

# chicago jewish history

**Our Fifth Mini-Reunion of Chicago Public High Schools Which Once Had Lots of Jewish Students**

## Save the Date! Sullivan High School: The Jewish Glory Years Sunday, November 18

Esther L. Manewith will be the featured speaker at the next open meeting of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society on Sunday, November 18, 2012, at the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation, 303 Dodge Avenue, Evanston. The program will begin at 2:00 p.m., followed by a social hour with kosher refreshments.

General admission is \$10 per person, payable at the door; Society members and JRC members free.

This will be the Society's fifth mini-reunion. Previously, alumni speakers from Roosevelt, Marshall, Hyde Park, and Austin delighted the attendees with reminiscences.



Sullivan alumna Esther Manewith is a public relations writer, researcher, and teacher, now retired. Her slide-illustrated talk will cover the years from the late 1930s to the early 1970s at "Sol Levin" High School.



**Roger C. Sullivan High School. 6631 North Bosworth Avenue.**  
*Collection of Rogers Park/Westridge Historical Society.*

Preceding the program, there will be a brief Annual Meeting during which an election will be held. Members of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society will vote on these nominees to a three-year term on the Board of Directors: Janet Iltis, Jerold Levin, and Dr. Milton Shulman.

**Parking and Public Transportation:**  
JRC is located on the northeast corner of Dodge (California) Avenue and Mulford Street. There is one parking lot directly south across Mulford and another one across Dodge behind the Levy Center. JRC is steps from the #97 Skokie bus route (Howard/Oakton) and three blocks north of the PACE #215 bus route (Howard).

**Calling All Authors!** November is Jewish Book Month. The Fall 2012 issue of *CJH* will feature a section devoted to the published works by active members of the Society. Would you like your book to be included? If your book was listed last year, rest assured, it will be listed again this year. Just let us know if there are any changes in ordering information or price. **Please reply by November 16, 2012.**

Author \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Ordering \_\_\_\_\_ Pages \_\_\_\_\_ Price \_\_\_\_\_

Add brief details and submit via e-mail (preferred) to [info@chicagojewishhistory.org](mailto:info@chicagojewishhistory.org) or via standard mail:  
**Chicago Jewish Historical Society, 610 South Michigan Ave., Room 803, Chicago, IL 60605-1901**

## President's Column



Edward H. Mazur

**ON BEHALF OF THE OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY, I WISH OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS A HAPPY NEW YEAR. SHANA TOVA!**

In this, our organization's thirty-fifth year, 5773/2012, let us hope for your good health, happiness, and fulfillment.

The coming months will be a time of great activity for the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. In addition to our own programs, publications, and research, we will be involved

with "**Shalom Chicago**"—a landmark exhibition on the history of Chicago's Jewish community—the *first ever* mounted at the Chicago History Museum (formerly the Chicago Historical Society).

The exhibition opened on Sunday, October 21. It runs through September 2, 2013. The entire project was planned in collaboration with our colleagues at **Spertus – A Center for Jewish Education and Culture**. Many of the artifacts in the exhibition were donated to Spertus via our Society, and it was my privilege and pleasure, along with other CJHS members, to be deeply involved in the planning.

We have just celebrated the *Sukkoth* holiday. One of my favorite memories from my youth is being in the *sukkah* of the Me'or Chaim Shul on Rockwell Street just south of Augusta Boulevard in the Humboldt Park neighborhood with my zayde, parents, and relatives. I thoroughly enjoyed this "camping out" experience.

On a recent Friday afternoon, I was meandering through the Northwestern University Law School campus on Chicago's lakefront, when I discovered in one of the courtyards a *sukkah* that had been erected by the **Northwestern Jewish Law Students Association**, with a written description of the meaning and import of the holiday posted on it. As *The Chicago Jewish News* Editor-Publisher Joe Aaron would write: "It is good to be a Jew in this country."

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society was pleased to present an honorary membership to **The Honorable Roey Gilad, the newly appointed Consul General of Israel to the Midwest**. Consul General Gilad *davens* at Anshe Sholom Congregation in Lakeview.

"**Bat Mitzvah Comes of Age**" is a traveling exhibition presented by the National Museum of American Jewish History (Philadelphia) and Moving Traditions. As the designers describe it: "This exhibition shows how *bat mitzvah* evolved from a radical innovation into a nearly universal American tradition. A fascinating story of how individuals shape and change ritual, 'Bat Mitzvah Comes of Age' is designed for easy travel and installation in small galleries, JCCs, and synagogues." The exhibition has traveled to New York, Detroit, Atlanta, and Portland, Oregon. We hope that a local institution will bring it to the Chicago area. ❖



chicago jewish historical society

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### Chicago Jewish History

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**Editorial Board** Burton Robin, Walter Roth, Milton Shulman

**Send all submissions to:**

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

If manuscript is sent via standard mail, enclose SASE.

## Senn, South Shore, and Von Steuben High School Alumni Ask for CJHS Mini-Reunions

The announcement of the Society's upcoming Sullivan High School mini-reunion brought e-mail, phone, and in-person appeals from members urging us to consider *their* high schools, which also had lots of Jewish students.

Jackye Sullins of Carlsbad, CA, noted that Von Steuben's student population was about 95% Jewish in her day. Edith Fantus Demar and Michael Supera made a strong case for Senn, and Herbert Eiseman put in a good word for South Shore. Other members also named these schools.

Dear Alumni: Please suggest guest speakers, notable classmates, and well-remembered teachers. The program committee will welcome your ideas.

### CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

The Spring 2012 issue of *CJH* was filled with typographical errors and lapses in fact-checking. A corrected version of the entire issue can be found on the Society website. Following are corrections of the worst goofs, with apologies.



**Mayor Rahm Emanuel.**  
*Google Images.*

**Page 5: Paul Green's lecture on Mayor Emanuel at our March 25 open meeting.** In reporting on one of Prof. Green's topics, "How Did Rahm Emanuel Become Chicago's Mayor?" we should have spelled out one of his points to read more clearly: "5a: The 1995 law that makes Chicago mayoral contests non-partisan (no party identification). A candidate has to win 50% plus one vote in the February Round One Election to avoid a Round Two Run-Off in April. Rahm Emanuel won Round One with 55.3% of the vote."

**Page 9: Dan and Gini Maxime.** The Maximes have been publishing their quarterly *Tuley Review Alumni Newsletter* since 1993, not 1999.

Tuley High School was not demolished. It closed in 1974 and reopened as Tuley Middle School in 1975 after a newly built high school, named for baseball star Roberto Clemente, opened at 1147 North Western Avenue.

**Page 20: Rae Silverman, West Side Basketball Star.** The height limit for players on Chicago Public High School Junior basketball teams was five feet, eight inches—not 5'8" as we wrote! (Maybe in the Lilliputian League...) The Junior team of 1950-51 was the one that suffered the heartbreaking 56-55 loss to Tilden in the Public League Final,



**Marshall High School Junior and Senior Basketball Teams, 1950-51.**  
*Rae's sons, the Levine twins, are kneeling at left: Ed (13) and Dan (10).  
Marshall Review 1951. Collection of Bev Chubat.*

## Welcome, New Members of the Society!

James S. Baer  
*Chicago, IL*

Laura Alter Klapman  
*Wilmette, IL*

Harvey Nathan & Lisa Kohn  
*Chicago, IL*

Avi Mlotek  
*Chicago, IL*

Robert Poplar  
*Kenosha, WI*



**Tuley Middle School,  
1313 North Claremont Avenue.**  
*Formerly Tuley High School.  
Collection of Dan and Gini Maxime.*



## Ongoing Exhibitions

### Jewish Modernists in Chicago

October 21, 2012—April 26, 2013

Spertus, A Center for Jewish Learning & Culture  
610 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago

*Chapter Seven in the series: Uncovered & Rediscovered.*

This chapter shares the work of an influential group of Jewish artists active in Chicago between 1920 and 1945. Predominantly Eastern European immigrants or first generation Americans, many began their careers during the Great Depression as painters for the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

The Modernists, as they were called, painted from personal experience and were influenced by the energy of their growing metropolis. See works by Todros Geller, A. Raymond Katz, Mitchell Siporin, Fritzi Brod, and others. Learn about the places they gathered, including Hull House, the JPI, and Around the Palette.



**Todros Geller, Self Portrait.**

Spertus Collection. On loan to the  
Chicago History Museum.

### Shalom Chicago

October 21, 2012—September 2, 2013

Chicago History Museum  
1601 North Clark Street, Chicago

Parking available at the corner of  
Stockton and LaSalle

Presented in collaboration with Spertus, *Shalom Chicago* illustrates the community's rich history and contributions to Chicago's growth and development through personal stories, rare artifacts, and engaging multimedia presentations.

Many of the artifacts are on loan from Spertus. Among them are items donated via the Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

### Holiday Exhibition

#### The Spirit of Hanukkah through the Eyes of Chicagoland Artists

November 16, 2012—February 19, 2013

North Suburban Synagogue Beth El  
The Arnold Rissman Family Kol Ami Museum  
1175 Sheridan Road, Highland Park

All-media art exhibit, curated by Molly J. Schiff, includes works by 18 local artists representing the symbols, history, and customs of Hanukkah.



**Sandra Holubow; A Tapestry of Hanukkah Memories.**  
Collage; 24 x 24 inches.

### Report: CJHS August 26 Walking Tour “Downtown Jewish Chicago”

The tour assembled in the South Lobby of the Chicago Cultural Center. Raindrops were falling and a down-pour was predicted, but there was no stopping us.

Guide Herb Eiseman, in his White Sox cap and raincape, led the way to Michigan Avenue. Society Tour Chair Leah Axelrod kept our little group together.

We looked east to Millennium Park, where many of its components were funded by Jewish philanthropists and to which Jewish artists contributed: the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, a dramatic silhouette with great sight lines and superb acoustics, thanks to architect Frank Gehry; the Crown fountains, splashy fun for kids; and the Lurie Garden, an exquisite array of native plants. The Harris Theater, on Randolph Street at the Park, offers a fine venue for dance performances and chamber music concerts, as it seats about fifteen-hundred, whereas the Civic Opera House seats over thirty-five-hundred.

