



chicago jewish historical society

# CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORY

*Celebrating Jewish Businesses, Revisiting Waldheim,  
Introducing Clara Landsberg*

## Bakery and Community: Shore Bakeries 1952 - 1982

By Rabbi Moshe Simkovich

We have spent the last few years in the World of Zoom. You attend a meeting online: You are “there,” but not as “there” as you would have been had you been physically present. It is a quasi-reality.

That is how I feel when I walk into the kosher bakery in a grocery store. I am there, the bagels are there, the birthday cakes are there, even the babka and kichel are there. But it isn't quite what I remember. And so, I give you a meditation on the kosher bakery where I grew up in days of yore - Shore Bakery.

### The Name, The West Side, The South Side, the North Side

Shore Bakery. People assume that when it was on the South Side, it was South Shore Bakery; when it was on the North Side, North Shore Bakery. Not at all.



continued on page 4

## Jews in the Produce Business

By Dr. Irving Cutler

Through the years, thousands of Chicagoans worked in the fresh produce industry - as alley peddlers, store owners, and wholesalers - and many of them were Jewish.

Initially, their products came mainly from local farmers. Dutch farmers from what is now the South Holland and Roseland area would bring their produce by horse and wagon up muddy Halsted Street. German and Luxembourgish farmers from Niles Center (now Skokie) and Tessville (Lincolnwood) would bring their produce via the plank road Lincoln Avenue. Swedish and English truck farmers would come on the plank Ogden Avenue. Other farmers would also come from inside the city's perimeter: A huge farm once stood at Foster and Western avenues in the city's Budlong Woods. There was even a small Jewish experimental farm in the Schaumburg area, but it was short lived and not very productive.

continued on page 6



Yosel Zelken holding sack of potatoes, circa 1940

## A Carat Is Not a Carrot: Early Life Lessons in My Uncle's Jewelry Business

By Dr. Edward Mazur

My Zayde Jacob Kleinbort z”l, my Uncle Norman Kleinbort z”l, and my first cousin, Neil Kleinbort, were jewelers—Zayde, in Bialystok, Poland, and Uncle



The author's mishpacha in front of the family jewelry store

Norman and Cousin Neil in Chicago. In Chicago, the Kleinbort family had a significant wholesale clientele and business that were first located in the 1930s at 2212 West Division Street, where they were known as J. Kleinbort and Son. (The property is now the site of AMITA Health Saints Mary and Elizabeth Medical Center Chicago, formerly Lutheran Deaconess Hospital, where I entered this world.) It subsequently moved to 2714 West Division Street, where the store's name was changed to Norman's Jewelry, and then, finally, to Skokie, where it closed in the first decade of the 21st century.

continued on page 8

## CO-PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Dr. Rachelle Gold

Chicago boasts a distinction that is precious to lovers of Israeli dance and music.

Every Thursday night, for nearly 50 years, Chicagoans have had the joy of participating in one of the longest continuously running Israeli folk dance groups in the U.S. and beyond. Now called “Chicago Israeli Dancing” (CID), the group, which meets at Evanston’s Beth Emet – the Free Synagogue, is still led by the team that was instrumental in its formation in the 1970s: Phil Moss and Penny Brichta. Retired from their professions in business consulting and human resources, respectively, they remain as devoted as ever to CID. The story of this dance group, which has gained worldwide fame, and its dedicated leaders deserves to be told. As a lover of Israeli dance and occasional dancer at CID, I was delighted to hear the story directly from its leaders, Phil and Penny.

The story begins in the basement of Northwestern University Hillel in the early 1970s. The Israel Students Organization organized a weekly dance session run by Olesh Sofer, a *shaliach* (emissary) from Israel, with live accordion accompaniment by Bernie Warman. Olesh also created an Israeli dance performance group, HaTzabarim. Phil began dancing at Northwestern Hillel in 1973, the year he returned to his hometown, Chicago, for graduate school at Northwestern after spending his undergraduate years at Columbia University.

Phil was not new to Israeli dancing. He had danced a little in high school. In New York, with its plethora of Israeli dance opportunities, he became immersed in Israeli dancing, going three times a week to groups at Columbia, the 92nd Street YMHA, and other New York venues. He learned dances from the famed Fred Berk and Karl Shapiro and from the many marvelous summers he spent at the Olin-Sang- Ruby Institute (OSRUI) in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, where he taught Israeli dancing to the campers and the staff.

At Northwestern, Phil joined HaTzabarim in 1974. Before Olesh returned to Israel, he asked Phil to take over leadership of the recreational group. Eventually, Phil moved the recreational group to a different evening from the performing group. He started a separate Israeli dance session on Thursday night that focused on teaching and dancing. The group soon established itself at Northwestern’s Parkes Hall (part of the Alice Millar Chapel complex).

Penny Brichta entered the scene in 1977. Unlike Phil, she had formal dance training. Like Phil, she was a seasoned and enthusiastic Israeli dancer. She had danced in camp and in college at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and, especially, during her junior year abroad at Hebrew University. She reminisced, “I learned to Israeli dance in Hebrew...I danced more than I studied.”

Penny’s teaching has since evolved into dance fitness: Jazzercise, senior dance/exercise, and an online fitness class attended exclusively by folk dancers.

Phil eventually left HaTzabarim and formed his own, semi-professional performing group, Nitzanim, in 1978. Initially, he did the choreography, and then used Israeli choreography from Yaakov Eden, Moshe Eskayo, Shmulik Gov Ari, and others. Penny joined Nitzanim in its inaugural year. For the 20 years of its existence, Nitzanim was the premier Israeli dance performing group in Chicago.



Phil Moss teaching a class

photo by David Yufit

Penny and Phil’s Israeli dance partnership deepened in 1989 when Penny began teaching the beginners’ segment on Thursday night. She and Phil became a team in teaching and running the group. Penny now focuses on leading the beginning part of the evening and also does a lot of leading from the floor.

CID remained a weekly event at Parkes Hall for many years, even as fewer newcomers came from Northwestern’s student body and most of the dancers were well beyond their student years. CID eventually moved to Temple Judea Mizpah—its home for the next 10 years. When the synagogue sold its building and announced a merger with Beth Emet in 2018, CID found temporary quarters until it moved to the congregation’s Evanston location in 2019.



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### Chicago Jewish History

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Phil and Penny's leadership in Israeli dance is known worldwide. Both have organized, danced, and taught at workshops and dance events in the Midwest and in other states and countries. For example, in the Midwest, they teach at the Greater Chicago Jewish Festival and at the annual Door County Folk Festival. Since 2016, Phil has run an Israeli dance camp, Machol Merkaz, every fall at OSRUI, with the exception of the first year of the pandemic. This year, it will take place October 20 to 23. (See [macholmerkaz.com](http://macholmerkaz.com) for details.)

Phil led a predecessor dance camp at OSRUI, Chagigah, from 1990 to 2010. Penny has taught Israeli dance at international folk dance camps in the U.S. and abroad. She is gratified by the many dancers who started learning the basics with her and have since become strong dancers in Chicago and other cities.

Phil and Penny are especially proud of CID's response to the COVID crisis. CID's record of uninterrupted weekly dance sessions could have ended when COVID restrictions were imposed in March 2020. Instead, with extraordinary persistence and creativity, Phil turned the crisis into an opportunity.

Immediately, CID shifted to weekly Zoom sessions in which Penny taught dancers participating from their homes. Phil and Penny soon discovered that dancers were attending from across the globe—throughout the U.S. and around the world—since other dance groups had been suspended and, at least initially, there were few virtual options other than theirs in Chicago. Eventually, Phil incorporated additional leaders from all over the U.S., as well as outside the country, including those from France, Israel, South America, and Australia. Phil also devised the idea of producing the first-ever global Israeli dance marathon, via Zoom. He signed up Israeli dance teachers from all over the world to lead dance segments at a designated slot according to their time zone. The project posed enormous logistical and technical challenges, but he and his team overcame them.

The result was two consecutive 24-hour marathons, the first on April 13 and 14, 2020; the second, on October 23 and 24 of that year. Phil has been interviewed about the global projects by foreign media outlets, including those in Israel and South America. He is gratified by his accomplishment in creating "a global phenomenon that changed people's lives, changed the world, and connected people in a way they never were... Others started leading live sessions on You Tube and Facebook. Israelis adopted our methods... Now we have a broader and deeper understanding of the importance of Israeli dance in Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, Chile, Costa Rica, and Australia, and in many places in Europe as well as the Far East."

During the pandemic, while Phil focused on the global dancers, Penny developed a session using a team of local dancers, with the goal of engaging the Chicago dance community that was separated.



Penny Brichta and husband Bob Pollock at the Daley Center in 1984

## Bakery and Community

continued from front page

The bakery was owned by my father and uncle, and, at first, it was simply Shore Bakery, on 75th Street, near Essex Avenue. The owner had been Jack Shore. When the Simkovich family bought it, the store name remained the same. There was no reason to muddy the recognizable identity.

There was no “South Shore Bakery” at all until the Simkoviches took over Terminal Bakery on Touhy Avenue on Chicago’s far North Side in the late 1960s. Then, the bakery in Rogers Park was renamed “North Shore” to differentiate it from the chain of stores on 75th, 79th, 87th, and 95th streets in South Shore. If they had bought a bakery on the East Side it would have been “East Shore,” but due to a geographical anomaly, Chicago has only three directions and a long, thin buffer next to the lake.

### The Owners

Jack Simkovich, my father, and Sam Simkovich, my uncle, were born around 1920. They had grown up on a farm, two of 11 children, near Uzhorod, a Central-Eastern European city that at the time had a significant Jewish population. The main family business was a saloon. As my father was about 5 feet 7 inches, and my uncle even shorter, the bouncer jobs went to my tallest uncles—some as tall as 6 feet 4 inches—who had fought in World War I. The shorter, younger sons had to find other professions. Uncle Sam trained to be a baker; my father, a bookbinder.

And then came World War II. Uzhorod, which had fluid borders over many centuries, was the “a” at the end of Czechoslovakia. Courtesy of Neville Chamberlain’s “Peace for our time” appeasement policy, Uzhorod was taken in 1938 by the Hungarians, who sent Jewish men capable of hard work to factories or to dangerous wartime jobs at the front, such as digging up mines.

Both Sam and Jack were sent at first to the front. But by the war’s end, they had spent time in some of Hitler’s camps, including Mauthausen. They found themselves in displaced persons camp following the war, and both were in Chicago by 1950.

A couple of years later, Uncle Sam got the idea to buy the bakery from Jack Shore. A year or two later, my father left the West Side and his job at Scott Foresman publishing company to join him in running the bakery. My father had no experience, but as he was of an artistic bent, he learned how to bake and decorate. As for my uncle, he could tell you the proportions of ingredients in a bagel just by holding it. If you learned the bread trade in Europe, you could weigh the truth of the product.

### The Clientele – South Side First

South Shore was a wonderful community. In the 1950s and 60s, it was a community that mixed everything that went into Chicago: steel mill workers, University of Chicago intellectuals, lawyers, doctors, junkyard owners, and disc jockeys (Art Roberts on WLS). All flavors of Christians, all flavors of politicians (even non-Daley!), and all flavors of none of the above. And, of course, all flavors of Jews.

