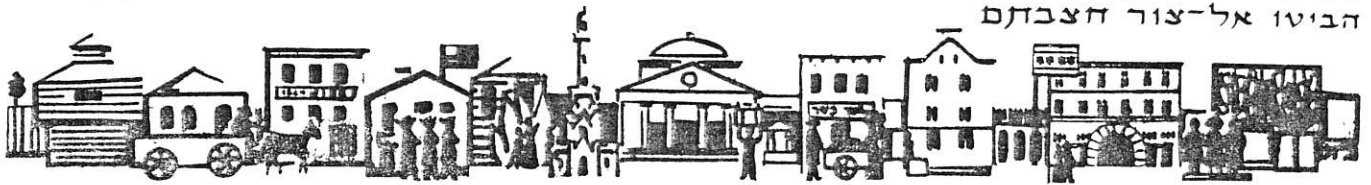


Look to the rock from which you were born
הביטו אל-צור הצבתם



chicago jewish historical society SOCIETY NEWS

VOL. II - NO. 3

NOVEMBER, 1978

Mark your calendars now for our winter
open meeting:

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 1979

Bederman Auditorium - Spertus College

618 S. Michigan Avenue

1:30 Social Hour - 2:30 Program

-Guest Speaker-

CANTOR ABRAHAM LUBIN

THE CANTOR-PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE
WITH HIGHLIGHTS ON CHICAGO CANTORS



Cantor Abraham Lubin was born in London, England in 1937. As a child his parents brought him to Palestine, the birthplace of his entire family. He is an Israeli of the fifth generation.

In Israel Cantor Lubin received his early Jewish and secular education and already in his young formative years, he had shown a talent and love for singing. As a child of eight he sang solo with the renowned Rivlin Choir in Jerusalem.

In 1951 Cantor Lubin returned to England with his parents where he continued his education at the Etz Chaim Yeshivah in London. He entered the Jews College Cantorial School and graduated to receive

(cont. on p. 5, col. 1)

Next Open Meeting: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19

Bederman Auditorium - Spertus College

618 S. Michigan Avenue

1:30 Social Hour - 2:30 Program

-Guest Speaker-

SAM LESNER

"ALAVEI HALAVAH"

MY MEMORIES OF THE YIDDISH THEATRE
IN CHICAGO

SAM LESNER is known to Chicagoland fans primarily as the award-winning movie and night life critic of the late Chicago Daily News. He was with the paper 49 years and 11 months, from April, 1928, until the paper's folding in March, 1978, just one month short of his golden anniversary with the paper.

What isn't well known, however, is that early in his journalism career Lesner was the "YIDDISH THEATRE CRITIC" of the Daily News, and therefore comes to our forum fully equipped to speak about the Yiddish Theatre in Chicago.

Sam Lesner joined the staff of the News as a library assistant while studying piano and voice ("for grand opera, no less!") at the Chicago and American Conservatories of Music. As he recalls, "A friend who had a friend on the Daily News staff spoke up for me because I needed money to pay for voice and piano lessons."

(cont. on p.5, col. 2)

UNIQUE ANNIVERSARY MARKED BY OLD CHICAGO FAMILY

by Charles B. Bernstein

Like most grandmothers, Society founding member JEANETTE S. FREILER is proud of her grandchildren and great-grandchild. However, in Mrs. Freiler's case, they indeed have a unique distinction--they are sixth and seventh generation Chicagoans.

Mrs. Freiler, a fourth generation Chicagoan, is the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Ernst Stein. Mrs. Stein, the former Ella Barbe, was a native Chicagoan who died in 1975 at the age of 98. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. Martin Barbe. Mr. Barbe's bar mitzvah in January, 1851, was the second such ceremony to occur in Chicago. His wife, the former Lizzie Theresa Spiegel, was born in Ohio, but settled in Chicago with her mother after her father was killed in action in the Civil War. She was among Chicago Jewry's leading social service workers of her time.

Lizzie's father, Col. Marcus M. Spiegel, was killed in battle on the Red River in Louisiana. He was a brother of Joseph Spiegel, whose early Chicago furniture store evolved into the Spiegel mail-order firm.

