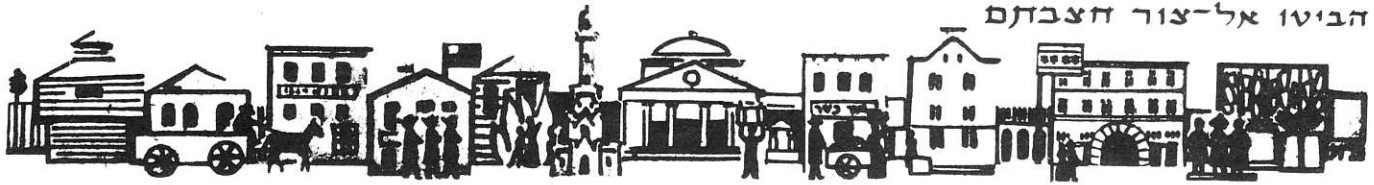


Look to the rock from which you were hewn  
הביטו אל-צור חצבתם



# chicago jewish historical society

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

## society news

VOLUME V - NUMBER 3

JUNE, 1982

### NEW CHJS OFFICERS ELECTED AT MAY BOARD MEETING

RACHEL HEIMOVICS SUCCEEDS  
MURIEL ROBIN AS SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Rachel Heimovics was elected president of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society by its board of directors at its monthly meeting in May. She succeeds the current president, Muriel Robin.

Other officers newly elected for the 1982-83 year include Doris Minsky, vice president; Ruth Brandzel, recording secretary; and Norman Schwartz, treasurer. All are longtime leaders in the organization.

#### Board Also Chosen

Elected at the same time to the CJHS

(continued on page eleven)



Rachel Heimovics

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT

It is a great honor to be able to serve the Chicago Jewish Historical Society as its third president. I will seek to continue the course that my dedicated predecessors began. Thanks are due both to Muriel Robin and to Dr. Adele Hast for all their efforts during their presidencies in behalf of the Society and for the cause of local Jewish history. Their leadership in providing quality programming, directing the collection of archives and oral histories, mounting exhibits, and coordinating all the other activities of the Society serves as both inspiration and challenge.

For the future, I look to a growing membership for the Society and to a greater involvement in our purposes by everyone who joins us. I envision the Society working hand-in-hand with many other organizations to preserve historic records, to celebrate special anniversaries, to document the personalities and events that highlight the story of the Chicago Jewish Community.

I especially look forward to working with our board of directors, a talented and energetic group of men and women. Together we will be able to build upon the past for an even better future.

Rachel B. Heimovics



Retiring President Robin

## CHAPLAIN-RABBI LIFSHUTZ CAPTIVATES HIS AUDIENCE

At the March 14 meeting of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society Rabbi Oscar Lifshutz, a retired Army chaplain, wove a spell that captured his audience. Reminiscing rather than lecturing, he touched upon such topics as growing up on the Jewish West Side, studying for the Orthodox rabbinate while teaching in Reform synagogues, working among soldiers both Jewish and non-Jewish and taking care of refugees from the concentration camps in post-World War II occupied Europe.

There was something for everyone, some of it humorous, much of it moving, and most of it optimistic. Throughout the presentation Rabbi Lifshutz came through as a gentle, concerned and attractive personality. It wasn't the sort of thing you carried away only in your head but also in your heart, and, as one member said upon leaving, "I could listen to him all day."

Rabbi Lifshutz, a lieutenant colonel (retired) and member of the Chaplaincy Committee of the Jewish Welfare Board, is rabbi of Agudas Achim North Shore Congregation. His presentation was titled "Adventures of a Soldier-Rabbi," and he was introduced by Charles B. Bernstein, CJHS vice president in charge of programs.

I.J.S.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR RETIRING PRESIDENT

Our Chicago Jewish Historical Society has completed its first five years, and it is with a feeling of accomplishment but also frustration that I write this, my final message for the Society News.

We have made a beginning in the study and preservation of Chicago Jewish history with the founding of our organization. Our membership has grown to several hundred people, and our programs have been extremely well received by the Jewish community. The members of our Board of Directors have made many valuable contributions, both individually and as a board, to promote our goals. A great many people have served on our board during these years, and because of their dedication and diligence we have created a new climate of interest in our heritage.

We have collected memorabilia for the Chicago Jewish Archives, presented exhibits, recorded the oral history of many Chicago Jews, conducted many bus tours of Jewish Chicago, and encouraged many people to become interested in the fascinating study of our Chicago Jewish heritage. All of this is just a beginning--the frustration comes in thinking of the ideas and plans not yet accomplished.

