



chicago jewish history



**Hannah Greenebaum
Solomon (1858-1942)**

Save the Date! Sunday, December 12 – Open Meeting: “Hannah’s Daughters: The National Council of Jewish Women”

“Hannah’s Daughters: The National Council of Jewish Women” will be the subject of the next open meeting of the CJHS on Sunday, December 12, at Temple Beth Israel, 3601 West Dempster Street, Skokie. The program will begin at 2:00 p.m., and will be followed by a social hour with kosher refreshments.

A guest panel of three NCJW activists—Carole Levine, Dawn Brent, and Cindy Wolfson—will discuss the past, present, and future of the organization, which originated in our city. In 1893, Hannah Greenebaum Solomon was asked to organize the participation of Jewish women in the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. When Hannah and her recruits discovered that participation was not substantive, but would consist of pouring coffee and other hostess duties, they walked out. Hannah

then took matters into her own hands, building on the courageous action and volunteer work she had been leading for years in Chicago. By the end of the fair, Hannah and the accompanying delegate body of women had founded the NCJW, changing forever the role of American Jewish women and the nature of volunteerism.

Admission is free and open to the public. There is ample parking in the Temple lot. For further information, e-mail info@chicagojewishhistory.org or phone the Society office (312) 663-5634.

CJHS Elects Board Members, Board Elects New Officers

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society held its annual meeting on Sunday, October 24, 2010, at which the following nominees were re-elected to a three-year term on the Board of Directors:

Dr. Carolyn Eastwood, Herbert Eiseman, Clare Greenberg, Dr. Edward H. Mazur, and Burt Robin.

The entire Board then voted for officers of the Society from the slate of nominated Board members.

Elected to serve a two-year term:

Dr. Edward H. Mazur – President
Jerold Levin – Vice-President
Muriel Rogers – Secretary
Melynda Lopin – Treasurer

The year 2010 marks the end of the remarkable twenty-two-year presidency of Walter Roth. He has been the face and force of the CJHS for so long that the Chicago Jewish Historical Society is often spoken of as “Walter Roth’s organization.”

Although he has relinquished his office, Walter will remain an active member of our Board, and, we hope, continue to contribute his articles to *Chicago Jewish History*.

Burt Robin, our longtime vice-president, has also retired. But he has been re-elected to another term on the Board, and fortunately for the editor and readers of *Chicago*

Jewish History, he will continue in his role of expert proofreader.

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*Our
Authors
Special Book
Section
Begins on
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President's Column



Walter Roth

AFTER 22 YEARS AS PRESIDENT, AND 88 COLUMNS IN OUR QUARTERLY, I find myself at an unfamiliar junction; for the first time in more than two decades I am at a loss for words! But that won't stop me from trying to say what is both difficult and necessary. After these many years, I have decided to retire as president of this wonderful society that has come to mean so much to us all and to me personally.

Why retire now? Because it's high time to allow for a new voice to sound the call and for a new set of eyes to envision a new outlook for our organization. Lest anyone think that aging and acute vision problems contributed to my decision, I will address those prognosticators directly and say, "You're right." But beyond that, I feel satisfied in having pursued scores of subjects and interests, and feel fulfilled by the opportunities you have given me in this leadership role.

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society was founded in 1977 by persons who had been active in the American Bicentennial exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago and the local chapter of American Jewish Congress, of which I was an active past president.

I subsequently became a member of the CJHS, and through the efforts of Charles B. Bernstein—then program chair of the Society—I helped to organize the symposium, "The German-Jewish Emigration of the 1930s and Its Impact on Chicago." I soon found that the Chicago Jewish Historical Society and its activities appealed to me in profound ways. Even though I was an attorney by profession, history was my passion, and Chicago was the city that embraced me and my family after we escaped from Germany in 1938.

I became particularly attached to Dr. Irwin Suloway, a retired educator, and at that time the editor of the CJHS newsletter. He urged me to begin writing for the publication, which I did, as much as my legal work permitted. I became devoted to the regimen of researching a particular subject or area that fascinated me in the history of the vibrant Chicago Jewish community. In particular, I enjoyed learning about our distinctive local personalities—the leaders who made a difference and the ne'er-do-wells who left an imprint. I recall that my first article was about the circumstances of the Haymarket Riot and its aftermath.

Among the first projects I worked on as president was the republication of *The History of the Jews of Chicago*, the 1924 magnum opus of editor H.L. Meites. With funds provided by the Meites family, the Society successfully oversaw the printing of a fine, limited edition facsimile, providing an invaluable reference resource for scholars and laymen.

In 1997, the Society produced a film, "Romance of A People:

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Officers 2010–2011

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President

Jerold Levin

Vice President

Muriel Rogers*

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Melynda Lopin

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**Indicates Past President*

Chicago Jewish History

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Editor-Designer Bev Chubak

Editorial Board Burt Robin, Walter Roth, Norman D. Schwartz, Milton Shulman

Send all submissions to:

Editor, Chicago Jewish Historical Society, at street address or e-mail address shown above.

CJHS Elections *continued from front page 1*

President Edward H. Mazur previously served as the Society's treasurer and is a longtime member of the CJHS Board of Directors. Dr. Mazur earned his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. He is professor emeritus of the City Colleges of Chicago. The author of *Minyans for a Prairie City: the Politics of Chicago's Jewry, 1850-1940*, he has published more than 150 articles on ethnicity, urban history, politics, and transportation. He serves on the Boards of the Illinois Historical Society, World Chicago, and the City Club of Chicago.

Vice-President Jerold Levin serves as CJHS Program Committee Chairman. A career executive in the construction industry, Jerry is now retired from full-time work. He does some part-time work as an owner's representative and consultant for several of his longtime customers. He serves on the consulting group updating the Building Code of the City of Chicago.

Secretary Muriel Rogers is a member of the Program Committee. She was the founding president of the Society. After many years of residence in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Muriel and her husband Fred returned to live in Chicago, and she renewed her participation in the work of the Society. Muriel was named Secretary in Fall 2009 when Dr. Carolyn Eastwood announced her retirement from office after ten years of distinguished service.

Treasurer Melynda Lopin is co-chair of the Membership Committee and serves on the Program Committee. Owner of an industrial real estate company, Melynda has business expertise, knowledge of local history and culture, and a deep commitment to Jewish learning.

The Board of Directors election portion of the annual meeting was brief, and the voting for officers was conducted later, via e-mail. What drew over a hundred attendees to Wilmette's Beth Hillel Congregation Bnai Emunah was Irving Cutler's slide lecture, "Chicago's Jewish West Side."

Natives of the Lawndale, Garfield Park, and Austin neighborhoods retain strong feelings for the area that once housed forty percent of Chicago's Jewish population. A men's social and philanthropic organization, the GVS (Great Vest Side), is going strong, and there are reunions of elementary and high school classes.

The slide show brought chuckles and sighs: a neighborhood grocery store; dancing couples on the roof garden of the JPI; towel-clad fellows relaxing in the lower level *shvitz* of the 'J'; marquees of the neighborhood movie palaces; a Jewish man and wife shaking hands with their new neighbors, an African-American couple; and finally, scenes of the desolate streets after the riots of 1968 that followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Cutler noted that no riots occurred during the racial change of the late 1950s. He attributed the Jewish flight from the West Side mainly to the lack of single-family homes, which were starting to become available to Jews in other neighborhoods and in the suburbs.

Welcome, New Members of the Society

Yosef Davis
Chicago, IL

Abigail F. Elkins
Northbrook, IL

Moshe & Esther Laber
Chicago, IL

Sherwin & Jan Mishkin
Chicago, IL

Eric Rubenstein
Northfield, IL

Beverly Siegel & Howard Rieger
Chicago, IL

Ellis & Rebecca Sostrin
Northbrook, IL

Amy Tuchler
Northbrook, IL

Contributors to this issue:

Walter Roth is a practicing lawyer with Seyfarth Shaw Attorneys LLP. His valedictory "President's Column" begins on page 2.

Jeff Epton wrote "Bernie Epton and the Chicago Mayoral Race of 1983," that begins on page 4. His biographical notes follow the article.

Edward H. Mazur is the newly elected president of the CJHS. His article on educator Dr. Irving Barkan begins on page 16.

Joy Kingsolver is Head Archivist at the Shel Silverstein Archive in Chicago, and was Director of the Chicago Jewish Archives at Spertus from 1996 to 2008. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the CJHS. Her article on the Barkan Papers begins on page 17.

Bev Chubat has been the editor and designer of *CJH* since 1999. Her essay, "Walter Roth, An Appreciation," appears on page 19.

*Family Memoir***Bernie Epton and the 1983 Chicago Mayoral Election**

BY JEFF EPTON

Twenty-seven years ago, my dad, Bernie Epton, ran for mayor of Chicago in an election campaign that traumatized both him and the city he loved. The race, between Democrat Harold Washington and my Republican father, was probably the most racially and politically divisive campaign in the city's history. Though racial inequality and political corruption are pervasive elements of Chicago's history, the 1983 campaign added a new chapter.

