societies had met together.

The American Jewish Historical Society had held an Executive Council meeting in Chicago on October 22. That weekend, speakers from the national group spoke at three area synagogues as well as at the CJHS meeting.

Confronting the Modern World

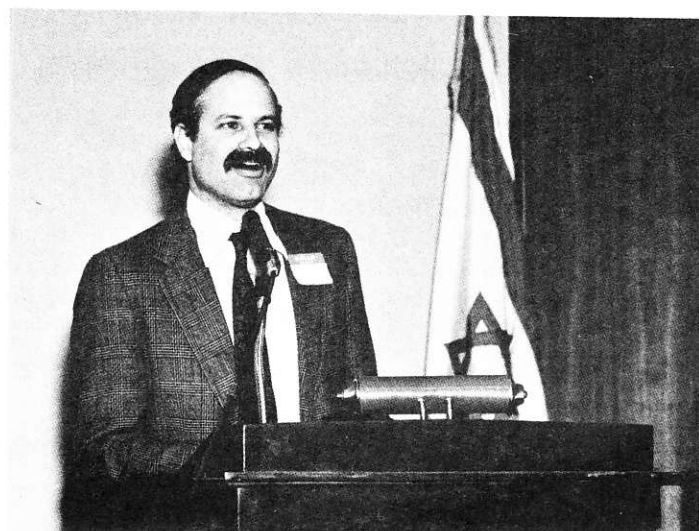
Dr. Whitfield spoke on "The Jewish Radical in American Society." He first talked about Jews like Moses Mendelsohn and people of Jewish descent like Karl Marx (perceived as Jewish) who confronted the modern world. He mentioned the choices they had to make between the particular and the universal.

Dr. Whitfield then moved to Jewish radicals in American history. He gave a polished historical survey of Jews in radical movements. Under Whitfield's skilful analysis, the people and the times came alive.

He spoke about Jews active in American socialism such as Daniel DeLeon and Abraham Cahan. Dr. Whitfield then mentioned anarchists like Emma Goldman, who is buried in Forest Home (formerly German Waldheim) Cemetery. He continued his talk by mentioning Jews who were active in the Communist Party, civil rights movement, and anti-Vietnam movement.

Theories of Jewish Radicalism

He made the point that although few Jews have been radicals, a disproportionate number of radicals have been Jews. He described three theories which try to explain the relationship of these Jews to radicalism.



Dr. Stephen J. Whitfield addressing the Society's October meeting on Jewish radicals in America.

(Photo by John G. Heimovics)

The first theory, postulated by Lawrence Fuchs, sees liberalism as naturally appealing to Jews. Jews feel an attraction to the left based on religious imperatives.

Another theory says Jews suffer from status deprivation. They compensate for that by seeking political change.

A third theory is called Toledot, meaning generations. It tries to find the seeds of radicalism within the Jewish family. Some scholars see continuity in the Jewish family while others see conflict.

Jewish Culture Persists

Although Jewish radicals frequently become alienated from Judaism, Dr. Whitfield feels the lesson of Jewish radicalism is that Jewish culture has outlasted political fashions. The price of experience is all that a man has.

Dr. Whitfield gave an exciting, well thought-out talk. It was a pleasure to listen to him, and the meeting was well attended.

Ruth Fein, president of the American Jewish Historical Society, gave some introductory remarks before Dr. Whitfield spoke. She said that local and national Jewish historical societies must collaborate to tell the story of the American Jewish community. She also gave several presents to the local society, including old photos picturing events in Chicago Jewish history. (See separate story.)

LINCOLN PARK WAS LOCATION OF EARLIEST JEWISH BURIAL GROUND IN CHICAGO AREA

ESTABLISHMENT IN 1847 PRE-DATES FIRST LOCAL CONGREGATION

By Joseph Levinson

One of the very curious oddities in the genesis of organized Jewish communal life in Chicago is the fact that an agency which ministered to the dead preceded the first institution which ministered to the living. Kehilath Anshe Mayriv congregation (K.A.M.), the first religious establishment, not only in Chicago but in all of Illinois, was founded in 1847. But two years before, in 1845, the Jewish Burial Ground Society was established by men who later became the nucleus of K.A.M. This chronological anomaly had its antecedents in Europe. In many parts of Europe, the only collective property Jews were allowed to own was a cemetery. Synagogues were mainly privately owned chapels, the cemeteries often antedating places of worship.