In 1853, Col. Spiegel married Caroline Frances Hamlin, of Lymanville, Ohio. He then brought her to Chicago, where on August 21, 1853, 125 years ago, she was converted to Judaism. The ceremony was the first of its kind ever held in Chicago. At that time, Chicago lacked the three rabbis necessary to compose the traditional collegium required to witness a conversion, so a learned layman, Samuel Straus, and a rabbi imported from Cleveland, Isidor Kalish, joined Rev. Ignatz Kunreuther, the unordained shohet and reader of KAM Temple, in officiating at the ceremony. Caroline was given the traditional name of Hannah, daughter of Abraham the Patriarch.

Mrs. Freiler has donated a fascinating collection of family memorabilia to the CHICAGO JEWISH ARCHIVES. The collection includes a booklet of memoirs written by Mrs. Martin Barbe, daguerrotypes of mem-

SOCIETY RUNS BUS TOUR FOR MONACEP

DR. IRVING CUTLER led a historic Jewish Chicago bus tour on Sunday afternoon, October 15 for MONACEP--the Oakton Community College Adult and Continuing Education Program. The tour was open to the public. About 35 enthusiastic persons, ranging in age from the 20's to the 60's, attended.

Dr. Cutler, a resident of Wilmette, is chairman of the Department of Geography at Chicago State University and a member of the Board of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

The tour began and ended at Niles North High School in Skokie. Included were the historic Jewish communities of the downtown area, Maxwell Street, Lawndale and parts of the northwest and north sides. There were several stops, including St. Basil's Greek Orthodox Church which was formerly the Ohave Anshe Sholom Shul (Mariampoler Shul) on the West Side. As usual when Dr. Cutler takes a tour to see this former landmark shul, refreshments were served to the tourists by members and staff of the church.

Another stop was at the cemetery in Niles that had once been defiled by the Nazis and which the JDL cleaned up and re-dedicated just a few weeks prior to the visit by the tour group.

The group also got off the bus for a visit to the Tels Yeshiva in Albany Park.

The Society conducts its own bus tours in the spring and summer, but this is the first tour it has run for another organization at their request. If you know of other groups that would like to have us conduct a historic Jewish Chicago bus tour for them, call our office with your request: 663-5634.

bers of the family, letters written by Col. Spiegel while on active duty, and the commission of Brigade Major awarded to Colonel Spiegel by Ohio Governor Salmon F. Chase in 1859.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SHALOM,

The past few months have brought many new members to our Society and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome them all. Also, to wish both old and new members L'shana Tovah.

Our volunteer staff has been sending membership cards to all current members, as well as dues notices to those who have not yet renewed their membership for 1978. But, we are volunteers - we are busy - and we belong to the fastest growing Jewish Historical Society in the country. If you have not been properly billed for your dues renewal, or have not yet received an acknowledgement of your new membership please be patient. We anticipate more help in our office for this coming season and hope to increase our efficiency with their participation. For more efficient handling of our organization we now have a 9 to 5 daily answering service. Please leave your messages for our officers or committee chairmen with her and your call will be returned as soon as possible. The number for our office as well as for our answering service is: 663-5634.

Our activities continue - committees met during the summer months and are now persuading many of the projects initiated then. We invite you to join in. Our Society, as I stated above, is made up of volunteers. Your talents are needed to make this a continuing, exciting and useful organization. We have purposely avoided any fund-raising, and rely solely on contributions and dues payments for our operating expenses. For this reason we emphasize the importance of each member's contribution of time and know-how, as well as dues payment.

EXHIBIT COMMITTEE NEWS: Spertus College has invited us to add to our exhibit of Chicago Jewish history in the cases on the second floor of the Spertus building. We welcome your help and suggestions for this exhibit.

TV - The Chicago Board of Rabbis has asked us to prepare some material for viewing on their TV programs. Does this interest and intrigue you? Please call and volunteer your assistance in this exciting new project.