More than 1.2 million city residents voted in the election—a number never reached in any other Chicago election. The campaign featured race-baiting, racially coded campaign messages, intemperate personal attacks, dirty tricks, and negative campaign literature produced by freelancing amateurs. It also featured many of the city's most powerful Democratic politicians declaring neutrality or, even support for Washington while their political cadre worked covertly or overtly for Epton. This stew of political toxins stirred old racial and ethnic animosities, initiated a sustained period of political stagnation and race-based political division, and created a new national notoriety for Chicago.

I do not pretend to know my father's thinking and state of mind throughout the campaign. Nor can I easily separate my opinions from a son's perspective on a father whose intellectual brilliance, mercurial temper and grand ambition were a part of my growing up. But I want to note some of the human complexities, strengths and frailties of a man who seems to be cast, in the prevailing views of the 1983 campaign, as a cunning racist or, alternatively, as a nonentity elevated to temporary celebrity. In my estimation, he was neither one.

Had one predicted in, say, 1976, that Washington and Epton, once congenial colleagues and political allies in the state legislature, would be the candidates for mayor of Chicago in an historic election seven years later, most people would have responded with skepticism. Bernie might well have been the Republican candidate, they would have agreed, but in a mayoral campaign that would be decided by four percent of the vote in a city that had been overwhelmingly Democratic for more than fifty years? Not likely.

Many would also have agreed that Washington would make a worthy candidate, my father included. But the city Democratic party's continuing ability to restrict African-American candidates to African-American constituencies would have made a

Washington victory in the Democratic primary appear unlikely to all but the most prescient observer.

Nothing in Bernie's background would have suggested the slightest reluctance to support a black candidate for mayor. He had served for years as the only white member of the Jane Dent Home for the Aged, the oldest retirement home for African-Americans in Illinois. After my sister Teri, brother Mark and I graduated from O'Keefe Elementary School on the South Side, Dad sent us to nearly all-black Hyde Park High School at a time when the vast majority of white children graduating from O'Keefe and from Parkside Elementary moved out of the district or went to private schools.

In 1968, after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, riots broke out in many cities across the country. In Chicago, eleven people died and millions of dollars in commercial property was vandalized and burned. In the aftermath of the riots, Dad, a rookie member of the Illinois State House at the time, had an intensely personal response to the crisis. He went to Memphis with my 17-year old brother Mark to join with that city's sanitation workers at a memorial march for King. It was only one of many acts of solidarity with African-Americans during his lifetime.

When Bernie announced he would retire from the state legislature at the end of his seventh term in 1982, news reports were favorable. "Epton gave me the best quote I have ever heard from a lawmaker. He once confessed that his greatest single accomplishment in Springfield was none of the bills he worked for or sponsored, but rather was in the number of bad bills he stopped from being passed," wrote Robert Bong in a 1982 column in *The Daily Calumet*.

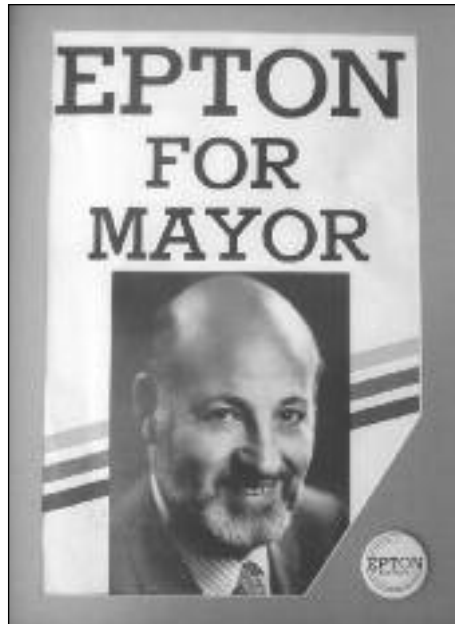
Bong noted that Bernie might end up being the Republican candidate for mayor of Chicago in 1983. He quoted State Rep. Phil Collins saying "there's not a finer man the GOP could nominate to run against Mayor Byrne or Rich Daley."

That sort of positive press was typical of the reviews Dad got for his legislative efforts. No observer familiar with his political career to that point would have anticipated Bernie's role in the divisive 1983 campaign. Much, if not most, subsequent media and academic analysis of that election is primarily concerned with the racial aspects of the campaign and how racism, prejudice and bigotry played out during the election. But even a casual review of that history makes clear that the political creativity, unity and maturity of the city's African-American community was a critical factor in Harold Washington's candidacy and eventual victories over Byrne and Daley in the primary and over Bernie in the general election. Washington's charisma and political independence helped establish him as a leader the black community could unite behind in an historic confrontation with Chicago's white Democratic Party establishment.

Though he could charm a room, Bernie didn't possess Harold's charisma. But they shared an ability to talk about public policy enthusiastically and exhaustively. In his fourteen-year-career in the Illinois House, Bernie had positioned himself as an important Republican ally of Chicago-area Democrats, working with them to hold off downstate conservatives and championing a liberal social agenda in Springfield.

Still, when Bernie decided in 1982 to seek the Republican nomination for mayor, no movement of any sort courted him to do so; no movement seemed to be waiting for a champion. And Bernie, a wealthy, politically moderate Jewish lawyer, would hardly have seemed the leader of choice for a white supremacist movement in the offing.

He did enter the race with a strategy, but it was not one that included mobilizing white voters on the South or Northwest sides of the city to provide the margin of victory against Jane Byrne or Richard M. Daley—the two candidates he thought were most likely to win the Democratic primary. Instead, Bernie imagined that he could put together a majority by appealing to voters with whom he felt a lifelong connection; blacks, reformers and lakefront liberals. Ironically, this was the coalition that would elect Harold Washington.



Campaign Poster and Button.
Courtesy of Dan and Gini Maxime.

Coincidentally, 1983 was an eventful year for me as well, though the drama would play out on a much smaller stage. I ran as a Democratic candidate for city council from the third ward in Ann Arbor, Mich. And defeated a Republican incumbent.

The turnout of a few thousand votes for me and my opponent added up to a mere three percent or so of the votes cast in the Washington-Epton election. But Dad's total of 11,000 votes in the Republican primary in February was an order of magnitude closer to my vote total than it was to the 400,000 votes that Washington won in the Democratic primary.

In defeating two prominent Chicago Democrats, Washington demonstrated the potential power of black unity. It soon became obvious that most white Democratic voters would not embrace Washington. Leading Democratic politicians sent plenty of signs that they would sit on their hands in the general election. Racial considerations became the central factor in developing campaign strategies for both Washington and Epton and in media coverage of the election.

The campaign had national implications, as well. Though Ronald Reagan had beaten Jimmy Carter badly in the 1980 presidential election, Republicans still faced an uphill battle in the big cities of the north. The sudden possibility of a viable Republican candidate for mayor of Chicago represented an opportunity the national party could not pass up.

Inevitably, the Chicago campaign attracted increasing interest from the national media, as well. In that context, Bernie's Democratic son, running for office in an April election in a community less than 250 miles from Chicago, became an interesting sidebar to the main story. As a result, I found myself talking to TV, radio and newspapers from Chicago and elsewhere. One particular interview with a Chicago news radio station stands out in memory.

I got a call early one morning from a reporter who wanted to discuss the progress of my campaign and my thoughts about Washington and Epton. I told the reporter who interviewed me that as a member of Democratic Socialists of America, I was politically much

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Bernie Epton *continued from page 5*

closer to Washington, who was himself a DSA contributor, than I was to my dad. I recall saying that there were many similarities between Washington's political platform and mine. Like Harold, I advocated increased public investment in black and low-income neighborhoods, more citizen control over police, and more accountability in city spending of block grants and other federal funds.

When I said that I believed Washington represented the legitimate aspirations of a community whose historic political moment had arrived, he asked me to talk more about my father. Dad, I told him, would make a good mayor. He was bright, capable, experienced and deeply devoted to the city. Who, then, would I vote for, the reporter asked.

I told him that I didn't know. It was one of those moments, I said, when one might not know until the moment to choose arrived.

Ultimately, my answer might have been a form of self-deception. Unable to say that I would likely vote for Washington, I persuaded myself that I didn't know. Perhaps I couldn't have voted against Dad. Even now it pains me to think about it.

Not half an hour after the early morning interview (6 a.m. Chicago time), Dad, preparing to begin another 16- to 18-hour campaign day, heard it. Listening, he may have concluded that I would vote for Washington. In the course of a seemingly endless, exhilarating, exhausting, adrenaline-soaked campaign, the notion that his son would not vote for him, and that others in Chicago heard me say so, proved too difficult for him to bear quietly. Angry, he called me.

How could you say such a thing, he asked. How could you think such a thing? My mother, he claimed, was distraught. Out of consideration for her, I should consider their home closed to me.

Dad's reaction wasn't unfamiliar. It wasn't the first time that he had banned me from his home, or claimed that such an action was necessary to protect Mom from further upset. The first such shunning came in 1967 after he reacted angrily to my activism against the Vietnam War, including publicly burning my draft card. Over the years that followed, my dissident stylings and Dad's establishment trappings would guarantee continuing conflict between us.

The vote in Ann Arbor came eight days before election day in Chicago. I won my election, by fewer

than 100 votes. That evening, as the Ann Arbor votes were tallied, Dad appeared on a call-in show on a Chicago TV station. My sister Dale reported later that she called the show while Dad was on the air.

