



chicago jewish history

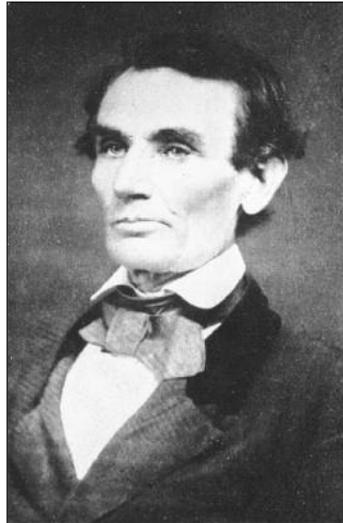
Our Three Terrific Tours in 2015

Details and Reservation Form on Page 19



Former Jewish People's Institute (JPI)
3500 West Douglas Boulevard, Chicago.

Sunday, July 12
"Chicago Jewish Roots"
Guide: Dr. Irving Cutler
author of The Jews of Chicago,
From Shtetl to Suburb
and a Founding Board Member
of the CJHS



Photograph of Abraham Lincoln, taken by his
Jewish photographer-friend Samuel Alschuler.
Urbana, Illinois, April 25, 1858

Sunday, August 23
Springfield, Illinois
"Lincoln and the Jews"
Guide: Randall Saxon

President of the Illinois State Historical Society



Holocaust Monument, New Light Cemetery
6807 North East-Prairie Road, Lincolnwood.

Sunday, October 11
"Chicago's Historic
North Side Jewish Cemeteries"
Guides: Mark Mandle
and Herbert Eiseman
Professional tour guides and Board
Members of the CJHS

Our Journal Wins an Award

The Illinois State Historical Society presented its Annual Awards for 2015 on April 25, in ceremonies in the Old State Capitol Foundation Hall and the House of Representatives Chambers, in Springfield.

Editor/Designer Beverly Chubat accepted our Society's **Award for Superior Achievement, Quarterly Journal: "Chicago Jewish History" in the category of Ongoing Periodicals.**

The comments of the three awarding judges: "This 16-page periodical [more pages these days!] features well-written, educational, and sophisticated articles by knowledgeable authors. The layout is pleasant and very professional, and the periodical also includes 'research inquiries' to help and promote various levels of scholarship. The variety of contributing writers brings fresh insight to the many different subjects covered."

Our Society was recognized by the ISHS in 1998 for our 30-minute documentary video **"Romance of A People: The First 100 Years of Jewish Life in Chicago 1833-1933," Award for Superior Achievement in Public Programming, Multimedia Production.** The Executive Producer/Director was Beverly Siegel.

President's Column



Edward H. Mazur.

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

“On April 20, 2006, President George W. Bush proclaimed that May would be Jewish American Heritage Month. The announcement was the crowning achievement in an effort by the Jewish Museum of Florida and South Florida Jewish community leaders that resulted in resolutions introduced by Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida and Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania urging the President to proclaim a month that would recognize the more than 350 year history of

Jewish contributions to American culture. The resolutions passed unanimously, first in the House of Representatives in December 2005 and later in the Senate in February 2006.

“The month of May was chosen due to the highly successful celebration of the 350th Anniversary of American Jewish History in May 2004, which was organized by the Commission for Commemorating 350 Years of American Jewish History. This coalition was composed of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, the American Jewish Historical Society, the Library of Congress and the National Archives and Records Administration....”

—*Jewish American Heritage Month website*

I suggest that you browse the Jewish American Heritage Month website—www.jewishheritagemonth.gov—to find a variety of excellent historical features of year-round significance.

President Obama has held celebrations of JAHM in the White House for the last three years. His remarks commemorating the event this year at Adas Israel Congregation in Washington, D.C. are online at www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/22/

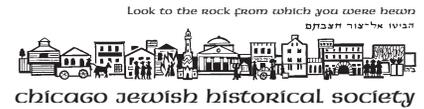
HILLEL IN MAY — HUMBOLDT PARK IN JUNE

Our Society's program on Sunday, May 3, concerned an important aspect of our Jewish American heritage—the birth, growth, and current direction of Hillels on college and university campuses. The speakers were Patti Ray and Rabbi Paul Saiger. I remember Hillel as a Jewish home away from home for me and many others of my generation at college in the 1960s. Read a full report on the program by Dr. Rachelle Gold on pages 6 and 7.