On the southwest corner of Wacker is an ornate skyscraper (formerly the London Guarantee Building) designed in the early 1920s by Alfred Alschuler. He was the architect of many significant commercial buildings as well as several synagogues. (KAM Isaiah Israel in

## Report on the CJHS September 23 Documentary Film Screening “Refuge: Stories of the Selfhelp Home”



Ethan Bensinger, a member of the Society, presented his documentary film “Refuge: Stories of the Selfhelp Home” at our open meeting on Sunday afternoon, September 23, in the chapel of Temple Sholom, 3480 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago.

The one-hour documentary reaches back to the 1930s to tell the story of a resourceful group of German Jewish refugees who left behind well-established lives and possessions and immigrated to Chicago. Here, they created a supportive community that eventually established the Selfhelp Home, where elderly refugees and Holocaust survivors have been brought together under one roof, first in the Hyde Park neighborhood and then in Edgewater.

To that general description must be added the personal meaning that Selfhelp has for Mr. Bensinger—his grandmother was a resident, and his mother, who volunteered at the home for over twenty-five years, now lives there. Ethan Bensinger is an attorney, not a filmmaker, but he felt compelled

*Continued on page 23*

### *Some Upcoming Local Screenings of “Refuge”*

#### **December 4, 2012**

Wilmette Public Library  
1242 Wilmette Avenue  
2:00 p.m.

#### **December 19, 2012**

Highland Park Public Library  
494 Laurel Avenue,  
10:30 a.m.

#### **January 30, 2013**

Skokie Public Library  
5215 Oakton Street

*Consult library calendar for time*

*These screenings are free and open to the public. There will also be special screenings at synagogues and at meetings of organizations.*

Kenwood is the most prominent, especially now. President Obama’s home is across the street.)

Gusts of wind greeted us as we rounded Wacker and headed west along the Chicago River. There we encountered the statue of Irv Kupcinet, *Sun-Times* columnist and TV talk show host. He points across the river toward the site of his newspaper’s former home, now occupied by Trump Tower.

At the corner of Wacker and Wabash, we stopped at the monument to three patriots of the Revolutionary War—financiers Robert Morris and Haym Salomon flanking General George Washington. A Chicago Jewish attorney and politician, Barnet Hodes, worked diligently for the creation of the monument. The early work was done by sculptor Lorado Taft. It was completed after his death by Leonard Crunelle.

Across the river, the distinctive corncob towers of Bertrand Goldberg’s Marina City held our gaze.

We headed west, then south, to Chicago Loop Synagogue at 16 South Clark Street. The custodian greeted us at the door, above which is the sculpture, *Hands of Peace*, by Henri Azaz. We entered the sanctuary to view the splendid wall-wide stained glass window, *Let There Be Light*, by Abraham Rattner.

Outdoors again, we moved on to Marc Chagall’s



**Triumvirate of Patriots Monument:  
Robert Morris, George Washington, and Haym Salomon.**

*Photo: Michael Ball, Initiate Marketing Inc.*

*Four Seasons* mosaic in Chase Plaza on Dearborn and Monroe. Herb Eiseman concluded his tour narration on the corner of Lake and Wells, where Chicago’s first *minyán* gathered in a room above a store in 1846. ❖

# Hot Dog! Jewish Participation in Chicago's Meat Industry

BY HERBERT EISEMAN & JEROLD LEVIN

Edited text of the talk given on Sunday, May 6, 2012 at an open meeting of the Society at Temple Beth Israel, 3601 West Dempster Street, Skokie

**W**e trace the beginning of the Jewish community in Chicago to 1846, when the first *minyan* was assembled on the third floor of a building on the southwest corner of Lake and Wells Streets, above the Rosenfeld and Rosenberg Dry Goods Emporium. An unsuccessful effort was made at establishing a cemetery or a *chevra kadisha*. While a *minyan* and a cemetery are important components of a Jewish community, so is the presence of a *shochet*, a ritual slaughterer.



**Ignatz Kunreuther.**

*History of the Jews of Chicago.*

The story has it that in the small Jewish community in the 1840s there were four Kohn brothers. They came to Chicago from New York City seeking their fortune in this wide open town. However, they left their widowed mother in New York. The boys pleaded with her to join them, but Mama Kohn would come only if she could be provided with kosher meat in Chicago. Her sons hired a

*shochet* from New York City, The Reverend Ignatz Kunreuther. Kosher meat was now available in Chicago, and Kehilath Anshe Maariv, Chicago's first synagogue, had its first rabbi, the very same Reverend Ignatz Kunreuther. So, with Mrs. Dilah Kohn's demand begins the Jewish involvement in the Chicago meat industry.

Other than her requirement for *kashruth*, it seems that the need for kosher meat was not very great. It was not until the influx of Jews from Eastern Europe, beginning in the early 1880s, that the proliferation of kosher meat purveyors occurred, and kosher markets could be found on commercial streets wherever Jews settled.

## Kosher Supervision

One can't simply open a butcher shop and advertise "Kosher Meat." A *shochet* has to slaughter the animal in the approved, humane manner. Observant Jews need to know that all the requirements are met, and proper processing is done by butchers and packinghouse workers. This requires standards and regular inspection by an agreed-upon authority, a *mashgiach*.

Once the observant Chicago community grew, some form of supervision was required. Several rabbis in those early days attempted to bring some order to the process.

In 1904, a Rabbi Vilovsky (the Ridvaz) arrived in Chicago and declared himself Chief Rabbi. He was met with opposition, and within several years he was gone. Other rabbis, also well-respected, but less egocentric, tried to bring order to kosher supervision. But it was not until the 1920s that two rabbis, Abraham Schur and Isaac Small, working together, brought some order to the system. Around 1937, the Chicago Rabbinic Council assumed responsibility for Passover *kashruth* supervision. However, it was not until the late 1960s that the CRC brought order to the supervision of *kashruth*. Still, today, for some organizations, the CRC's approval is not adequate; they do their own slaughtering or have *glatt* kosher meat shipped from New York.

## Nelson Morris

*The following material is based on "Nelson Morris and 'The Yards'" by CJHS President Emeritus Walter Roth, published in Chicago Jewish History, Spring 2008.*

*The entire issue and all others dating back to 1999 can be found on our website, [www.chicagojewishhistory.org](http://www.chicagojewishhistory.org).*

By the mid-nineteenth century, Chicago had become the center for slaughtering and packing livestock. These functions were performed in many locations scattered over the South Side. The consolidation of the various yards into one central Yard was in the best interest of the leading packers and major railroads. The result of their planning was the incorporation of the Union Stock Yard and Transit Co. in 1865.

Three individuals leading the development of the enterprise were packers Phillip Armour, Gustavus Swift, and Nelson Morris. Most of us are familiar with the Armour and Swift names, but today few can identify Nelson Morris, who was Jewish.

He was born Moritz Beisinger in the small town of Hechingen, in what is now southern Germany, on January 21, 1838. It was common for Jews living in small towns in Germany to be in the cattle trading business, well into the twentieth century.

As a result of the failed Revolution of 1848, there was a great immigration of German-speaking Central

Europeans to the United States. Ten-year-old Moritz was sent to live with an uncle in New England. At some point, probably at Castle Garden, the forerunner of Ellis Island, Morris Beisinger became Nelson Morris. Not long after joining his uncle in New England, he made his way to Pennsylvania, where he worked in the coal mines. He found his way onto a vessel on the Erie Canal that was on its way to Chicago.

When Nelson Morris arrived in Chicago in 1853, he found employment in a livestock yard at 30th and Cottage Grove that was owned by John B. Sherman, who was later instrumental in establishing the Union Stock Yard and Transportation Co. Young Nelson began trading in cattle very

successfully and soon began to accumulate wealth. At the age of twenty-three, at the start of the Civil War in 1861, Morris won a bid from the Federal Government to provide twenty thousand cattle to cities near the war zone. He soon acquired a slaughterhouse and butcher shop at 31st and the Lake.

The Union Stock Yard was a consolidation of nine small yards. Chicago's boundaries in 1864 went from Lake Michigan west to Crawford (Pulaski), north to Fullerton, and south to 39th (Pershing). The original Yard in 1865 was at the periphery of the City, on a square mile between 39th, 47th, Halsted, and Ashland.

**N**elson Morris & Co. was one of the first firms located there, along with its wholly-owned subsidiary, Fairbanks Canning. By the close of the 1880s, in addition to the large Chicago operation, Morris already owned plants in East St. Louis, South Bend, St. Joseph, Michigan, and Kansas City. The Morris packing operation included ownership of rail freight cars, which included both livestock and refrigerated units. Morris also owned cattle ranches in Texas and other western states. At the turn of the twentieth century it was estimated that Nelson Morris & Co. had nearly one hundred ranches and processing plants throughout the country. Morris employed over 3,700 people at the Union Stock Yard itself.

Nelson Morris & Co did not operate a kosher processing business. They processed beef, veal, sheep, pork, and their by-products. Morris did have a small kosher operation, as did both Armour and Swift.



**Nelson Morris and his son Ira.**

*Heritage from My Father: An Autobiography.*  
By Ira Nelson Morris, 1947. Published by his  
widow, Constance Lily (Rothschild) Morris.  
Ira Nelson Morris died in 1942.

In addition to his meat industry interests, Nelson Morris served on the Board of Directors of the Livestock National Bank, Peoples Trust and Savings Bank, and the First National Bank of Chicago.

He and his wife Sarah (Vogel) made their home on Indiana Avenue, where other wealthy Jews also resided. They had three sons and two daughters.

One of their daughters, Augusta, married Morris L. Rothchild, a successful State Street department store owner. Their son Edward married Helen Swift, the daughter of Gustavus Swift.

