



# chicago jewish historical society

## SOCIETY NEWS

Vol. I - No. 3

September, 1977

### CJHS HAS AN OFFICE

On August 24, the Chicago Jewish Historical Society officially moved into its lovely new office, generously donated to us by Spertus College of Judaica, in the Spertus building at 618 S. Michigan Avenue.

The office is now open every Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. under the management of Vice-President Ruth Brandzel. All Society members are invited to come in on Wednesdays to look at our fine facilities and offer your help to Ruth.

Our own phone can be reached Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. (3 p.m. on Fridays). Our phone number is:

663-5634

From now on, please call this number for all inquiries or messages regarding Society business.

### OPEN MEETING OCTOBER 16

The next program of the CJHS will be a talk on "The Genesis of Chicago Jewry" by Charles B. Bernstein, the Society's treasurer and one of its founders.

Bernstein, an attorney by occupation, is a dedicated historian and genealogist who has spent years of meticulous research in Chicago Jewish history. He brings to his hobby the love and insights of a life-long Chicagoan.

Come and learn about the fascinating people and events that mark the beginnings of the story that this Society is committed to preserving and telling.

OPEN MEETING

ALL ARE WELCOME

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16TH  
AT 3:00 P.M.  
BEDERMAN HALL - 2ND FLOOR  
SPERTUS COLLEGE OF JUDAICA

REFRESHMENTS & SPECIAL ART SALE - 2P.M.

### ARCHIVISTS AT WORK

Over the summer many of our members attended a four-session seminar training program in archives collecting, conducted by Richard Marcus, head librarian and archivist at Spertus College. Those who completed the course met again on September 7 to plot strategy on how to bring in material and are now at work gathering archives for the Society to be deposited in the Chicago Jewish Archives at Spertus College.

Marcus hopes to offer the course again at some future date to other interested volunteers once the work of the present group has progressed sufficiently.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the New Year begins, the officers and board join me in wishing all of our members and friends L'shana Tova. May this coming year be a year of peace, good health, and fulfillment for all.

The pages of the Society News indicate the growing number of activities in which we are engaged. Our committees continue to seek new members and welcome your participation. If you have indicated an interest in a particular committee and have not yet been contacted, please phone the chairman again, or call our office at 663-5634 and leave a message. In our attempt to accomplish our many aims we hope that we have not inadvertently omitted any of the people who wish to become involved. We need you.

I would again like to invite you to visit the Spertus College of Judaica, to avail yourselves of its many programs and facilities and, while in the building, to stop and see our beautiful new office on the third floor. We are very proud to be located in this important Jewish center, and encourage our members to take advantage of all it has to offer.

Peruse this bulletin, mark your calendar, and join in the committees and activities of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. We're finding that Chicago Jewish history is fascinating.

Sincerely yours,

MURIEL ROBIN

## CALLING ALL SPEAKERS

Do you have a program to give on some aspect of Chicago Jewish History or related topics? Do you need such a program or a speaker for your group or organization?

Ruth Brandzel is developing a Speakers Clearing House as well as a cross file of Chicago Jewish History Resources and a Calendar of Jewish History events.

Mail your information or requests to Ruth Brandzel in care of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, 618 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, 60605, or call Ruth at our office any Wednesday, 663-5634 (other days leave a message).

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in the CJHS is open to all. Dues categories are the following:

\$ 5.00	Student & Senior Citizen
10.00	Contributing Membership
25.00	Sustaining Membership
50.00	Patron Membership
100.00	and up - Sponsoring Mem.
25.00	Minimum contribution - Synagogue and Organization Membership

Dues and contributions are tax-deductible. To become a member please send your check to our treasurer, Chas. B. Bernstein, 5457 S. Hyde Park Blvd., Chicago, 60615. Membership envelopes are available on request from Ruth Brandzel at our office, 663-5634.

### SUMMER BUS TOURS A SUCCESS, TO BE REPEATED

The two guided bus tours of historic Jewish Chicago that the Society offered this summer were highly successful events. Both tours were filled to capacity, with many people turned away after all the seats were sold. Those who were lucky enough to get their reservations in on time spent delightful afternoons.

Gasps of excitement from the participants greeted every new site as old memories were kindled or discoveries were made of "so that's where that is, I always wondered!"

The conversation was lively as participants vied with the knowledgeable tour guides to announce a fact about a certain monument or building. Our well-prepared guides were kept on their toes by their appreciative but emotional audiences, and they managed throughout the excited, joyful chaos to present well-organized, informative programs.

The first tour, on July 17, was "Earliest Beginnings to the South Side: 100 Years of Movement." It was conducted by Rachel Heimovics.

The second tour, on August 7, was "Westward and Northwest: 1880-1940." The guide was Irving Cutler.

Both tours will be repeated in October (though in reverse order), so if you're sorry that you missed one or both, you now have another chance to avail yourself of an informative, thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.

See page 5 for details and application.

### ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE TO BEGIN WORK

Moselle Mintz and Mark Mandle have finalized plans for an Oral History Committee which they will chair jointly. Persons interested in working in this field should contact them at once so that the actual work of taking histories can begin as soon as possible. Moselle and Mark will train and guide all volunteers in the technique of obtaining oral histories.

Specifically, here is what the committee needs to proceed with its work:

--TRANSCRIBERS: People are needed who take shorthand and type to transcribe the recorded interviews.

--BI-LINGUAL INTERVIEWERS: People are needed who speak Yiddish, German, Hebrew, Russian or other foreign languages and who can conduct an interview in the given foreign language.