Mr. Epton, she said, your son has been elected to the Ann Arbor City Council. Dad was visibly moved, Dale told me later. He choked up, she said, as he told host Peter Nolan how proud he was of me.

But it would be late September before Dad broke the silence between us with a telephone call to me, rare even at the best of times. He asked about his grandchildren, then invited me to come to Chicago for a baseball playoff game between the White Sox and the Baltimore Orioles, the first post-season playoff game in the city since the World Series in 1959.

Attendance at the game, at old Comiskey Park, turned out to be a way to experience an aspect of the 1983 campaign that I had not fully understood. As we walked to our seats, moments before the first pitch, the capacity crowd bubbled with excitement. But Dad's presence became a distraction. People in their seats recognized him and reached out to shake his hand. Before long, the chant of "Bernie, Bernie," a staple of the campaign, began to spread. Brother Mark and I trailed behind Dad, awed at a kind of enthusiasm for a public figure that I had never before witnessed in person. Pleased by the response, Dad smiled and waved. As the chant grew in intensity, I could feel the hair on the back of my neck and on my arms stand up, rubbing against collar and shirtsleeves. I had never before experienced such a sustained fight-or-flight response.

The scene put me in mind of film footage that I had seen of rallies in Nazi Germany. The moment was a visceral lesson in the passion and intensity of the campaign. If Dad were still alive, the suggestion that I would associate images of Nazi Germany with his campaign would rupture our relationship again. Nevertheless, for me that scene was stalked by overtones of triumphant mobs and images of historic injustice.

Dad clearly found the experience invigorating and, when we finally took our seats, he was more animated than I had seen him in years and more animated than I would ever see him again. He felt loved, but it seemed to me that he was deceived. The crowd loved the symbol he had become.

I am certain that same crowd would have rejected the Bernie Epton who persisted in his support of the public school system that other white politicians shunned. They would have rejected the Bernie Epton who routinely contributed to the NAACP and the Urban League. They would have rejected the Bernie

who went to Memphis in 1968. And they would have rejected the Bernie Epton who would have willingly supported Harold Washington in a campaign against Jane Byrne or Richie Daley had he, himself, not been a candidate.

It is hard to determine the level of Dad's responsibility for some of the politically and socially damaging features of his campaign. But newspaper accounts of some of his behavior during the campaign—his frequent sarcastic ridicule of the press, his occasional tense performances on camera, his sometimes abrupt departures from public events—suggest a man under stress. Such reactions should not be a surprise. He and longtime political allies were on opposite sides of a brutal campaign. His new political friends were people like Dick Mell, Ed Vrdolyak and Vito Marzullo, Democratic ward bosses all. Politicians whose machine politics and tight hold on power were symptomatic of everything Dad had previously rejected.

Others close to him were also new allies. People like Reagan political consultant John Deardorff, who had showed up in Chicago after Washington's primary victory, bringing with them an infusion of campaign cash and pushing aside the small team of friends and relatives who had run Dad's campaign before the primary. Into the bargain, Dad suddenly had a legitimate chance to be elected mayor of Chicago. His own parents were Jewish immigrants from Germany and Poland. They left family behind in Europe, but little else, and were rootless until they got to Chicago. They adopted the city and seemed to feel more like Chicagoans than Americans and they passed those feelings along to Dad and his siblings. Dad's notion of himself as a Chicagoan was

among the most rooted parts of his identity. To be mayor of Chicago had been an impossible dream, but an accident of history transformed everything. To win would be his crowning achievement.

In March an event at St. Pascal Catholic Church on the Northwest Side created some of the most powerful and frightening images of the campaign. Washington, accompanied by Democratic presidential candidate, Walter Mondale, paid a visit to the church at the invitation of St. Pascal's priest. But they were met outside the church and driven away by a screaming angry mob. The scene was reminiscent of a Southwest Side mob stoning an open housing march led by Martin Luther King, nearly 25 years earlier.

Such events, which drove even the most neutral observers to choose sides, were all too common. Dad's campaign was well aware that a variety of Democratic ward organizations and independent groups—some behaving like vigilantes—were organizing demonstrations and circulating racially charged literature.

By that point in the campaign, the Epton team had already decided to focus on what they regarded as the personal flaws that made Harold Washington unsuitable for leadership. The campaign focused on Washington's unfiled tax returns (though he owed no income tax), and on instances when Washington, as an attorney, had received payments from individuals who claimed that they had not been well or fully represented by him. In the overheated campaign, it was a near-certainty that Bernie would come to believe the charges he and his campaign leveled at Washington were the sum total of the man, a

proposition that he would not have believed under any other circumstances.

With the lines of difference and division increasingly clear, and an exclusive focus on how every comment would advance or set back the campaign, Dad spent little time repeating his early insistence that he did not want the votes of bigots. His campaign would not use or authorize bad behavior or racially inflammatory materials, he might say, but he refrained from condemning individuals and groups, even those publicly identified as responsible for divisive tactics.

People were being judged on hearsay and rumors, he would say. Epton supporters were people who believed he was better equipped to run the city, he said frequently, not people who were afraid of the possibility of a black man in the mayor's office. Critics of Bernie's campaign called such statements equivocations. It was well known that he could be quite blunt. A few years ago, journalist Carol Marin exchanged e-mails with one of Bernie's grandsons, Abraham Epton.

"I never believed then nor do I believe now that he was anything other than a man caught by the frantic forces of the moment," Marin wrote. "[But] nobody then heard him do what he was so capable of doing: fiercely repudiate supporters who took the color of his skin rather than the content of his character as their reason for [supporting him]."

The slogan "Epton, Before It's Too Late," became instantly controversial when it first appeared in television ads for Dad. Observers perceived it to be an overt attempt to mobilize white voters. Dad denied that, arguing that the phrase

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Bernie Epton *continued from page 7*

referred to the tenuous financial condition of the city and that Washington lacked the expertise to manage it. But the firestorm of criticism seemed to require a different response from him.

I do not want to suggest that Bernie can be blamed for all the worst features of the campaign. Republican operatives from outside the city had much responsibility for the course of the campaign. So did Republican supporters of Epton, Democratic party workers who abandoned Washington and campaign strategists who worked for Washington. And just as there is evidence that well-meaning supporters of both sides decried appeals for racial solidarity, there is ample evidence that activists on both sides believed that racial division offered the best chance to mobilize core voters on behalf of their candidate.

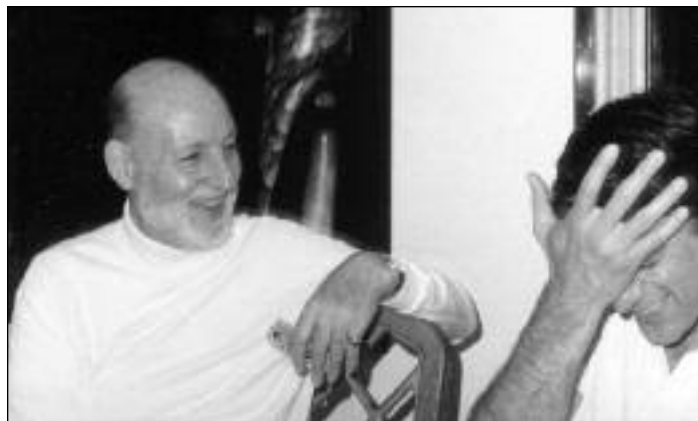
Even after the campaign, Dad continued to defend the slogan. "It might be of interest to you to note 'Epton Now, Before It's Too Late,' was proposed and decided upon prior to the knowledge that Harold Washington was to be my opponent," he wrote in a 1984 letter to a member of the political science faculty at the University of Illinois.

"It was made in the belief that Jane Byrne [would be] the primary victor and our greatest fault with her lay in her inept handling of federal, state and city funds. The same situation applied in the case of Harold Washington, especially in the handling of his own funds, and we saw no reason to alter our attack, which simply meant that a fiscal manager was imperative, before the city was bankrupt," Dad continued.

Taking him at his word, that the slogan was developed in anticipation that someone other than Washington would be the candidate, there remain some problems with the continuing use of the slogan. It was, after all, a stand-alone phrase with no obvious connection to a detailed fiscal critique.

Further, Dad was a sophisticated, experienced politician sensitive to racial issues. I am aware of no other instance in which he demonstrated such tone-deafness. Had he been an adviser to a campaign on the receiving end of such criticism, rather than the candidate, himself, I am near certain that he would have counseled the candidate to withdraw the slogan and make some statement of conciliation.

As Marin put it to my nephew, "the [slogan], for a man so skilled and smart, screamed the possibility of another, darker message."



Bernie and Jeff Epton laughing together.

Courtesy of Jeff Epton.

Though Dad's margin of defeat was small, the loss was large. A month after the election, he told *Chicago Tribune* reporter Cheryl Lavin that the election cost him his reputation. The campaign and the election were dirty, Lavin wrote, and Epton "got labeled a racist, his campaign was called low and mean."

He was sorry he ran, he told Lavin. "It took me 61 years to build [my reputation], and I saw it go down the drain." Lavin quoted my sister, Dale, who ran Dad's campaign in the primary and also worked for him in the general election. "And now he thinks it's his fault. Not just that life is tough," Dale said. "He thinks he let down his supporters, that he wasn't a good enough candidate. He thinks he's failed."