Our program on Sunday, June 7, “The Saul Bellow Centenary,” examined the life and career of the Nobel Prize-winning author, a native of Canada, but a longtime Chicagoan. (I attended the same grammar school as Bellow—Lafayette, at 2714 West August Blvd., in the Humboldt Park neighborhood.)

This program's presenter, Richard Reeder, was the moving force in the naming of Honorary Saul Bellow Way on Augusta Boulevard in 2012. Turn to page 5 for a report on Mr. Reeder's talk.

Continued on page 17



2015

Officers & Board of Directors

Dr. Edward H. Mazur

President

Jerold Levin

Vice President

Dr. Rachelle Gold

Secretary

Marvin Dickman *Z"L*

Treasurer

Leah Axelrod

Rachel Heimovics Braun*

Dr. Irving Cutler

Dr. Carolyn Eastwood *Z"L*

Herbert Eiseman

Elise Ginsparg

Clare Greenberg

Dr. Adele Hast*

Janet Iltis

Jacob M. Kaplan

Mark Mandle

Dr. Stanton Polin

Joan Pomaranc

Burton Robin

Muriel Rogers*

Walter Roth*

Norman D. Schwartz* *Z"L*

Dr. Milton Shulman

Carey Wintergreen

**Past President*

Chicago Jewish History

is published quarterly by the CJHS at 610 S. Michigan Ave., Room 803, Chicago, IL 60605-1901. Phone (312) 663-5634. info@chicagojewishhistory.org. Successor to *Society News*. Single copies \$4.00 postpaid.

Editor/Designer Beverly Chubat
Editorial Board Edward Mazur, Burton Robin, Milton Shulman.

Send all submissions to Editor: electronically to e-mail address or via standard mail to street address. If manuscript is sent via standard mail, enclose SASE.

Exhibit at Spertus: “A Bintel Brief: Love and Longing in Old New York” Through Sunday, July 19, 2015

As the 19th century drew to a close and the 20th century began, a surge of Jewish immigrants arrived on American shores. Struggling to assimilate to the ways of their new world, men and women shared their personal hopes and fears with Abraham Cahan, legendary editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward* and creator of its enormously popular advice column, “A Bintel Brief — Yiddish for “A Bundle of Letters.” It spoke with unparalleled immediacy to both the humor and heartbreak of the immigrant experience, from family squabbles to crises of faith. The talented young cartoonist **Liana Finck** has brought these letters to life in her book, *A Bintel Brief: Love and Longing in Old New York*. The exhibit includes a selection of her sensitive illustrations, sketches, and etchings.

Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership, 610 S. Michigan Ave.
First Floor Vestibule Gallery. Admission Free. For hours see www.spertus.edu

Jewish History Lectures at Suburban Libraries

The Chicago YIVO Society 2015 Summer Festival of Yiddish Culture includes these lectures in its three-month calendar of music, movies, and spoken word programs. Free and open to the public.

Thursday, July 2

2:00 p.m.

German Historian Anette Isaacs
“Germany and Israel—Fifty Years
of an Unlikely Friendship”

PowerPoint visual presentation
Morton Grove Public Library
6140 Lincoln Avenue

Thursday, July 16

2:00 p.m.

Prof. Joshua Shanes
(College of Charleston)

“*Di Galitsyaners: The Jews of
Galicia, 1772-1914*”

PowerPoint visual presentation
Evanston Public Library
1703 Orrington Avenue

Thursday, August 6

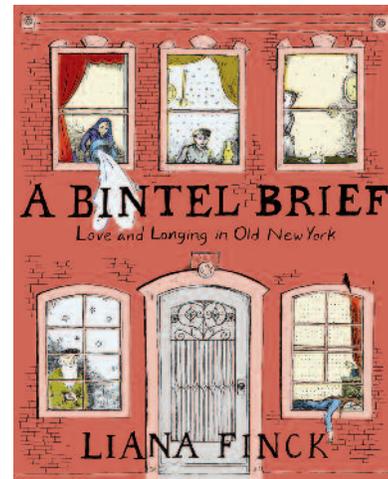
7:00 p.m.