Nelson Morris died in 1907. He had never ridden in an automobile and warned his wife against doing so. Ironically, she was

killed in an automobile accident in France in 1909.

Edward Morris began working in the business as a youngster and took over its leadership after the death of Nelson. Herbert, the middle son, followed Edward into the business, but he died young, at under thirty years of age, in 1898. Edward bought out the interests of his siblings in Morris & Co. after their father's death. Ira, the youngest son, and the only one to graduate from college, turned away from the business; he served as an American diplomat. After Edward died in 1913, Helen and their sons took over the leadership of Morris & Co. In 1922, they sold it to Armour.

Nelson Morris's involvement in the organized Jewish community was limited. Although a member of Sinai Temple, he took no leadership role. Nevertheless, in their wills, Nelson and Sarah requested that medical facilities be established at Michael Reese Hospital. The Sarah Morris Hospital for Children and the Nelson Morris Institute became vital parts of that hospital's operation. Edward and Helen's daughters, pediatrician Ruth Bakwin and psychotherapist Muriel Gardiner, became medical doctors who worked with children.

A footnote: Nicholas J. Pritzker, the patriarch of the Chicago Pritzker family, started out as a bookkeeper at Morris & Co. This is documented at the Chicago History Museum in the Naphtali Ben Yakov Pritzker American History Wing and in the "Shalom Chicago" exhibition. He was not the only young Jewish man who received his start in business working for the Morris.

*Continued on page 8*



## Meat Industry *Continued from page 7*

### **Here we will introduce some Meat Industry Terms:**

*Dressed meat is primal slaughtered product, either a half or quarter of the animal carcass with head, tail, innards, and skin removed. Breaking means splitting the dressed carcass into wholesale cuts. Boning means stripping the meat from the wholesale cuts, leaving just the bones. The meat and fat and bones are sold or processed separately. Boxed meat is boneless meat sealed in boxes or pallet-size containers for further processing. Fabrication is the assembly of boned meat into products either raw for cooking or ready to eat, either for the commercial trade or the consumer. Firms may do one type of work or several—and they may vary their operations over time as the market changes.*

**F**or the large meat packing firms, the slaughter of the livestock was just the beginning of their operations. The business included the following: distribution of the dressed carcasses to retail shops throughout the United States, processing and canning of cooked meat and soups, manufacture of edible oils—both from animal fats and vegetable fats (cotton seed)—soap, the cold cream base for cosmetics, dyes from blood, fertilizers, glue, ammonia, and horns and hides.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Chicago meatpackers were the largest users of the railroads.

### **The Beef Trust**

In 1902, the three packing giants—Swift, Armour, and Morris—formed a corporation called The National Packing Company. Edward Morris was President. They purchased G.H. Hammond Meat Packing and operated it under the auspices of National Packing. Using the National Packing envelope, they bought a number of smaller competitors. Thus, the three giants, with their hostage company, Hammond, controlled about fifty-five percent of the nationally inspected meat industry. Their intention was to establish monopolistic control of the dressed meat market. This attracted the attention of the U.S. Department of Justice, and anti-trust action was taken against them. Criminal charges were filed against Morris and other executives. Levy Mayer was their attorney. The Federal lawsuit dragged through the courts for ten years, ending in an acquittal in 1912.

In 1900, the New York Jewish meatpacking firm of Schwarzschild & Sulzberger decided to establish a major branch in Chicago. S & S already had plants in New York and Kansas City. The firm was about the size of the Morris company. Louis Pfaelzer, an independent Jewish shop owner, gave up his wholesale meat business

to become S & S's Chicago general manager. They opened two wholesale locations—one in the Fulton Market and one on Oakdale Street. Shortly thereafter, they secured property at 4100 South Ashland Avenue, just outside of the main Union Stock Yard.

By 1902, S & S had an operating plant in Chicago and was expanding into Texas, Nebraska, and the East Coast. Much of the expansion was financed with borrowed money. In 1910, S & S was in financial trouble, and control of the company passed to the newly incorporated Sulzberger & Sons.

An interesting sidelight: When Edward Morris died in 1913, the Morris & Co. Operations Manager, Tom Wilson, became President. A few years later, he was lured away by Sulzberger to head Ashland Manufacturing, a firm founded to use the by-products from the Sulzberger slaughterhouses. Wilson renamed the company after himself. He acquired a knitting mill and other firms, and began to manufacture baseball shoes and tennis racquets and golf bags; then footballs and basketballs and volleyballs.

In 1918, Tom Wilson went back to concentrating on meatpacking. He changed the Sulzberger name to Wilson & Co. The firm has undergone a number of takeovers, control changes, and an eventual sale.



### **Hot Dog!**

According to the *Sentinel* magazine's "History of Chicago Jewry" (1986), the earliest documented

Jewish meat firm in the city was David Berg & Co., established in 1848.

The company's logo says, "Since 1860." We have not found any other source that validates either date. The earliest we can confirm is 1900. However, a butcher named David Berg is listed in the *Chicago City Directory* as early as 1866, in association with his brother Adolph's meat market.

David Berg & Co. holds the coveted designation, United States Department of Agriculture Inspection Approval #1—meaning that theirs was the first USDA-inspected plant in the country.

Their website claims that they "increased popularity of the 'hot dog' by introducing it in 1901 to Major League baseball fans at the original Chicago White Sox Park," and that their hot dogs "were a popular item at the Republican National Convention in Chicago that nominated Abraham Lincoln for the Presidency."

David Berg is now a Vienna brand.



## Vienna Beef — “The Chicago Hot Dog”

After Nelson Morris, the major Jewish contributors to the early meat industry in Chicago were Samuel Ladany and Emil Reichl, sausage makers who emigrated from Budapest to the United States in 1890. The lure of potential business associated with the World’s Columbian Exposition brought them to Chicago in 1893.

Their efforts at the fair were so successful that they decided to establish their business in Chicago. They chose “Vienna” as the company name because that elegant city, the great capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, had a reputation for fine sausage.

Their first location was in a small, three-story building on the northeast corner of O’Brien and Halsted streets, in the Maxwell Street Market area. Around 1920, they expanded the business into a block-long facility, where they remained until 1995, when their present plant at 2501 North Damen Avenue was constructed.

One reason for Vienna’s early success may have been that their sausages were all beef, not pork or a combination of beef and pork. Perhaps another reason was the taste of the kosher spicing they used.

In the early days, Vienna began selling to other retailers and stand operators. Henry Davis, a longtime VP of sales, helped stand owners with layout and signage. In return, the vendors agreed to sell only Vienna products. Thanks to Davis’s techniques, Vienna was able to corner the market, supplying independent stand owners with their “Vienna All Beef Hot Dog” logo.

**T**he Depression affected the hot dog market. Frankfurters could be bought for as little as a penny a piece. The hot dog boom continued through WWII, when, as a result of meat rationing, the demand for foods like hot dogs increased. By the war’s end, America’s eating habits had changed, and hot dogs were in!

In 1950, Vienna began selling their products nationwide. The



**Vienna Sausage Co.**

*Collection of the Chicago History Museum.*

demand was so great that they established distribution facilities in eight other American cities, and not long after that, production facilities on the West Coast and in Florida.

Also, after WWII, they began to supply supermarkets and chain stores, responding to customers’ increasing demands for delicatessen products. Advances in refrigeration made it possible to store meats longer and sell products in smaller, self-serve packages.

Vienna, for much of its existence, manufactured a full line of kosher sausages under the Wilno brand. In 1972, as a result of pressure from the observant community, they stopped producing kosher products in their plant. The Wilno label, while owned by Vienna, was then produced in the Sinai Kosher plant. Since the closure of Sinai, Wilno is no longer available.

Jules Ladany, who had taken over the company from his father, Samuel, died in 1979. Jules Ladany was succeeded by his son-in-law, Jim Eisenberg, who had joined the company in 1956. Eisenberg and Jim Bodman, who had been with Vienna since 1964, purchased the firm from the Ladany family.

The new management expanded into non-meat products (pickles, matzo balls, blintzes, soups, desserts, pizza, and hot dog buns) and into international marketing by licensing its products to a number of foreign firms. By the late twentieth century, Vienna had grown to a hundred-million-dollar-a-year company.

Today, just about every neighborhood in Chicago has at least one Vienna hot dog stand, and if you enter sports facilities in Chicago and others around the country, you will likely find Vienna hot dogs for sale.

It is remarkable that the Vienna Sausage Co., a multi-million-dollar worldwide business, began with two Jewish immigrant sausage makers peddling their wares at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Jackson Park. It is just one example of the influence Jews have had on the meat industry in Chicago.

### **Kosher Wars!**

Chicago’s kosher sausage makers were very competitive. In the “Kosher Wars” that raged during the 1920s and ’30s, Sam Levin and Harry Levitz were winners. They had become partners in 1904. Kosher Star was their trade name. Their first location was in a meat market at 329 West 14th Street.

*Continued on page 10*

## Meat *Continued from page 9*

Their second address was 1006-1010 Maxwell Street.

Sinai Kosher was started by Charles Pozin, Jack Levin, and Harry Katz around 1912. It was located at 3351 South Halsted Street. In 1922, Kosher Star merged with Sinai Kosher and kept the Sinai name. At the time of the merger, Kosher Star had over sixty employees working the product lines. The Kosher Star operation was moved to Sinai's Halsted location.

From 1920 to 1930, Levin and Levitz bought out Feinberg Kosher, Shofar Kosher, United Kosher Sausage, and Newberry Kosher. Sausage makers who bit the (saw)dust during that period were: Northwest Side Kosher Sausage (Division Street), Rubinsky & Shapiro Kosher Sausage, and Palestine Kosher Sausage.

Sinai Kosher emerged as the dominant vendor to the deli trade in Chicago. From 1960 to 1972, Wilno and Kosher Zion were manufactured in the Sinai plant.

## Superior & Sinai

The Lowenstein family set up in Fulton Market under the trade name of S. Lowenstein & Son. By 1930, under the ownership of Ira and Dick Lowenstein, this operation had metamorphosed into Superior Packing, 4119 South Union.