Lavin reflected on Dad's evident depression. "Failure doesn't come naturally to Epton," she wrote. "And he doesn't take to it well. He lost eighteen pounds from his already thin frame during the campaign, and he hasn't put it back yet. His clothes are loose on him, his shirt big around his neck. There is a sadness over him these days. It drags down his features and slows his gait, softens his voice. His eyes look wet...it is not his natural state."

Dad died less than four and a half years later. Harold Washington preceded Dad in death by less than three weeks. They are both buried in Oak Woods Cemetery on the South Side, a place where African Americans and Jews have rested together in death for a century or more. Personally, I rarely saw Dad happy after the campaign. In fact, his continuing sadness affected me so deeply that the single most important memento I have of him is a picture of us laughing together. It was a rare moment. Though publicly Dad blamed the media for the course of his campaign and its aftermath, I believe that his continuing sadness to the

end of his life was based in a deeply personal conflict. Some of the choices he made during the campaign were antithetical to his sense of himself as a man motivated by idealism. Shattered by his experience, he didn't have the will to say that he had let himself down.

Two years after the campaign, Dad had an encounter with Timuel Black, an old ally. Tim is something of an iconic figure on the South Side and in liberal circles. A retired public school teacher, a political activist, a civil libertarian, and an historian of the black migration to Chicago in the early twentieth century, Tim is a lifelong Democrat who worked for a Republican only once; for Dad in his 1976 campaign for re-election to the state legislature. Sadly, Dad told Tim that he had been abandoned by all his African-American friends over the 1983 campaign. "No," Tim responded. "You abandoned us." When Tim tells the story, he does so with regret over the personal tragedy of it all. But it is a tragedy that teaches important lessons.

My understanding of the campaign separated me from many others in my family (including Bernie), who preferred a story that laid less blame on Dad. But denial of responsibility did little to ease Dad's pain during the last four years of his life. In private, he may not have spared himself rough judgment, but perhaps because he could not take public responsibility, he could not find peace. It was a difficult place to be at the end of his life. If he taught me anything, it was to speak the truth and act on what you believe. Compromise with that and risk everything.

The broader lesson, I think, has to do with the role that race has played in shaping our individual lives, our behaviors, our dreams, our culture and our politics. Race distorts us, blinds us to our motives, sometimes

tests our character beyond our limits. So it should be no surprise when race is a factor in our failure to realize our most important aspirations for ourselves and for others. It therefore seems clear that if we do not accept and address the pervasiveness of racism in our history, our culture, and our politics, we will bear perennial witness to the individual and collective tragedies it causes.

In the early '70s, after a few years in the legislature, Dad began writing a regular column in *The Hyde Park Herald*. He sent one of those columns to me after it was published. I still have it, and though it does not mention race, I think what he wrote captured the real essence of him as a person and a politician.

"...after five years in Springfield," he wrote, "the power of the 'Establishment' has painfully penetrated. I was always aware of the power inherent in the major industries and professions, but it is somewhat devastating to see the extent to which they can prevent the passage of legislation not to their liking...my only purpose in making these comments is to renew your individual desire to continue an unceasing fight against the power brokers who permeate every moment of our life...to those of you who...intend to continue fighting the establishment, good luck. I only wish there were more like you."

To me, that column reads like a personal letter from Dad. Despite our differences, he was telling me to keep up the good fight. That's what I thought he did most of his life and what he intended his legacy to be. That it is not his legacy tells us something important, I think; that powerful social forces can bend and break the best of us, causing us to act against our better selves. We forget that lesson at our peril. ♦

JEFF EPTON served on the Ann Arbor City Council from 1983 to 1989. He has been a writer and political activist for the last forty years. He and his wife, Marrienne McMullen, founded the Dayton Voice, an alternative weekly newspaper, in 1993 and worked there for seven years. He lives now with his family in Washington, DC and writes and blogs at inandoutwithjeff.blogspot.com and at outdoorpoetry.blogspot.com.



Bernie Epton 1983 campaign buttons; Harold Washington 1983 and 1987 buttons. Courtesy of Dan and Gini Maxime.

Our Authors

HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF CHICAGO. Edited by Hyman L. Meites. The Chicago Jewish Historical Society's 1990 facsimile of the original 1924 edition, with supplement excerpts from the 1927 edition. New introduction by James R. Grossman. Foreword by Thomas R. Meites and Jerome B. Meites. Hundreds of biographical entries; synagogue and organization histories; index. Illustrated with black and white photographs and drawings. 856 pages. Printed in a limited edition. *Sold out.*

Reference copies can be found at the Chicago Public Library, Harold Washington Library Center, 400 South State Street, and the Asher Library, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, 610 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago.

SYNAGOGUES OF CHICAGO.

Edited by Irving Cutler, Norman D. Schwartz, and Sidney Sorokin. Project supervised by Clare Greenberg. 1991. A compilation of synagogue listings in Chicago city directories since 1851. Includes street address; name of rabbi; and names of officers if available. *Reference copies can be found at HWLC and Asher Library.*

THE GERMAN-JEWISH EMIGRATION OF THE 1930S AND ITS IMPACT ON

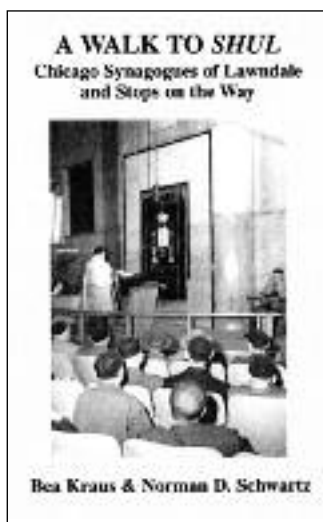
CHICAGO. By Walter Roth. 1980. Text of speeches at a CJHS symposium held at Congregation Ezra-Habonim in 1979. Illustrated. 24 pages. Paper \$4.00*

THE CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY: A Ten Year History. Edited by Irwin J. Suloway. 1988. Illustrated. 24 pages. Paper \$4.00*

CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORY: INDEX 1977-2002. Compiled and Edited by Adele Hast. 2002. Covers the first twenty-five years of our quarterly publication. 23 pages. Paper \$4.00*

CHICAGO JEWISH HISTORY: 1977—Present. Single copies of our quarterly dating from the the first issue. Each \$4.00*

**Price includes postage. Prepay by check to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society office.*



A WALK TO SHUL: Chicago Synagogues of Lawndale and Stops on the Way. By Bea Kraus and Norman D. Schwartz. Chicago Jewish Historical Society. 2003. A nostalgic street-by-street stroll past the impressive synagogues, the modest *shtibeleh*, the schools, businesses, and community buildings of the West Side. Illustrated with black and white photographs. 159 pages. Neighborhood grid map enclosed. Paper \$22.95

Price includes postage. Prepay by check to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society office.

DVD: ROMANCE OF A PEOPLE: The First 100 Years of Jewish Life in Chicago: 1833-1933. Beverly Siegel, Executive Producer-Director. 1997. Rare film footage, vintage photos, sound recordings, and informative interviews combine to tell the story of the building of Chicago's Jewish community and its impact on the City of the Big Shoulders. Highlighted is the role of the early German-Jewish settlers in the development of some of the city's major cultural institutions, the arrival of Jews from Eastern Europe, and the founding in Chicago of several national Jewish organizations.

One of the most moving segments is actual film footage of the Jewish community's spectacular pageant, "Romance of a People," presented on Jewish Day at the 1933 Century of Progress. Color and B&W. Running time 30 minutes. DVD \$29.95

ROMANCE OF A PEOPLE: DVD and PROGRAM BOOK. In the year 2000, the Society published a facsimile of the 72-page program book for Jewish Day pageant "The Romance of a People." Included are program notes, the names of the participants and sponsors, and lots of ads. Walter Roth's eight-page essay adds a historical perspective. 80 pages. Paper. **Special Offer!** DVD and Program Book \$39.95

Order from Ergo Home Video. Phone Toll-Free (877) 539-4748. Online catalog: www.jewishvideo.com

ROMANCE OF A PEOPLE: PROGRAM BOOK. 80 pages. Paper \$18. *Includes postage. Prepay by check to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society office, 610 South Michigan Avenue, Room 803, Chicago IL 60605-1901.*

Our Authors

CJHS Minsky Fund Prize Winners

Doris Minsky was a founder, director, and officer of the Society. The Fund was established in her memory for the purpose of publishing monographs on the history of the Jews of Chicago. Submissions were judged, and cash prizes awarded, by the CJHS Publications Committee.

Volume One: 1991

CHICAGO JEWISH STREET

PEDDLERS. By Carolyn Eastwood. A valuable study by an eminent urban historian. Illustrated with drawings.

MEMORIES OF LAWDALE. By Beatrice Michaels Shapiro. Illustrated with photos. Total 103 pages. Paper.*

Volume Two: 1993

THE CHAYDER, THE YESHIVA

AND I. By Morris Springer. Recollections of Hebrew school and the Hebrew Theological College.