Prof. Karen Underhill
(University of Illinois at Chicago)
“Warsaw’s POLIN Museum”

PowerPoint visual presentation
Evanston Public Library
1703 Orrington Avenue

See complete festival calendar at
www.chicagoyivo.org

Be sure to visit the website
www.forgottenchicago.com
for fascinating historical articles
and announcements of expertly
guided walking tours



Edgewater Historical Society Seeks Information and Material on Jewish Immigration for Upcoming Exhibit

The Edgewater Historical Society is planning a major exhibit on Immigration to Edgewater, from October 2015 through May 2016, at the EHS museum, 5358 North Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL 60660.

The exhibit will include the stories, oral histories, artifacts, photos, textiles, maps, and census statistics of the many waves immigrants to Edgewater, the Chicago community area bounded by Foster Avenue on the south, Devon Avenue on the north, Lake Michigan on the east, and Ravenswood on the west.

Edgewater is home to immigrants from almost a hundred countries who make up over thirty percent of the current population. Since even before its founding in the 1880s, originally as a suburban community, Edgewater had been home to immigrants, with the first permanent settlers being celery farmers from Luxembourg in the 1840s.

There were at least three waves of Jewish immigrants to Edgewater, the most recent from the former Soviet Union starting in the 1970s. The first wave was from Central and Eastern Europe in the 1880s to about 1914; then refugees from Nazi Germany in the 1930s and '40s.

If you have information or materials you would like to share with the EHS, post your message at ‘Contact Us’ on the website
www.edgewaterhistory.org.

You may also phone EHS President Bob Remer at 773.561.6280 or send him an e-mail at chibooks@aol.com. Any materials loaned or donated will be properly accessioned and gratefully acknowledged.

CJHS members... YASHER KOACH!

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



Ethan Bensinger (left) pictured in Hamburg, Germany, last December. He reported having a wonderful series of screenings of his documentary "Refuge: Stories of the Selfhelp Home" there. In March, he was off to China for a month, starting in Hong Kong with several screenings at schools, including the Jewish International school. PBS aired "Refuge" nationwide for Yom HaShoa in April. *Photo courtesy of The Chicago Jewish News.*

Rabbi Herman and Lotte Schaalman were honored at a very special event on Sunday, May 31, at Emanuel Congregation, *The Schaalman Centenary Celebration*. A pivotal figure in the development of twentieth century Reform Judaism, Rabbi Schaalman served as Emanuel's Senior Rabbi for over 32 years, and is in his 28th year as Rabbi Emeritus. Lotte Schaalman was "the heart of Emanuel." **Founding President Muriel Rogers** and **Board Member Janet Iltis** attended the event, and the CJHS purchased a Tribute in honor of the Schaalmans, loyal, longtime members of our Society.

Board Member Herbert Eiseman is at an IDF base somewhere in Israel at work as a volunteer with Sar-EL, the National Project for Volunteers for Israel. In his e-mail message to us he reported on his work counting flags, water canteens, helmets, belts, etc. Herb periodically donates his "elbow grease" for some weeks to free Israel's soldiers from such mundane tasks. He reported having also involuntarily "donated" blood to the local bugs! Insect repellent and an ever-present bottle of water for rehydration are necessities in the seasonal heat. Herb's free time is spent in happy reunions with the many Israeli friends he has made over the years.

Welcome, New Members of the Society

Dr. Wayne & Cheryl Burton
Hinsdale, IL

Adelle Heisler Carman
Highland Park, IL

Marilyn Hamburger
Chicago, IL

Barbara Heinrich
Buffalo Grove, IL

Julius Levine
Chicago, IL

Monroe Roth
Chicago, IL

Ronald Tarrson
Santa Fe, NM

The CJHS thanks all our new and renewing members for your support!



Jardine Water Purification Plant employee retirement party in the late 1980s. From left: Fraser "Robbie" Robinson III, Mike McInerney, Bill Hill, and Dan Maxime.

Photo courtesy of Dan Maxime.

Jardine Water Purification Plant in Mr. Robinson's later years. (Both men were Democratic Precinct Captains.) Dan is quoted in the book about how Chicago politics worked in the old days. Elections were war. But, as he told Slevin, Fraser Robinson was not one to falsify registrations or steal votes. "He wasn't the type. He was strait-laced. Just the salt of the earth."