They all seemed to like onion rolls, Kaiser rolls, brownies, birthday cakes, challah, and rye bread. My father did the sweet and artistic stuff; my uncle, the bread and rolls. (They could flip roles if needed).

On Fridays and Sundays, in particular, you could meet everybody in the neighborhood at the bakery, where there often were lines. In a way, the Jewish bakery—perhaps like the butcher shop and the bookstore—was more central to the entirety of the Jewish

community than anything else. Walking in, whether southern location or northern, was like walking into a mini-Jewish world: denizens starting with Europe and traversing time until reaching the Americanized fellow who liked lox (pre-sushi) and the White Sox.

Besides occasionally coming in to help out, I was given special roles as the owner’s son. For example, before Rosh Hashanah and holidays, I would be given challahs to hand-deliver to community rabbis. (Okay, not so hard to do the day before Yom Kippur or Passover.)

Annually, the bakery would have a special Kosher for Passover run of goods: This was in the days before wholesale Passover products. Passover was a crazy, all-hands-on-deck time. The whole family turned out to work and work and work, cleaning chametz away, then turning out macaroons and sponge cakes and nut Kracowsky cookies until Passover finally arrived—and we were freed.

### The Workers

The up-front salespeople, mostly women, were the face of the store. Most were Jewish and from the neighborhood. But the owners were often up front, too. The task at hand was to try to satisfy the customer, and nothing could surpass personal attention except, maybe, free cookies for kids.

***The Jewish bakery, perhaps like the butcher shop and the bookstore, was more central to the entirety of the Jewish community than anything else.***

Most of the workers in back, the bakers, were not Jewish. Walking into the baking area was like walking into the United Nations. Ted, the bread man, was from the Polish community. (At the time, a lot of Jewish baking was similar to other Eastern European baking.) There was a Black expert in making Jewish dough. There was a person who grew up in, and out of, Hitler Youth. There was a Jewish veteran of the war in the South Pacific, who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder and self-medicated the old liquid way. There was a special fellow who was hired specifically to teach my father the art of the petit four. G-d bless him: He made something pink that I liked. And there was Larry, the delivery guy, who occasionally drove me to school. I once asked him what he did when he was younger. He answered that he used to drive for Al Capone. When I told him that he seemed way too nice for that type of job, he said, "I drove, I didn't enforce."

Andy fixed machinery, as well as cars. Al, the delivery guy, also delivered soda for White Rock. Kashrut supervisors (mashgichim) also did shechitah in Iowa. So, trades were made: challot for steaks, cases of soda for cakes, car repairs for I'm-not-sure-what. During car repairs, I drove around in Andy's rejuvenated police car, siren and all.

### What Was Unique to a Kosher Bakery

Making a bakery kosher is no easy enterprise. However, all the workers figured it out—or else. I can recall that when I was studying in yeshiva, one worker told me, "You know, I could fool those rabbis, and treyf this place up in a minute!" But he didn't. The owners cared, and the workers were honest.

Kosher bakeries in Chicago evolved. Consider kashrut itself. Being kosher was not like being Orthodox. Many Jews kept kosher and not Shabbat. Many kept kind-of-kosher and kind-of-Shabbat. At first, the Shore bakeries on the South Side did not keep Shabbat. Only upon the move to the North Side did they close the store on Saturday.

And yet the bakeries' customers generally trusted the kashrut for a different reason. They understood that although my family was not shomer mitzvos, or 100 percent observant, it was macshiv Torah—among those who thought of Torah and the Jewish community with profound respect and would always act with integrity. My family had lived lives that had demanded sacrifices to that effect, and their clientele tended to take them at their word. If they said it was kosher, it was. Many influential rabbis trusted them, particularly those who excelled in the greatest yeshivas in Europe and certified the baked goods.

The decision to close on Shabbat probably added a couple of years to my father's and uncle's lives. A day of

rest every week – it was about time. And when, after the move north, I was old enough to help do the Friday deliveries, it was always a race to beat the Shabbos clock. Good thing that traffic tickets were then "negotiable."



### The Move North

Upon the decline in the 1960s of the South Shore Jewish community—whose loss was keenly felt by thousands of South Side Jewish Chicagoans, many of whom migrated to the North Side or to southern burbs, such as Flossmoor, Homewood, and Olympia Fields—the bakery moved to Rogers Park, a larger Jewish community filled with other kosher bakeries. Some were more American style, but many were European style in the same way as my family's bakery. For example, I could walk into Gittel's on Devon Avenue and know exactly what was going on. There was more competition, and each kosher bakery tried to offer something different and unique.

Though very Jewish, the community was ever-changing. It had the flavor of a Jewish neighborhood, but also attracted residents and the store customers from a diverse North Side group. There were "bonus customers," too. Our Chicago food safety inspector was a Latino lawyer who represented Jose Cardenal, Jorge Orta, and other Cubs and White Sox players. Cardenal loved onion rolls. I got a signed baseball and occasional seats at Orta's box at Comiskey.

Jewish businesses were growing, expanding beyond their neighborhoods. This was so with my family's bakery. Even though we were on the North Side, we continued to deliver to suburban Homewood, to Katzman's Deli in Hyde Park, to shuls all over the metropolitan area, to the Blackstone Rangers in Woodlawn, and to hotels like the Palmer House.

We had a good reputation. I can recall the offer that was made by a New York frozen food business to mass produce North Shore challahs. My uncle turned this down. He could not believe that a frozen challah could replicate the real thing, freshly made. He was probably right, but we'll never know how dough might have rolled in if he had accepted.

continued on page 23

## Jews in the Produce Business

continued from front page

The farmers would bring their produce to two Chicago markets. One was the very crowded South Water Market downtown along the river, stretching from State to Wells streets. The other, less crowded market was on the very wide Randolph Street, stretching for several blocks on each side of Halsted Street, in the Haymarket Area. As Randolph Street was frequently widened, the market expanded westward to Sangamon Avenue (932 West) and later to Union Park.

The farmers would usually come at dusk to secure a better parking space in the open-air market. They would pay a small fee to the city Market Master, who also kept order in the market. Weather permitting, they would, as far back as the 1880s, sleep in the wagons to save the quarter fee at the local hotel.

There was a nearby restaurant open all night. Some of the farmers would engage in dice games before going to sleep.

At dawn, peddlers, grocers and buyers for hotels and restaurants would come. They would go from wagon to wagon checking quality and prices. The fresh produce displayed included cabbages, onions, potatoes, apples, berries, pickles, watermelons, tomatoes, asparagus, and other fresh products. The farmers would stay until they sold out. In the late 1800s, a net of 10 dollars for the day was considered a good day's work. Much of what was unsold usually had to be dumped because of potential for spoilage.

By 1923, the very congested South Water Market gave way to the expanding and very expensive Loop. It was replaced by the double-deck Wacker Drive. However, the open-air Randolph Street Market continued to exist for a few more decades. Some of the South Water Market commission merchants moved onto Randolph Street. Some moved to the newly erected South Water Market (1925). It was located around 14th Street and Racine Avenue, not far from the Maxwell Street Market. The new market, using the old name, consisted of two blocks of six long buildings with 166 identical units.

After their purchases, the peddlers would fan out through the city, especially through the numerous ethnic neighborhoods. Many of these peddlers were Jewish. They would go down the alleys shouting their products. There would sometimes be a constant stream of peddlers coming down an alley. Before refrigeration, housewives would come almost every day to the alleys to sample and buy the fresh produce. Some of the housewives would eventually have their favorite peddler. If the peddler did not sell out during the day, he would sometimes park at a busy intersection till dusk and try to sell out at a lower price. Most of the peddlers were immigrants.

In some parts of the city, there were facilities that sold feed for the peddler's horses. There were also drinking fountains for the horses, especially in some of the parks. The city provided men who would clean up the manure left by the horses.

The horses and wagons were usually kept overnight in barns that were often rented and situated behind people's homes. When a horse died, its body was dragged into the alley—a good meal for flies and rodents, until the city would come and cart away the carcass. There were also companies that would rent out horses and wagons on a daily basis—an advantage for some peddlers who required a low-capital investment.



Randolph Street Market, circa 1890

Some of the more successful peddlers would eventually open their own fruit stores. In the Jewish neighborhoods, they sold fruits and vegetables, along with Coca Cola and Old Colony beverages, the latter produced in Jewish North Lawndale. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, I remember signs in the store windows offering two pounds of green grapes for 15 cents or a dozen oranges for 29 cents. These small stores were usually supplied by a wholesaler, usually Jewish, who would come around several times a week with a bulging truck loaded with crates of pears, lettuce, apples, and more. One of the more prominent wholesalers was a Mr. Cherick, who was Jewish, and his helper, Mike.

The larger fruit stores, grocers, small chains, restaurants, and hotels would usually go to the newly opened South Water Market. There, each vendor usually specialized in a few items such as potatoes and onions, or pickles, radishes, asparagus, and cauliflower. The vendors were a competitive but congenial group, most Jewish, Italian, or Greek. The big chains like Jewel and Dominick's had their own warehouses and would come to the market only when they were short of some products.

The many Jewish wholesale merchants in the market included Morris Nathan Company, Irv Solomon and Son, United Potato, and Jack Tuchten Wholesale Produce. Some of these companies had started on a small scale. Jack Tuchten started at 14, when he took over the family pushcart business on Maxwell Street.

United Potato happened to be owned by my brother-in-law, Joe (Yosel) Zelken. He was born in Poland and came to the United States via Cuba. He married my sister and was hired by his brother, Benny Zelken, who owned a potato and onion company in the South Water Market. Yosel would get up at 3:00 a.m. to go to work. He worked hard and, in a few years, learned the business. Not getting along well with his brother, he and a partner, Joe Belson, started their own company, United Potato Company. Although Yosel could barely read or write English, he had a very pleasing and likeable personality, and the partnership did well. He made friends with potato farmers in Wisconsin, and he and his wife would make occasional social visits to these farmers.

In the summer of 1946, when I was a college student, Yosel got me a summer job with one of his very friendly competitors who needed help, Morris Nathan Company. My main job was to go with the truck driver to the yards of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad to pick up sacks of potatoes. I was to count the number of sacks and reject any sacks that looked spoiled or smelled bad. One Monday morning at the tracks, the truck driver, evidently suffering from a hangover, offered me \$5 to load the sacks of potatoes from the railcar into the adjacent truck. As a poor college student, I agreed to the deal. After unloading the first heavy sack of potatoes, I knew I had made a bad deal. But I persisted and loaded all 50 sacks of potatoes and thereafter felt completely exhausted for days.

Years later, as a tour guide, I used to take groups into the South Water Market. The groups enjoyed the hustle of the market and the displays of all the fresh produce. They especially enjoyed the visit to Irv Solomon and Son, where its recent owner, Ron Solomon, regaled them with funny stories of how his grandfather started the business despite some initial antisemitism.

By 2003, the market had become obsolete. When it opened 78 years earlier, customers were coming with horse and wagon and small trucks. By 2003, the market was overcrowded with big trailer trucks, some refrigerated, that came from Mexico, California, Florida, and other places. The market wasn't built to handle such large trucks. It had become very congested and inefficient by the time of its closure 19 years ago.

At that time, there were three bidders for its land. Two said they would tear everything down and rebuild with new housing. The third bidder, who won, said he would convert the existing structures into residences, with many amenities and recreational facilities. The result was a beautiful conversion that has won architectural awards. It is now known as University Commons.