ORAL HISTORY - chairperson MOSELLE MINTZ of the committee needs more transcribers to type the permanent records of the tapes for our Archives. Oral histories are being taken by many members of our Society and we are anxious to make them available to students of Chicago Jewish history. To do this the tapes must be transcribed by a typist using one of our transcribing machines. Interviewers are also needed, and EDWARD MAZUR has been conducting training sessions to teach people the techniques of good oral history taking. If you would like to learn more about this and get involved in a very exciting aspect of recording our history, please call our office and leave a message for Moselle.

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE chairperson, ELSIE ORLINSKY, with the assistance of RICHARD MARCUS, is also seeking materials of importance for the Chicago Jewish Archives. The committee is involved in the collection, preservation and recording of the acquisitions. A call to the office to volunteer either your services or your archival materials will be gratefully appreciated.

OFFICE MANAGER, vice president RUTH BRANDZEL, has just returned from an extended vacation and is managing our office (on the 7th floor of the Spertus building). Ruth is always there on Wednesday mornings and handles many details of our organization including the growing demands of our Speakers Service. This service was initiated to provide organizations with speakers or slide presentations of Chicago Jewish history. Ruth can also use volunteer help and would welcome your call.

As your president I take great pride in bringing you all of the above news, and am also pleased that much of the remainder of this issue of SOCIETY NEWS has been devoted to the biographies of some important Chicago people, an historic reunion, as well as other information. Hope that you find it all interesting...

MURIEL ROBIN

MAZEL TOV
MOSELLE MINTZ - NORMAN SCHWARTZ

Two of the most visible, most active, and most enthusiastic founding members of the Society have announced their forthcoming marriage. On Sunday, November 26, 1978 they will become Mr. and Mrs. Schwartz. We are delighted and wish them a hearty MAZEL TOV, a long, happy and productive life together, and hope that their involvement in the Jewish community in general and the Chicago Jewish Historical Society in particular will bring added fulfillment to their lives.

CJHS MEETS WITH REPRESENTATIVE OF AJHS

On Friday afternoon, October 20, a meeting was held in our office between some of our board members and Saul Viener of the American Jewish Historical Society. The purpose of the meeting was to begin a dialogue between the local organization and the American Jewish Historical Society and to compare the work and background of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society with the Southern Jewish Historical Society.

Members of the board of the CJHS who attended are CHARLES BERNSTEIN, SHAINA COHN, ADELE HAST, RACHEL HEIMOVICS, RICHARD MARCUS, ED MAZUR, ELSIE ORLINSKY, NORMAN SCHWARTZ AND SID SORKIN.

Saul Viener gave a short presentation of the history and work of the American Jewish Historical Society. The membership and fundraising concerns of the AJHS were indicated as well as the increasing concern of the AJHS for local Jewish Historical Societies throughout the country. Saul mentioned the newly established Committee on Local Jewish Historical Societies, under the chairmanship of David Brener, as well as the meeting which Saul chaired last Spring with representatives from local societies.

Also discussed was the possibility of local programming under the joint auspices of the AJHS and the CJHS.

ADLER PLANETARIUM MEETING
MAKES HISTORY

Sunday afternoon, September 24, 1978 has been recorded in the annals of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society as another memorable occasion. Our meeting at the Adler Planetarium made history for Chicago and for Chicago Jewry. For the first time an organization was permitted to hold a meeting in the Planetarium, and for the first time a special tribute to The Adler and Rosenwald families was the topic of an open meeting to which the community came in large number. Only the confusion caused by the Mayor Daley Marathon and its ensuing traffic problems marred the beautiful and exciting day.

Charles B. Bernstein, our chairman of the day, invited most outstanding speakers to give us insights into Benefactors of Chicago. Robert S. Adler, Ralph F. Colton, and Joan Weil Saltzstein presented us with a fascinating and beautiful history of these two famous Chicago Jewish families, and we are grateful to them and to Chuck Bernstein for a very special afternoon.

Our apologies to the many members and guests who were inconvenienced by the traffic problems. We are truly sorry. But having crossed the barriers of the Outer Drive, the stalwarts were all very well rewarded for their efforts.