Just as biblical legend tells us that Abraham purchased for 400 shekels of silver a plot for a grave for his beloved Sarah, so did this Jewish Burial Ground Society buy from the young city of Chicago one acre of ground in what is now Lincoln Park for the sum of \$46.00. This was not only an act of reverence for the dead; it was an actual, as well as symbolic, planting of roots as a gesture of loyal commitment to Jewry's future in this area of the country.

Earlier Cemeteries at River Bank

Lincoln Park was then, and for a number of years thereafter, the locale for several cemeteries. Before 1845, and even before Chicago was incorporated as a city in 1833, burial sites were located along the banks of the Chicago River, under the site of what is now the Wrigley Building. This burial facility served Fort Dearborn and the people who inhabited the cabins around the area. However, the river bank sites were unhygienic and the cemetery was moved to the southern part of Lincoln Park in 1837, at which time practically all other cemeteries were located there.

Soon after its founding in 1847, K.A.M. absorbed the Jewish Burial Ground Society. The young Jewish community of Chicago, small and just beginning to achieve viability, was not large enough to support two organizations, some of whose functions overlapped.

Park Site Used Only Briefly

K.A.M. utilized its one-acre burial site in Lincoln Park from the time of its acquisition from the city of Chicago until 1856. Then, as stated by M. M. Gerstley, president of K.A.M., in a report to the congregation in 1891:

"It was in 1856 that the members came to the conclusion that the burying ground near the city cemetery would no longer answer its purpose. The sand was continually being blown in from the lake shore, so that the graves became completely covered, and in many instances relatives or friends could not find the spot where their beloved ones rested."

The congregation then acquired a four-acre tract at the corner of Green Bay Road (now North Clark Street) and Belmont Avenue, enclosed it and laid out family lots. The remains of those interred in Lincoln Park were brought to the new burial ground. But the repose for the dead was relatively short-lived. The second K.A.M. Cemetery was forced to yield to the urban growth of a burgeoning Chicago.

Second Move to Present Location

In 1888, Jacob Rosenberg, one of the founders of K.A.M., donated to the congregation twenty acres of ground at the corner of Narragansett Avenue and Addison Street. This became and has ever since been known as Mount Mayriv Cemetery.

The remains of those first interred in Lincoln Park, then in the cemetery at Clark and Belmont, were now reinterred in Mount Mayriv Cemetery. This, it must be added, has posed and continues to pose problems for the cemetery administration. The descendants of many of those who were interred so many years ago cannot be lo-

FIRST JEWISH CEMETERY

(Continued from Previous Page)

cated. The care and attendant expense, therefore, devolves upon the management. The old limestone monuments and markers, victims of time and weather and with inscriptions all but obliterated are being maintained by the cemetery administration for cosmetic reasons as well as for considerations of reverence.

Park Still Contains Two Graves

Although the burial site belonging to K.A.M. in Lincoln Park was occupied and operated for a relatively short period of time, it is pertinent and historically interesting to relate the rest of the story of the park's former status as burial grounds. An ordinance was enacted in 1859, prohibiting any further sale of cemetery lots. In 1865, an implementing ordinance forbade entirely any burials there.

In spite of these legislative enactments, and notwithstanding the removal of bodies buried there, two notable instances of successful resistance remain. One mausoleum at the west end of the park, with the name "Couch" inscribed, still remains. It is supposed to contain the body of Ira Couch, a pioneer Chicago hotelman. It is believed that his family, through court action, was able to resist the park's mandate to remove the mausoleum. Additionally, a huge rock bearing the name of David Kennison is still in the park, supposedly marking his burial site. He died in 1852 at the age of 115. He was the only living survivor of the Boston Tea Party. It is believed that his continued interment was permitted because of his historical importance.

Records Remain in K.A.M. Archives

Following the legislative enactments forbidding sales of sites and burials in Lincoln Park, legal steps had to be taken to revest titles to the many sites in the park commissioners. The Chicago Park District (successor to the Lincoln Park District), was kind enough to furnish to the writer documentation evidencing the first involvement of K.A.M. with the burial ground in the park and the later di-

IDENTIFICATION OF ORTHODOX RABBIS IN PHOTOGRAPH STILL INCONCLUSIVE

We are still unsure of some identifications for the photograph of four orthodox rabbis pictured in our last issue of Society News. Would you believe the problem is that each of two rabbis has been identified as being two or three different individuals?

There is general agreement concerning Rabbi Ezriel Epstein and Rabbi Samuel Schach, but we are attempting to identify definitively the two men appearing on the left in that picture. If you can help, get in touch with the editor. Look for a later report in our next issue.

The photograph, published on page eleven of October's Society News, pictures four rabbis at a Michigan summer resort. It seems to have been taken shortly before 1920.

vestiture of title.