The South Water Market was replaced in 2003 by a very spacious city-sponsored Chicago International Produce Market. It is located at 24th Street and Wolcott Avenue—about a mile and a half southwest of where it stood. Many of the merchants, including the Jewish ones, moved into this new market, which is about four times the size of the old market. It is an efficient, uncongested facility with plenty of room in which large trucks can maneuver.

As the city grew, so did its produce facilities, evolving in a century and a half from the open-air markets, such as at Randolph Street—with its lineup of horses and wagons—to the present large truck-oriented Chicago International Produce Market. What has remained a constant over the past 150 years, however, has been the opportunity for Jewish vendors and entrepreneurs to make their mark in the fruit and vegetable industry.

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## A Carat Is Not a Carrot

continued from front page

My connection to the jewelry business was short-lived but significant. On Saturday afternoons, after watching two movies and many newsreels and cartoons at the Vision Theater, which was located at 2650 West Division Street, I stopped at Norman's to visit my relatives and help them close the jewelry store at 6 p.m.

When I was 11, I became one of the store's messengers and carrier of valuable gems, necklaces, rings, and more to the wholesale jewelers in many of the downtown buildings catering to the trade. I walked from the Lafayette Grammar School to Norman's. There, my Uncle Norman or Aunt Thelma Zukerman Kleinbort z"l would place a small manilla envelope in my shirt pocket or schoolbag, pinning the pocket or securing the schoolbag. I then boarded the #70 Division Street CTA bus and rode it downtown or transferred to the subway at what was known as the Polish Triangle: the intersection of Division Street and Milwaukee and Ashland avenues.



The author's Uncle Norman and Aunt Thelma at their jewelry store on West Division Street

On my return, I was often treated to a chocolate phosphate or half of a corned-beef sandwich on Rosen's Rye Bread at the Joe Pierce Delicatessen located across the street from the jewelry store. Occasionally, I was taken to one or two other nearby delicatessens: Ruttenberg's and The Spot.

My delivery and pick-up locations included the Pittsfield Building, 55 East Washington Street, now a university dormitory and apartments; the Silversmiths Building, 10 South Wabash Avenue, currently a hotel; and the Mallers Building, which used the address 67 East Madison Street instead of 5 South Wabash Avenue, and was known as "The Den of Forty Thieves." On the north side of Wabash Avenue, at Madison Street, was 5 North Wabash, the Kesner Building, that is now almost totally emptied of jewelers and is the site of condominiums. One building in the vicinity of the central business district that still has many jewelers is 29 East Madison East. It is called the Heyworth Building.

During the two years that I worked for my Kleinbort mishpocha, a wholesale firm named Stein and Ellbogen leased the entire ninth floor of the Pittsfield Building. It stayed in business for more than a century. David Ellbogen used to brag to folks gathered at his many counters about the founder, "My uncle was one of the first settlers of Chicago—he settled for ten cents on the dollar." Other wholesalers included Braude and Sons, A.C. Becken, Hy Spreckman, and John Greenfield and Son. Among the diamond dealers utilized by many retailers like Norman's Jewelry were William Levine, Gottlieb and Sons, Jacques Adler, Ben Wandner, and the National Diamond Syndicate. Diamond setters were located in each of the aforementioned buildings, but my Uncle Norman used Albert Zvolner and Paul Wolfinger.

My uncle was a master watch repairman. His bench was in the front window facing Division Street, and he would have a loupe in his right eye while he delicately repaired every brand of watch that ever existed. On those rare occasions when he was stymied, I took the watch that needed repairing to a man named Ralph Telengater. He is memorialized on a plaque at the Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel Congregation on Melrose Avenue in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood.

I personally never knew any person who purchased jewelry in a retail store. For most of my life, all of my friends and associates always had a relative or a friend who knew someone who would offer them a "great deal" on an engagement ring, cocktail ring, gem studded necklace, or other form of jewelry.

To many of us, a "carat" is a vegetable, orange in color, that is beneficial to one's health and, especially, eyesight. To Uncle Norman and others in the jewelry trade a "carat or CT" weighed 200 milligrams and



was divided into both 100 points and four grains. A “20 pointer” weighs one-fifth of a carat and a “six-grainer” weighs 1.5 carats or 300 milligrams. As I waited to complete my assignment with the various jewelry establishments, I learned that the Jewish jewelers, staffs, customers, buyers, and sellers had their own way and language of communicating.

“Rough” described an uncut and unpolished stone. A “strop” was a bad buy and a stone that wouldn’t sell. “Strops” usually sat in the back of the safe—sometimes for years, maybe even generations. Sometimes, forgotten stones surge back into fashion, hence the saying “People get rich on strops.” “Chazerei” meant that something was junk and/or trash. One of my favorite expressions was “links-shtivl”—left-footed boots that described a parcel of “chazerei” in which nothing matches. “Shlock” referred to junk: rubbish, fake, and/or second-rate merchandise. “Shvimers” and floaters referred to impressive stones that seem to “swim across the surface” of loose diamonds, improving the appearance of lesser ones. Occasionally, I would see and learn about a “mamezitzer”—literally, mother-sitter—a very large diamond. A stone with “tam” meant it had flavor and appeal. My uncle and Cousin Neil were excellent at instinctively sensing which stone had the greater “tam.”

“Fisheye” described a stone with a large diameter and small depth so it gave the appearance of a much larger stone. My Cousin Neil often said that such a stone was “nice for a Chicago precinct captain’s pinkie.” “Matzo stones” were diamonds made to look larger by cutting them flat at the widest spot. Since buyers always wanted the most for the least cost, a frequent expression that I heard was “a firkantike eyer”—four-cornered eggs, an impossible request, or a stone or price that simply did not exist. Once I heard a wholesaler say, “You are looking for firkantike eyer. Go to the Smithsonian.”

Today, we have become familiar with the term “estate jewelry.” This term, which means second-hand or used, did not exist when I was the messenger of gems and diamonds, watches, and rings. Today, it is in vogue, and may appeal to those concerned about the humanitarian and ecological costs of newly mined stones.

My Aunt Thelma and Uncle Norman would wrap the items to be taken downtown and returned to Division Street in a “brifke,” or parcel-paper that was a folded wrap of paper used to store stones. The hand-held magnifying lens, the loupe, usually boasted a magnification power of 10. An informal clarity-grading rank of diamonds was Loupe Clean (no inclusions visible under loupe); Eye Clean (no inclusions visible to the naked eye); and Center Clean (no inclusions visible in the stone’s center). Every jeweler, jewelry store, and wholesale house had many “shmattes”—cloths for cleaning “schmutz,” or dirt, from stones. Clean the “schmutz,” blow on the stone, wipe it off, and place it in front of the consumer. It was a form of dancing.

Buying jewelry is, in most cases, a luxury to celebrate a special occasion of “simcha.” This means there were busy and not-so-busy seasons. The holiday seasons were “brens” or on fire. Stores were kept open until 9 p.m. or even later. Stores like Uncle Norman’s used a layaway plan. Uncle Norman had a file box in which he recorded the purchaser’s name, item, price, and payments made until the customer had reached 100 percent payment. The opposite of the “brens” period was referred to as “shtil” (quiet) or “shvakh” (weak).

If you did not sell enough to pay the rent or lease on your establishment, you would go “mekhule,” or bankrupt. Thankfully, Norman’s Jewelry weathered all the hard times and had many good, if not great, periods. The most significant phrase in the jewelry trade is “mazel und brokhe”: good luck and a blessing. This is an oral handshake that can seal million-dollar deals without lawyers, witnesses, or contracts. For its participants, this is a stake of their personal honor and that of their family, and it has near-universal respect.

A final consideration is “the deal.” A “metziah” is a great deal: a bargain, when stones are bought cheaply. A “ganeyve” is a “steal.” This is even better than a “metziah.” All the people I encountered in my messenger days had a love of “hondling.” They thrived on bargaining, haggling, and trading. Often, I heard the expression, “Nem di gelt,” or “take the money.” This was a sense that business must keep moving, and it is evident in phrases like “No one died for an offer” and “No one went broke taking a profit.”

I am now 79, and I have been married to my bride for 56 years. I am largely unaware of the current jewelry trade. But the industry was a fascinating period of my life, and I learned so much about human nature, humanity, business, and commerce that I believe I earned an advanced degree before I reached my bar mitzvah at 13.

## In Memoriam: Clare “Chaickey” Greenberg

The Society mourns the recent death of longtime CJHS member and stalwart Clare “Chaickey” Greenberg, who served on its Board for many decades. She was 93.

A Chicago native, Chaickey identified as a Labor Zionist and an upholder of Yiddishkeit. According to longtime CJHS member and former *CJH* Editor Beverly Chubat, Chaickey’s late father, Chaim Pomerantz, was an executive of the Manischewitz matzoh company who earlier in his life had been a Yiddish teacher at the Sholem Aleichem Folk Schools. Pomerantz, wrote Chubat, is credited with having named the Manischewitz cracker a “Tam Tam.” The word “tam” means “tasty” in Yiddish.

In addition to her active participation in Society affairs, Chaickey was a member of the Chicago chapter of YIVO and gave of her time, talents, and resources to many other Jewish, cultural, and charitable organizations.

By profession, Chaickey was a librarian, and she served as the head reference librarian at the City of Chicago Municipal Reference Library for many years.

Jan Iltis, CJHS Board Secretary, noted that “Chaickey was one of the most welcoming, kind, and interesting people I’ve ever known. All the information she had stored in her head was always readily available.”

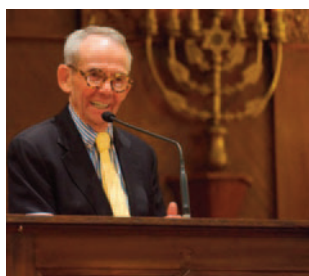
Chaickey is survived by three children, Ruth Bernkopf, Aaron Greenberg, and CJHS member Joseph Greenberg; five grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Her late, husband, Daniel, was also an active CJHS member.

The Society wants to acknowledge the generosity of Chaickey’s many loved ones and friends who have made memorial gifts to CJHS in her honor, per the wishes of her family, who designated the organization as the recipient of such gifts.



## CJHS Co-Presents Photo Exhibit Highlighting Chicago Jewish Neighborhood

The CJHS, in partnership with the Jewish Neighborhood Development Council (JNDC) of Chicago and Chicago Public Library, will be presenting the photo retrospective “Then and Now: 10 Decades of Jewish Community in West Rogers Park” October 23 through November 20 at the Chicago Public Library Northtown Branch. The display will highlight the rich cultural, religious, commercial, and familial connections that Jewish members of the West Rogers Park Jewish community have enjoyed for nearly a century.



Noted Chicago author Joseph Epstein will speak at the photo exhibit’s reception on October 23.

The exhibit will kick off on Sunday, the 23rd, with an opening reception and keynote address by celebrated Chicago Jewish author and scholar Joseph Epstein, who grew up in West Rogers Park. A prolific writer over the last five decades, Epstein has penned four collections of short stories, 17 books of essays, and other works that have covered the gamut: from “*Alexis de Tocqueville: Democracy’s Guide*” to “*Gossip: The Untrivial Pursuit*.” He is formerly the Editor of *The American Scholar*, the publication of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society, and he taught for 30 years in Northwestern University’s English Department. The reception is 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

The Northtown Branch of the Chicago Public Library is at 6800 North Western Avenue.