Around 1958, the Lowensteins constructed a building at 1000 West Pershing Road. This was a non-kosher beef and veal operation.

At the beginning of the 1960s, Sinai merged with Superior and moved into the Pershing building.

The Sinai ownership now was in the hands of Sam Pozin and Richard Lowenstein. The combined company decided to double the size of the building because their sausage manufacturing now included private labels as well as Sinai.

In 1979, Pozin and Lowenstein sold the business to Maple Leaf Mills/Foods of Canada. They continued to manage it for the new owners. Within several years, Maple Leaf found that a kosher meat company in the USA did not fit into their corporate structure. They sold Sinai back to Sam and Richard.

## Best Kosher

The mid-1920s marked the entry of the Oscherwitz family from Cincinnati into the Chicago market. Isaac Oscherwitz & Sons was the major kosher sausage firm in Cincinnati, the early center of meatpacking in the Midwest. Oscherwitz served all of the Eastern seaboard, selling both fresh and processed meats.

By 1925, the family knew that they had to move their manufacturing to Chicago. Harry and Phil Oscherwitz came from Cincinnati. Their brother-in-law, Sam Broida, came from St. Louis. Soon they were going head-to-head with Sinai.

The Oscherwitz Chicago firm incorporated as Best Kosher Sausage and started selling their prepackaged products via supermarkets.

After World War II, they relocated from Roosevelt Road to South Water Market.

John Mann (Sam Broida's son-in-law) and Jerry Oscherwitz were the first of the college-educated managers. John Mann, with degrees in Chemistry and Business from the University of Chicago, was the moving force for modernizing the business. Jerry Oscherwitz, with a degree in Marketing, did the *hondling*.

**B**est Kosher took the industry by surprise when it introduced a lower-fat frankfurter. They took that idea one step further in 1984 when Best began marketing a low-fat brand with no sugar and less salt than in regular hot dogs. With the rest of the third generation on board: Millard and Bernie Oscherwitz and Sheldon Sternberg, the company moved into the dominant position of kosher sausage manufacture in the USA. By this time, the Cincinnati facility was used only as a distribution center.



Best Kosher Sausage Co., 3527 West Roosevelt Road

## Best, Bessin & Sara Lee

By 1983, the Oscherwitz family was looking to move from their four-story South Water Market facility to a modern single-story plant.

In 1985, they purchased Sinai. Now they could offer fresh kosher deli meat and prepack products. Less than a year later, just about all their operations were combined at the Sinai facility on Pershing Road. Sales were now national and international. They renamed the newly enlarged firm Bessin Corp.

**F**ortune seemed to smile on the Oscherwitz/Broida family when John Bryan, the CEO of the Sara Lee Corporation came calling. Sara Lee's rival, ConAgra, had bought Bessin's chief competitor, Hebrew National, in 1993. Sara Lee bought Bessin.

*The paragraph that appeared here in the earlier print edition has been deleted. The information was incorrect.*

Bessin reintroduced the Oscherwitz brand name in 1997 for a line of fresh and cooked *glatt* kosher meats, including a line of sausage products. Bessin looked to take advantage of another trend: consumers were showing a renewed interest in meat snacks, and believed that kosher meant a better quality product. Over half of Bessin sales were to non-Jews.

In 2007, Sara Lee turned the key on the Pershing Road plant. Chicago lost its USDA Sinai 48 and Best 15 plants. Fressers around the nation were shocked that Sara Lee gave up on Bessin. Executives at Sara Lee found that they could not fit a small specialty operation into their large corporate structure. To date, Sara Lee has not given any indication why they closed Bessin and if they will sell the brand names or the recipes.



**New South Water Market.**

## The Manaster Family

Harry Manaster & Bros. first appears in the records in 1920. Their firms were United Packers, Columbia Corn Beef, Forrest Poultry, and Culinary Foods. David Berg was purchased by the Manaster family in the late 1920s. Included in the purchase was Kosher Zion.

By 1980, the Manaster businesses were divided. Joe Manaster's children owned the poultry businesses. Dave Manaster's children owned David Berg and Columbia Corn Beef, operating in the South Water Market. Paula Manaster became President of these two companies about 1976. During this time, the Kosher Zion products were manufactured at the Sinai plant.

After Paula Manaster died in 1991, her husband, Henry Stein, negotiated the sale of Berg/Columbia to Vienna Beef.

With the purchase of Berg, Vienna was able to take over the coveted USDA #1 designation for all of the products from the Damen Avenue plant.



**Visking Corp., Union Stock Yards.**  
Viskase® Companies, Inc.

## Sausage & Kishke Casings

Animal gut casing is an interesting meat industry specialty. The Oppenheimer and Levi families were the biggest producers. Only the Oppenheimer Casing Co. survives today, wholly-owned by an Australian firm. But a legacy of Oppenheimer thrives in Darien, Illinois. Erwin O. Freund of that firm invented the cellulose casing that could replace animal intestine casing.

“This cellulosic casing stuffed well, could be linked, and was able to withstand the rigors of the smokehouse. Quite by accident, he discovered that when the casing was removed from the product, the sausages retained their shape and were firm. The skinless sausage was born! In 1925, Mr. Freund organized a company by the name of Visking Corporation and the first production line of NOJAX® Casings began in a ramshackle building in the Chicago Union Stock Yards.”—*website of the Viskase® Companies, Inc.*

*Continued on page 14*



## ED MAZUR'S PAGES FROM THE PAST

**M**y source for these selections is the Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey Microfilm Collection at the Chicago Public Library, Harold Washington Library Center.

In the autumn of 1936 the Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey was organized under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) of Illinois. The purpose of the Survey was to translate and classify selected news articles appearing in Chicago's foreign language press from 1861 to 1938.

Financial curtailments in the WPA program ended the Survey in October 1941. The Chicago Public Library published the work in 1942. The project consists of a file of 120,000 typewritten pages from newspapers of 22 different foreign language communities in Chicago.

Yiddish is the foreign language of the Jewish press in the Survey. English language periodicals are also included, as well as the publications of charitable institutions, communal organizations, and synagogues.

### TRAINING SCHOOL FOR NURSES

A new training school for nurses, which was built as an addition to the Michael Reese Hospital was opened this week. It contains accommodations for forty nurses and six patients, besides having a lecture room and reception room. The present staff consists of a superintendent, an assistant, twenty-four nurses and two orderlies.

There are still accommodations for sixteen ladies, who may wish to become nurses. The Directors are especially desirous of obtaining applications from Jewish young ladies, as the

schooling afforded would be of great benefit to them. The rules require applicants to be between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five. The allowance for the first year is \$8.00 per month and \$12.00 for the second year. Board and lodging is furnished free.

*The Reform Advocate,*  
March 19, 1892.

### A GIFT FOR THE CHILDREN'S

**HOSPITAL** At a meeting of the Board of Directors, E.G. Foreman, M.E. Greenebaum, and A.J. Pflaum were present as a committee from Michael Reese Hospital with reference to the proposed gift of \$300,000 by the heirs of Mrs. Nelson Morris for the Children's Hospital. The following statement was submitted: cost of maintenance of hospital \$41,299 per year, income per year \$41,257. Permission was granted the Board of Michael Reese Hospital to accept the gift.

*Associated Jewish Charities*  
*Minutes,* May 11, 1910.

### LIBERAL ENDOWMENT: HEIRS OF M.A. MEYER TO GIVE \$500,000 TO MICHAEL REESE HOSPITAL

According to reliable information, the widow of the recently departed well-known lawyer, Levy Mayer, and her brothers and sisters, Mrs. Isaac H. Meyer, Mrs. Fred Fecheimer, Mrs. Sidney Stein, Edwin Meyer, Carl Meyer, Abraham Meyer and Albert Meyer, have decided to give an endowment fund of \$500,000 to Michael Reese Hospital as a memorial to their parents.

A new wing is to be added to the hospital to provide for patients of the better class. That is, refined but impecunious persons will be given treatment and comfort there, on a par with the more affluent. Mrs. Levy Mayer, as we reported at the

time, donated \$500,000 to Northwestern University recently, in memory of her deceased husband.

*Sonntagpost (Sunday*  
*Edition of Abendpost),*  
July 6, 1924.

### MICHAEL REESE HOSPITAL:

**CARE 1935** In regard to the Michael Reese Hospital, in 1935, 143,064 hospital days' care and 14,153 Nursery Days care were given, of which 76,980 were totally or partly free; and 140,225 dispensary visits were made at Mandel Clinic, of which 133,104 were totally or partly free.

During the year, the Hospital cooperated with the Illinois Emergency Relief in both the in-patient and outpatient departments accepting for care many non-Jewish patients as well as Jewish patients who were clients of the Commission.

*The Jewish Charities*  
*Report Book,* 1936.

### A DEPLORABLE SITUATION AT

**MICHAEL REESE** A number of subscribers have complained to us that the care and treatment at this institution has deteriorated to such a point that it has actually become hazardous to enter it as a patient. The number and variety of complaints are far too numerous to shrug off as being routine or commonplace.

We personally happen to know of one case where a dear friend, having undergone a serious operation, went through days of agony as a result of draining tubes having been incorrectly inserted by an intern... We were shocked to learn from other visitors at the hospital of even more stupid and inexcusable acts of inefficiency on

the part of the staff....

Various alibis are offered as to the reason for the deplorable state of affairs. First, as usual are the old excuses of overcrowded facilities, insufficient trained nurses, lack of budget, etc. A few observers have told us bluntly that the hospital is handling so many charity cases that there has developed a general feeling among the employees that "whatever we do is good enough for these people." Many enter Michael Reese and then as soon as beds are available, move over to Meyer House which is an entirely different set-up.

Our only concern is that it does not reflect credit upon this great Chicago Jewish community to have one of its two hospitals develop a reputation for being so grossly neglectful, inefficient, and indifferent to its patients that it earns the reputation for being "another County Hospital."