The K.A.M. archival collection contains photocopies of the following documents: the original deed from the City of Chicago to K.A.M. for the one-acre tract, the minutes of the meeting of the K.A.M. Board of Directors dated November 5, 1882, ratifying the reconveyance to the Lincoln Park Commissioners and a deed dated November 9, 1882, effectuating this resolution.

There was also sent a detailed plat of Lincoln Park showing the various cemeteries located there, including that of K.A.M. Armed with the deeds and the plat, the writer some years ago visited the site to see what evidences, if any, remained of its original use. None were visible. In fact, the area is now occupied by a baseball diamond. Someone waggishly observed that, perhaps, the incongruity between a cemetery and a baseball diamond is not as great as might appear: the Supreme Umpire simply preceded current umpires in calling one out.

W O U L D Y O U L I K E T O

See Society News regularly?

Attend interesting meetings?

Know more about local Jewish history?

PAY YOUR DUES NOW!

See Page 11

MARIAMPOLER AID SOCIETY CELEBRATES SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AS MUTUAL AID AND CHARITY ORGANIZATION

LITHUANIAN VEREIN HAS COLORFUL AND AMUSING EARLY HISTORY

By Sidney Sorkin

On Sunday, September 12, 1982, the Mariampoler Aid Society celebrated its 75th anniversary at the Belmont Hotel with a 12:00 o'clock lunch. The history of the Mariampolers is deeply embedded in the lore and legend of Chicago's Jewish community. These Lithuanian Jews from the town of Mariampole had an aid society some time in the early part of 1870, before there was a Mariampole shul. The man with the straw hat who came to daven is a well known story of Chicago lore, and the history of Ohave Sholom Congregation is part of that story as well.

Men and hats, horses and men seem to be part of this organization's history. A Mariampoler went out to his barn one morning, only to find that his horse was dead. There are three parts to a team: a man, a horse, and a wagon. What is a peddler without his horse? The word soon spread, and Gadalia Wolf heard and called a meeting of Mariampoler landsleit on June 7, 1907. Some dozen men met at his house on Johnson Street in the Maxwell Street area, and out of that meeting came money for a horse for the peddler, and, more important, the formation of the present Mariampole Aid Society.

The peddler got his \$200, which under today's inflation would be about \$10,000. Some time after the peddler had received the money and was again earning a living, no money had been paid back to the society. Nisson Berkson made a visit to the lady of the family and made arrangements with her for the money to be paid back, and so it was in monthly installments.

Women Revitalize It in 1929

By 1929, most of the men who were members and founders of the M.A.S. were married and busy with the business of earning a livelihood and raising their families. The organization was about to disintegrate when Celia Rudnick, a born

Mariampoler, called a meeting and re-organized the M.A.S. Women were now full members, and Mrs. Rudnick was elected president. She was the first and only woman president of the M.A.S. She was subsequently elected vice-president many times, but president only once. It would seem that the ladies added the spark, the special vitality that the organization needed to continue.

World War II began officially in 1939, and the lines of communication to Lithuania were cut. In September of 1941 on the outskirts of the town the Germans and their Lithuanian allies put to death some 8000 Jews of Mariampole and the surrounding area. Old Mariampole was no more. The Russians in turn, upon recapturing the town, reorganized and rebuilt it and renamed it Kapsukas, after a Lithuanian communist party official.

Newsletter Plays Important Role

In November of 1944 a one-page newsletter with a very tentative HOW... DO... YOU...DO? became the voice of the M.A.S. That was issue number one, with a line of editors beginning with Albert Margowsky, then his nephew Harold Passman, and Harold's son David, now the editor, sending out its 365th edition. This is unique in the history of Chicago vereins.

Sixty-five people attended the 75th anniversary banquet, including two of Gadalia Wolf's daughters, as well as the daughter of Celia Rudnick. Sonia Kurs, an officer in the M.A.S. for the last forty-five years, was at the center of the head table, and is the center of the life and threads of contributions and correspondence. There were second- and third-generation M.A.S. children and fourth- and fifth-generation American-born Mariampolers.

Members Gather from Afar

Ten people sent in money for reservations as donations to help pay for the expenses of the banquet. When you say that they came from near and far, they did, for one lady lived in the hotel and another came from Seattle, Washington.

NER TAMID ABSORBS REMNANT OF B'NAI DAVID SHAARE ZEDEK

Although Congregation B'nai David Shaare Zedek, the successor to Humboldt Boulevard Temple, has closed, the former organization continues in merged form at Congregation Ner Tamid.