## A Chicago Son Preserves His Grandfather's Artistic Legacy

When Jeff Sippil was growing up in suburban Chicago in the 1950s, he didn't know much about his maternal grandfather, Egon Adler, other than he was an artistic gentleman of Central European background—originally from Karlsbad, Bohemia—who lived in New York and had a penchant for Riverside Park stray dogs, some of which made it into his paintings and drawings.

"I was just a kid, and I only saw my grandfather and grandmother when they came to visit us in Chicago perhaps once or twice a year," Sippil said.

But a year or two after his grandfather's death, Sippil, just out of college at the time, was charged with going to New York to retrieve the paintings his grandfather had created over many decades, including a few from the prewar period. Sippil had to rent a U-Haul because there were several hundred items to bring back to Chicago.

That was almost 60 years ago—enough time, Sippil acknowledged, for him to gain an understanding of his grandfather's life as an artist and as a displaced survivor who had to reinvent himself in the United States after Hitler put the kibosh on his burgeoning career in Berlin, Vienna, Prague, and Paris.

What Sippil has learned over the decades is enough to fill the history books. As a matter of fact, he noted, a number of books, most notably Sheila Isenberg's *"A Hero of Our Own: The Story of Varian Fry,"* included parts of Egon Adler's illustrious life.

Adler and Sippil's grandmother, Berthe Marie, were among the several thousand artists, writers, musicians, and intellectuals—Hannah Arendt, Lion Feuchtwanger, Wanda Landowska, Marc Chagall, and Arthur Koestler, among them—whom journalist Varian Fry helped smuggle out of Nazi-occupied France. Sippil discovered in his research that his grandparents and their little dog, Czibi, along with other refugees, crossed the Pyrenees on foot into Spain before making their way to Lisbon, Portugal, and setting sail for New York. (Their daughter, Sippil's mother, had been sent to the States a few years before.) Adler had to leave behind his work as a graphic designer and illustrator for 20th Century Fox in Paris and a growing reputation as a painter of some renown whose German Expressionist-style paintings were influenced by Franz Marc, August Macke, Alexej von Jawlensky, and Oskar Kokoschka.



An abstract by Egon Adler

his grandfather's work. He said that his continued efforts to showcase Egon Adler's oeuvre to ease the pain of his never having asked his grandfather about his earlier years.

"I was young," he said, "and did not perceive the importance of his life experiences in those tumultuous times."



Jeff Sippil holds an illustration by his late grandfather, artist Egon Adler.

When Adler and his wife arrived in New York, they, like many World War II refugees, settled on New York's Upper West Side. For a time, he owned a housewares store that specialized in modernist furnishings. He continued to work as an illustrator, but the promise of fame and fortune that youth seemed to guarantee did not come to pass in his middle and later years in New York.

Adler died at 70 in 1963.

Since that time, Sippil, a retired businessman, has dedicated part of his life to documenting his grandfather's life and honoring his legacy. He has catalogued hundreds of Adler's watercolors, oils, gouaches, and crayon drawings, many of which remain in his Highland Park home. About two dozen or so of Adler's works can also be viewed at Chicago's Richard Norton Gallery, which represents the artist. Sippil and his wife, Marcia, also created a website—[www.egonadler.com](http://www.egonadler.com)—so that others can learn more about

## Celebrating Waldheim Cemetery: 150 Years of Chicago Jewish History

By Abby Schmelling

In 1975, my husband Bill and I moved from Pittsburgh, where our two children were born, to River Forest, Illinois, not more than a quick, 10-minute drive from Waldheim Jewish Cemetery (for me, just Waldheim) and the surrounding five major cemeteries in Forest Park, a suburban village that holds more of the dead than the living. But it wasn't until the past several years—a long time after I had researched my families' histories, learned about their immigration to the United States, visited their shtetls and what remained of their few remaining cemeteries in Lithuania, tracked down where and why they lived in particular places in this country, and studied the history and cultures reflected in Jewish cemeteries—that I have come full circle to writing about the bigger story of this particular cemetery, where my family is buried, and its history as a Chicago Jewish cultural institution.

Waldheim is the first cemetery I ever visited. As a child in Kenosha, Wisconsin, in the 1950s, I remember the two-hour-plus Sunday drive south on Highway 41 to reach Chicago and then west on Roosevelt Road to Forest Park and Jewish Waldheim. Interstate 94 and the Congress/Eisenhower Expressway we're just in the planning stages. The graves of my mother's Lithuanian side of our family are within the Kalvarija and Kovner gates; my father's grandmother, in the Ticktin section; other distant family from Poland, in Ostrover. My folks were raised in Lawndale on Chicago's West Side. They were high school sweethearts at Manley High School and married in 1939 before World War II. My mother's parents divorced when she was 4, and her father, Louis Crystal, moved to Kenosha to open a men's clothing store. When he died in 1954, my parents took over the business.

I first met Sid Sorkin and his wife Shirley in the early 1990s when I worked at what was then the Jewish Community Center of Buffalo Grove. In 1993, Sid published the definitive work, *Bridges to an American City: A Guide to Chicago's Landsmanshaften, 1870 to 1990*, a book that introduced me to these *landsmanshaften vereins*, or homeland organizations, which were community groups formed by Ashkenazi Jews who immigrated to the United States from the same town or province in primarily Eastern Europe. As Sid's introduction states,

"Those voluntary organizations were one of the means of transformations that took place here when the immigrants and people of Chicago interacted with each other. In the first year of the 20th century the City of Chicago had annexed more of the small adjacent communities and had grown to one hundred and ninety square miles. There were now 1,698,575 people in the city, of whom 75,000 were Jews. They had fifty known congregations, thirty-nine charitable societies, sixty lodges, eleven social clubs, thirteen loan associations, and four new Zionist groups."

Sid listed each *landsmanshaften* organization alphabetically, along with its history and membership. Many of these societies also owned a cemetery section at Waldheim or another Chicago Jewish cemetery; they are listed at the end of each organization's description. This amazing book has provided me with the framework I need to understand the layout and structure of Waldheim Cemetery. With Sid's book and a map of Waldheim, I can see the big picture of this special place that blends Old World social structures of Eastern Europe with those of the Chicago Jewish community after the fires of 1871 and 1874. Sid's notes and a copy of the book are available on the Jewish Genealogy Society of Illinois website, [www.jgsi.org](http://www.jgsi.org).



A remaining cemetery gate. Maramoros is a province in the Carpathian Mountains, now part of Romania.

Waldheim online describes itself as "a Chicagoland Jewish tradition since 1873." The book I am writing is a biography of the cemetery to commemorate the 150th anniversary of its first burial. The early group members who originally came out to Forest Park to bury their dead at Waldheim are long gone, as well as their early congregations and burial societies whose gates marked their more than 270 separate sections. Absent, too, are many first-hand accounts about the people and a tangible connection to Chicago's West Side where our ancestors first settled. Unlike New York City's Tenement Museum, there is no Maxwell Street area to visit for a taste of what life was like at the turn to the 20th century. We know about the Jewish Westside mainly through books, photos, and, from time to time, bus tours. But the connection to Waldheim still exists. My book, through text and photographs, adds to the immigrant story: how Waldheim came to be in Forest Park; how our ancestors transported

their loved ones to the “end of the line” for burial, staying overnight and dining in local hotels; stories of some of the famous and infamous buried there; Chicago’s history of life-changing events reflected in those buried there; its haunting and related phenomena, which occur in all cemeteries; and the challenges Waldheim faces today.

Writing Waldheim’s history—how it developed, grew, and managed to survive and how it still endures at 150 years—also gives me the opportunity to share the story of one man, Irwin Lapping, whose family’s involvement with Waldheim stretches from his paternal grandfather, Isadore Lapping, who is buried in Waldheim’s Independent Western Star Order cemetery at gate 18.

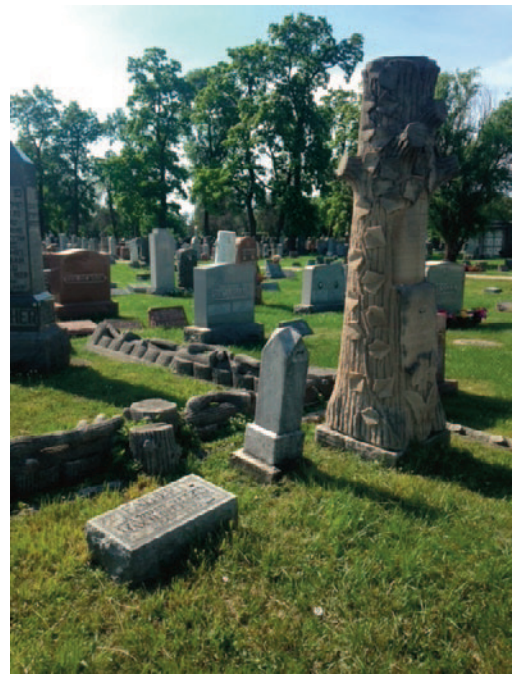
My book will draw from Irwin’s memoir, which gives us a unique first-hand history of Waldheim throughout the past century to present day management of more than 175,000 graves. Irwin grew up on Chicago’s West Side, in the Austin neighborhood. His mother’s father was the head of the Leibovitz Caretaking Company at Waldheim, and his aunts worked in the office where Irwin’s parents met. While in college, Irwin worked summers on the grounds of Chicago and Suburban Cemetery Association, a division of Liebovitz, in Broadview, where he cut the grass and dug graves by hand. Although Irwin earned a law degree, he agreed to run the cemetery when the family retired in 1953, and he learned the cemetery business firsthand. Over the course of the next several years, Irwin became involved in the management of Waldheim and, through his knowhow, consolidated the cemetery from a decentralized organization to a modern institution that continues to be viable for years to come. The wonderful story of Irwin Lapping, who himself was laid to rest in Waldheim, in 2017, at age 90, needs to be told.

Because of Waldheim’s connection to many Jewish Chicagoans’ past, and because I hope that people will celebrate this outdoor museum of Jewish history by visiting it, I am including a field guide to the cemetery as an addendum to my book. Visitors to Waldheim can tour the cemetery in a variety of ways. For example, they might want to see the graves of the famous and infamous there, from celebrities to mobsters. Or, they may want to visit particular landsmanshaften or other group sections that are described in Sid Sorkin’s book. They can also photograph Waldheim’s remaining gates, its monuments, and mausolea. Many of the stones are in Hebrew. My field guide will provide information on common transliterations and symbols.

After placing a notice about my book on the Facebook group page for Jewish Genealogy Portal, I received an amazing response. People throughout the country sent stories of their family buried in various sections of Waldheim. It confirms that the cemetery continues to be vital to many.

In *“Generation to Generation,”* well known genealogist Arthur Kurzweil wrote that “apart from the personal significance that a cemetery has for the survivors of someone who has died, cemeteries represent the history of people. Each stone is a lifetime, a family, a world.” Similarly, Waldheim connects, in one vast space, Jewish history and culture from the neighborhoods of Chicago’s West Side to Jews across the country’s Midwest, other parts of the United States, and the distant shtetls of Europe.

My ability to do detailed research for my book has increased greatly through current technology, but the gaps in first-hand information will also call on readers to fill in the book’s narrative with their own stories of Jewish Chicago and Waldheim.