Our new president, Rachel Heimovics, is dedicated to the ideas and ideals set forth in our original Statement of Purpose. Her background as a Jewish historian, long-time board member of the American Jewish Historical Society, charter board member of the CJHS, and author all assure the Society of a bright future. I am very delighted to be presenting the gavel to her, as I was when presenting it to Adele Hast (President 1980-81), and pledge my cooperation and continued support to the Society, to Rachel, and to the new board.

It is with great pleasure that I express my appreciation to the many board members with whom I have worked so closely during these five years, to Spertus College for its cooperation, and to our membership which has responded so warmly to the ideas which we have presented. Thank you for the privilege of studying and working with all of you.

Shalom,  
Muriel Robin

## FIRST SUMMER TOUR SET FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 27

Again this summer the Chicago Jewish Historical Society will be sponsoring local tours of Jewish interest, according to Tour Chairman Leah Axelrod. These afternoon tours will be on air-conditioned coaches and will be directed by experts in various aspects of local history.

The first tour, to be held Sunday, June 27, will be Chicago Jewish Roots. A sentimental tour to Maxwell Street, Lawn-dale, Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Albany Park and West Rogers Park, the outing will include stops at places of Jewish historical significance. The leader will again be Dr. Irving Cutler. This tour, a sell-out last season, is being repeated by popular demand.

Pick-up will be at the Horwich Center, 3303 West Touhy Avenue, at 12:30 P.M., with a return to the Center at 4:30 P.M. Reservations, if space is still available, may be made by calling Mrs. Axelrod (432-7003) or the CJHS office at 663-5634. The cost is \$6.00 for CJHS members and \$9.00 for non-members. Non-members who join the Society before the tour (minimum dues \$10.00; \$5.00 for senior citizens) receive the members' rate.

Information about Tour Number 2, set for Sunday, July 25, will reach members shortly, and a third tour is in the planning stage. Renew your membership if it is over a year old to be certain to receive other tour announcements.

# 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.

President . . . . . Muriel Robin  
Editor . . . . . Irwin J. Suloway

### Editorial Board

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

## A CLOSE LOOK AT THE SOCIETY'S NEW PRESIDENT

Unlike many CJHS members, the Society's new president, Rachel Heimovics, is not a native of the Chicago area. However, her roots in Chicago have grown deeply in the more than twenty years she has lived here, and prior to that she attended a local university.

Born in Milwaukee and reared in a rabbinical household, Rachel Baron Heimovics is a graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern and worked in New York City for the Columbia Broadcasting System before coming to Chicago in 1958. Since then she has been prominent as an historian, an author, a lecturer and a tour director.

She is a founder of the CJHS and serves on the Executive Council of the American Jewish historical Society. Her studies in local Jewish history have resulted in the recent publication of The Chicago Jewish Source Book as well as in the preparation of several exhibits and audio-visual presentations on the subject.

Her lecture and slide presentation, The History of Chicago Jewry, has been presented to dozens of groups, religious and secular, Jewish and non-Jewish, making her a familiar and respected figure in community affairs. She is a former Senior Editor of the Field Educational Corporation and a contributor to many magazines.

Always a board member and active leader in the Society, Ms. Heimovics has most recently had the responsibilities of publicity and liaison with the American Jewish Historical Society. She is married to John G. Heimovics, a patent attorney, and has three children, Joseph, George and Nan. She lives in Highland Park.

I.J.S.

## TYPEWRITER, ANYBODY?

The CJHS office badly needs a working IBM Selectric typewriter to expedite its work. If you or anyone you know might be willing to donate such a machine (tax-deductible) or sell one to us at a price we can afford, please get in touch with the office (663-5634) or with Rachel Heimovics at 831-2548.

## "THE RUSSISHE SHUL" LIVES ON THROUGH MERGER

FROM WEST SIDE TO SOUTH SIDE

TO WEST ROGERS PARK IN 107 YEARS

One of Chicago's oldest and best known Orthodox congregations, Congregation Anshe Kanesses Israel, familiarly known throughout its history as "The Russishe Shul," exists today in merged form as part of Congregation Adas Yeschurun-Anshe Kanesses Israel.

"The Russishe Shul," noted for the size of its congregation, its leadership in Judaism here and elsewhere, and the long tenure of a justly famous rabbi, continues its 107-year history in a newly remodeled sanctuary at 2949 West Touhy Avenue. The recent years were times of trial after a glorious period in the Douglas Park area.