Sidney Rubin, CJHS member and careful reader of Society News, has informed us that Ner Tamid has absorbed former members of B'nai David Shaare Zedek and that that congregation was merged into Ner Tamid by formal action of both boards.

According to Rabbi Samuel Klein, Ner Tamid has remodeled a room in its building at 2754 West Rosemont into a B'nai David Shaare Zedek Memorial Room, and the memorial tablets of the Foster Avenue congregation have been preserved there.

MARIAMPOLER AID SOCIETY

(Continued from previous page)

Gary, Detroit, South Haven, South Chicago and all the points around metropolitan Chicago were represented. There were children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the founders. The party was a combination of nostalgia, entertainment, and a determination to continue with its good work.

The list of charitable work done by the organization is very long and honorable. To give one example: between 1945 and 1960 over 2,000 packages were sent to displaced persons camps in Europe as well as to survivors in other parts of Europe, in Israel, and in South America.

There were two other Mariampoler Aid Societies, one in New York and one in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Landsleit Verein Dwindle Away

At one time there were perhaps 600 landsleit organizations in Chicago. There are now less than two dozen. Nearly each week the death notices carry another name of a member of one of these organizations, and with each of them frequently goes the history of their organization. The Mariampolers have contributed to the Chicago Jewish Archives copies of almost all of their bulletins and two dozen annual banquet ad books as well as pictures and record books.



American Jewish Historical Society President Ruth Fein presenting CJHS founding president, Muriel Robin, with items of local historical interest for the archives.

(Photo by John G. Heimovics)

NATIONAL GROUP GIVES SOCIETY GIFT OF HISTORIC MEMORABILIA

At its joint meeting with the American Jewish Historical Society on October 24, the Chicago Jewish Historical Society was presented with several items pertaining to Jewish history by the national group.

They included a limited edition facsimile of George Washington's "Address to the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia, New York, Charleston and Richmond" as well as two prints of rare photographs relating to local Jewish history.

The Chicago photographs are of a sewing class at the Jewish Manual Training School (1892) and of the dedication of a tablet marking the 1851 site of the first Jewish house of worship (K.A.M. Congregation) in Illinois (1918). The tablet, originally on the wall of the old Post Office Building, is now on the Kluczynski Federal Building in the Loop.

Also presented to the CJHS were two volumes on Jewish history in other American cities, Mid America's Promise: A Profile of Kansas City Jewry and On Common Ground: The Boston Jewish Experience.

The presentation was made by the American Jewish Historical Society president, Ruth Fein of Boston, and was received by CJHS founding president Muriel Robin.

HOFFMAN ESTATES CONGREGATION BETH TIKVAH MARKS TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF GROWTH

Editor's Note: While many area congregations have reached or approach a century of service and some, unfortunately, have disappeared, it is encouraging to note that still others are just now approaching maturity as a second generation takes over. Two such congregations, Beth Tikvah and Solel, are currently celebrating twenty-five years of service. The rise of Beth Tikvah is chronicled below. The Solel Story will appear in another issue of Society News.

BARN, JOCKEY CLUB USED AS WORSHIP LOCATIONS

By Alice Rosenberg

Late in 1955, when Sam and Jack Hoffman built their first small houses in a development they named "Hoffman Estates" in northwest suburban Cook County Schaumburg Township, the township consisted of scarcely more than one thousand people, most of them ethnic German farmers. There were no incorporated communities in the township and almost no business buildings.

Among the young families who came to buy were Jews, mainly from the orthodox west side of Chicago. They tried taking their children to the synagogue in Elgin, but it wasn't exactly next door. So in the spring of 1957, thirteen families paid a young yeshiva student to come out "to the wilderness" and teach their 23 children. They even managed to hold a couple of services that spring.

Holiday Services Held in Barn

That fall they were joined by others from Hoffman Estates and other villages in the area for High Holiday services, and then for a gala Yom Kippur dance, both in the Hammerstein Barn, which the Homeowners Association was using as a community center. They conducted their own services and borrowed a Torah.

Services were continued every other Friday night throughout the year at Twinbrook School, hence the first name: Twinbrook Hebrew Congregation. Occasionally, they were conducted by guest rabbis. School was held on Sundays at Fairview School. A Sisterhood was formed in November of 1957.