Author Peter Slevin surprised **Life Member Dan Maxime** by seeking him out for an interview during research for his book, *Michelle Obama, A Life*. Slevin wanted to hear Maxime's recollections of working with Mrs. Obama's father, Fraser "Robby" Robinson III, at the City of Chicago's

Report: CJHS Open Meeting Sunday, June 7, 2015

The Saul Bellow Centenary



Richard Reeder.

Richard Reeder presented a talk on “The Saul Bellow Centenary” at the CJHS open meeting on Sunday afternoon, June 7, at Temple Beth Israel, 3601 West Dempster Street, Skokie. A native of the Lawndale neighborhood, he grew up in Rogers Park, and studied History and Sociology at Roosevelt University. He teaches courses on Chicago authors in the Oakton Community College Emeritus Program. He is the

writer of the blog *aliteraryreeder.wordpress.com* where he posted this entry on October 23, 2011:

“**Saul Bellow Way** Thanks to the efforts of Alderman Roberto Maldonado of Chicago’s 26th Ward, an ordinance was passed this month by the Chicago City Council designating the 2600-2700 block of Augusta Boulevard as ‘[Honorary] Saul Bellow Way.’ The Nobel Prize-winning author lived on this Humboldt Park street with his family during his youth. This much overdue honor adds to Chicago’s celebration of Bellow, whose novel, *The Adventures of Augie March*, is the current “One Book, One Chicago” selection.”

Mr. Reeder was the moving force behind Alderman Maldonado’s efforts. The two men became acquainted when they both worked for the City. The street sign was put in place around the time of Saul Bellow’s birthday in June 2012. *The Adventures of Augie March* was the first “One Book, One Chicago” chosen in Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s administration.

Mr. Reeder reminded our audience of the earlier controversy about naming an “Honorary Way” for the author in Hyde Park, where he had lived and taught at the University of Chicago. Bellow’s colleague and friend Professor Richard Stern suggested the idea to then Alderman Toni Preckwinkle of the 5th Ward. She replied: “Saul Bellow was never a friend of people of color and I believe he is not deserving of such a street sign.” Studs Terkel agreed with her. Although Saul Bellow was friends with the African-American author Ralph Ellison (*The Invisible Man*), his sharp, sarcastic comments on race had caused outrage.

Abraham Belo, his wife, two sons, and daughter lived “without papers” in St. Petersburg, Russia, in the early years of the twentieth century. In Tsarist

times, Jews could not live in cities outside the Pale without permission. Belo was a hustler. Somehow he was able to get forged documents and take his family to Canada in 1914, to Lachine, Quebec, near Montreal. Solomon Belo (later Saul Bellow) was born there in 1915. Abraham, accustomed to living outside the law, became a bootlegger. But then it was time to move on.

There was a cousin in Chicago, and that is where the family moved in 1924. The cousin was Louis Dworkin, owner of the Imperial Bakery, and Abraham began working there. The family first lived at 2629 West Augusta Boulevard, at Rockwell. Nine-year-old

Saul attended Lafayette Elementary School.

Abraham became a wood peddler, then a coal dealer, and the family was able to move farther west.



Saul Bellow (1915-2005)

Nobel Prize website.

1932 to 1936. His classmates, friends, and rivals included Sydney J. Harris and Isaac Rosenfeld.

Yiddishkeit and politics affected these young people as well as their elders. They were Bundists (non-Communist Socialists), Trotskyites, and Communists. Bellow later moved away from the doctrinaire Left and presented himself simply as a Jew. The Jewish Studs Terkel and Nelson Algren never did so.

Mr. Reeder read a brief excerpt from a Bellow novel. He chronicled the author’s college education and early employment, told of his introduction to the Jewish cultural scene in New York City, and his eventual critical acclaim and honors, culminating in the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1976—and his five wives.

The presentation to our Society audience rightly focussed on Bellow’s Chicago Jewish history. There is still a family connection to him here, not just a street sign. Kaufman’s Bagel Bakery and Delicatessen in Skokie is owned by members of the Dworkin family, descendants of the baker cousin who welcomed the future literary giant to our community. —*B.C.*

Report: CJHS Open Meeting Sunday, May 3, 2015

“If Not Now...When?” The Birth and Growth of Hillel on Campus

Since the first Hillel Foundation was created at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1923, generations of Jewish students have Hillel to thank for making Jewish life an important part of their college experience. The Society’s May 3 public program at Anshe Emet Synagogue featured two Chicagoans, Patti Ray and Rabbi Paul Saiger, who were leaders and innovators in the development of Hillels in Illinois and nationally.