We look forward to future meetings to provide similar insights into other outstanding Chicago Jewish families, and invite the suggestions of our membership.

CONDOLENCES

To the family of Sarah Spertus, (Mrs. Herman Spertus). Mrs. Spertus was the mother of Philip Spertus and sister of Rose Levin.

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Editor: ROBERTA BERNSTEIN
President: MURIEL ROBIN
CJHS Logo: ROSEANN CHASMAN

(Cantor Lubin, cont. from p. 1, col. 1)

the diploma of Hazzan. He pursued his secular musical studies at the London College of Music where he received the diploma A.L.C.M. (Associate of the London College of Music). At this college he won a silver medal of merit for excellence. Cantor Lubin is also a graduate of the College Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati, where he obtained a Bachelor of Music degree. At DePaul University he received his Master of Music degree (with distinction).

During his period of training, Cantor Lubin sang in many leading synagogues and concertized in London and throughout England and Scotland. At thirteen he was invited to conduct the Services at leading synagogues in the area. At fifteen, Cantor Lubin sang his first High Holyday Service. At seventeen he was engaged as Hazzan at the Jubilee St. Zionist Synagogue in London. At nineteen, Abraham Lubin accepted the position made available through the retirement of his teacher and mentor, at the famed Bayswater Synagogue in London. He was inducted into office by the then Chief Rabbi, Dr. Israel Brodie. Cantor Lubin was acclaimed by the press at the time as the youngest Hazzan ever to hold such a post in the history of the British United Synagogue.

Cantor Lubin arrived on these shores in 1958, and soon after his arrival he was engaged by the Beth Abraham Synagogue in Dayton, Ohio where he served with great distinction for ten years.

In October, 1968, Cantor Lubin accepted the call of the famed Congregation Rodfei Zedek in Chicago, Illinois, and assumed the post as its Hazzan.

He has appeared in many concert recitals and at numerous national organizational banquets throughout Chicago and the Midwest area.

Cantor Lubin's repertoire is a vast one. Well versed in Hazzanut, Hebrew, Israeli, and Yiddish songs, he also is at home in the operatic, oratorio,

(cont. on p. 6)

(Sam Lesner, cont. from p. 1, col. 2)

In the summer of 1932 he was handed his first writing assignment: reviewing band concerts in the Daily News Plaza for the National Contest for Symphony Bands for the 1933 Century of Progress Fair. His successful reviews led to appointments as assistant music critic and assistant drama critic throughout the thirties. It was in this latter capacity that he was asked to cover productions of the Yiddish Theatre which at that time was flourishing in Chicago and other large Jewish metropolitan centers. Such luminaries as Maurice Schwartz could not be ignored by the paper, no matter what their language, and Lesner, who was fluent in Yiddish and had grown up in the environment of the Yiddish Theatre, was the perfect man for the job.

Though the Yiddish Theatre soon began its demise, Lesner's career as critic was now fully launched and rising rapidly.

In 1941 he was made full-time entertainment features writer and soon progressed to night club editor, while continuing as assistant to radio, drama and music critics simultaneously. He continued to write about night life until the paper's demise.

As night club editor, he is credited with helping to "discover" Danny Thomas, who was then working in a small Chicago night club, the 5100 Club.

In 1944, Lesner entered the army "and was classified as a medic, since the Army had no immediate need for a night club critic, as the classifying officer informed me. I served in France and Belgium until August, 1945 and helped to build the 130th General Hospital in a Belgian cow pasture. I learned all the new psychiatric and medical treatments for combat-exhausted and battle-shocked soldiers and as a result, became something of an 'authority' among the local critics with the rash of post-war 'psychiatric' films."

This war-earned expertise equally qualified him for the movie critic's job which was handed to Lesner upon his return from the service in 1945, and for the next 26 years, he reigned as the dean of movie critics in Chicago, while still serving as night life editor. So outstanding was his criticism that he was saluted by the Variety Club of Illinois in 1963 with a star-studded luncheon and a testimonial

(cont. on p. 6)

(Lubin, cont. from page 5, col. 1)

Lieder, and Italian repertoire. Cantor Lubin has appeared in operatic scenes at the University of Cincinnati operatic productions.