Kalvaria, Gate 20. Kalvaria is in Lithuania, near Mariampole. This is the author’s Oppenheim family. Note the “tree-cut-down” symbol on the right.

## A Tale of Many Cultures: Clara Landsberg's Experiences at Hull House with Eastern European Jewish Immigrants and White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Social Workers

By Dr. Cynthia Francis Gensheimer

Clara Landsberg, a Jewish-born teacher, social worker, and pacifist, lived at Hull House in the room directly adjacent to Jane Addams's for roughly 20 years and made significant contributions to the Chicago settlement house. However, scholars have paid scant attention to her story until now, perhaps because she never sought prominence during her lifetime.<sup>1</sup> While researching her connection with Bryn Mawr College as part of a larger project on early Jewish women students at the Seven Sisters schools, I have discovered that shortly after graduating in 1897, Landsberg left Judaism to become Episcopalian. Afterward, she maintained ties with her influential Jewish parents but also became a member of the nation's Protestant elite and of an international sisterhood of pacifists. Like many leading women intellectuals and social workers of her day, Landsberg lived with her lifelong partner—a woman—in a predominantly female world. This article will provide an overview of Landsberg's biography, with a focus on her role at Hull House.

Clara was the daughter of a Jewish power couple: Rabbi Max Landsberg and Miriam (Isengarten) Landsberg, leading Jewish intellectuals and nationally known experts on charity administration, with 30 years of hands-on experience in helping the less fortunate in Rochester, New York.<sup>2</sup> Clara's parents had close working relationships with luminaries Jewish and non-Jewish, including Chicago's Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch, Hannah Greenebaum Solomon, and Jane Addams.<sup>3</sup> Closer to home, Susan B. Anthony attended the Landsberg congregation's annual interfaith Thanksgiving services and, in 1892, recommended Miriam Landsberg for a statewide position—although that position was ultimately filled by Anthony herself.<sup>4</sup> The Landsbergs helped lead efforts for social good in Rochester with their closest friends: the Unitarian minister William Gannett and his wife, Mary T. L. Gannett. Clara Landsberg followed her parents' example in many ways.

Clara can be taken as a case study in the difficulties that many Jewish women of her generation would have faced in attempting to achieve the Landsbergs' highest ideals. Clara graduated from the most intellectually rigorous women's college on the East Coast and, through her partner, Margaret Hamilton, became a member of one of the country's most elite Protestant families. Yet even after graduating from college and becoming Episcopalian, she was denied a job at a girls' preparatory school because she was still considered Jewish. This discrimination against Jews, even those who had left the faith, was leveled against a young woman of eminent qualifications and impeccable manners. It belied her own parents' fervent wish that Judaism should be considered only a religion, not a race, and that Jews should find full acceptance in American society.

Born in Rochester in 1873, Clara—and her two younger sisters, Rose and Grace—attended Miss Cruttenden's School for Girls, which offered a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, but also equipped its students for lives of simple refinement. Although their social world was predominantly Jewish, they had Christian friends as well. At Rose's confirmation, Rabbi Landsberg enjoined the teenagers coming of age in his Reform congregation to take a rational approach to religion and to determine their beliefs for themselves without feeling bound by tradition.<sup>5</sup> As the Landsberg children would have known, Susan B. Anthony and Mary T. L. Gannett had done exactly that by becoming Unitarians after growing up as Quakers.



**Clara Landsberg in her early years**  
Photo courtesy of Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute,  
Harvard University



Link: Rochester Public Library Local History Division

**Rabbi Max Landsberg, an esteemed Rochester, New York, clergyman**

Photo courtesy of Monroe County Library System, New York

At Bryn Mawr College, Clara met her future life partner: Margaret Hamilton, daughter of an upper-class WASP family in Fort Wayne, Indiana.<sup>6</sup> Clara also became acquainted with Margaret's sisters: Alice Hamilton, who would later establish the field of industrial medicine, and Edith Hamilton, who would famously popularize classical Greek and Roman mythology.<sup>7</sup> Bryn Mawr, founded by Quakers, advertised itself as "pervaded by a simple and practical Christianity" and required daily chapel attendance.<sup>8</sup> Clara, the only Jew of roughly 50 students in her graduating class, lived on campus and studied classical and modern languages, with a concentration in Latin and Greek.<sup>9</sup> After their 1897 graduation, Clara and Margaret studied abroad at the Sorbonne and the University of Munich.<sup>10</sup>

Around 1900, Clara Landsberg moved to Hull House, where she would room with Alice Hamilton for the next two decades.<sup>11</sup> By the time Clara arrived, three-quarters of Hull House's clientele consisted of Jews from Chicago's Near West Side and other neighborhoods.<sup>12</sup> These Jews—mostly immigrants from Eastern Europe—came to learn English, attend lectures and concerts, and participate in drama, music, and debate clubs.<sup>13</sup> Despite their apprehensions with respect to Christian proselytizing, they predominated among the 9,000 people who visited Hull House each week.<sup>14</sup> Clara Landsberg earned her living by teaching German and history at a local girls' school; in her free time, she taught—and later supervised—the evening classes at Hull House.<sup>15</sup>

Jane Addams mentored Clara, who was initially in the unique position of being the only resident who had been born and raised Jewish. Jane Addams called her the "dean of our educational department"—in other words, supervisor of one of the settlement's core activities.<sup>16</sup> In 1908, a paragraph in the *Bryn Mawr Alumnæ Quarterly*—likely written by Clara herself—reported that she was living at Hull House to familiarize herself with the problems of immigrants living in "crowded" quarters. Rather than describing her students as Catholic or Jewish, Clara identified them by their various nationalities: "Italian, Greek, Russian, Roumanian, Polish, Armenian, and German."<sup>17</sup> She explained that they wanted to learn English not only to get good jobs, but also to "study subjects more or less remote from their daily work for much the same reasons that induce people of more fortunate neighborhoods to study Browning, Shakespeare, Ibsen, or Bernard Shaw."<sup>18</sup> During her early years at Hull House, Clara introduced her students—primarily Eastern European Jews—to some of the classic works of English literature.<sup>19</sup> According to Jane Addams, Clara possessed "an unusual power" as a knowledgeable teacher with an unassuming, quiet presence.<sup>20</sup> In addition, Landsberg had "many friends among the poor people of the neighborhood who are devotedly attached to her."<sup>21</sup> Two of those friends were Hilda Satt and Morris Levinson.

Hilda Satt's life was transformed through her long association with the settlement and its residents. Hilda, who had first visited Hull House as a young teenager in 1895, later became a member of one of Clara Landsberg's reading groups. Certain her mother would disapprove, Hilda had initially declined an Irish friend's invitation to attend that year's Hull House Christmas party. In her posthumously published autobiography, Hilda recalled her fear that she would be killed if she attended, because in Poland it had been dangerous for Jewish children to play outside on Christmas. She later wrote, "There were children and parents ... from Russia, Poland, Italy, Germany, Ireland, England, and many other lands, but no one seemed to care where they had come from, or what religion they professed ... I became a staunch American at this party."<sup>22</sup>

In one of the first reading groups Clara conducted at Hull House, she ignited a love of English literature in Hilda, who spoke Yiddish at home and had left school after fifth grade to work days sewing shirt cuffs. In addition to the books Clara assigned, Hilda was soon reading "every book I could borrow."<sup>23</sup> Only a few years earlier, Hilda's English vocabulary had been so limited that she did not yet know the word "mushroom." During a meal at Hull House, she had been served a mushroom omelet, of which she would later recall, "I was tortured with the question of whether the mushrooms were kosher."<sup>24</sup> Soon, however, Hilda counted authors like Dickens and Louisa May Alcott among her friends. Months after meeting Hilda, Clara presented her with a Christmas gift of a copy of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. Hilda would later recall this as her

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## Landsberg: A Tale of Many Cultures

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fondlest memory of “Miss Landsberg, ... a fragile, ethereal, gentle woman ... [who] opened new vistas in reading for me.”<sup>25</sup> With Clara Landsberg’s help, Hilda Satt became an exemplar of the path to Americanization and upward mobility that the settlement aimed to encourage.<sup>26</sup>

Another of Clara’s students, Morris Levinson, was, like many immigrants, eager to learn English and become an American citizen in the cultural as well as the political sense of the word. With Clara Landsberg as his mentor, he aspired to learn much more than basic skills of vocabulary, grammar, and usage.<sup>27</sup> Landsberg saved two letters that he wrote to her in 1905, while she was home in Rochester convalescing after a serious illness. In broken English, Morris expressed his concern that “Miss Landsberg” was “too sweet, and delicate, to be confind to bed of illness [sic],” reassured her that Ellen Gates Starr had taken him on as a pupil, and told her that he was studying a book she had given him to read: “*The Boys of 76*,” a collection of first-hand accounts of soldiers in the American Revolution:

“I bolive I should have to know the history of this Country ... I have resolved to read it over agan, so that I will remember everything better ... Miss Landsberg, I bolive this history will make me a throught citisin.”<sup>28</sup>

Morris also confided in Clara. He planned not to live solely seeking fun, “as a great many of people do,” but rather to “try to egicat [him]self as much as poseble” in order to “see the mining of this beautiful world and of the real uman life.”<sup>29</sup> Clara was not only a teacher but a role model for Morris Levinson: someone he admired and to whom he felt a deep sense of gratitude.

Although Hilda, Morris, and Clara had all been raised in Jewish homes, their similarities ended there. Clara’s highly educated, German-born parents spoke fluent English and shunned Yiddish. Like other Reform rabbis, Rabbi Landsberg jettisoned “superstitious forms and antiquated dogmas,” eliminating rituals he considered outmoded, such as Bar Mitzvah.<sup>30</sup> He endorsed the principles adopted by the Reform movement in its Pittsburgh Platform of 1885, but, like Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch of Chicago’s Sinai Congregation, he saw them as only the beginning rather than the end. In 1893, Rabbi Landsberg spoke in Chicago at the World Parliament of Religions, endorsing an expanded role for Jewish women in congregational life.<sup>31</sup>

Clara’s approach to Judaism was virtually the antithesis of that of many of the Jewish immigrants at Hull House. Her father decried Orthodoxy as well as Jewish nationalism. The Jewish immigrants—familiar and comfortable only with Orthodox Judaism—rejected Reform Judaism. Even those atheists, anarchists, and socialists who spurned all religion felt a connection to Yiddishkeit and Jewish peoplehood, concepts rejected by the Landsbergs and most Reform Jews. Did these immigrant Jews nonetheless recognize Clara Landsberg as ethnically Jewish, or did they see her as one of many Protestant residents of Hull House? Might they have accepted her precisely because they had no idea she was Jewish?