A great deal of responsibility rests with the doctors...who are well aware of what is going on. There will come a day when the situation will affect them where it hurts the most—their pocketbook.

*Chicago Jewish Sentinel,*  
August 19, 1954.

**CHICAGO'S PRIDE—MICHAEL REESE HOSPITAL** In an editorial last week, THE SENTINEL, sharply criticized Michael Reese Hospital. The editor has agreed to give the President of the Board of Directors, Grant J. Pick, this space for a presentation of facts which were not in the Editor's possession when he wrote the editorial.

Michael Reese is the largest private hospital west of New York, and the second largest in

the United States. It is given the highest ratings ever issued for its medical performance and care of patients and holds these ratings at present time. More than 90 percent of the patients at the hospital have reported...that they are delighted with the care and attention they got at the hospital.

Michael Reese is one of the few hospitals that is preferred for graduate study by interns and residents....They feel they will leave the hospital as a better trained doctor, because medicine is practiced better at Michael Reese Hospital....The medical staff consists of qualified specialists, and a large percentage of the hospital staff holds teaching positions on the faculties of medical schools. All these factors lead to better care and faster recovery of the patient.

We would like to mention the specialized personnel, equipment and techniques available at Michael Reese Hospital for cardiac catheterization and heart and lung surgery, radioactive isotopes, medical anesthesia, physical medicine and rehab, radiation therapy, giant magnet for removal of foreign bodies from the eye, and such other facilities as full time departments in biochemistry, cardiology, hematology, human reproduction, metabolism and endocrinology, microbiology, pathology, psychiatry, and radiology.

The hospital's organization and facilities are found in few institutions in the entire world. They bring to the Michael Reese medical staff, and to the Chicagoland community the very latest and best knowledge, equipment and techniques available for medical care.

*Chicago Jewish Sentinel,*  
August 26, 1954



**Isaac Daniel.**

*History of the Jews of Chicago.*

## ONE FAMILY'S PAGES

**A** biography and a photograph of Isaac Daniel appear in Herman L. Meites's *History of the Jews of Chicago*, published in 1924. Mr. Daniel is described as the head of a flourishing real estate company, the president of the Beth Hamedrosh Hagadol Congregation, and a member of a number of fraternal lodges. He and his wife, Lena (Marcus), were married on March 1, 1897, and had three children: daughters Irene, Lillian, and Ruth.

Mr. Daniel's copy of the limited edition *History* is personalized and numbered, indicating that he contributed monetarily to the publication of the book.

Today, this rare volume can be found in the office of the CJHS. It was mailed to us by Richard Crawford, a volunteer at the Poudre Valley Hospital Thrift Shop in Fort Collins, Colorado.

A few months ago, he had phoned our office, saying that the book had been donated to the shop, and he wanted to save it from being discarded. Could we return it to the family? An original Meites and a mystery. Of course, we said. "Send it!"

*Continued on page 22*

## Meat *Continued from page 11*

### Peddlers

In the 1920s and '30s, many Jewish men became meat peddlers. They would purchase wholesale cuts from the large packinghouses and sell/deliver them to local butchers, restaurants, and clubs. Many of these peddlers had regular routes that they served on a semi-weekly basis. These men would also function as middlemen between shops and restaurants. If a butcher shop had a surplus of a cut of meat or was looking for a deal on meat that another shop had to sell, the peddler/route man made the *shiddach*—taking his profit in the process. Time was of the essence. If a shop had surplus meat, they had to sell it before it spoiled.

The middle of the 1930s signaled an explosive entry of Jews into the non-kosher side of the meat industry. The peddlers/route men started settling into stalls in the three major wholesale meat districts of the City: Fulton, New South Water, and the Stock Yard District.

### New South Water Market

This was where, in 1925, the City of Chicago relocated all of the wholesale food purveyors from the original South Water Street, which had been along the main channel of the Chicago River and Lake Street, and from State Street to Market Street (South Wacker Drive).

The structure was a group of six buildings that ran along 14th Place and 15th Street from Morgan to Racine, just a couple of blocks south of the Maxwell Street Market. Each of the buildings was three stories above grade and had full basements. The construction was all concrete. And unlike the old Market, loading docks were truck bed height with wide streets. The buildings were divided into twenty-foot-wide units. Firms could rent/purchase one or more units. Most of the firms who relocated were fruit/vegetable merchants. But quite a few were meat dealers: David Berg, B. Arron & Sons, M & G Provisions (Oscar Ginsberg), Columbia Corn Beef, and Best Kosher Sausage. Vienna was just a quarter of a mile away.

### Fulton Market

The Fulton Market was the location of the wholesale operations of the large and medium size meat firms. (It was also a major poultry market.) Starting in the 1930s, some of the meat peddlers purchased stalls along the Fulton Market. Some wholesalers relied on the peddlers to distribute their product and some had their own delivery service.

**T**he Fulton Market ranged from Des Plaines Avenue on the east to Ogden Avenue on the west, and from Randolph Street on the south to the Chicago & Northwestern tracks (Carroll Street) on the north.

Today, a visitor to the Fulton Market district will find art galleries, design studios, cafes, and boutiques, as well as meat purveyors.

Some Fulton Market red meat firms still existing today are: Stock Yards Packing (originally owned by the Katz/Pollack family), now located at 340 North Oakley, B Arron & Sons, I Blum, L Frankel Packing, Kosher Packing Company, Liberman Meat, Joseph Lifshitz & Sons, Monarch Provision, and Hess Sigel.

### Pork

There are three firms that were/are owned by Jews that deal only in pork products: Kassel Zoll (now Zoll Packing), Wichita Meats, and Evans Foods. Together they supply over half of the pork ribs and puff bacon rinds consumed in the Chicago market.

Kassel Zoll was started by Ted Kassel in the Fulton Market. Larry Zoll became Ted's partner in the late 1970s. Ted Kassel was one of the few people who ran a meat business and also had a seat on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. He was very much a hedger, in that he could take a delivery of the pork bellies that were traded on the futures market.

In the mid-1980s, KZ moved to the old Burhops plant at 1445 Willow. In 1990, Ted retired, and Larry was joined by his son, Steve. In 1995, the Zolls moved the business to suburban South Holland. In 2004, they sold the business to ConAgra, which sold it to Rupari. Steve is managing the operations for the new owners.

Hyman Golant and his son own Wichita Meat, 1325 Fulton. They are the other major supplier of pork ribs in the Chicago Market.

Evans Foods manufactures puffed pig skins (otherwise known as bacon rinds). Lester Olin purchased the business around 1955. He sold it in 1985 to Alimentos Finos del Norte (ALFINO), a Mexican firm. The original plant is located on South Halsted, and is still in operation, although the owner has three other bacon rind plants in the United States and one in Mexico.

**I**f we travel west of the city, we come upon a meat firm that started out in the Fulton Market. The firm was founded by Bernie Weinstein in 1959, rather late in the Fulton era. Weinstein Wholesale Meats, Inc. is a full line purveyor. It is now operated by Bernie's son, Ronald, from 7501 Industrial Drive, Forest Park. Yes, it is adjacent to Jewish Waldheim Cemetery.



## The Yards

The largest group of firms both Jewish and non-Jewish were in the area called the Stockyards or just the Yards. This district consisted of the original Union Stock Yard, Packingtown, Back of the Yards, Canaryville, and Bridgeport—from approximately 35th Street to 49th Street, and from Wentworth to Ashland, with a four block appendage into the Chicago Manufacturing District (CMD) for some of Wilson's plants (the former Schwartzschild & Sulzberger).

In this eastern portion of the original Yards were the pens where the railroads, and later, trucks, delivered livestock for trading. On the western half of original Yards were the giant firms' processing plants. On the periphery were the small firms and support vendors. It was in this surrounding area that the Jewish firms located. The moves began in the early 1920s. Eight casing firms were also located there.



Chicago Stockyards, 1935.

## Refugees

Many of the Jewish refugees from Hitler in the 1930s had been cattle dealers and sausage makers in Germany. Two firms founded by refugees were full line operations that bought livestock, slaughtered, and distributed wholesale: Lincoln Meats, founded by Wally Mander, and C B Packing, founded by Leo Bonem and J.R. Cohen. Both firms slaughtered beef and veal. Both were located two blocks north of the main Yards on 38th Street. C B was kosher only and Lincoln was not. C B closed in 1961; Lincoln operates today under non-Jewish ownership.

Most of the German Jews who founded meat firms went into the provisioning business, joining a line already developed by Eastern European Jewish immigrants. Purveyors or provisioners bought dressed sides of beef or pork, split the carcass into wholesale cuts, and then sold to retail butchers, restaurants, and sausage makers.

When C B Packing closed, three of the managers (Burt Falk, Bob Cohn, and Lee Bendorf) opened Dakota Packing. Other German Jewish refugee provisioners were L Beck & Sons (Wally and Sidney Beck), S Beck Meat Co. (Sidney Beck), Central Meats (Sig Mannheimer), Lorig Meats (Julius Lorig and Karl Meyer), and Mannheimer Meats (Lou Mannheimer).

*Max Lorig's memoir of his father, Julius, starts on page 16.*



**Walter S. Mander.** Collection of Lincoln Provision, Inc. The painting illustrates the article "Walter S. Mander: The Jewish Cowboy Philanthropist" by Walter Roth. Chicago Jewish History, Summer 2008.

Read the article online at [www.chicagojewishhistory.org](http://www.chicagojewishhistory.org)

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## Jewish Participation in Chicago's Meat Industry

### JULIUS LORIG J. Lorig Inc.

*CJHS Vice President Jerold Levin, in preparing the Meat Industry program, wrote to Max Lorig, inquiring about his father's meat processing business, J. Lorig Inc., and how it developed. Max Lorig answered with this moving account.*

My father and mother, Julius and Betty Lorig, settled in Kordel, Germany when they got married in 1927. Kordel is a small town, about ten to fifteen minutes from Trier. My father was born in Butzweiler, and my mother in Soetern, again, both small towns near Trier. Apparently Kordel was a pleasant town with a minimal amount of anti-Semitism for the 1930s period. In fact, my father was elected or appointed to the volunteer fire department, an honor for anyone, but especially for a Jew.