Anshe Kanesses Israel had its beginning in the desire of a group of landsleit to band together in a spiritual unit, for mutual comfort and common place of worship.

In the fall of 1875, Levy Edelstein, a pious young immigrant, began to organize a house of worship in the new and growing West Side settlement bounded by Canal, Halsted, Fourteenth and Polk Streets. He approached Abraham Bernstein, who had a store on Canal Street, and interested him; Bernstein in turn enlisted his neighbors. At first, services were held only on Shabbat, but the need for a place to pray on a daily basis grew, and efforts were made to have a daily minyan. Bernstein set aside a room above his store on South Canal Street in which services were held regularly.

### Founders Came from Russia

The Congregation soon became popularly known as "the Russishe Shul" owing to the fact that most of its members and worshippers hailed from Russia.

They continued in that room for five years until attendance was too great for it. They sought a larger location off a main street, where the men would not be subject to harassment by hoodlums. A committee was appointed, and the northeast corner of Clinton and Judd Streets was selected as the future site of the congregation. At that time there was only \$100 in the treasury. Bernstein, the congregation's president, volun-

teered to solicit funds and succeeded in raising \$2,000.

Meanwhile, Max Swartz, an influential resident of the area, joined the congregation and secured a loan of \$3,000, and a temporary frame building was erected on the site. This served until 1884 when the frame building was demolished and a beautiful and imposing synagogue was erected. It was dedicated by Kalman Kleinowitz, a well known chazan, who was brought from Schilel, Russia, for the occasion.

The congregation continued to prosper and grow, but the shifting of the Jewish population further west made it necessary to seek a new location. In July, 1912, the property at 3411-19 Douglas Boulevard was purchased by the Congregation. On this site, under the leadership of Moses Salk, one of the most beautiful synagogues in Chicago was erected and dedicated on Rosh Hoshanna, 1913. Its 3,500 seats afforded it the largest seating capacity of all synagogues in Chicago.

The four-story building with two handsomely carved lions on its facade, its high arched roof and its fine architectural details soon became a landmark on the Jewish West Side. At this time the synagogue possessed thirty-five Torah scrolls.

### Rabbi Epstein Arrives

Rabbi Ephriam Epstein had arrived in 1911 to assume the rabbinate and, under his leadership, the congregation became one of the most active and influential in the Jewish community. He was a most energetic worker for the preservation of Torah Judaism in his synagogue, in the city and also in Europe and Israel.

Against overwhelming odds, he battled for stringent ideals in Jewish education and public Jewish institutions. He participated in the maintenance and development of Talmud Torahs, and unceasingly worked for the establishment of yeshivot in Chicago, Europe and Jerusalem. He was personally responsible for seeing to it that several of the great European yeshivot did not close during the difficult period of World War I, and he traveled to Europe in 1920, 1945 and again in 1946 to help a poor and despondent Jewry.

His activity in his own community was very great. He was a founder of the Federated Orthodox Charities and the local Miz-rachi movement. He was the father and pa-

tron of the Vaad Hayeshivos. Rabbi Epstein was also a founder and the prime mover of the Vaad Harabonim, the Beth Din which sat on Mondays and Thursdays to judge matters of personal and business dispute.

When campaigns or fund-raising of any kind took place in Chicago, Anshe Kanesses Israel with its membership of 450 families was at the forefront. As a notable case in point, the Beis Hamedrash L'Torah found its inception in this congregation under the leadership of Rabbi Epstein.

#### Establishes a School for Girls

The congregation maintained a girls' school with a daily attendance of 200, and in 1918 joined with Congregation Shaare Torah in establishing the Kanesses Israel Shaare Torah Hebrew School at 3242-3244 Grenshaw Street, where a three-story building was erected at a cost of \$75,000. For a long period the school had an average daily attendance of over 600 students.