Addams and her cohort respected religious differences and tried hard to make Hull House welcoming to all.<sup>32</sup> Yet Jane Addams was motivated by her Protestant faith—especially by the literature and culture of social Christianity, which she described as a “renaissance of the early Christian humanitarianism ... with a bent to express in social service and in terms of action the spirit of Christ.”<sup>33</sup> Addams has been criticized for failing to grasp that for many Eastern European Jewish immigrants, Judaism was far more than a religion. On the other hand, features of Hull House that Orthodox Jews would have found off-putting—the Chi-Rho cross Addams always wore, the Christian artwork on display, the lack of kosher food—would not have offended the most liberal Reform Jews such as Clara Landsberg or her mother, Miriam Landsberg.<sup>34</sup>



Clara Landsberg’s Bryn Mawr College graduation portrait

Photo courtesy of Bryn Mawr College Library’s Special Collections





Landsberg in her middle years

Photo courtesy of Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University

Miriam Landsberg, Hannah G. Solomon, and other German Jews mirrored mainstream America's adulation of Addams. One of these Jewish admirers, Sara Hart, called Addams "the single, most influential citizen of my generation."<sup>35</sup> Miriam Landsberg visited Hull House frequently and helped spearhead efforts among affluent Jews to establish a settlement in Rochester. In 1905, after spending several weeks at Hull House, she wrote: "I do not wonder that any one who has ever lived at Hull House cannot bear to go back to ordinary life." She described the 21 residents (including her daughter Clara) as a "family" composed of "people of the finest minds" and life at Hull House as "simple, practical, ... ideal."<sup>36</sup>

Settlement work was popular among graduates of Bryn Mawr and similar colleges. Even so, it was not Clara's first career choice. She and Margaret had wanted to teach at the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore, but two of the school's most influential trustees, Mary Garrett and M. Carey Thomas (then president of Bryn Mawr College), refused to hire her because she was Jewish.<sup>37</sup> In 1899, Edith Hamilton (then headmistress of the Bryn Mawr School) wrote to M. Carey Thomas to apprise her of Clara's conversion:

"My sister has just written me that Miss Landsberg is about to become a member of the Episcopal church, and I have wondered whether this would make a difference in your and Miss Thomas' opinion that we could not offer her a position because she is a Jewess."<sup>38</sup>

Clara Landsberg's conversion made "not the least difference," either to Mary Garrett or to M. Carey Thomas, as Garrett explained in her response to Edith Hamilton:

"Our objection is one of policy and very few Jews employed in schools or colleges are Jews by religion; it never had occurred to us that Miss Landsberg was really an orthodox Jew. We are wholly unwilling to connect with the school in any capacity a Jew by race, and in view of our feeling of the financial unwisdom of such a step we think that Jews ought to be ruled out of court for the future in consideration of possible appointments."<sup>39</sup>

Yet Clara persisted. In 1900, M. Carey Thomas wrote to Mary Garrett saying, "The Jews enrage me. Is nothing in the world settled? Have Miss Landsberg & the Jews to come up perpetually. It is awfully bad policy."<sup>40</sup>

Clara remained at Hull House until 1920, when a Quaker organization sponsored her to travel to Vienna to perform postwar humanitarian relief work. Two letters of recommendation finally qualified her as a WASP and (therefore) fit to represent the U.S. abroad. Jane Addams provided a ringing endorsement, and Mary T. L. Gannett was careful to specify: "As a matter of information, Miss Landsberg, during her college course joined the Episcopal Church - and as far as I know is still a loyal member of that Communion."<sup>41</sup>

When Addams and her partner, Mary Rozet Smith, learned that Clara Landsberg had been accepted to the Quaker program, they both wrote letters of congratulation and farewell. Addams wrote, "I can't bear to think of H.H. [Hull-House] next winter without either Alice [Hamilton] or yourself."<sup>42</sup> Mary Rozet Smith wrote: "... no words will express ... [our] sense of desolation ... when we think of the year without you. ... J.A. and I have decided that it is like losing a mother and a child at once. ... With Alice in Boston and you in Vienna what will Hull-House be! It is too depressing to face."<sup>43</sup>

Did Max and Miriam Landsberg know that their daughter was no longer Jewish? In the 1899 letter announcing Clara Landsberg's conversion, Edith Hamilton had written, "Under the circumstances her family would prefer her not to be at home."<sup>44</sup> Yet there is no proof that Clara's parents did learn of her conversion. To all appearances, she maintained a positive relationship with her mother and father throughout their lives. In his final instructions

continued on following page

## Landsberg: A Tale of Many Cultures

continued from preceding page

to his children, Max Landsberg wrote, “[M]y life has been one of uniform happiness. The only serious trouble in my whole life has been the loss of my dear wife, your good mother.”<sup>45</sup>

As tolerant as Miriam was toward other beliefs, however, it is likely she would have cared deeply that Clara had left Judaism. At a national conference, as chair of the National Council of Jewish Women’s Committee on Religion, she worried that many German Jews were “given over entirely to materialism and indifference to all Jewish affairs.” She warned Jewish mothers that children raised without religion could “fall prey to ... pious sharks ... eager for souls.”<sup>46</sup> A few years later, she implored mothers to transmit a love of Judaism to their children “to preserve to our posterity that Judaism which gave Religion to the world.”<sup>47</sup> Despite Miriam’s fears, it is doubtful her daughter would have fallen prey to “pious sharks.” Rather, through exposure to Christianity at school and through her closest friends and role models, Clara rejected the most modern version of Judaism, one carefully crafted by her own parents, in favor of the Episcopal Church, which her father had criticized for what he saw as its strict adherence to ritual and creed.<sup>48</sup>

Part Two of this article will discuss Clara Landsberg’s becoming godmother to Jane Addams’ grandniece, Clara’s travels with Addams, and Clara’s own work as a pacifist, which was deeply informed by her connection with Addams. It will also document her retaining ties to her birth family, even as she joined the Hamilton family as well. And it will describe Landsberg’s trip to Germany with Alice Hamilton just after Hitler had come to power. In a letter to herself documenting the onset of the Holocaust, Landsberg would write, “I am a Jewess.”

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Even one of Clara Landsberg’s fellow residents, Francis Hackett, seemingly forgot her surname: “Miss Clara, of Bryn Mawr vintage, valiant, tense, souffrante, at once impatient and remorseful, indefatigable and worn-out.” Francis Hackett, “Hull-House: A Souvenir,” *100 Years at Hull-House*, eds. Mary Lynn McCree Bryan and Allen F. Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), 69.

<sup>2</sup>Max Landsberg, born in Berlin in 1845, was a rabbi’s son and a protégé of Abraham Geiger. *American Jewish Year Book 1903-1904*, 72; [http://www.ajarchives.org/AJC\\_DATA/Files/1903\\_1904\\_3\\_SpecialArticles.pdf](http://www.ajarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1903_1904_3_SpecialArticles.pdf). When Miriam Landsberg, who was born in Hanover in 1847, died, the *American Israelite* called her death a “loss to American Jewry.” *American Israelite*, April 25, 1912. Peter Eisenstadt, *Affirming the Covenant: A History of Temple B’rith Kodesh, Rochester, New York, 1848-1998* (Rochester: Temple B’rith Kodesh, 1999), ch. 2 and 3; Stuart E. Rosenberg, *The Jewish Community in Rochester, 1843-1925* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954). At a 1910 meeting of the National Conference of Jewish Charities, during Miriam Landsberg’s term as vice-president, Jane Addams gave the opening address, and Rabbi Landsberg served as delegate representing the Jewish Orphan Asylum of Western New York, which he had co-founded and led for decades. *Sixth Biennial Session of the National Conference of Jewish Charities in the United States Held in the City of St. Louis, May 17th to 19th, 1910* (Baltimore: Kohn & Pollock, 1910). *American Israelite*, February 5, 1914, 3. Rabbi Landsberg was elected president of the New York State Conference on Charities and Correction in 1910, when Miriam Landsberg was the outgoing vice-president. “Conference of Charities Holds Three Busy Sessions,” *Democrat and Chronicle*, November 17, 1910, 17.

<sup>3</sup>As chair of the Committee on Religion of the National Council of Jewish Women, Miriam Landsberg worked closely with Hannah G. Solomon, the organization’s founder. Susan B. Anthony wrote to Miriam Landsberg, giving instructions for a meeting of the National Council of Women in Washington, D.C., and letting her know that Hannah G. Solomon and Sadie American had already arrived. Susan B. Anthony to Miriam Landsberg, February 12, 1899, University of Rochester Archives. After Hannah G. Solomon’s daughter, Helen, visited the Landsbergs in 1902, Rabbi Landsberg wrote to Hannah telling her what a “great treat” it had been to have her visit: “Helen reminds me so much of you, although she looks more like the best husband on earth.” He signed the letter, “With love for your husband and all the sisters within your reach.” Max Landsberg to Hannah G. Solomon, April 2, 1902. Helen Solomon Wellesley Correspondence, Hannah G. Solomon Family Collection, MC 749, American Jewish Archives. For the working relationship among Rabbi Hirsch, Hannah G. Solomon, and Jane Addams, see Rina Lunin Schultz, “Striving for Fellowship: Sinai’s Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch and Hull-House’s Jane Addams, A Not-So-Odd Couple,” unpublished manuscript, February 24, 2015.

<sup>4</sup>Ida Husted Harper, *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony* (Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill, 1898), 2:730. In 1891, Susan B. Anthony, Rabbi Landsberg, and Rev. William C. Gannett spoke at the annual Thanksgiving service. “The Benefits of Unrest,” *Democrat and Chronicle*, November 27, 1891, 6.

<sup>5</sup>Rochester, N.Y.,” *American Israelite*, June 20, 1889, 2.

<sup>6</sup>For background on Bryn Mawr College, see Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women’s Colleges from Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984) and Horowitz, *The Power and Passion of M. Carey Thomas* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994).

<sup>7</sup>For a significant biographical work on the nature of Clara Landsberg’s relationship with Margaret Hamilton, as well as Edith’s connection to Bryn Mawr College and the Bryn Mawr School, see Judith P. Hallett, “Edith Hamilton,” *The Classical World* 90, nos. 2/3, Six Women Classicists (November 1996-February 1997): 107-147.

<sup>8</sup>*Bryn Mawr College Program 1892* (Philadelphia: Sherman & Co., 1892), 77.

<sup>9</sup>Clara Landsberg’s student transcript, Bryn Mawr College Archives. Religious affiliations researched by the author.

<sup>10</sup>Clara Landsberg’s alumna record, Bryn Mawr College Archives. Sandra L. Singer, *Adventures Abroad: North American Women at German-speaking Universities, 1868-1915* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 75, 212.

<sup>11</sup>Presumably by the time that Clara Landsberg moved to Hull House, she had become a member of the Episcopal church, but evidence surrounding the conversion is scanty, and that surrounding the exact dates of Clara Landsberg’s tenure at Hull House is contradictory. For Alice Hamilton’s experience at Hull House, see Alice Hamilton, *Exploring the Dangerous Trades* (Fairfax, Virginia: American Industrial Hy-

giene Association, 1995), ch. 4 and 5; Barbara Sicherman, *Alice Hamilton: A Life in Letters* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984), 3-4, 5, 115-136, 139-141, 144-152, 182, 244. Both Hamilton's and Sicherman's books are valuable resources that contain references to Clara Landsberg throughout.

<sup>12</sup>Hannah G. Solomon, introducing Jane Addams as a speaker at a national convention of the National Council of Jewish Women. "General Council of Hebrew Women Meets," *The Washington Times*, December 3, 1902, 2.

<sup>13</sup>Philip Davis, "Educational Influences," in *The Russian Jew in the United States*, ed. Charles S. Bernheimer (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The John C. Winston Co., 1905), 217.