A lot of Jews in that region were cattle dealers, buying and selling, as well as having farmers care for their cattle until they were suitable for the slaughterhouse. Some were slaughtered as kosher and some not. (In fact, my grandfather was a *shokhet*.) My father was a cattle dealer, and in addition, operated a butcher shop in Kordel with a partner.

#### Immigrants

We all know what happened in the 1930s in Germany, but in Kordel the full impact was slow in coming. This was a Catholic area, and was slow to endorse Hitler's ideas. In 1937, my father and mother felt that conditions would not improve. It was very difficult to make a living, plus they saw that things were even worse in the larger cities. They were fortunate to get a sponsor and visas for the family (mother, father, Sonja, age 8, and Max, age 4) to go to the USA in September 1937.

My father had six brothers and sisters. Two brothers and my father were able to leave. The remaining four siblings and their large families were killed in the 1942-43 period. The two brothers who stayed were WWI German army veterans and apparently felt that they could outlast a rogue regime.

One brother, Isadore Lorig, and his family, had preceded our family to Chicago in 1936, so that was our destination. We arrived virtually penniless, and lived with these relatives for a few weeks until we could find a place of our own. Germany would not allow Jews to take any money with them, but did allow some

possessions. We bought a Leica camera in Germany and sold it in the USA to raise some money. We also applied to HIAS for a hundred dollar loan. This financed the first few weeks until my father could get a job.

At that time, during the Depression, jobs were very difficult to find, especially for a thirty-six-year-old man who did not speak any English. My very proud and distinguished father was finally able to get work as a dishwasher, which allowed us to repay HIAS and rent an apartment of our own.

#### Johnson & Keck

After a few months he found a job as a butcher in a combined wholesale and retail shop, Johnson & Keck, at 533 South Wells Street. The owner spoke German and was willing to hire my father. In retrospect, I understand that this was not altogether altruistic, since he knew he was hiring an intelligent, hard-working man who was desperate to succeed. This job consisted of working in a cooler all day.

My father worked at Johnson and Keck for about nine years, learning how to cut meat "American style" and learning American business ways. Johnson & Keck was a supplier to many downtown restaurants, and since my father was very good at interacting with people and as a salesman, he became the person that these restaurants wanted to talk to and order from.

I want to mention that immediately upon settling in Chicago, my parents applied for American citizenship. There was a five-year waiting period before an applicant could take the citizenship test, but as soon as the five years were up, they took the test and passed. They attended English and citizenship classes, even though both were working full-time jobs and running a household. At that time the US government labeled all German immigrants "Enemy Aliens"—Jews or not. It was a terrible label, and I even felt it as a child.

In 1946, my father quit his job and started what was known as "peddling" in the meat industry. We had a 1936 Chevrolet car, and he would go to the Fulton Market and buy quantities of meat that he felt he could sell or already had orders for. Then he would deliver the orders. He quickly developed enough business to make a living. The 1936 Chevrolet gave way to a used Ford wood-sided station wagon to accommodate more business.

#### Custer Street

In 1948, he took the opportunity to buy a small existing retail meat market at 613 Custer Street in Evanston. Along with operating the retail business, he developed a growing wholesale clientele of restaurants on the North Shore and the North Side of Chicago, as

well as fraternity and sorority houses at Northwestern University. He then purchased a small panel truck to supplement the station wagon. In time, the wholesale business took over and the retail market was closed. The business stayed at the same location.

At that time, my father took in a junior partner. Karl Mayer was a survivor of the concentration camps, an immigrant to the United States, and then a draftee in the Army. He was interested in the business, and also, he was “strong as an ox”—so he could relieve my father of some of the very heavy work. My mother handled all the billing and invoice payments in addition to working full time as a checker at the local A&P.

The business progressed very well in the period of 1952-1970. The Custer location was outfitted with a large cooler and freezer as well as a rail system to unload trucks and move meat into the cooler. My father also bought and operated two refrigerated trucks to better serve the customers. My brother-in-law, Sam Gebel, was brought into the business as a junior partner.



### Milwaukee Avenue

J. Lorig Inc. outgrew the Custer Street location, and a building at 5120 North Milwaukee Avenue in Chicago was purchased. Previously owned by Swift & Co., it had been shut down because of improper conditions for handling meat. The building was completely rehabilitated and improved with sanitary rail systems, necessary cleaning systems, and outside loading dock improvements, sufficient to receive USDA approval to operate with Federal inspection. One must remember that my father was over seventy years old at that time. Yet he was very vibrant, upbeat, and optimistic.

That building enabled J. Lorig Inc. to handle both kosher and non-kosher meats, and the business thrived with the opportunity to handle both. They served many kosher meat markets, as well as many supermarkets, such as Treasure Island, Smithfields, and George B. Winters (an Evanston boutique grocery and meat market that specialized in phone-in orders from the wealthier Evanstonians).

They also served many fine restaurants, such as the Golden Ox and DiLeo's in Chicago and Fanny's in Evanston. Fanny's, a North Shore institution, was so pleased with my father's products and service that she printed on her menu, “Steaks by Julius Lorig Co.” The business was running smoothly with six refrigerated trucks delivering meat throughout the Chicago area. The business continued to thrive until the early 1980s when “boxed beef” became popular.



**Left: Julius Lorig inside his Milwaukee Avenue meat cooler. Right: J. Lorig Inc. trucks.** Collection of Max H. Lorig.

### Boxed Beef

My father's method of operation was always to buy beef in bulk, usually a trailer of perhaps forty full carcasses, then cut up those carcasses into the portions desired by his customers. Some customers wanted full hindquarters or fore-quarters, some wanted full loins or ribs, and some wanted much more service, such as individual steaks or even hamburger. With boxed beef that was processed in non-union rural areas, the meat was usually cut, then frozen, then sold in forty to fifty pound quantities. Boxed beef virtually cut out processors like my father.

By 1986, the business was still operating, but at minimal profit. My father was eighty-five years old, but still loved to work and be useful.

*Continued on page 19*



## Meat *Continued from page 15*

### WWII Rationing

In 1937, Mel Solomon bought Allen Bros.—one man with a broken-down truck. Mel soon built up the business, only to be stopped cold at the start of the war by the US government in Washington, DC.

He wasn't drafted. His problem was the rationing that was being set up. In order to buy and sell goods, your business had to fit into a recognized trade classification. The Office of Price Administration (OPA) had not included meat provisioners. Mel contacted Clarence Becker in Milwaukee, and the two of them went to DC and secured a classification.

After that effort, Mel, Ellard Pfaelzer, and several others founded a trade organization, the National Association of Meat Purveyors, now known as the North American Meat Processors Association (NAMP).

Allen Bros., now owned by the Hatoff family, is still one of the leading purveyors in the Midwest.

In November 2011, Mel Solomon was inducted in the Meat Industry Hall of Fame.

One of his outstanding achievements was founding the *NAMP Meat Buyer's Guide*, the premier resource publication for food service purchasers, educators, students, and the others who deal with the public and the meat industry. It is the most comprehensive meat and poultry identification manual available; including sections on Beef, Lamb, Veal, Pork, By-Products, and Poultry.

Additional content areas provide the user with trim/quality specifications, food safety information, material requirements, grading descriptions, and the industry's most complete meat glossary.

### Livestock Brokers/ Cattle Dealers & Farmers



**"C. Franks Marengo, IL" farm truck.**  
*Collection of the Franks family.*

Finally, we meet the farmers and their agents, the livestock broker/dealers. Carl Franks was a Jewish cattle dealer who owned a farm in Marengo, Illinois, in McHenry county. We asked his son, Herb, to tell us something about the Franks family's involvement in the meat industry. Here is his reply:

"There were a whole bunch of cattle dealers in our area, but, of course, the one who immediately comes to mind is my father.

"Karl Perl was a cattle dealer who frequently parked his animals at our farm until he could get a whole load that he would haul into Chicago himself. He and my father were great friends. He later moved to St. Cloud, Minnesota, where he started a six-hundred-cow dairy operation. I remember at least three other cattle dealers. It seems to me one was named Strauss, from

**Do you have something to add?  
Send us an e-mail at  
[info@chicagohistory.org](mailto:info@chicagohistory.org)**

Harvard, Illinois. Others were active in our area, and we were frequently bidding against each other, although the relationships were always warm.

"While I was going to Roosevelt College from 1951 to 1954, I drove a semi to the Halsted Street Stock Yards to deliver cattle and hogs.

"We were a family of five children. Judy Farah is the youngest. My brother, Sheldon, worked on our farm until his death a number of years ago. Another sister, Helen Lindow, was Chairman of the First National Bank of Marengo until it was sold recently. She lives on the family farm in the same field as I do. My other sister, Betty Sobelman, lives in Northbrook. She is the widow of Richard Sobelman.

"My son, Jack, is a fairly well-known State Representative. He still lives on our family farm, where he recently built his own home, which he occupies with his wife and two sons. Jack is a partner in our law firm of Franks, Gerkin & McKenna, also located on the family farm."

Another Jewish cattle dealer working the Northern Illinois farms was Max Hertz. Max lived in Chicago, in Westridge, on the weekends, and in Sterling, Illinois, during the work week.

**W**e cannot conclude without mentioning that the Jewish meat dealers as an industry group participated in the charitable life of Jewish Chicago. B'nai B'rith had Meat Industry Lodge No. 2344, organized in 1961. The membership roster is a Who's Who of the Chicago Jewish meat packing community,

The Trades and Professions Division of JUF/Jewish Federation had a separate dinner for the meat industry owners/managers. I am told that it was the best meal of the annual fundraising campaign. Ah, those rare steaks! ❖

**HERBERT EISEMAN** is a member of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

He is a Certified Member of the Chicago Tour-Guide Professional Association (CTPA).