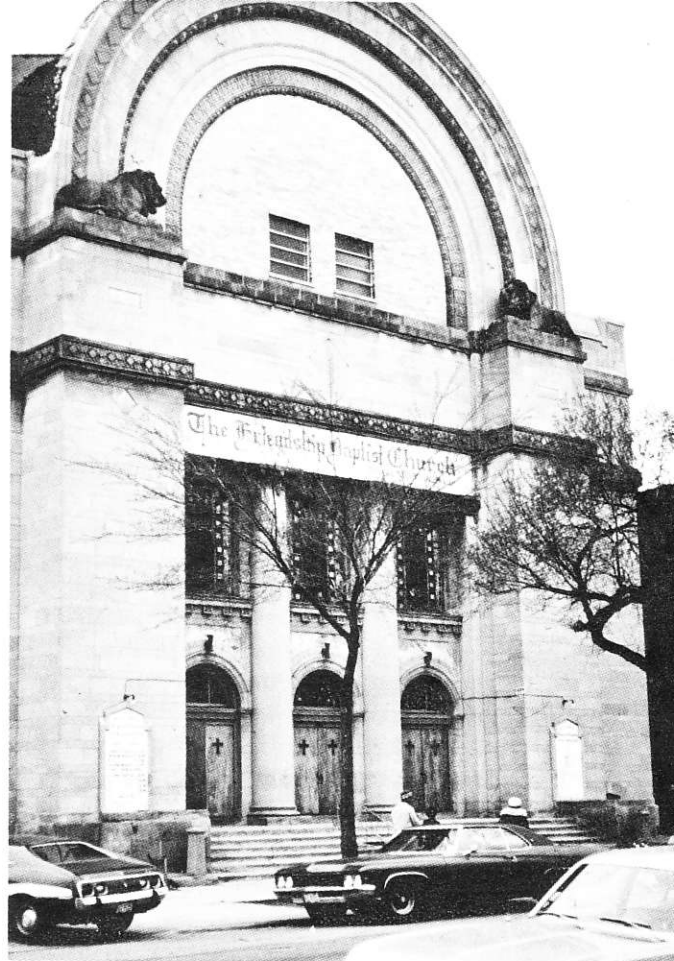
At this time several subsidiary groups were organized, among them the Chevra Mikro, Chevra Gemora, Gemiloth Chasodim, and Chevra Mishnayos.

In the 1920's Mr. William Lavin became associated with the synagogue, and at this time the synagogue entered its golden era of leadership. Mr. Lavin eventually became chairman of the board of trustees and was instrumental in keeping the synagogue open and functioning in the difficult period following World War II when the Lawndale area began to change.

#### Neighborhood Change Requires Move

After the synagogue closed its doors on Douglas Boulevard in 1955, the Lavin family guided its merger with Torah Synagogue located at 75th Street and Yates Avenue in South Shore. There it was to function for over twenty years under the leadership of Rabbi Moshe Litoff. At this location the congregation became very involved in youth activities, sponsoring B'nai Akiva, N.C.S.Y. youth clubs and, especially, serving as home for Orthodox Jewish university students on the nearby University of Chicago campus. When the synagogue was remodeled in the late 1950's, a mikvah was added to the building.

The synagogue closed its doors at this location with the moving of its last members in 1976.



The Douglas Boulevard building of "The Russishe Shul" as it looks today. At least the lions remain. (Photo by Irving Cutler)

#### Adas Yeschurun and the Merger

Congregation Adas Yeschurun was founded in 1970 by a group of observant families who moved into the area north of Touhy Avenue. The first minyan of eleven people met in one room of an office building. Gradually, the synagogue grew with the influx of additional observant Jews into the area. In 1977 Rabbi Herschel Berger was retained as rabbi of the growing congregation, which numbered among its membership some fifteen ordained rabbis. Today the congregation has a membership of 150 families who, with great effort, sacrifice and hard work, purchased and remodeled their previously rented quarters at a cost of \$500,000.

It was with a great sense of simcha and gratitude that the new synagogue was dedicated on Rosh Hashanna of 1981--sixty-eight years to the day after the dedication of "the Russishe Shul" on Douglas Boulevard.

NOTE: This article was adapted from a manuscript written by Rabbi Herschel Berger, spiritual leader of the combined Congregation Adas Yeschurun-Anshe Kanesses Israel.

## THE AM ECHOD STORY: HOW FACTS GET LOST--AND FOUND AGAIN, THANKS TO CONTRIBUTIONS MADE TO OUR JEWISH ARCHIVES

Editor's Note: Elsie Orlinsky, our indefatigable archives chairman, who carefully receives, accessions and files items for the Chicago Jewish archives maintained at Spertus College by the Society, offers readers an actual case study of the misstatement of a relatively important historical fact. She then tells how, by chance, individuals active in the Society were able to set the record straight.

Her story and her list of "memorabilia" which too often get thrown away but really are basic to the future historians should encourage readers with such materials about Chicago Jewry to call her at 643-9666 so that they might get added to the archives instead of lost forever.

Memories preserve our past. But what happens when the people with those memories are gone? Will the events and places of importance to the local Jewish community become obliterated or distorted? Certainly--unless we can collect memorabilia to help document and reconstruct that past.

Many of the synagogues in Chicago have closed or merged with others. And in many cases there is either a void or misinformation about them.