MEMORIES OF THE MANOR. By Eva Gross. Reminiscences of growing up Jewish in Chicago's Jeffery Manor neighborhood. Illustrated. Total 95 pages. Paper.*

Volume Three: 1996

THE CANTORS: Gifted Voices

Remembered. By Bea Kraus. Chicago was well-known for her fine congregational cantors and the world-famous vocal artists engaged for the High Holy Days. Illustrated. 85 pages. Paper.*

Volume Four: 1997

MY FATHER, MYSELF. By Rabbi Alex J. Goldman. A son's memoir of his father, Yehudah D. Goldman, America's oldest practicing rabbi. Illustrated. 120 pages. Paper.*

Volume Five: 2001

THROUGH THE EYES OF THEIR CHILDREN.

By Myron H. Fox. A riveting account of Chicago's bloody Taxi Wars of the 1920s and the author's research into the victimization of his taxi driver father. Illustrated. 160 pages. Paper.*

*Each \$5.00

Postage included. Prepay by check to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society office.

Walter Roth's Jewish Chicagoans



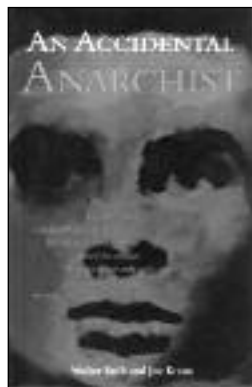
LOOKING BACKWARD: True Stories from Chicago's Jewish Past.

By Walter Roth. Academy Chicago Publishers. 2002. The unknown story of Jewish participation in Chicago's great fair of 1893 is only one of the fascinating nuggets of history unearthed and polished by Walter Roth in the pages of *Chicago Jewish History*. The material chronicles events and people from the late 1800s to the end of World War II. Illustrated. 305 pages. Paper \$16.95.



AVENGERS AND DEFENDERS: Glimpses of Chicago's Jewish Past.

By Walter Roth. Academy Chicago Publishers. 2008. The second collection of articles from *CJH* by President Roth, who conveys his justifiable pride in the productive immigrants, refugees, and native-born Jews who enriched the life of our city. The "avenger" in the title is Sholom Schwartzbard, who assassinated Simon Petlura, whose followers perpetrated the post-WWI pogroms in Ukraine. Illustrated. 235 pages. Paper \$16.95.



AN ACCIDENTAL ANARCHIST: How the Killing of a Humble Jewish Immigrant by Chicago's Chief of Police Exposed the Conflict Between Law & Order and Civil Rights in Early 20th Century America.

By Walter Roth & Joe Kraus. Academy Chicago Publishers. 1998. The episode took place on a cold Chicago morning in March, 1908. Lazarus Averbuch, a 19-year-old Jewish immigrant, knocked on the door of Police Chief George Shippy. Minutes later, the boy lay dead, shot by Shippy himself. Why Averbuch went to the police chief's house and exactly what happened afterward is still not known. The book does not solve the mystery, rather the authors examine the many different perspectives and concerns that surrounded the investigation of Averbuch's killing. Illustrated. 212 pages. Paper \$16.95 Online: Go to WTTW-Channel 11 "Chicago Tonight" Past Program 8/25/10 to see a feature on this story.

Walter Roth's books are sold at the Spertus Shop, at local bookstores, and online at amazon.com. All proceeds go to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

Our Authors

Irving Cutler's Neighborhoods



CHICAGO'S JEWISH WEST SIDE.

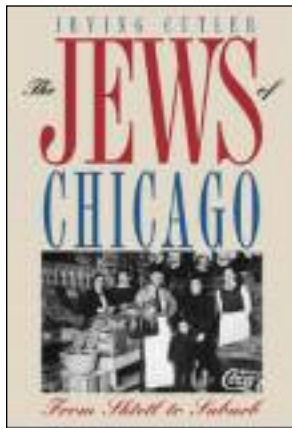
By Irving Cutler. Arcadia Publishing *Images of America*. 2009. A new gathering of nostalgic photos from private collections and Dr. Cutler's own treasure trove of images. Former West Siders will *kvell* and maybe also shed a tear. 126 pages. Paper \$21.99

THE JEWS OF CHICAGO: From Shtetl

to Suburb. By Irving Cutler. University of Illinois Press. 1996. The authoritative, vividly told history of Chicago's Jewish community, by a founding Board member of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. 336 pages. Illustrated with 162 black and white photographs. Cloth \$36.95, Paper \$24.95

JEWISH CHICAGO: A Pictorial History.

By Irving Cutler. Arcadia Publishing *Images of America*. 2000. A sentimental snapshot of the city's Jewish community. Includes 230 photographs and neighborhood maps. 126 pages. Paper \$18.99



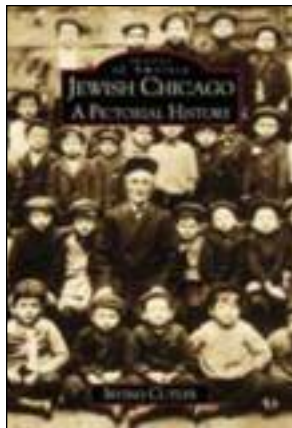
CHICAGO: Metropolis of the Mid-

Continent. Fourth Edition. By Irving Cutler. Southern Illinois University Press. 2006. Dr. Cutler skillfully weaves together the history, economy, and culture of the city and its suburbs, with a special emphasis on the role of the many ethnic and racial groups that comprise the "real Chicago" neighborhoods. 447 pages. Illustrated.

Cloth \$52.00, Paper \$22.95

URBAN GEOGRAPHY. By Irving Cutler.

Charles E. Merrill Publishing. 1978. A general study of cities in the United States and some of their major characteristics. 120 pages. Illustrated. Paper \$18.50



NEAR WEST SIDE STORIES: Struggles for Community in Chicago's Maxwell Street Neighborhood.

By Carolyn Eastwood. Lake Claremont Press. 2002. Four extraordinary "ordinary" people try to save their neighborhood and the market at its core. One of them is the flamboyant Jewish clothier and jazz musician, Harold Fox, designer of the first zoot suit. The other highly motivated, sympathetic subjects are Florence Scala, Nate Duncan, and Hilda Portillo, who represent the Italian, black, and Mexican communities. Illustrated. 355 pages. Paper \$17.95 .

CHICAGO'S FORGOTTEN SYNAGOGUES.

By Robert A. Packer. Arcadia Publishing *Images of America*. 2007. Photographs of former Jewish houses of worship and communal buildings. Includes portraits of rabbis, Hebrew school class pictures, flyers, and invitations. 126 pages. Paper \$19.99

DOORS OF REDEMPTION: The Forgotten Synagogues of Chicago and Other Communal Buildings.

Photographed and edited by Robert A. Packer. Booksurge. 2006. 282 pages. Spiral-bound paper \$23.99

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHICAGO. Edited by James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff. University of Chicago Press. 2004. The "Jewish Community" entry is by Dr. Irving Cutler. 1,152 pages. Color insert; illustrations; maps. Cloth \$65.00

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY. Edited by Stephen Norwood and Eunice Pollack. ABC-CLIO. 2007. The encyclopedia's six-page entry on "Chicago" is by Dr. Irving Cutler. Two volumes, total 775 pages. Illustrated. Cloth \$195.00.

Irving Cutler's books are widely available at local bookstores and from online merchants.

Our Authors

BRIDGES TO AN AMERICAN CITY: A Guide to Chicago's Landsmanshaften 1870 to 1990. By Sidney Sorkin. Peter Lang Publishing. 1993. A thorough study of the hundreds of service organizations, named after their Old World origins, that were a significant part of the immigrant experience. 480 pages. \$35.00
Order from the author (847) 541-2188.

MINYANS FOR A PRAIRIE CITY: The Politics of Chicago Jewry 1850-1914. By Edward H. Mazur. Garland. 1990. 428 pages. *Out of print.*

THE ETHNIC FRONTIER. Holli and d'A Jones, editors. Eerdmans. 1984. Essays on the history of group survival in Chicago and the Midwest. The "Jewish Chicago" entry is by Ed Mazur. 422 pages. *Out of print.*

BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN MAYORS, 1820-1980. Holli and d'A Jones, editors; Edward H. Mazur, contributing editor. Greenwood Press. 1981. 441 pages. *Out of print*

A NATURAL HISTORY OF THE CHICAGO REGION. By Joel Greenberg. University of Chicago Press. 2002. The author places the natural history of the region in a human context, showing how it affects our everyday existence in even the most urbanized landscape of Chicago. 592 pages. Photographs, maps, and drawings. Cloth \$40.00, Paper \$25.00

OF PRAIRIE, WOODS, & WATER: Two Centuries of Chicago Nature Writing. Edited by Joel Greenberg. University of Chicago Press. 2008. Drawn from archives he uncovered while writing his acclaimed book, *A Natural History of the Chicago Region*, Greenberg selected these fascinating first-person narratives. 424 pages. Cloth \$45.00, Paper \$25.00

PRAIRIE DIRECTORY OF NORTH AMERICA: U.S. & Canada. By Charlotte Adelman and Bernard L. Schwartz. Lawndale Enterprises. 2002. The first-ever guide for visits to the prairie, an ecosystem unique to North America. Fifty pages are devoted to Illinois. 352 pages. Paper \$19.95 P.O. Box 561, Wilmette, IL 60091-0561 and www.Lawndaleenterprises.com