Mr. Eiseman guides "Downtown Jewish Chicago" walking tours for the Society. Last year, he presented the slide lecture "Jewish Merchant Princes of State Street" at a Society open meeting at Temple Sholom, guiding the audience on a virtual tour.

He is a member of the Board of Directors of Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel Congregation.

Mr. Eiseman participates in the Volunteers for Israel® program, doing civilian support work on Israel Defense Forces (IDF) bases.

**JEROLD LEVIN** was raised in Chicago's South Shore neighborhood, where he attended Chicago Public Schools. He earned a BS in Construction Management with a minor in Economics from Bradley University. Upon graduation he joined the family construction business, Architectural Builders Co. In 1985, he sold the business and joined the Ben A. Borenstein Company as a vice president.

For forty years, one area of Mr. Levin's construction specialization was meat industry facilities. In 2008, he retired from full-time work.

His wife, Evelyn (Strauss), is a North Sider and a Bradley alumna. She is a Past President of the Chicago Section of the National Council of Jewish Women. She retired from her longtime position as Executive Director of Cong. Ezras Israel in 2008.

They live in Westridge (West Rogers Park), where they raised their sons, Craig and David, and joined Temple Beth El. Mr. Levin is a Past President of the Temple, which is now located in Northbrook. Craig and his wife, Elizabeth, live in the Washington DC area, as does David. Both Craig and David work for Uncle Sam.

The Levins were among the founding members of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. Mr. Levin is currently the Society's Vice President.

#### **Thanks to everyone who helped!**

**Cary Cwolvick, Herb Franks,  
Judy Franks Farah, Marvin Fagel,  
Al Gitelman, Linda Johnson, Jerry Kohn,  
Barry Levy, Mort Levy,  
Alan Lezak, Norman Light,  
Max Lorig, Libby Mahoney, Robert Mann,  
Sema Menora, Alan Ray, Mel Salomon,  
Alan R. Schneider, and Roger Wilk**

## **Julius Lorig** *Continued from page 17*



**J. Lorig workers inside cooler.** Collection of Max H. Lorig.

When my brother-in-law, Sam Gebel, died in February 1986, my father lost some of his enthusiasm, and his health declined. A few months later, he came home from work on a Thursday, and died that Saturday.

Karl Mayer was unable to operate the business because of poor health, and since that type of operation was fading, we decided to close up shop, pay all the employees' severance, and pay all bills in the proper way, as my father would have wanted.

My father, Julius Lorig, was extremely proud of what he accomplished in his adopted country and the opportunities that it gave him. I was happy to work with him from age thirteen—after school, vacation periods, even on Saturdays when I was already working full-time in my chosen profession—until well after I was married.

Jerry, after concluding this letter, I realize that I gave you much more information than you requested. The fact is, this was wonderfully cathartic for me to put in writing all the respect and admiration for my parents that I have felt over the years, especially as I get older and more retrospective. Thank you for the impetus.

Max H. Lorig  
Northbrook, IL

*Max Lorig graduated from Lane Tech High School. He attended the University of Illinois where he earned a BS in Civil Engineering. He served two years in the US Army. Mr. Lorig worked as a civil engineer until forming his own road and bridge building company in 1986. He is now chairman of Lorig Construction, one of the larger heavy construction companies in Illinois.*

*Max and Sondra Lorig have been married for over fifty-three years. Their son Glenn, an electrical engineer with Texas Instruments, lives in Dallas with wife Sue Ann and daughter Kirby. Son David is an attorney and the president of Lorig Construction. He and wife Debbie have one son, Jacob, and two daughters, Tanya and Nina.*

# FIVE BROTHERS WHO MADE THEIR MARX IN CHICAGO

BY NEIL KLEINBORT

I have been a Marx Brothers fan for the past half century. I liked all of the brothers and laughed at them all—well, all except poor, superfluous Zeppo—but I was always most partial to Groucho. As a kid in Humboldt Park I first became aware of the television Groucho, watching him spar with George Fenneman and quiz show contestants on the wildly popular “You Bet Your Life.” “Tell ’em Groucho sent you!” was his mantra. He drove a DeSoto, smoked big cigars, and flaunted a moustache made of actual human hair. It was some years later that I discovered Marx Brothers movies—the ones where Groucho couldn’t be bothered with growing a moustache and just painted one on.

I remember first seeing *A Night at the Opera* and *A Day at the Races* on a double bill at the old Clark Theater on Clark and Madison. The place was packed, and for three and a half hours the building practically shook with laughter. My brother Barry and I would go to the Clark frequently to see movie classics. There were double features daily and a different program every day of the week. Bruce Trinz, the Clark’s owner, probably did more to popularize old movies in Chicago than anyone until Ted Turner.

Critic Roger Ebert refers to the Clark Theater as a “repertory” house, but I prefer to call it a “revival” house. The Clark got more than its share of winos and derelicts spending the day. At times it seemed that half the patrons were passed out or asleep. Ushers would revive them by patrolling the aisles, rapping on the seats with such vigor that the theater seemed to be under attack by a flock of angry woodpeckers.

Once I started driving, Barry and I would take occasional trips to the Rose Theater in Franklin Park, another revival house. The Rose was not much to look at, about as far as one could get from the Balaban and Katz movie palaces of yore—just a remodeled Quonset Hut—but for viewing *Monkey Business* or *Horse Feathers*, it was fine enough.

Later still, I was able to meet Groucho in person. That happened at Northwestern University. English Professor Bergen Evans, a good friend and pen pal of Groucho’s, invited him to give a talk at McGaw Hall. It was the evening of May 29, 1970, and there were several thousand of us in the audience—many wearing Harpo wigs or Chico hats or Groucho moustaches and glasses. An amateur artist, I had drawn quite a few charcoal portraits of my favorite comedians, and,

hoping for an autograph, I brought along a picture of Groucho. At some point in the proceedings, I held up the drawing, and Groucho invited me up on stage to get a closer look. He took it from my hand and studied it. “It makes me look kind of surly,” he concluded, “I think you should go home and take another crack at it.” I was crestfallen. I said, “Well, would you sign it, anyway?” The 79-year-old comedy legend waited for a beat, and then declared, “I’ll sign anything, as long as it’s not a check!” And to my relief, he did.

This may have been Groucho’s last visit to Chicago, but he and his brothers had been here many times before. In fact, Chicago was their home for some twelve years between 1909 and 1920. The brothers were born in New York City, the five sons of the indomitable Minnie Schoenberg and the ineffectual Sam Marx. The eldest son Leonard (Chico) was born in 1887 with Adolph (Harpo) arriving the following year in 1888. Next came Julius (Groucho) in 1890, Milton (Gummo) in 1892, and, finally, Herbert (Zeppo) in 1901.

Except for the mostly self-educated Groucho, the brothers showed little interest in books or learning, so Mother Minnie set her sights on show business careers for her brood. Minnie’s brother, Al Shean, one half of the vaudeville team Gallagher and Shean, had done very well, and she probably figured that her five boys could do even better. After all, as an avid poker player, Minnie knew that a full house always beats a pair!

But success eluded the Marxes in New York. Minnie thought up acts in many different permutations, but they remained consistently and hopelessly “small-time.” There is an old Hebrew saying, “Change your place, and change your luck,” advice Jews had taken since Abraham. So, in 1909, Minnie decided to pack up the family and move to Chicago, an important stop on the vaudeville circuits, and our city boasted some thirty vaudeville theaters.

Eventually, the Marxes occupied three separate residences in the Chicago area. From 1909 until 1912, they rented an apartment at 4696 Calumet Avenue. In 1912, they moved to 4512 Grand Blvd. (This house still stands; the address is now 4512 King Drive). It is a large three-story graystone building, located in what was then a ritzy Jewish neighborhood. It has a turret and a stone balcony—the sort of place that in a Marx Brothers movie would have been occupied by the

wealthy *grand dame*, played by the majestic Margaret Dumont. Minnie bought the house for \$25,000—putting \$1,000 down and hoping she'd be able to meet the mortgage payments to a Mr. Greenbaum. According to Groucho, whenever the brothers got too rambunctious onstage, putting themselves in danger of having their act cancelled, Minnie was able to get their attention with a single word uttered from the wings, "Greenbaum."

In 1917 Minnie made the family move yet again when she purchased a twenty-seven-acre chicken farm in a then undeveloped area located northeast of the intersection of Joliet Road and La Grange Road, in La Grange (now Countryside). I don't know what Minnie paid for the farm, but surely Groucho would have called it "a poultry sum."

Reminiscing about the farm, Groucho joked, "The first day we got up at five in the morning. The second morning we dawdled until six. By the end of the first week we slept until noon, which gave us just enough time to catch the 1:07 train to Chicago to see the Chicago Cubs play." The Marxes were fervent baseball fans and went to many Cubs games, but Groucho also mentions seeing Ty Cobb play at Comiskey Park on "many a day," so it would seem their loyalties were ecumenical.

**R**egarding the chicken farm: it's a lot easier to picture the Marx Brothers frolicking with farmers' daughters rather than becoming farmers themselves. But the United States had entered World War I in April of 1917, and, evidently, Minnie was under the impression that farmers would be exempt from the draft because of their valuable occupation—feeding the nation.



**Photo of the five Marx Brothers on the Chicago Tribute Marker of Distinction, 4512 South King Blvd.** From the top: Groucho, Zeppo, Harpo, Chico, Gummo. The markers commemorate notable Chicagoans by marking the places where they lived or worked. Since the program started in 1997, eighty markers have been erected around the city. Chicago Tribute Markers of Distinction is a collaboration between the Chicago Cultural Center Foundation, the Chicago Tribune Foundation, and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs.

She knew that her boys were more interested in feeding straight lines to Groucho—but she was desperate to keep them out of the Army and on the stage.