Ms. Ray, the first woman Hillel Director (at U of I Chicago Circle), founding Director of Hillel at Loyola University Chicago from 1987-2013, and former Director of the Cross-Campus Program of The Hillels of Illinois, currently organizes special programs as a resource for Loyola University Chicago academic departments and other areas of the university.

Rabbi Saiger, Executive Director of The Hillels of Illinois from 1995 to 2011, is the current President of Congregation Anshe Sholom B’nai Israel in Chicago’s East Lakeview neighborhood.

In their presentation, “If Not Now... When? The Birth and Growth of Hillel on Campus,” they focussed on the Hillel movement through three phases.

The first era was the period from 1923-1971, when Hillels were a kind of club for Jewish students that served as a “Jewish home away from home.” A Hillel usually consisted of a rabbi and a secretary. A dynamic local Hillel director, Rabbi Maurice Pekarsky, founder of the University of Chicago Hillel, founded other Hillels in the United States and even at Hebrew University in Israel. Hillel programming consisted of classes, Friday night dinners, religious services, holiday programs, social events, and Israeli dancing. As a result of the Six-Day War, Israel started to become an important part of programming. Most Hillel rabbis were career Hillel directors who were Conservative or Reform, but who did not necessarily identify strongly with their denominational roots, so there was religious flexibility in Hillels.

The political activism of the 1960s had an impact on Hillel. Students rebelled and asserted themselves. Ms. Ray told about the protest by Jewish students at the



Rabbi Paul Saiger and Patti Ray.
Anshe Emet Synagogue.
Photograph by Rachelle Gold.

1969 General Assembly of the Jewish Federations, held in Boston.

The financial support for Hillel provided by B’nai B’rith since 1924 had declined after the 1950s, and little new money was available in the 1960s. The students demanded and achieved Federations’ support for existing Hillels and a commitment to establishing Hillels especially on commuter campuses that lacked them.

The second phase of Hillel, through the late 1980s, the heyday of the Movement, saw huge growth in the number of Hillels and the expansion to commuter campuses in cities with large Jewish populations. Ms. Ray’s Hillel career began during this second phase,

when she was a graduate student in English at UIUC during Rabbi Edward Feld’s Hillel directorship. She began a Hillel program for graduate students, and in 1969 became Assistant Director.

When she returned to Chicago in 1971, the large residential campuses had active Hillels, but the only commuter campus with one was the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle (now University of Illinois at Chicago), the first commuter Hillel in the country to have Jewish Federation support. Chicago Circle Hillel Director Rabbi Joseph Schachter teamed up with his good friend, University of Chicago Hillel Director Rabbi Daniel Leifer, to obtain Federation support for Circle Hillel programming—including Rabbi Schachter’s famous “Firesides” at his home in Rogers Park, taking Hillel programming off campus for the first time. The Federation’s commuter campus initiative developed into Hillel/College Age Youth Services (CAYS), which was a special program of the JCCs.

Three women were hired to attempt establishment of Hillel on commuter campuses with no permanent Hillel buildings. Patti Ray was assigned to Roosevelt University (1971-1975). Other campuses were covered by Anita Weinstein, later the founder and director of the Federation’s Ezra Multiservice Center in Uptown, and Annalee Letchinger, who later founded and directed the JCC initiative for Jewish high school students—The Chicago Jewish Youth Council. These were among the first women working professionally in Hillel.

In 1973, during the Yom Kippur War, Ms. Ray was introduced to Walter and Dr. Chaya Roth, when Chaya was helping the American Zionist Youth Foundation, whose offices were directly across the street from Roosevelt University, interviewing Chicagoans who were volunteering to fly to Israel to help in the war effort.

Ms. Ray took over the Hillel directorship at Chicago Circle in 1975, becoming the first female director. (The second, appointed in 1976 to University of Southern California Hillel, was Rabbi Laura Geller.)