WOMEN BUILDING CHICAGO, 1790-1990: A Biographical Dictionary. Edited by Adele Hast and Rima Lunin Schultz. Indiana University Press. 2001. Of the over 400 individual entries, forty are Jewish women. 1,088 pages. Illustrated. Cloth \$75.00

BREAKING GROUND: Careers of 20 Chicago Jewish Women. By Beatrice Michaels Shapiro. Edited by Dr. Khane-Faygl Turteltaub. Author House. 2004. Interviews bring out the Jewish values that have played a part in the lives of these high achievers. Judge Ilana Rovner, U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky, Ruth Rothstein, Melissa Isaacson, Beverly Siegel, and Klara Tulsy are included. 137 pages. Paper \$15.50
Available at local bookstores: Rosenblum's World of Judaica, Women and Children First, Barnes & Noble (Skokie), Waldenbooks (Lincolnwood Mall), or from www.authorhouse.com

JULIUS ROSENWALD: The Man Who Built Sears, Roebuck and Advanced the Cause of Black Education in the American South. By Peter Ascoli. Indiana University Press. 2006. Chicago's Julius Rosenwald was one of the richest men in America in the 1920s, but few people today, other than the older members of the Jewish and African-American communities, know the story of his far-reaching philanthropy. Historian Peter Ascoli is Rosenwald's grandson. He tells his grandfather's story with professional skill as well as insights that only an insider with access to family records and memories could have. Illustrated with black and white photographs. 472 pages. Cloth \$35.00

CREATING CHICAGO'S NORTH SHORE: A Suburban History. By Michael H. Ebner. University of Chicago Press. 1988. Evanston, Wilmette, Kenilworth, Winnetka, Glencoe, Highland Park, Lake Forest, and Lake Bluff— eight communities that serve as a genteel enclave of affluence, culture, and high society. Prof. Ebner explains the origins and evolution of the North Shore as a distinctive region. 368 pages. Photographs and maps. Cloth \$55.00

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN GLENCOE: The Little Migration. By Robert A. Sideman. The History Press. 2009. 126 pages. Illustrated. Paper \$19.99

Our Authors



A TIME TO REMEMBER: A History of the Jewish Community in South Haven. By Bea Kraus. Priscilla Press. 1999. Covers the 1920s through the 1950s, before air conditioning, when this town on the Lake Michigan shore was home to a thriving Jewish summer resort community. Illustrated. 287 pages. Paper \$24.95

A PLACE TO REMEMBER: South Haven—A Success from the Beginning. By Bea

Kraus. Priscilla Press. 2003. An anecdotal history of the people from the town's early days. Illustrated. 316 pages. Paper \$24.95

A PLACE AND A TIME REVISITED. South Haven's Latest Generation of Resorters. By Bea Kraus. Priscilla Press. 2008. The gentrified renaissance was inevitable. Illustrated. 214 pages. Paper \$24.95 *Order online at www.KrausBooks.com*

THE FLORIDA JEWISH HERITAGE TRAIL. By Rachel Heimovics and Marcia Zerivitz. Florida Department of State. 2000. 44 pages. Illustrated. Paper. \$10.50 each for one or two copies. *Prepay by check to The Jewish Museum of Florida, 301 Washington Ave., Miami Beach, FL 33139-6965. (305) 672-5044.*

SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY. The peer-reviewed annual journal of the Southern Jewish Historical Society. Dr. Mark K. Bauman, editor. Rachel Heimovics, managing editor. Now in its 13th year and published each year in October, the journal has grown since 1998 from a slim 140 pages to around 300 pages of articles, primary documents, and reviews related to the southern Jewish experience. Current volumes are \$20, back volumes are \$15 for individuals, and all volumes are \$40 for institutions. The journal is also a benefit of membership in the Southern Jewish Historical Society. For further information about back issues and a cumulated table of contents, visit the journal link at the SJHS website at www.jewishsouth.org or email journal@jewishsouth.org

NEW ART IN THE 60s AND 70s: Redefining Reality. By Anne Rorimer. Thames & Hudson. 2001. The first detailed account of developments centered around the conceptual art movement. The book highlights the main issues underlying visually disparate works dating from the second half of the 1960s to the end of the 1970s, through close examination of individual works and artists. Illustrated with 303 halftone images. 304 pages. Cloth \$50.00, Paper \$29.95

◆ **THE ART OF THE YIDDISH FOLK SONG.** Sima Miller, soprano; Arnold Miller, piano. A vintage collection of performances by Chicago's internationally renowned concert artists. Four CDs, each \$15.00; five audiotapes, each \$10.00 *Order from Sima Miller, 8610 Avers Avenue, Skokie, IL 60076; (847) 673-6409*

TO LOVE MERCY: A Novel.

By Frank S. Joseph. Atlantic Highlands. 2006. *Winner of five awards.* A tale of Chicago blacks and whites, Christians and Jews, conflict and forgiveness. Set in 1948, it throws together two boys from different worlds—affluent Jewish Hyde Park and the hard-scrabble Bronzeville black ghetto—on a quest for a missing silver talisman inscribed with the verse from Micah, “What doth the Lord require of thee? To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.” Concludes with excerpts from oral history transcripts. Illustrated with black and white photographs. 291 pages. Paper \$14.95 *Available online from amazon*

A SONG OF INNOCENCE.

By Harold H. Kraus Fidler-Doubleday. 2004. Two meek U.S. Army recruits, a Jew and a Gentile, feel the wrath of an anti-Semitic redneck in a WWII training camp. 135 pages. Paper \$12.00 *www.KrausBooks.com*

SHORT SEA SAGAS.

By Harold T. Berc. Athena Press. 2002. Unusual tales of over two hundred ships—mutinies, unusual sinkings, mystery ships sailing for years without crews, piracy! Concludes with a chapter on the author's own experiences as a U.S. Navy combat officer in World War II. 190 pages. Paper \$17.95

JACK OF HEARTS—A FULL DECK. By Jack W. Ardell. 2004. Nostalgic short stories, poems, and cartoons by a former West Sider. 150 pages. Paper \$12.00 + \$3.00 s/h. *Ardell Art & Craft, 5140 S. Fairview, #8, Downers Grove, IL 60515.*

Our Authors

New! THE ALEXANDRIA LETTER: A Novel. By George R. Honig. Synergy Books. 2010. Cambridge scholar Nathan Tobin discovers an ancient Aramaic letter which contains surprising revelations about the lives of Jesus, John the Baptist, and Paul of Tarsus. If true, the contents threaten to overturn long-held tenets of Christianity. As Tobin races to verify the letter's authenticity, he faces rejection by his fellow scholars and sinister opposition from within the Church. 329 pages. \$22.95 Available from amazon

New! CORPORATE WAR: Poison Pills and Golden Parachutes. By Werner L. Frank. Amazon Kindle. 2010. A business thriller portraying the cutthroat behavior of two computer companies engaged in a hostile takeover. \$7.95

LEGACY: The Saga of a German-Jewish Family Across Time and Circumstance. By Werner L. Frank. 2003. Avoteynu Foundation, Inc. A portion of the book deals with the author's immigration to Chicago and growing up in Hyde Park. 926 pages plus CD. \$49.00 Order from www.avoteynu.com

THE FATE OF HOLOCAUST MEMORIES: Transmission and Family Dialogues. By Chaya H. Roth, Ph.D. Palgrave MacMillan. 2008. An innovative mix of personal history and psychological research, this book tells the story of an extended family of Holocaust survivors and reveals how each generation has passed on memories of World War II and the *Shoah* to the next. Dr. Roth is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Illustrated with black and white photographs. 228 pages. \$74.95

CANDLES BURNED IN CHICAGO: A History of 53 Memorial Commemorations of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The Midwest Jewish Council. Kenan Heise, editor; N. Sue Weiler, contributing editor. 2004. AuthorHouse. A record of the annual gatherings mounted by a group of Jewish Chicagoans and their friends from 1944 to 1996. 132 pages. Paper \$18.00 *The Midwest Jewish Council, P.O. Box 59032, Chicago, IL 60659*

A STUDENT LOOKS AT THE SIDDUR. By Sender Leib (Sanford) Aronin. Targum Press. 1997. *Chidushei Torah* on Tractate *Berachos*. 78 pages. Paper. Out of print.