In reality, agricultural workers were drafted in about the same percentage as everyone else, but as it turned out, Gummo was the only brother to actually pass his army physical. Gummo, who didn't like

performing because he stuttered, was drafted near the end of the War and after the Armistice he never returned to the act. The other brothers didn't see active military service until *Duck Soup* in 1933, and then they were fighting for a foreign country, the mythical Freedonia.

In addition to the loss of Gummo, the Marxes' act suffered another casualty during the War. Due to anti-German sentiment, Groucho was forced to abandon the German accent he had been affecting for years. Now, when he spoke, the audience booed. So he replaced the accent with the stooped walk and rapid-fire sarcasm that became his trademark—a huge improvement. One can only imagine how the great Chico/Groucho dialogues might have sounded with the brothers conversing in both broken Italian and broken German. *Oy vey!*

The Chicago area is also where the brothers were renamed. One night in Galesburg, Illinois, the Marxes were playing poker with a comedian named Al Fisher. As he dealt a hand, Fisher was inspired to give the brothers nicknames based on "Sherlocko the Monk," a popular comic strip of the time in which all of the characters' names ended with the letter "O." Chico chased girls (chicks), Harpo played the harp, Gummo wore rubber soled shoes (gumshoes), and Groucho was a grouch. Back on the farm, the youngest brother was given a rustic nickname, Zeb, which was later changed to Zeppo.

When they first arrived in Chicago in 1909, the Marxes had already been knocking around in small-time vaudeville for several years in acts that weren't very good. But by the time they left Chicago to return to New York in 1920, they

*Continued on page 22*



## ONE FAMILY'S PAGES *Continued from page 13*

**H**ow did it get to Colorado? How did Mr. Crawford find us? The first question remains a mystery; the second can be answered.

Tucked into the book is a letter from the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, sent in 1977, soliciting memberships in our new organization. Mr. Crawford was able to find our current contact information on the internet.

Isaac Daniel's family used his copy of the *History* as a family album. Pasted on the blank pages at the front and back of the book are vintage photographs of Isaac and Lena and their daughters. There is Lena's business card, when she was a dressmaker on 12th Street before marrying Isaac. There are documents attesting to his lodge memberships.

A sad photo shows the family gathered at a barren gravesite in

Albuquerque, NM, where a number of markers simply say "DANIEL"

The book seems to have been handed down to the Daniel's middle daughter, Lillian. There is an obituary dated July 21, 1970, for Israel Mawrence, of 5201 South Cornell; husband of Lillian (nee Daniel); father of Sybil (David) Helman of Scotch Plains, NJ.

Lillian was active in Hadassah. Tucked into the book are envelopes from Israel addressed to Mrs. Israel Mawrence, 9017 Constance Avenue, Chicago. There is a card with a greeting handwritten in Hebrew by Shaul Ramati, who was the Consul General of Israel in Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s.

Dear Readers: If you know the whereabouts of any Daniel descendants, please contact the CJHS. We want them to have their *History*. ❖

## ANOTHER MYSTERY FROM COLORADO? NEIGH.

In early 2011, the CJHS office received an inquiry from Andy Levy of Denver. He wanted to buy a Meites *History*. No copies of our 1990 reprint remained, but Muriel Rogers volunteered to donate her copy to sell to Mr. Levy, with the proceeds going to our Society.

Mr. Levy was overjoyed. He had notable ancestors in Chicago, one of whom was Municipal Court Judge Isidore H. Himes, whom Mr. Levy claims was the first Jewish judge in Chicago (though he is not mentioned in Meites).

A horse owner, C.R. Ellison, appeared before Judge Himes and was so pleased with his ruling that he named his horse after him, and it won the Kentucky Derby. You can look it up! The 1903 Kentucky Derby winner—Judge Himes. ❖

## FIVE BROTHERS *Continued from page 21*

had developed the personas, the costumes, the makeup and even the stage names that would propel them to great success on Broadway and in Hollywood for decades to come.

**C**hicago would never be far from their thoughts. For example, for most of his life Groucho nursed a grudge against the "vicious" *Chicago Tribune* theater critic, Percy Hammond. In *An Evening with Groucho* at Carnegie Hall in 1972, Groucho told an oft-repeated story: "Percy Hammond reviewed us at the Majestic Theater in Chicago (now the Bank of America Theatre). He said, 'The Marx Brothers and their various relatives ran around the stage for about an hour yesterday evening. Why, I'll never understand.'" Groucho continued to tell this story long after Percy Hammond

was forgotten and long after the whole country understood that the Marx Brothers were the greatest comedy team America ever produced.

The Marxes, in various capacities, returned to Chicago many times over the years. For example, Chico Marx and his Orchestra, featuring local boy drummer and singer Mel Torme, appeared at the Blackhawk Cafe for four months in 1942. But if anyone doubts the Marx Brothers' fondness for our town, there is one story they need to know, a story that reveals how, at the moment of one of their greatest triumphs, their thoughts turned to Chicago.

In 1933, the Four Marx Brothers, now movie stars, placed their handprints in cement in the forecourt of Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. Regarding the ceremony, Groucho stated, "There was no need to inform us of the protocol involved. We were from Chicago and knew all about cement." ❖

**NEIL KLEINBORT** is a life-long Chicagoan and a relatively (cousin of President Ed Mazur) new member of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. An inveterate jokester, he spent many years standing in hallways at Lafayette and Boone Elementary Schools and the Chicago Jewish Academy High School and, somehow, managed to graduate from the U of I at Chicago Circle. A retired jeweler, Neil spends his days writing funny songs, walking, and napping, and his nights under the expert care of his ace attendant and life partner, Sandy Rebitzer. His daughter Tori pretends they are not related.

# CJHS members... YASHER KOACH!

*To all our activists, achievers, and honorees... the Hebrew phrase means "More Power to You"...*

## **"Refuge"** *Continued from page 5*

to record interviews with the residents and founders so that their unique life experiences in a special time and place would not be lost. With the can-do attitude that he inherited, Mr. Bensinger assembled financial backing, technical support, and marketing expertise.

"Refuge" premiered in June at the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Educational Center in Skokie. Subsequent screenings have been well-attended and enthusiastically praised.

"Refuge" was awarded "Best Documentary" and "Best in Fest" honors at the 2012 Sycamore Film Festival. In October, it was screened at the Crystal Palace International Film Festival in London, England. It will be aired on PBS and shown in a number of upcoming film festivals in the Midwest.

Our CJHS audience appreciated Mr. Bensinger's active participation in our event. He introduced the film and graciously answered audience questions afterward. We are proud to have him as a member of the Society, as we rejoice in the many Selfhelp supporters who are longtime CJHS members, as well. ❖

## **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago Dedicates Chagall-Inspired Program to Mayor Rahm Emanuel**

Resident Choreographer Alejandro Cerrudo created Hubbard Street's first full-length performance, *One Thousand Pieces*, inspired by Marc Chagall's *America Windows*, on view at the Art Institute of Chicago.

This world premiere was given in honor of Mayor Rahm Emanuel during the company's Thirty-Fifth Anniversary Fall Series engagement at the Harris Theater in Millennium Park.

In accepting the honor onstage before the performance on Friday, October 19th, Mayor Emanuel said, "You've made a Jewish mother very happy—and it's not easy to make a Jewish mother happy."

## **Irving Cutler Appears in Film on Jewish Lawndale**

"Remembering Jewish Lawndale," a short film about the rich history of one Chicago neighborhood, received two screenings on Tuesday afternoon, October 9, at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn.

The 30-minute film was co-produced by the College of DuPage Geography program and the Illinois Geographic Society. It features interviews by independent journalist Maria Traska and was filmed by COD student employee Luke Ronne through the College's Multimedia department.

Dr. Irving Cutler, a Founding Board Member of the CJHS is interviewed in the film and took part in the post-screening discussion.

From the College of DuPage website, in an article about the project, Brian Kleeman wrote:

"Keith Yearman, associate professor of Geography, said the idea [for the film] grew from two separate projects. 'Six years ago, the IGS proposed recording several well-known Illinois geographers to present their knowledge on a variety of topics,' he said. 'At the same time, I've been working on a new book about Route 66 between Chicago and Joliet. Most tour books show the route starting in downtown Chicago and then jumping to Joliet, skipping most of what's in between. But the route passed through Lawndale by Douglas Park.'

"Fascinated by the neighborhood, Yearman contacted Irving Cutler, former Geography chair at Chicago State University who grew up in Lawndale [and is the Lawndale *maven extraordinaire*]. Cutler and Yearman took a driving tour through the community and began discussing its history..."

Dr. Cutler reported to the CJHS Board that a couple of Jewish West Siders attended one of the screenings in Glen Ellyn. They wanted to talk about the Workmen's Circle and the ninety-nine straight wins by Marshall High School basketball teams in the 1940s. ❖

Thirty-five years ago, in 1977, when the Hubbard Street company was founded, Marc Chagall dedicated his *America Windows* to the memory of Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, who had died the year before. ❖

Look to the rock from which you were born  
הביטו אלי צור הציבונם



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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 handsome logo. Inside, our mission statement and space for your personal message. Pack of five cards and envelopes \$18.00. Individual cards can be mailed for you from our office at \$5.00 per card, postage included. Mail your order and check to the CJHS office, 610 South Michigan Avenue, Room 803. Chicago IL 60605-1901.

## About the Society

### What We Do

The Society seeks out, collects and preserves written, spoken and photographic records, in close cooperation with Spertus – A Center for Jewish Learning & Culture. The Society publishes books and the quarterly journal *Chicago Jewish History*; holds open meetings at which various aspects of Chicago Jewish history are treated; and offers tours of local 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 Store, and the opportunity to learn and inform others about Chicago Jewish history and its preservation. 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.

### Browse Our Website

**[www.chicagojewishhistory.org](http://www.chicagojewishhistory.org)**  
Use the printable membership application. Find information on upcoming CJHS events. Read the current and back issues of *Chicago Jewish History*.

**E-mail** We welcome your inquiries and comments at:  
**[info@chicagojewishhistory.org](mailto:info@chicagojewishhistory.org)**

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