For instance, in a published book about Chicago area synagogues, there is an inaccurate account of the demise of Congregation Am Echod. It states that Am Echod became part of Congregation Rodfei Zedek. That did not happen at all!

This could have been avoided had we had better documentation in our Archives, for use by historians.

### Members Provide Correct Information

Some former Am Echod members who are affiliated with the Chicago Jewish Historical Society have recently contributed many valuable, interesting legal documents and memorabilia to us which, among other things, clear up the misstatement referred to above.

Congregation Am Echod was a Conservative synagogue first housed in a store at 8010 Cottage Grove Ave. around 1928. It was unique because it was the only synagogue in the Chatham community. There were virtually no Jews in the area who did not participate in one or another of Am Echod's activities even though they may never have been members.

When a fortuitous opportunity presented itself, the congregants purchased a partially completed church building at 81st St. and Maryland Ave., which they eventually

completed.

The building was destroyed by fire in 1960. Because so many of the members had moved in so many different directions by then, it was decided not to rebuild or merge with any other synagogue and to distribute the assets instead to worthy Jewish institutions, local and national and international.

### What Actually Happened

Among the papers given to CJHS archives is a copy of a committee report of a meeting held January 17, 1961, which recommended "that the religious corporation known as Congregation Am Echod cease operation and liquidate the assets as to the will of the Congregation," and the recommendation for the distribution of those assets. We also have the "Final Distribution" statement with the original check stubs attached and acknowledgment letters and signed receipts from the receiving organizations.

### Am Echod in Israel

There is a letter from the Jewish National Fund dated July 4, 1962, describing perhaps the most satisfying result of the dispersed monies: a Congregation Am Echod would be built in Israel. "Revacha is the name of the settlement where the nahala of the Am Echod Congregation has been designated." The settlers of Revacha are from North Africa, Iran and Kurdistan.

And in that building hangs a large brass plaque containing the names of the Chicago Am Echod board members of 1961.

In the future, historians of the local scene need not perpetuate the misinformation earlier referred to. If they wish to know about Am Echod, the Archives now have many of the facts.

DO YOU HAVE ITEMS SUCH  
AS THESE? IF SO, WE NEED THEM!

This is a partial list of items, recently acquired by the Archives, which pertain to the late Congregation Am Echod. Items such as these--some of them documents, but others memorabilia of social activities--help the historian to reconstruct local Jewish life.

--A guarantee agreement between congregation members and one member who advanced \$25,000 to enable the congregation to complete its building program. (1948)

--A report of the Religious Committee which indicated that 35 Jewish boys from the nearby Norgan Park Military Academy were happy to receive religious and Hebrew instruction from the Rabbi rather than to attend otherwise required Christian religious instruction. (1945/6)

--Records and mementos of the extremely active Chatham Young Peoples Club, including tickets to a Yom Kippur Night dance at the Venetian Room of the Southmoor Hotel featuring the music of the then very young Nat "King" Cole band. Admission was fifty cents. These include newspaper clippings as well. (1935)

--An unidentified newspaper clipping headed "Arson Suspected in Temple Fire." (1960?)

--An agreement with the Chatham Bank extending the mortgage taken out in 1949 for another five years. The interest rate was 5 percent! (1935)

--A contract with the rabbi indicating a salary of \$4,000 per year. (1945)

--Sisterhood records including reports of activities of various years, invitations to affairs, dinner dances and the like.

--A very effective and affectionate caricature of long-term Rabbi Benjamin Teller drawn by Richard Frooman, today a professional artist but then a teenage son of congregants.

--Copy of a contract stipulating a base salary for the cantor of \$400.00 a month. (1959)

--Copies of bulletins and newsletters published by the congregation during various years.

You can help make facts available for other synagogues and Jewish institutions. Contribute your memorabilia!

CJHS EMPLOYS ITS FIRST  
PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANT

A historic milestone for your historical society: the hiring of Michal Finkelshtein to provide the society's first professional office assistance. On a part-time basis she will be handling correspondence, processing memberships, and attending to specific needs of the society board. Her most immediate priority will be to bring up-to-date the current backlog of new and renewed memberships.

Michal is no stranger to local Jewish history. She was the professional who catalogued the papers of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago that were placed in the Chicago Jewish Archives. More about Michal in a future issue.

NEW JEWISH MONTHLY  
APPEARS ON NEWSTANDS

By now many readers will have seen the first issues of Jewish Chicago, a monthly magazine which first appeared in April at newsstands and bookstores as well as in the supermarkets. A "slick" magazine with a good deal of color printing and an appeal for the general Jewish reader, the first issue featured, among others, articles on Senator Percy and Israel, the growing popularity of Sephardic culture and food and the difficulties facing foster children.