New! THE BIBLICAL PATH TO PSYCHOLOGICAL MATURITY. By Vivian B. Skolnick, Ph.D. Trafford. 2010. Sigmund Freud would be amazed that his discipline could contribute to a deeper understanding of the Torah. Vivian Skolnick, through her training in psychoanalysis, succeeds in doing so in this work. She applies some of Freud's findings, particularly with regard to dream interpretation and the workings of the unconscious, to delve into the psyches of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs and explore the unique personality of Moses. Through her psychological insights, drawn from her private practice, Dr. Skolnick makes the Torah relevant to all ages and religious persuasions. By linking her observations to the synagogue's weekly Sabbath cycle of Torah readings, she provides a year-round study forum for family and group discussions which will help to guide the reader on the path to psychological maturity. 305 pages. Paper \$36.99 Available online from amazon

JEWISH LAW IN TRANSITION: How Economic Forces Overcame the Prohibition Against Lending Interest. By Hillel Gamoran. Hebrew Union College Press. 2008. 196 pp. Hardcover \$35.00. Available online from amazon

THE SIDDUR COMPANION. By Paul H. Vishny. Devorah Publishing, Jerusalem. 2005. This work is intended to form the background for a meaningful devotion to prayers. 112 pages. Hardcover \$18.95, Paper \$12.95 Available online from amazon

Career Books on Media for Young People

In 1961, S. William (Bill) Pattis started the book publishing firm NTC Publishing Group with two titles. Over the years, NTC published over 4,000 titles under a number of imprints. The firm now functions as part of McGraw-Hill. Among the books that Mr. Pattis has authored or co-authored are:

CAREERS IN ADVERTISING. 2004.
OPPORTUNITIES IN MAGAZINE PUBLISHING CAREERS. 2001.
They are sold, new and/or used, by bookstores and online vendors under various imprints in various editions and formats. They may also be available on loan from the Chicago Public Library Harold Washington Library Center.

Preserving Our History

Dr. Irving Barkan and Jewish Education in Chicago

BY EDWARD H. MAZUR

Since its founding, the Chicago Jewish Historical Society has been active in its mission of seeking out, collecting, and preserving the written, oral, and photographic records of our community.

I am a member of Chicago's Lake Shore Synagogue, 70 East Elm Street. At the *kiddushim* that follow Shabbos services, I frequently talk about the CJHS and its many activities. One Sunday afternoon, after one such discussion, I received a telephone call from a friend and fellow congregant, Paula Madansky, who asked me if the Society would be interested in the papers, photographs, books, and other memorabilia of her late father, the distinguished educator, Dr. Irving Barkan. Without hesitation, I answered in the affirmative, and we arranged to meet in Skokie at the apartment of her late parents. There, Paula, her sister Sherry Gorin, and I spent an entire day collecting, assembling, sorting, reading, commenting, reminiscing, and, finally, boxing and delivering to the offices of the CJHS and the Asher Library, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, what will become the Irving Barkan Collection.

Dr. Irving Barkan (1909-2008) devoted his life to Jewish education in Chicago for more than four decades. During his long and distinguished career he held a number of important positions that reflected his background of secular and religious scholarship and included tenures as principal of a large South Shore synagogue school, the South Side Hebrew Congregation, a founder of the Akiba (later Akiba Schechter) Day School, director of the High School of Jewish Studies, president of the Hebrew Principals Association and Superintendent of the Board of Jewish Education of Metropolitan Chicago.

Irving Barkan was born February 28, 1909 in Lahoisk, a *shtetl* near Minsk in present day Belarus. His parents operated a small general store. In 1913, his father left for Cleveland, intending to send for the family after he established a foothold in the *goldene*

medinah. World War I interfered with those plans, so Irving, his two sisters, and his mother did not make it to the United States until a decade later. The family was reunited with their father on July 4, 1923. The fourteen-year-old Irving was enrolled in the local public school, but because of his inability to speak English, he was placed in a lower grade than his age dictated. He learned the language so quickly that by the end of the school term he was attending class with children of his own age. Irving Barkan became so proficient in proper English usage that some of his teachers and colleagues over the years would ask him, "Irv, are you British?"

He had an aptitude for languages and studied several, including Hebrew. A graduate of the Hebrew Teacher's Institute in Cleveland and the 1930 class of Western Reserve University, Barkan was asked to substitute teach a class at the Hebrew Institute of Cleveland (now the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies). There he met the fifteen-year-old Sarah Polikoff. Within a matter of weeks, Irving and Sarah were a steady couple. They married in 1933 and began a wonderful life partnership that lasted until Sarah's passing in February 2002.

In 1931, Barkan was awarded a Fellowship to the University of Chicago in the Department of Classics. While attending the University, and prior to his marriage, he lived with his sister and brother-in-law on the West Side and commuted to Hyde Park. He received his Ph.D. from the University in 1935. "Capital Punishment in Ancient Athens" was the title of his doctoral thesis.

Irving Barkan's involvement in Chicago Jewish education began in 1933, while he was pursuing his doctorate. Dr. Alexander M. Dushkin, a seminal figure in Jewish education, not only in Chicago, but also nationally and in the yishuv, offered him a teaching position at Congregation B'nai Bezalel in Hyde Park. Barkan was one to



Dr. Irving Barkan, ca. 1960.
The Irving Barkan Collection.

face challenges boldly and directly. He went around the neighborhood, knocked on doors, and asked families to bring their children to the synagogue's school.

In 1935, at age twenty-six, Barkan was asked to head the Hebrew School at the South Side Hebrew Congregation in the South Shore neighborhood. Shortly thereafter, he was named the Congregation's Executive Director. He served as the educational director of the South Side Hebrew Congregation for more than two decades. In this position, he developed an intensive and innovative educational program that attained national as well as local recognition. Dr. Barkan was among the first Jewish educators to initiate minimum requirements for Bar and Bat Mitzvahs that led to the enrollment of children at a younger age in Hebrew schools.

He demonstrated that the formal Hebrew school curriculum could be enriched and intensified by the meshing of traditional studies with informal activities, such as clubs. His students were active in Boy Scout Troop 521 and Girl Scout Troop 232, Young Judea, Rishona Dorum, Har Carmel, Shomrim, Aleph tov, Petach Tikvah, and *Ha-Kol*, the yearbook published by the students at South Side Hebrew Congregation.

In 1952, he was one of the driving forces that led to the opening of the Akiba Day School, which was housed at South Side Hebrew Congregation in its early years. Between 1952-1957, Barkan served as Akiba's Principal. He developed an extensive program of adult and family education that would become a template for other synagogues. His efforts resulted in the South Side Hebrew Congregation receiving the prestigious Solomon Schechter Award.

In 1962, Dr. Barkan left South Side Hebrew Congregation and became the educational director of another large Conservative congregation, Rodfei Sholom Or Chodosh.

Four years later, in 1966, Barkan became the director of the High School of Jewish Studies at the Chicago Board of Jewish Education. Under his leadership, enrollment increased, new high school branches were established, the curricula were diversified and upgraded, new instructors were hired, and morale greatly improved. In 1970, he was named Superintendent of the Board of Jewish Education, a position he held until his retirement in 1976.

During his tenure, new schools became affiliated with the Board of Jewish Education, more collegial relationships were established with existing schools, consultative services were expanded and intensified, new curricular materials were developed, a program for

students with learning disabilities was initiated, early childhood centers were developed, and a multimedia center was established.

At his retirement testimonial dinner, Irving Barkan was awarded the Joshua Ben Gamla gold medallion (named for the high priest who established community schools for the education of young children during the last days of the second Jewish Commonwealth) for distinguished service in the field of Jewish Education.

The CJHS urges our members and friends to contact us about donating historical papers, photographs, or artifacts relating to the Chicago Jewish community. Phone the Society office at (312) 663-5634 or email info@chicagojewishhistory.org ❖

An Archivist's View of The Irving Barkan Papers

BY JOY KINGSOLVER

To represent sixty years of involvement in Jewish education is no small task. The papers of Dr. Irving Barkan contain highlights from a life of dedicated service to Jewish education in Chicago. This collection, which will fill perhaps five or six archival boxes when fully processed, contains little that is purely personal, and does not provide much family context for an understanding of Dr. Barkan's life. But it is a valuable collection for the history of Jewish education in Chicago, and connects to several other collections held at Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.

The most important topic covered by the collection is the history of the Board of Jewish Education, headed by Dr. Barkan from 1970 to 1976. The files kept by Dr. Barkan contain his superintendent's reports, minutes, articles on the history of the BJE, statistics, correspondence, and speeches. The BJE's often-stormy relationship with the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago is also reflected in these papers. We see the passionate debate sparked in 1977, when the Federation's withholding of funds and creation of the Jewish Education Committee threatened the independence of the BJE.

The collection touches on the history of the College of Jewish Studies, antecedent of Spertus, and a part of the BJE until 1968. The importance of the College to Jewish education in Chicago can be seen in many of the reports and letters in the collection. Dr. Barkan was well acquainted with Alexander Dushkin and Samuel Blumenfield, key figures in both the College and the

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Barkan Papers

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BJE. Included are addresses, letters, tributes and articles relating to these men. Particularly revealing is a set of minutes of the BJE's Executive Committee, 1953, in which the matter of Samuel Blumenfield's resignation is discussed.

Dr. Blumenfield was leaving for another position, and the discussion of the transition and severance pay shows the confusion caused by the three-way sharing of authority among the Jewish Welfare Fund, the BJE, and the College.

Dr. Barkan was also a founder of the Akiba School, a progressive Jewish day school, and directed the High School of Jewish Studies from 1966-76. Among the documents in the collection are the original charter of the Akiba school, 1952, and notes on the curriculum. The High School is represented in the BJE Superintendent's Reports, brochures, and in photographs.

Although Dr. Barkan was principal of religious schools at Rodfei Sholom Or Chodosh (1935-62) and South Side Hebrew Congregation (1962-66), material on these synagogues is more scattered, consisting largely of bulletins and programs for testimonial dinners. Other organizations that make brief appearances are the Hahlevy Choral Society, the Hebrew Principals' Association, and the United Synagogues of America.