Cantor Lubin is a member of the Executive Council of the Cantors Assembly of America and is a member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Synagogue Music published by the Cantors Assembly. He is the recent recipient of the Cantors Assembly's coveted 25th Anniversary YUVAL AWARD "in recognition of his distinguished career in Hazzanut." At the 28th National Convention of the Cantors Assembly held in New York (May, 1975) Cantor Lubin received a special citation from that body. In 1977 he was designated an Honorary Fellow of the Cantor's Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Cantor Lubin serves on the boards of the following educational institutions: The Solomon Schechter Day Schools, Akiba-Schechter Jewish Day School.

Cantor Lubin is listed in the Who's Who in Religion, Notable Americans and the Dictionary of International Biography. He is the author of a new adaptation of the classic prayer Eleh Ezherah in the new edition of the High Holy Day Prayer Book published by the Rabbinical Assembly.

(Reunion, cont. from p.7)

Stories of happy memories - and of childhood troubles - filled the room. Eddie Ginsburg recalled the Pesach Seder as a special event - "an outstanding meal." With so many participants, visitors as well as all the children, innovations were made in the customary service. Instead of drinking four glasses of wine, the children sipped four times from one glass. Two afikomens were hidden, one for the boys, the other for the girls. The reading of "Echad Mi Yodeah", "Who knows one?", became a fun-filled communal event as two children stood and read, "Who knows two?", three chimed "Who knows three?" until thirteen laughing youngsters completed the recital.

As social thinking changed about the best upbringing for homeless children, fewer were sent to the home. In the

(Lesner, cont. from p.5, col. 2)

plaque that read: "For his unending and continual efforts in behalf of the entertainment industry." In 1966 he received the coveted Directors Guild of America Critic's Award for his "outstanding contribution to motion picture criticism." He is the only Chicago critic ever to receive this award.

He also was on the scene to cover the birth of the television as an entertainment medium. From 1948 thru 1955 he served as TV editor. Lesner recalls that "at that time there were only about 400 sets in Chicago, mostly in saloons, and I had to go to a saloon to see the TV programs I covered."

In addition to his journalistic career, he has maintained a life-long second career in music education. As specialist in baroque music for the recorder, he has been an Instructor in Music Theory and Teacher of the Recorder at the Central YMCA Adult Education Program since 1947.

His friends know him also as an accomplished gardener.

Countless Chicagoans have known him over the years by sight and sound as well as thru the print medium, for he is a well known radio and TV personality in his own right through his own shows as well as frequent guest appearances. He is also well known in the Jewish Community as a frequent speaker to Synagogues and Jewish groups.

late 1930s and the 1940s the courts tried to place children in foster homes. Other children, despite broken homes, found care with their own families. In 1946 the home closed its doors.

For the children there in the last years, the warm spirit of camaraderie was not as strong as before. But for those who grew up in the home in earlier, harder times, when there was no other place for them to go, the Chicago Home for Jewish Orphans was family, friends, and the only home they knew. "There was such a warm spirit of fraternal feeling among the people here that the home to them was like having brother-sister." That warm feeling drew these "brothers and sisters" together in reunion half a lifetime later.

CHICAGO HOME FOR JEWISH ORPHANS HOLDS UNIQUE REUNION

by ADELE HAST

"Our ties here are stronger than in a blood family." SID SAMPSON explained the embraces of long-separated brethren and the joyful shouts of recognition that filled the room. This was a reunion of a special family, the former "home kids" of the Chicago Home for Jewish Orphans, held in Chicago September 2-3, 1978, thirty-two years after the home had closed. ROY KLOWDEN of Chicago originally planned a small reunion of the local alumni of the home. When RACHEL HEIMOVICS of the CJHS, who assisted with publicity, placed an announcement of the reunion in Jewish publications throughout the country, responses mushroomed, "I'm coming!" On Saturday, September 2, about seventy-five out-of-towners gathered at 6517 N. California for the first day of reunion. A banquet the next day, at the Max Dolnick Community Center, 6122 N. California Avenue, brought together three hundred people--"home kids" and their spouses--from the Chicago area and some twenty states. In an emotion-filled weekend, the joyful participants reminisced, sharing their memories with ADELE HAST, MOSELLE MINTZ, and NORMAN SCHWARTZ of the CJHS Oral History Committee.