<sup>14</sup>Hull House was not the only center serving immigrant Jews in its neighborhood. German Jews in Chicago organized their own institutions, and, in fact, Jane Addams mediated between the German and Eastern European Jews when the Jewish-run Maxwell Street Settlement was established a few blocks from Hull House. The first organizational meeting, held at Hull House in 1892, nearly disbanded due to the terrible arguing between the immigrants and the German Jews who convened the meeting. In an essay titled "A Resented Philanthropy," one of the immigrants at the meeting later credited Addams with reestablishing civility. He said, "The 'culture' which was to emanate from the settlement and permeate all corners of the Ghetto was conspicuously absent from the heated discussion of the 'enlightened' benefactors." In 1907, 150 people visited Hull House weekly to lecture, teach, or supervise clubs. For Hull House's purpose, the names of its residents, and its weekly attendance, see *Hull-House Year Book 1907*, 5-6 (Archive.org, <https://archive.org/details/hullhouseyearboo1906hull/page/38/mode/2up?q=jewish>).

<sup>15</sup>Clara's work evolved over time. She worked full-time at Hull House for one year, but finding that too difficult, she eventually taught at the University School for Girls (Miss Haire's). Alice Hamilton to Agnes Hamilton, [mid-June? 1902], in Sicherman, *Alice Hamilton*, 142-143. Clara Landsberg's alumna record, Bryn Mawr College.

<sup>16</sup>Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 437 (A Celebration of Women Writers, ed. Mary Mark Ockerbloom, <https://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/addams/hullhouse/hullhouse.html>).

<sup>17</sup>Italians came to predominate during Clara's second decade. In 1902, the Chicago Tribune reported on a "Hebrew invasion" in the "crowded west side district": "As soon as a Jewish family gets a foothold in a tenement other occupants vacate." "Races Shift Like Sand," *Chicago Tribune*, September 26, 1902, 13.

<sup>18</sup>*Bryn Mawr Alumnæ Quarterly Vol. 1-2 1907-1909* (Bryn Mawr, PA: Bryn Mawr Alumnæ Association, 1907-1909) (<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/214021114.pdf>).

<sup>19</sup>Francis Hackett wrote in his memoir: "Russian Jews and Jewesses came in great numbers to the classes at Hull House, and had special leanings toward literature" (72). Some English classes were composed entirely of Jews. Philip Davis, "Intellectual Influences," in *The Russian Jew in the United States*, ed. Charles S. Bernheimer (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The John C. Winston Co., 1905), 217.

<sup>20</sup>Jane Addams to Anita McCormick Blaine, June 29, 1901, Anita McCormick Blaine Correspondence and Papers, 1828-1958, Wisconsin Historical Society (Jane Addams Papers Project, <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/1015>).

<sup>21</sup>Jane Addams, American Friends' Service Committee (AFSC) letter of recommendation for Clara Landsberg, May 1, 1920. AFSC Archives.

<sup>22</sup>Hilda Satt Polacheck, *I Came a Stranger: The Story of a Hull-House Girl* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 51-52, 66.

<sup>23</sup>Polacheck, *I Came a Stranger*, 66.

<sup>24</sup>Polacheck, *I Came a Stranger*, 66.

<sup>25</sup>Polacheck, *I Came a Stranger*, 66-67.

<sup>26</sup>In 1905, Hilda Satt took over supervision of the evening classes in Clara's absence. In 1906-07, she taught beginners' English at Hull House. Jane Addams to Clara Landsberg, July 4, 1905, Clara Landsberg Papers, University of Illinois at Chicago Library (Jane Addams Papers Project, <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu/items/show/840>); *Hull-House Year Book 1906-1907*, 8.

<sup>27</sup>Addams noted the frequency with which young Jewish men who had patronized Hull House also graduated from high school with help from their parents and then managed on their own to go on to college. *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, 346.

<sup>28</sup>Morris Levinson to Clara Landsberg, May 26, 1905, Additional Papers of the Hamilton Family, 1850-1994, box 13, 83-M175-94-M77, Schlesinger Library. Levinson's letters are quoted as written, without corrections as to spelling, grammar, or usage.

<sup>29</sup>Morris Levinson to Clara Landsberg, n/d, Additional Papers of the Hamilton Family, 1850-1994, box 13, 83-M175-94-M77, Schlesinger Library.

<sup>30</sup>"Dr. Landsberg's Closing Lecture," *Jewish Tidings*, March 30, 1888, 19.

<sup>31</sup>Max Landsberg, "The Position of Woman Among the Jews," World Parliament of Religions, Chicago, Illinois, 1893 (GoogleBooks, [https://books.google.com/books?id=q2U-AAAAYAAJ&pg=PA241&dq=%22max+landsberg%22+%22The+Position+of+Woman+among+the+Jews%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi-3aifgMLPAhUK\\_4MKHRbLCOIQ6AEIIDA#v=onepage&q=%22max%20landsberg%22%20%22The%20Position%20of%20Woman%20among%20the%20Jews%22&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=q2U-AAAAYAAJ&pg=PA241&dq=%22max+landsberg%22+%22The+Position+of+Woman+among+the+Jews%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi-3aifgMLPAhUK_4MKHRbLCOIQ6AEIIDA#v=onepage&q=%22max%20landsberg%22%20%22The%20Position%20of%20Woman%20among%20the%20Jews%22&f=false)).

When virtually no other rabbi in America would perform an interfaith marriage, both Hirsch and Landsberg did so. Rosenberg, *The Jewish Community in Rochester*, 93-94. Tobias Brinkmann, *Sundays at Sinai* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 136.

<sup>32</sup>In *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, Addams explained that over time, she and the other residents abandoned Protestant evening prayer, and their demographic composition at least in part reflected the make-up of the neighborhood, including Catholics and Jews, "dissenters and a few agnostics." Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, 448-449. Rivka Shpak Lissak has claimed that although many traditional Jews avoided Hull House, it "had a closer relationship with the marginal Jewish elements, the assimilationists and the radicals." Lissak, *Pluralism and Progressives: Hull House and the New Immigrants, 1890-1919* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 80.

<sup>33</sup>Rima Lunin Schultz wrote: "For Addams, who affixed a Chi-Rho Cross to her bodice, her work at Hull-House was religious; yet by establishing her settlement as an independent association without ties to any religious organization, university, or other agency, and by not requiring religious worship or religious education, she set out to spread a Christian humanism that she envisioned as cosmopolitan and democratic, inclusive and tolerant. Did this mean that she resolved to exclude religious ideas from Hull-House? I would argue that this has been an area of misunderstanding about Addams's intentions." Rina Lunin Schultz, "Jane Addams, Apotheosis of Social Christianity," *Church History* 84, no. 1 (March 2015): 207.

<sup>34</sup>Many Eastern European Jewish immigrants were strongly attached to Jewish culture and Zionism, even as they lost their connection to Jewish worship. Jane Addams wanted children of immigrants to respect their parents, yet she also saw that many old customs and religious traditions made no sense to the younger generation and in some cases held them back. Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, 247-248; Rivka Shpak Lissak, *Pluralism and Progressives*, 80-94. In contrast, on a family trip to Germany when Clara was 10 years old, the Landsbergs had appreciated the aesthetic value of medieval Christian architecture, such as the Hildesheim cathedral. Clara Landsberg, "Leaves from My Diary," 1887, 1-4, Additional Papers of the Hamilton Family, 1850-1994, 83-M175-94-M77, box 13, folder 81, Schlesinger Library.

## Landsberg: A Tale of Many Cultures

continued from preceding page

<sup>35</sup>Sara Hart wrote of Jane Addams, "It was my pleasure to know her intimately for more than thirty years." Sara L. Hart, *The Pleasure is Mine: An Autobiography* (Chicago, Illinois: Valentine-Newman, 1947), 82. Hannah G. Solomon considered Jane Addams a leader of "all humanity" and "the greatest woman of our century." Jane Addams inspired Jewish women at the NCJW's third biennial in 1902, which Solomon attended as president and Miriam Landsberg as vice-president (Hannah G. Solomon, "Council Welfare Work Forty Years Ago and Today," 4, n/d, Hannah G. Solomon Collection, Library of Congress, box 11, folder 5).

<sup>36</sup>"Sings Praises of Hull House," *Democrat and Chronicle*, March 17, 1905, 10.

<sup>37</sup>To understand Mary Elizabeth Garrett and the early history of Bryn Mawr School, see Kathleen Waters Sander, *Mary Elizabeth Garrett: Society and Philanthropy in the Gilded Age* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2008).

<sup>38</sup>Edith Hamilton to Mary Garrett, April 18, 1899, Bryn Mawr College Archives, Papers of M. Carey Thomas, reel 214.

<sup>39</sup>I am indebted to Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, who cites this letter and gives a good overview of M. Carey Thomas's antisemitism in *M. Carey Thomas*, 230–32, 267, 486. Mary Garrett to Edith Hamilton, April 24, 1899, Bryn Mawr College Archives, Papers of M. Carey Thomas, reel 214.

<sup>40</sup>M. Carey Thomas to Mary Garrett, September 26, 1900, Bryn Mawr College Archives, Papers of M. Carey Thomas, reel 23, nos. 37–39.

<sup>41</sup>Mary T. L. Gannett, letter of recommendation, May 4, 1920, Clara Landsberg's personnel file, AFSC Archives.

<sup>42</sup>Jane Addams to Clara Landsberg, August 7, 1920, Hamilton Family Collection, 84-M210, box 1, folder 7, Schlesinger Library. Alice Hamilton had just been appointed the first woman professor at Harvard's School of Medicine.

<sup>43</sup>Mary Rozet Smith to Clara Landsberg, August 7, 1920, Hamilton Family Collection, 84-M210, box 1, folder 7, Schlesinger Library.

<sup>44</sup>Edith Hamilton to Mary Garrett, April 18, 1899.

<sup>45</sup>Max Landsberg to his children, January 16, 1918, Max Landsberg SC 6602, American Jewish Archives.

<sup>46</sup>"The Council's Report on 'Religion,'" *The Reform Advocate*, March 24, 1900, 167 (The National Library of Israel, <https://www.nli.org.il/en/newspapers/?a=d&d=refadv19000324-01.1.11&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxTI-%22miriam+landsberg%22-----1>).

<sup>47</sup>Miriam Landsberg, "Report of Committee on Religion," *The Reform Advocate*, January 3, 1903, 452 (The National Library of Israel, <https://www.nli.org.il/en/newspapers/refadv/1903/01/03/01/article/29/?srpos=12&e=-----190-en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxTI-landsberg+committee+on+religion-----1>).

<sup>48</sup>Max Landsberg criticized Episcopalians for requiring members to "believe in the forty-nine articles of faith" and Presbyterians for the Westminster catechism. "What is Judaism?" *Democrat and Chronicle*, November 22, 1899, 11. The Hamilton sisters, whose family Clara Landsberg joined, had been reared in the Presbyterian congregation founded by their grandfather, but, as children, they preferred the small Episcopal church on Mackinac Island, where they spent their summers. For a thorough discussion of the Hamilton sisters' religious upbringing, see *The Education of Alice Hamilton*, eds. Matthew C. Ringenberg, William C. Ringenberg, and Joseph D. Brain (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), esp. 13–14, 23–24. For a discussion of religion among the residents of Hull House, see Eleanor J. Stebner, *The Women of Hull House: A Study in Spirituality, Vocation, and Friendship* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

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## CJHS members... YASHER KOACH!