Especially interesting and complete is a full-color pull-out map of Jewish Chicago, which locates synagogues, schools, clubs, restaurants and other institutions throughout Chicagoland. On the pattern of Chicago magazine, which it resembles, Jewish Chicago also contains a monthly calendar of all sorts of events of interest to Jews in the area.

The magazine is edited by Joseph Aaron, 26, a trained journalist previously employed by the Lerner newspapers. The publisher is Avy Meyers, whose previous experience in publishing was with trade publications and the Lerner newspaper chain. Single copies are \$2.00; subscriptions are available at \$18.00 per year at 1335 Dodge, Evanston 60201.

## IN SEARCH OF . . . .

Board Member Sidney Sorkin conducts this inquiry service for persons seeking information about Jewish individuals or organizations from Chicago's past. When he cannot supply the information himself, he prints the information sought in Society News. Individuals with questions to ask can write him in care of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. Persons with information may send it directly to the addresses indicated.

Australian Seeks Husband's Chicago Relatives

Mrs. Beverly Davis, 3 Alma Road, Camberwell, Victoria 3124 Australia, wrote to Rachel Heimovics last October. She is seeking information about a relative who may have been a rabbi by the name of Rubenstein who would have come to Chicago before 1900. Mrs. Davis wrote:

"Chaya Blooma (surname unknown) married David Palitz and they lived in Vilkomir, Lithuania. They had three children. The daughter, Rose Dinah, married and came to Australia. The two sons (according to the family legend) changed their surnames to Cohen and Rubenstein, respectively, and went to live in America. This would have been in the 1890's when vast numbers of Russian immigrants came.

"Chaya Blooma then married Yehezkiel Plostok, still in Vilkomir, and had another three children. We don't know what happened to the first husband. Two of these children settled in Australia (one became my husband's only European grandparent) but the third changed his name to Simon and apparently went to New York and established a business, possibly called 'The Master Shirt Factory.' About 1920 he came on a visit to Sydney, Australia, to visit his brother and sister. The silver fob watch he gave this brother is now in my possession . . . .

"Getting back to the first family, I understand that either or both the sons became Rabbis. The most persistent story is that Rubenstein became a rabbi in Chicago.

"I would be so very grateful if you could give me any help unraveling this complicated mystery!"

Spokane Woman Searches For Grandfather's Grave

Dear Mr. Sorkin;

So much time has elapsed that you probably didn't think that you would hear from me again. In the meantime I have written innumerable letters and made calls and have come up with a little more to tell you. If you recall, my grandfather was Harry Phillip Friedman, born August 26, 1887 in Russia....I am the only living grandchild since my brother died three years ago.

I did find out that he joined the army in May 1918, because of a physical disability. My mother and my sister received a pension because of it, and of course also my grandfather.

. . .Mr. Hubert Adams from the Chicago Title and Trust has written to me twice and I talked to him a short time ago.... Also I had written to the Chicago Tribune and they forwarded my letter to the Jewish Federation of Chicago and Mr. Victor Sikevitz. He wrote to me and wanted to know the names of the cemeteries. But Mr. Adams told me that he knows Mr. Sikewitz and would get together with him and work on this. Small world! Wrote to Silverman and Weiss, and Barnett Joseph, and they are supposed to go through their cemetery maps when they have the time.

Harry Friedman married my grandmother, Mamie Gilstrap, on June 30, 1911, in Evanston, Illinois. I went down to the Cook County Records Office and got a copy of the marriage certificate when I was in Chicago last May.

The only way that I will ever find out where they buried him is if we can find a living relative. My mother thinks that a J.S. Friedman who lived at 421 Darrow, Evanston, was a relative and that they had at least one son. But they moved and I do not know where.

(Editor's note: Harry Phillip Friedman died on February 24, 1926, and was buried in Waldheim by Silverman and Weiss, in a section called Dorsche-Moische. Silverman and Weiss, however, cannot find any records showing the existence of a cemetery section by that name.)

Mrs. L. E. Picard,  
3827 W. Beacon,  
Spokane, WA 99208



## FIFTY TAKE PART IN ROUNDTABLE ON CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORY

SHARE RESEARCH ON CONGREGATIONS,  
GENEALOGY, BIOGRAPHY AND OTHER TOPICS

Fifty persons participated in the first Chicago Roundtable in Local Jewish History held Sunday, February 21, at the Spertus College of Judaica. The day-long program was sponsored by the Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

The Jewish Genealogy session was led by Mark Mandle and included a number of people who have been researching their family trees. There was an exchange of resources and information.