--INTERVIEWEES: We invite our entire membership to suggest persons in the Chicago area who are interesting or knowledgeable and whose memories should be preserved.

--MACHINES: We need cassette tape recorders to be used for the oral interviews. We welcome donations or discount prices. Donors would receive the usual tax-deductible donation forms.

If you can help in any of the mentioned areas, please call our office at 663-5634 and leave a message for the Oral History Committee, giving your name, address, zip code and phone number.

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CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Editors: Roberta Bernstein  
Burton Robin

CJHS Logo: Roseann Chasman

## EXHIBIT COMMITTEE PLANS FIRST EXHIBIT

Your Exhibit Committee has been hard at work over the summer planning our introductory exhibit. It will be produced at Spertus College in the second floor display area. It will expand in size as rapidly as we receive additional materials and are able to do the work.

This first exhibit will be an introduction to Chicago Jewish history and will visually explain the purposes of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

We need help from all of you to collect articles which may be loaned to us for the exhibit. These articles are to be borrowed for the use of the exhibit only and will be insured and kept locked and secure at all times. If desired by the owner, they may be permanently donated to the Chicago Jewish Archives, but otherwise they will be returned to the owner after the exhibit closes.

The articles we wish to display should relate to early Jewish settlers in the Chicago area. Among these items might be the following:

- immigrant photos
- ceremonial objects or photos (e.g. wedding photo, ketubah, bar mitzvah photo or certificate, yarmulke, Haggadah, siddur, kiddush cup, candlesticks, etc.)
- family Bible with family tree or history.
- photos of business men/workers at their trade or tools used
- tombstone rubbings
- diaries, letters
- garments
- immigration/naturalization papers
- steamship passage/transportation tickets
- photos of dwellings, stores, synagogues

If you have or can obtain these or any other items which may be usable for our exhibit,

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## IN MEMORIAM

The Society records with sorrow the passing of Mrs. Clarissa Claster Schwartz, a founding member and the mother of two founding members.

Mrs. Schwartz was born in Harrisburg, Pa., on May 8, 1893. She was the daughter of Henry Carl Claster, a jeweler who had emigrated from Lithuania in 1883, and Pauline (Schwarz) Claster, a native of Jassy, Roumania, who was brought to Philadelphia in 1875.

She was graduated from the Harrisburg Conservatory of Music, where she studied violin, and was one of the first two Jewish girls in Harrisburg to attend college rather than a finishing school. She was graduated from Wellesley in 1915.

Clarissa Claster married Jacob X. Schwartz in Harrisburg on March 16, 1920. Mr. Schwartz, a graduate of Harvard Law School, was a partner in the prestigious law firm of Mayer, Meyer, Austrian and Platt of Chicago. He passed away in 1974.

Mr. and Mrs. Schwartz settled in Waukegan where Mrs. Schwartz utilized the cultural opportunities she had been given for the betterment of both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities. She was secretary and president of the Sisterhood of Temple Am Echod, and, two generations ahead of her time, was a member of the first board of the Temple when it constructed its new building in the 1920's.

While program chairman of the Waukegan Women's Club in the 1930's, she brought Dr. Abram L. Sachar to speak, which caused an uproar from anti-semitic people, which Mrs. Schwartz successfully fought with help from the ADL. (cont. p. 5)

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please contact Kenneth Cohen,  
Committee chairman, at 675-6614,  
or leave a message for him at  
our office, 663-5634.



In Memoriam, cont. from p. 4

She was elected to the Board of Waukegan Township High School from 1933 to 1940. During World War II she served as co-chairman of a USO, sponsored by the Jewish Welfare Board, which served the Great Lakes Naval Training Station. She was also deputy commissioner of the local Girl Scouts.

Mrs. Schwartz died in Chicago on August 22, 1977, and was buried in the Temple Am Echod Cemetery in Waukegan. Survivors include two CJHS members: a son, Society Vice-President Norman D. Schwartz, and a daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Gerson.

### CJHS BUS TOURS OF HISTORIC JEWISH CHICAGO

#### TOUR # 1

Sunday, Oct. 23, 1 to 5 p.m. - "Westward & Northwest: 1880-1940"

Guide: Prof. Irving Cutler, chairman of the Dept. of Geography at Chicago State University. Irv is the author of Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continents, which is being re-issued in a revised second edition. He is also a founding member of the Society and sits on our board.

#### TOUR # 2

Sunday, Oct, 30, 1 to 5 p.m. - "Earliest Beginnings to the South Side: 100 Years of Movement"

Guide: Rachel Heimovics, a free-lance writer, specializing in Chicago Jewish History. She is a founding member and board member of our Society, serving also as publicity chairman. Rachel has been organizing and guiding tours of Jewish Chicago since 1964.

FEE PER TOUR: \$ 8.00 Society members (including those who join with this application)  
10.00 Non-members

Departures: 12:30 p.m.- Horwich J.C.C. parking lot (3003 W. Touhy)  
1:00 p.m.- Haym Solomon-George Washington-Robert Morris Monument at Wacker Drive & South Water Street  
YOU MAY BOARD THE BUS AT EITHER POINT

RESERVATION FORM - Check must accompany this form  
Send to: Rachel Heimovics, 1958 Mc Craren Road, Highland Park, Ill. 60035

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seats for Tour # 1 - Oct. 23  
\_\_\_\_\_ seats for Tour # 2 - Oct. 30 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ total enclosed

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_