Most of the children at the home were not truly orphans, but their families could no longer care for them. Their parents were generally immigrants who found that the hardships of life made it impossible to provide for their children: a mother widowed at twenty-nine with five youngsters; a father infected with tuberculosis; a divorce that left children homeless; a stepmother in conflict with her husband's sons. The children came to the home after experiencing emotional turmoil and unhappiness, and found, despite the institutional nature of the place, a stable environment and a new family.

MORRIS ABRAMS of St. Louis explained: "For someone who came from a broken home, it was unbelievable. You could make buddies. There were about seventy-five boys, and each one picked a buddy." SID SAMPSON told of the special friendships that developed: given a Reform Jewish education, each youngster had strongest ties with those in his confirmation class.

Several guests, who stayed at RUSTY GOLDMAN's home, were each handed a nickel on arrival--"your weekly Saturday allowance." Saturday was even more special: it meant having ice cream desserts, savoring veal chops, and going to the movies in the afternoon--the Tivoli, the Maryland, and the Drexel Theatres. Summers brought outdoor events, picnics in Washington Park and "automobile days" in August when the board of directors took the children on an outing to Lincoln Park. Throughout the summer, they went to Camp Wooster in Round Lake, Illinois, in groups of thirty boys and girls.

What drew together people who had not seen each other for three decades or longer? What impelled them to travel from the corners of the country to their childhood city? Alumni explained their powerful emotional ties. One woman remembered her experiences in going from one foster home to another. "I hated everyone. They didn't care about me and my sister." When she finally came to the Chicago Home for Jewish Orphans, it gave her freedom. "I was fed, taken care of, had moments of delight. For a troubled child who had suffered trauma, the home was a safe place." Another participant joined in with her story. For her immigrant parents, life in Chicago was short and bitter. Her mother had died when the child was only six, and her father followed in death a few years later. Her sixteen year old sister, left with the responsibilities of running a household, was unable to keep the children together, and the home became their haven.

(cont. on p. 6)

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF THE CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE MEMBERSHIP, MARCH 13, 1977

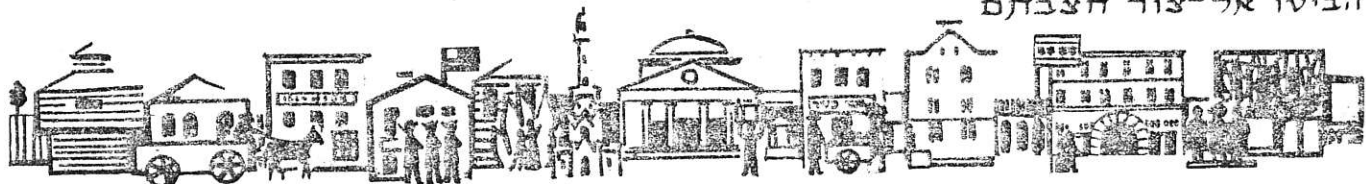
To collect, preserve and exhibit memorabilia and materials of every kind pertaining to the settlement, history and life of Jews and the Jewish community of metropolitan Chicago, Illinois; and to conduct education programs, encourage study and research, and disseminate information pertaining to the settlement, history and life of Jews and the Jewish community of metropolitan Chicago, Illinois.

Membership Information

Membership in the CJHS is open to all.
The dues categories are the following:
\$ 5.00 Students & Senior Citizens
10.00 Contributing Membership
25.00 Sustaining Membership
50.00 Patron Membership
100.00 & up--Sponsoring Membership
25.00 Minimum contribution for synagogue
and organization membership

To become a member, or to increase your membership contribution, send your check to
CJHS Treasurer, Charles B. Bernstein, 5457
S. Hyde Park Blvd., Chicago 60615.

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



chicago jewish historical society

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