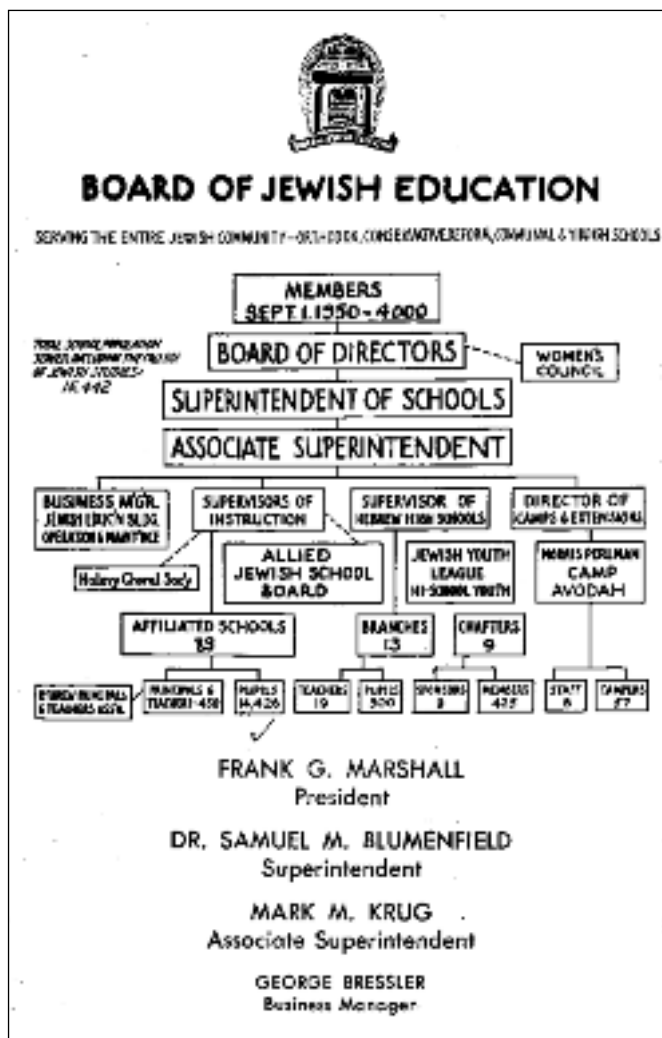
Perhaps the most surprising items in the collections are several scripts for cantatas written by Dr. Barkan. In this context, a cantata is a narration or collection of readings, interspersed with music drawn from various sources—and these would have been performed by students. An interesting example in the collection is a tribute to the poet Bialik, with narration by Dr. Barkan and using poems set to music by various composers. Another cantata uses the music of renowned Chicago

composer Max Janowski.

Dr. Barkan's wife Sarah also wrote cantatas, as well as parody scripts for the South Side Hebrew Congregation's sisterhood. Regrettably, information about Mrs. Barkan is somewhat limited. We know that she taught Latin and Hebrew, and was principal of the Bet Am Religious School for fifteen years, but few documents remain to show us her life.

Finally, the photographs in the collection are a valuable asset to this collection. Testimonial dinner photographs are perhaps somewhat predictable, but are also helpful in capturing the era. We can see from the testimonials and awards in the collection that Dr. Barkan was held in high esteem by the Chicago Jewish community. The High School of Jewish Studies is well represented, with graduating class photographs (1969, 1971, 1973), a Hebrew class, and various activities.

The collection of Dr. Barkan gives us an interesting look at the history of Chicago Jewish education, and should be valuable for research on several topics. It connects to related collections in the Spertus archives on the history of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago and the history of Spertus itself. Like many archival collections, it makes us want to know more about this fascinating person, so central to Jewish education in Chicago, and about the the history of Jewish Chicago. ❖



Portion of a page from a pamphlet called *Understanding the Board of Jewish Education*, ca. 1950. (Date written in pen at the top.)

"BOARD OF JEWISH EDUCATION
SERVING THE ENTIRE JEWISH COMMUNITY—
ORTHODOX, CONSERVATIVE, REFORM,
COMMUNAL & YIDDISH SCHOOLS"

The Irving Barakan Collection.

President's Column *continued from page 2*

The First Hundred Years of Jewish Life in Chicago, 1833-1933," with filmmaker Beverly Siegel as executive producer-director. The documentary premiered to an enthusiastic overflow crowd in the auditorium of the Chicago Historical Society. The CJHS screened the film as part of our 25th anniversary exhibition at the Spertus Institute, and various museums and libraries have shown it. Over the years, *Romance* has been aired on Chicago public television. VHS and DVD copies continue to be available for sale to the public.

Our film took its title from the pageant that was performed at Soldier Field on Jewish Day at the 1933 Century of Progress, and in 2000, the Society published a facsimile of the impressive 72-page *Romance of A People* program book. (A rare bit of live performance film appears in our *Romance* documentary.) I was proud to spearhead this publication project as well as the commemorative *Romance* program we staged for the public, featuring singer-actress Renee Matthews, daughter of the lead singer in the 1933 pageant, and with the participation of Society members who had been present at Jewish Day as young children.

Health permitting, I hope to continue writing for *Chicago Jewish History* and elsewhere.

I am currently writing the history of my family in Germany, in particular about my father, Markus Roth, and the early life of my maternal grandfather, Herz Stern, whose family tree can be traced back to early seventeenth century Germany.

The original Herz Stern, an orphan, came to live in the small farming town of Roth, outside Marburg, in about 1630. The family that took him in was engaged in the typical Jewish trades of the time, working as peddlers and trading in cattle with the peasants of the region.

His descendant, my maternal grandfather, Herz Stern, had an only son, Herman, who was killed in the First World War while serving in the German Army. His only daughter—my mother, Selma—died of influenza in 1934.

My father, Markus Roth (*not* born in the town of Roth—confusing?), served in the German Army in the First World War for four years, but was, nevertheless, haunted by the Nazis.

In 1938, my family managed to leave Germany: my father Markus and stepmother Toni, my brother Herbert, and myself (our sister Irene had died). Toni was pregnant when we left, and sister Helen was born in Chicago. But my grandfather, tragically, could not leave. Herz Stern was deported to Theresienstadt, where he died in 1943.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the officers of the CJHS who have served with me over the years. I also want to thank Bev Chubatz, the current editor of our quarterly and her predecessor, Joe Kraus, the co-author of my first book, *An Accidental Anarchist*. And let me additionally thank each and every board member and all the hundreds of loyal Society members who have lent material support and a helping hand to make this organization the important community resource that it remains to this day. ❖



Walter Roth, an Editor's Appreciation

Who are these ghostly fellows? They are Ben Hecht and Meyer Levin, two great Chicago Jewish writers. Hecht's youthful columns in the *Daily News*, "1,001 Afternoons in Chicago," and Levin's West Side novel, *The Old Bunch*, captured the essence of our city 'back in the day.' Both of them were committed to the Jewish People. They are Walter Roth's heroes. He follows in their giant footsteps by researching rigorously and writing well about fascinating characters and stirring historical events. I am delighted to help shape his manuscripts for publication in *CJH* and grateful for his support and encouragement.—*Bev Chubatz*



Look to the rock from which you were born
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- Educator Dr. Irving Barkan
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What We Are

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society was founded in 1977, and is in part an outgrowth of local Jewish participation in the United States Bicentennial Celebration of 1976 at an exhibition mounted at the Museum of Science and Industry. The Society has as its purpose the discovery, preservation and dissemination of information about the Jewish experience in the Chicago area.

Tribute Cards for Celebrations or Memorials The card design features the Society's logo, our mission statement, and space for a personal message. A pack of eight cards and envelopes is \$10.00. Individual cards can be mailed for you from our office at \$5.00 per card, postage included. Order cards from the Society office (312) 663-5634.

Remember the Society Name the Chicago Jewish Historical Society as a beneficiary under your Last Will, Living Trust, IRA or other retirement account. Any gift to CJHS avoids all estate taxes and can be used to support any activity of our Society that you choose—publication, exhibition, public program, or research. For information please call the Society office at (312) 663-5634.

Browse Our Website for information about our upcoming programs. Read past issues of *Chicago Jewish History*. Discover links to other Jewish sites. Use the printable membership application. We welcome your inquiries and comments. E-mail: info@chicagojewishhistory.org

www.chicagojewishhistory.org

About the Society

What We Do

The Society seeks out, collects and preserves written, spoken and photographic records, in close cooperation with the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies. The Society publishes historical information; holds public meetings at which various aspects of Chicago Jewish history are treated; mounts appropriate exhibits; and offers tours of Jewish historical sites.

Membership

Membership in the Society is open to all interested persons and organizations and includes a subscription to *Chicago Jewish History*, discounts on Society tours and at the Spertus Museum store, and the opportunity to learn and inform others about Chicago Jewish history and its preservation.

Dues Structure

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.

Life Membership	\$1000
Annual Dues:	
Historian	500
Scholar	250
Sponsor	100
Patron	50
Basic Membership	35

Make checks payable to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, and mail to our office at 610 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605-1901. Dues are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.