### Documenting Synagogue History

The Synagogue Documentation discussion, chaired by Leah Axelrod, included several persons who have been photographing and otherwise recording former and existing Chicago synagogues over a period of years. Among those participants were Carey Wintergreen, architect; Jerold Levin, general contractor; and Rachel Heimovics, CJHS board member.

Two simultaneous discussions--on Synagogue Documentation and Jewish Genealogy--were held in the morning. The combined afternoon program included separate presentations on a wide variety of topics.

Among afternoon participants were the following persons and their topics:

Marshall Krolick, Chicago Jews and the Civil War.

Peter Friedman, Chicago communal response to German Jewish immigration of the 1930's compared with Soviet Jewish immigration of the 1970's.

Roslyn Berlat, researching the history of the Hebrew Theological College.

Irin Eckstein, the life of Hannah G. Solomon.

Babette Inglehart, studies of Chicago (including Jewish) literary societies and Yiddish folksongs.

### Photographic Histories

Hilton Kaufman, a proposal by the Pho-



A session at the first Roundtable in Local Jewish History

tography Club to document the current community of West Rogers Park.

Sidney Sorkin, documentation and history of the Landsmanshaften Verein of Chicago.

Curtis Melnick, history of the Jews of the Englewood community area.

Irving Cutler, geographic patterns of Chicago Jewish history.

The Roundtable was organized by Mrs. Heimovics and Mark Mandle.

To all who attended, both participants and audience, the Chicago Jewish Historical Society sends a Thank You for making the day such a resounding success!

Rachel B. Heimovics

## LOCAL JEWISH PERIODICALS ARE VALUABLE HISTORICAL AIDS

At last year's final meeting, Charles B. Bernstein discussed, among other items on the Jewish literary scene, periodicals which are important resources for Chicago Jewish history. His remarks are reprinted here as an aid to the many persons interested in local Jewish history who were not present at that meeting. Bernstein is a vice-president of CJHS.

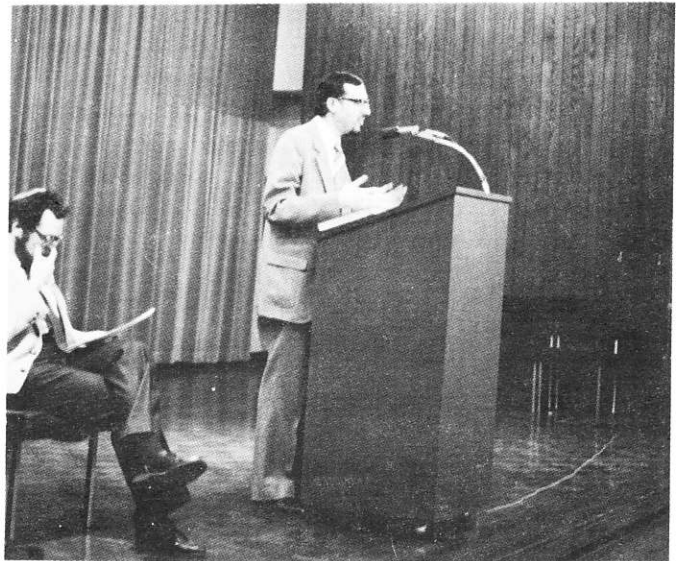
Finally, I want to mention briefly some periodicals which are valuable to the student of Chicago Jewish History. The first is The Reform Advocate, founded on February 20, 1981. To make it easy on myself, I will simply quote Gutstein: "Dr. Emil G. Hirsch became the editor of the paper from its inception...."

"The Reform Advocate, as the title indicates, was a weekly (somewhat in the format of the Sentinel) devoted to the interest of Reform Judaism. It also featured news and articles of general Jewish interest. Along with the editorials, special essays, sermons, and discourses, as well as articles on the 'science of Judaism' by Dr. Hirsch, there appeared in the columns of The Reform Advocate sermons, articles, literary essays, and discourses by other rabbis and authors." Later, Rabbi Tobias Schanfarber assisted Hirsch.

### Started by German Jews

The Advocate featured news of the Chicago Jewish community and of Jewish communities around America as well as in Europe. Most of the American news concentrated on the German-Jewish Reform community, although this was modified as the years moved on and the paper developed a broader readership. Occasionally, the Advocate published a lengthy supplement about the history of various American Jewish communities, two of which were published on Chicago Jewry. Another feature is the comprehensive social notes; and birth, marriage, and death notices, which can be most helpful.