*The Hebrew phrase means  
"More Power to You."*

CJHS Board member **Rachel Heimovics Braun** had a letter published in the May 2022 *Hadassah* magazine about her family's early support of the ordination of female rabbis within Judaism's Reform movement.

CJHS social media director **Nathan Ellstrand** received his doctorate in history from Loyola University Chicago this past spring. Nathan is the Arthur J. Schmitt Fellow at Loyola and a Visiting Student Researcher at the University of California, Berkeley. His academic interests include the United States–Latin American transnational history, ideology, and borderlands. His Ph.D. dissertation was on the anti-communist, Catholic, and nationalist Mexican Unión Nacional Sinarquista (National Synarchist Union) within the context of the United States during World War II.

CJHS Co-President **Dr. Rachelle Gold** made a Zoom presentation on Chicago's Three Patriots statue to the Senior Connections affiliate of North Shore Congregation Israel this past May. Following her spring 2022 CJHS Co-President's column on her Jewish activism as an undergraduate at Northwestern University, she returned to her alma mater to talk to Professor Sara Hirschhorn's Jewish Studies class about her experiences on campus in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

CJHS Board member **Jacob Kaplan** served on the committee that rededicated Chicago's Kolmar Park in honor of the late Jewish poet, Gertrud Kolmar.

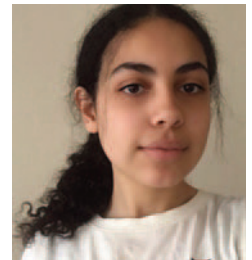
CJHS member **Rabbi Leonard Matanky** was quoted and photographed in an April 2022 *Chicago Sun-Times* article about the rising incidence of antisemitic acts, both locally and nationally. Rabbi Matanky is the rabbi

of Congregation K.I.N.S. in Chicago's West Rogers Park and the dean of the Ida Crown Jewish Academy.

CJHS member **Alice Solovy**, a published poet, taped a segment about her poetry. It was screened at the April 2022 Hadassah meeting at Skokie's Temple Beth Israel, where many of her poems have been read at Friday night Shabbat services.

## CJHS Sponsors Chicago History Essay Award

The CJHS is pleased to announce that this year's Muriel Robin Rogers Jewish History Award, an honor bestowed on a Chicago area high school student for a project addressing an aspect of Chicago Jewish history, went to a Chicago public high school student Sarah Mostafa for her paper "The Maxwell Street Market vs. UIC Expansion: The Fight Against Relocation." The award is named in honor of a CJHS founder, first president, and longtime leader, who died in 2019.



Essay winner  
Sarah Mostafa

Mostafa recently completed the 10th grade at Chicago's Lincoln Park High School. Her interest in writing about Maxwell Street—which had been a vibrant commercial strip in the heart of the city's Jewish community more than 100 years ago—was piqued, she said, by seeing "the many statues in memory of the once lively market known as the original Maxwell Street Market....I was interested in learning about what was once there."

The Muriel Robin Rogers Award is part of a series of awards distributed through the Chicago History Museum, which yearly invites high school students to submit a research project in conjunction with its Chicago Metro History Day.

## Correspondence from Members and Friends

In response to the Spring 2022 "Have an Eggroll, Mr. Goldstone" article:

Our family moved to Northbrook in 1958. It did not have the big Jewish population that is there today. In those first few years, it seemed that we were never far from Devon Avenue. My mother's parents, Little Bub and Grandpa Jack, lived in East Rogers Park on Pratt Boulevard. Our typical trip to Pekin House included a stop at Slivka Shoes, also on Devon. After we got our fill of Stride Rite Shoes, we'd beg Mr. Slivka to turn on the "Cow Jumps Over the Moon" machine that was on the wall. Okay, it doesn't sound like much, but in 1959, it was pretty cool to an 8-year-old.

Then our party of seven would go to Pekin House. When it came time to order, my mother and Little Bub would walk downstairs to the basement bathroom and wait. Why? Blame it on "*The Chinese Waiter*" comedy album by Jewish comedian Buddy Hackett. Little Bub and my mother were unable to control themselves when our own Chinese waiter took our order. They kept thinking about the Hackett's record. All you had to say was "Two from Column A and one from Column B," and my mother and Little Bub were unable to suppress their laughter. My father and Grandpa Jack were infuriated by their behavior.

Like many Jewish kids, I also thought that pork and shrimp in a Chinese restaurant were OK. If sweet and sour pork were wrong, why were the other Jews in this restaurant enjoying it so much?

Our typical order: beef chop suey, chicken chow mein, the seemingly permissible sweet and sour pork, egg rolls or a pupu platter, and egg drop soup. Rice and tea magically arrived without having to be ordered. Of course, we loved the almond and fortune cookies.

Maybe it was my imagination, but it seemed that as time went on, more treyf appeared, such as barbecued spareribs and barbecued pork appetizers. We were introduced to shrimp in lobster sauce, which seemed like an exotic dish to us at that time. I have two brothers, and the three of us ate like "the Russians were in Evanston," as my parents would say.

The entire cost for a dinner for seven? I remember my dad leaving 17 dollars on the table.

### Jay Arbetman

Tai Sam Yon was a favorite Chinese restaurant for people at the University of Chicago and Hyde Park and South Shore residents. It was located on 63rd Street, just east of Dorchester Avenue, on the north side of the street. Outside were the elevated tracks that provided sound for diners as they ate.

One weekend in the late 1960s, my in-laws, Harry "Hershel" Hankin and Evelyn Hankin, came to visit their daughter, Myrna, and son-in-law, an aspiring Ph.D. candidate in American urban studies. They said they would take us to the restaurant of our choice. We suggested Tai Sam Yon.

When we entered the establishment, there were a few open tables. We were seated next to a couple trying to manipulate the food to their mouths with chopsticks. My father-in-law stopped, looked at them, and said, "Saul, how are you doing?" Saul was Saul Bellow, the famous author and professor on the Committee on Social Thought, who was there with his wife.

Bellow looked up, stared at Hershel, and said, "We were classmates in that English literature class at Tuley High School in 1932." The two then engaged in an animated conversation for several minutes before Bellow and his wife returned to the bowls of rice, egg rolls, egg foo young, and chow mein. Bellow told us that his friend Hershel was one of the characters in his novel "*Humboldt's Gift*." My father-in-law had often told us this story, but we assumed it was not necessarily so. Now, we had provenance.

Having not seen one another in almost 40 years, two nice Jewish boys reminisced, over egg rolls, about their Humboldt Park and Wicker Park neighborhoods in which they had spent their first two decades.

### Dr. Edward Mazur

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In response to the Spring 2022 article on the Jewish origins of WFMT:

Your wonderful article tells the distinctive story of WFMT. Thank you for including the role Dad, Newton Minow, played in securing its future. I learned from Dad that after WGN invested to upgrade WFMT, Dad worked with WGN on the gift of WFMT to WTTW in the face of objections about WGN dominance. WGN said it would give a further gift if WFMT could not make a profit. But it did make a profit! One reason was Dad's suggestion to merge the scheduled programming guides that had been separately published by WTTW and WFMT. The merger became the basis of *Chicago Magazine*, which made money and was sold for funds that went into WTTW's endowment.

Your exploration of the roles of Studs Terkel and Mike Nichols, along with those of Bernie and Rita Jacobs, underscores the value of imagining what will improve the world rather than simply meeting an existing "need." Many thanks!

**Martha Minow**, 300th Anniversary University Professor  
Harvard Law School

Thanks for your excellent essay about WFMT, which is still serving our community and is now heard digitally around the world. Keep up your fine reporting.

**Newton Minow**  
Former Chair, Federal Communications Commission

## Bakery and Community

continued from page 5

### But What Was Special?

A kosher bakery back then was not just a business. It was a service to and a reflection of its neighborhood. People shopping not only knew one another, but they also had a sense of shared experience.

If you weren't Jewish, you could still feel the 'Europe+Jewish+America' aura in the room, just like you would feel France if you walked into a patisserie in Paris. If you were Jewish, you knew, more or less, where everybody was coming from. You knew who was a Jewish scholar, an actor, on the Mercantile Exchange, a millionaire. You knew who bought their first house, who was a native, who was a greener. It was a more intimate world than Zoom, but nevertheless a world moving into a dynamic America. As playwright David Mamet, a Jewish South Sider, wrote, "Things change."

Our connection to the store changed, too. It was sold in the early 1980s. My father and uncle asked if I would take it over, and I declined. Although there is something wonderful about making food people like, there is nothing wonderful about waking up at 4:00 a.m. every day and working until late.

Still, after all of the changes, I am sentimental about seeing the store's name on a bag, even now. But no more free cookies...

## Co-President's Column

continued from page 3

As a worldwide phenomenon, Israeli dancing is not exclusive to Jewish people. In Israel, it is a Jewish activity, and Phil notes that at CID and in North America, most of the dancers are Jewish. However, in other countries, there is a mix of Jews and non-Jews. In some European countries, most participants are not Jewish.

Currently, CID operates with a hybrid model. Thursday night dancers who are vaccinated and masked can attend in person, or participants can attend via Zoom. As the director of CID, Phil handles the technical operations, business operations, the website ([chicagoisraelidancing.com](http://chicagoisraelidancing.com)), programming, and some of the teaching. Every week, he emails an announcement of the past week's playlist, the upcoming week's teaching list, and the links to videos of the dances to be taught. The website serves as a comprehensive resource about Israeli dancing.

Phil and Penny have promoted Israeli dancing around the world and are responsible for its continuity and vitality in Chicago. We have been enriched by their lifelong work. Plan a visit to Beth Emet on a Thursday night to see for yourself.

Look to the rock from which you were hewn

הביטו אל-צור חצבתכם



# chicago jewish historical society

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## IN THIS ISSUE

- Bakeries and Community: Shore Bakeries
- Jews in the Produce Business
- Life Lessons in the Jewelry Business
- Clara Landsberg and Hull House
- Revisiting Waldheim Cemetery
- Israeli Dancing in Chicago
- Remembering Clare “Chaikey” Greenberg
- Chicagoan Preserves His Grandfather’s Artistic Legacy
- West Rogers Park Jewish Photo Exhibit

**BONUS:** If you buy a new membership, it will last for the remainder of 2022—and the entirety of 2023. Act now!

### Our History and Mission

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society, founded in 1977, is in part an outgrowth of local Jewish participation in the United States Bicentennial Celebration of 1976. Forty-five years later, our mission remains the discovery, collection, and

### ABOUT THE SOCIETY

dissemination of information about the Jewish experience in the Chicago area through publications, open programs, tours, and outreach to youth and others interested in the preservation of Chicago Jewish history.

**Tribute Cards for Celebrations or Memorials** The card design features the Society’s handsome logo. Pack of five cards and envelopes \$36. Individual cards can be mailed for you from our office at \$5 per card, postage included. Mail your order and check to CJHS, P.O. Box 597004, Chicago, IL 60659-7004. You may also order online at our website.

**Back Issues of *Chicago Jewish History*** cost \$8 apiece. To request back issues, please email the Society at [info@chicagojewishhistory.org](mailto:info@chicagojewishhistory.org)

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**Membership** in the Society is open to all interested persons and organizations, and includes

- A subscription to our award-winning quarterly journal, *Chicago Jewish History*.
- Free admission to Society public programs. General admission is \$10 per person.
- Membership runs on a calendar year, from January through December. New members joining after July 1 are given an initial membership through December of the following year.

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