Reform Union Offers Aid

When the Conservative movement was not interested in helping the congrega-



The current home of Congregation
Beth Tikvah in Hoffman Estates.
(Photo by Irving Cutler)

tion, an alliance was formed with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations through Rabbi Richard G. Hirsch, then area director. In the fall of 1958, again in the Barn, a student rabbi from Cincinnati, Joseph Karasick, conducted High Holiday services and came every other week to conduct services. Members officiated on the off weeks. The congregation was now Temple Beth Israel.

In the fall of 1959, High Holiday services were moved to the Jockey Club at the Arlington Park Race Track. Friday night services were at Twinbrook School with Rabbi Hirsch conducting the holidays and every other week. The congregation had now become Beth Tikvah Congregation. Religious school was held that year at Palatine High School.

Using the Jockey Club

And in August of 1960, Rabbi Hillel Gamoran became our first and only permanent rabbi. From then until we moved into our building for High Holidays of 1963, our wandering existence continued. For

CONGREGATION BETH TIKVAH

(Continued from previous page)

four years, High Holiday services were held at the Jockey Club, where it was either hot and full of horseflies or cold with no heat. School was moved to Elk Grove Village, first at Rupley School and then at Ridge School. Friday night services were held at Twinbrook School in Hoffman Estates (with a few of them at the Blackhawk School in that village).

With the advent of the Rabbi, an office was rented in Arlington Heights; and the temple acquired a secretary and a permanent address and phone number. Rabbi Gamoran instituted a program of teacher certification by the Board of Jewish Education. Our teachers traveled to downtown and northside Chicago for classes until the congregation brought teacher-training classes out to us in the fall of 1962. This program is still in existence, and many of our member/teachers have received certification from the Board.

Own Building At Last

In March of 1962 planning for a congregational building began in earnest; and, after a fund drive, purchase of land in Hoffman Estates, and groundbreaking, the sanctuary was sufficiently complete to house High Holiday services in 1963 with the dedication following in November. Ten years later an addition was completed.

In its first twenty-five years Beth Tikvah has had several distinctions. Among them are establishing a branch of the High School of Jewish studies, election of a woman president, and--unusual for a Reform congregation--two-day services on Rosh Hashanah.

The congregation now consists of just over 350 families from 31 different villages and cities. What started out as a homogeneous group of couples with young children is now a community of all ages--couples, singles, single-parent families, mixed marriages. Some grandchildren of members are entering the school, and new young couples bring new energy and excitement to the congregation.

Beth Tikvah Congregation is currently in the midst of a five-month celebra-

YES: I WANT TO CONTINUE TO

- Be informed of CJHS meetings
- Learn more about Chicago Jewish History
- Receive issues of Society News
- Enjoy local summer tours at reduced rates

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for my 1983 dues. (\$15.00 regular; \$10.00 senior citizen or student; \$25.00 institutional or sustaining; \$50.00 patron; \$100.00 sponsor) Dues are tax-deductible.

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Chicago Jewish Historical Society
618 S. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60605

SOCIETY SPONSORS SECOND ROUNDTABLE ON LOCAL JEWISH HISTORY

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society held its Second Roundtable on Chicago Jewish History from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday, December 19.

In the morning, there were simultaneous sessions, each conducted as a roundtable discussion. Morning sessions dealt with photographing the Chicago Jewish community and oral histories. At noon, there was a buffet lunch followed by the afternoon presentations. Each participant had a chance to present and discuss his or her own area of interest and exploration in the afternoon session.

A report on the Roundtable will appear in a future edition of Society News.

tion of its anniversary under the leadership of its president, Michael Firsell, and anniversary co-chairmen, Alice and Elliott Rosenberg.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION;

JOINING THE SOCIETY

Membership in the Chicago Jewish Historical Society is open to all interested persons and organizations. The membership year is from January to December; however, non-members may join at any time. Information concerning dues appears in the next column.

Membership in the Society includes a subscription to Society News, discounts on other Society publications and at the Spertus Museum Store, information about Society meetings and other activities, and the opportunity to learn and inform others concerning Chicago Jewish history and its preservation.

Committees currently active and seeking members include Oral History, Archives, Ex-

hibits, and the Speakers Bureau. Anticipated are a photography committee and an audio-visual committee. Requests for additional information and membership inquiries may be addressed to our office (Phone 663-5634). We welcome your membership and active participation.

Annual Dues Categories

Regular Membership	\$15.00
Senior Citizens & Students	10.00
Sustaining Membership	25.00
Patron Membership	50.00
Sponsoring Membership . . at least	100.00
Synagogue & Organization	
Membership at least	25.00

Make checks payable to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society and mail to our office at 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605.

Look to the rock from which you were hewn
הביטו אל-צור חצבתם



chicago jewish historical society

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