When Dr. Hirsch died in 1923, the editor's pen was taken up by his son-in-law, Rabbi Gerson Baruch Levi, father of Attorney General Edward H. Levi. After Rabbi Levi's death in 1938, the Advocate wound down its operations and ceased publication



Charles Bernstein discusses local Jewish periodicals at CJHS meeting. (Photo by Ken Singer)

in the mid-1940's.

The Asher Library of the Spertus College of Judaica has a complete set of the Advocate on microfilm, and I believe the Chicago Public Library also has a set of the volumes.

### The "Sentinel" Began in 1911

The Sentinel, with which most of us are familiar, published its first edition on February 4, 1911, and has celebrated its 70th birthday. Its format is similar to the Advocate. The first editors were Rabbi Abram Hirshberg and Louis S. Berlin. Jack Fishbein became editor in 1943. The Sentinel appealed to the middle-class Eastern European Jews of Chicago and its literary and intellectual level was not as ambitious as the early Advocate. It also had extensive social notes and birth, marriage, and death notices; but these have dwindled considerably in the last 20 years. Spertus also has a collection of the Sentinel.

The Yiddish press was once an important factor in Chicago. The Jewish Daily Forward, founded in 1897, for many years published a Chicago edition. Unfortunately, back issues or microfilms of this publication are not to be found in Chicago to my knowledge.

The Daily Jewish Courier was founded in 1887 by M. Philip Ginzburg, grandfather of one of our members. It was published until 1947. Spertus has some microfilm but the set is not complete.

Dr. Irving Cutler addresses members at February Meeting. (Photo by Burt Robin)

## WOMAN HEADS AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The American Jewish Historical Society, at its recent 90th anniversary meeting in Kansas City, elected its first woman president, Ruth Fein of Boston, Massachusetts. Mrs. Fein, previously a vice-president, has a long record of service to Jewish and secular organizations both nationally and in Boston, Washington and Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She succeeds Saul Viener.

Among Chicago area persons attending the AJHS meetings were CJHS leaders Rachel Heimovics, Sidney Sorkin and Shirley Sorkin, all of whom reported that the meeting was stimulating, informative and inspirational. Membership is open to all interested individuals, and information about it can be obtained by addressing a postcard to the AJHS at 2 Thornton Rd., Waltham, MA 02154.

## ELECTION RESULTS

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Board of Directors were Leah Axelrod, Charles Bernstein, Sol Brandzel, Irving Cutler, Sara Jacobson, Mark Mandle, Elsie Orlinsky, Burt Robin, Moselle Schwartz, Shirley Sorkin, Sidney Sorkin and Irwin Suloway. The two past presidents, Muriel Robin and Adele Hast, are ex-officio members of the board.

Chosen to serve as an Advisory Board were Sally Goldsmith, Richard Marcus, Edward Mazur and Curtis Melnick.

## Committee Suggests Changes

The slate was placed in nomination by a nominating committee headed by Sol Brandzel, which had also recommended the consolidation of certain positions and a reduction in the size of the board of directors. These recommendations were approved and implemented in the slate for the 1982-83 year.

A biographical sketch of Mrs. Heimovics appears on page three of this issue of Society News.

## REVIEWERS PRAISE CUTLER'S ESSAY ON JEWS IN CHICAGO

Irving Cutler, CJHS board member familiar to many for the Jewish interest tours he conducts for the Society, has received several favorable reviews of the section he contributed to Ethnic Chicago, a volume published recently under the editorship of Peter d'A. Jones and Melvin Halli. The book, with chapters on various ethnic groups in Chicago, features an essay by Dr. Cutler titled "The Jews of Chicago: From Shtetl to Suburb."

Sydney J. Harris in his review of the book says that the story of the Jewish migration "makes fascinating reading." Another reviewer, Richard J. Shereikis of Sangamon State University, says that Cutler's essay "is outstanding for its vivid description of the Jewish dispersion from Maxwell Street" to other areas of the city, and he included several paragraphs describing life in Lawndale in his review appearing in Illinois Issues.

The book, published late last year, contains sections on Greek, German, Irish, Italian and Japanese minority groups in Chicago as well as Cutler's section on Jews. It is available at all downtown and many local bookstores as well as at the Spertus College bookstore.

Cutler is chairman of the department of geography at Chicago State University and has published several works on Chicago and urban geography, most recently a third edition of Chicago, Metropolis of the Mid-Continent.