The late 1980s ushered in the third and current phase of the history of Hillel. Jewish Federations began taking responsibility for commuter campus Hillels in addition to helping support Hillels financed by B'nai B'rith, as their funding dwindled. In addition to the national B'nai B'rith Hillel office in Washington, D.C., regional Hillel centers were established.

Prominent regional Hillel figures of the time were Chicagoan Rabbi Oscar Groner at Northwestern University, and later a national and international Hillel director; Rabbi Yehiel Poupko, who became the first Hillel director employed by a Jewish Federation, when he became the Director of Hillel/CAYS in Chicago in 1977; at University of Michigan, and Rabbi Richard Marker, who came to Chicago as Director of Hillel/CAYS, a program of the Jewish Community Centers, and in 1987 became the Executive Director of the new Jewish Federation agency, The Hillels of Illinois, which replaced Hillel/CAYS. In 1995 Rabbi Paul Saiger came from directing The Hillels of Rochester, New York, to Chicago and succeeded Rabbi Marker as Director of The Hillels of Illinois.

Hillel as an organization was revolutionized by Richard Joel, its international director from 1988 to 2008, and currently President of Yeshiva University. Hillel ended its association with B'nai B'rith in 1994 and internationally became Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life. Under Joel's leadership, local and international boards were created whose mission included raising funds from wealthy individuals. Richard Joel transformed Hillel's vision and possibilities by reaching out to philanthropists and their organizations as well as initiating a strategic national plan for Federations' support for Hillel which was approved by the General Assembly of Jewish Federations. Hillel staffs were expanded, and there was a greater emphasis on business management and outreach strategies.

Nationally, the outreach model became institutionalized in Hillel through the Jewish Campus Service Corps (1994-2008), a cadre of new college graduates hired to do outreach. Locally, a new Hillel building was

constructed at Northwestern University, and an addition was made to the historic Hillel House at the University of Chicago.

A dramatic change in campus services included multiple concurrent religious services, outreach programs outside of Hillel buildings, and partnerships within and across universities. Rabbi Daniel Leifer at the University of Chicago urged integrating academics into Hillel. He was the first Hillel Director to serve on a dissertation committee. Hillel became a network, rather than single provider, of Jewish services. The Birthright Israel program and the increase in university Jewish Studies programs stimulated an increase in Israel programming.

At the beginning of this third Hillel era, Loyola University Chicago asked for a Hillel as part of its effort to attract Jewish students. In 1987 Loyola became the first Jesuit university to have a Hillel, and Patti Ray served as its director for 26 years. Hillel at Loyola became known for its collaboration with other student groups at Loyola. The Russian Hillel program of The Hillels of Illinois had its beginnings at Loyola, the first Chicago area campus where Jewish students from the former USSR became actively involved in Hillel.

Today, as former Hillel International Director Wayne Firestone explained, Hillel's use of student "engagement interns" as outreach specialists to Jewish student populations on campuses throughout the world can be likened to a human "Facebook network," reaching Jewish young adults "where they are" and helping them find a way to "continue their Jewish journeys." Hillel's vision statement is that "every Jewish student is inspired to make an enduring commitment to Jewish life." Its mission statement is "to enrich the lives of Jewish undergraduate and graduate students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world."

Patti Ray and Paul Saiger led a lively question and answer session after their presentation. In the audience were individuals who had connections to Hillel as leaders, students, or family members of students. Attendees browsed books, journals and memorabilia about local Hillels in a display created by Ms. Ray

Dr. Rachele Gold

For more details about the birth of Hillel, see our Society website, click on the Publication Archive, and scroll down to *CJH* Summer 2014, for the article "Chicagoans Played Instrumental Part in the Establishment of Hillel Foundations...." To learn about Hillel today see www.hillel.org. For information on The Hillels of Illinois, see www.juf.org/college/hillel.

Report: CJHS Open Meeting Sunday, December 7, 2014

AMERICAN HEROES: Chicago Jewish Veterans of World War II (Part 2)

The open meeting was held at Beth Hillel Congregation Bnai Emunah, 3220 Big Tree Lane, Wilmette. Program Moderator Colonel Fred R. Rosenberg, CAP Great Lakes Region, Civil Air Patrol, introduced the program with an overview of Jewish service in the U.S. Armed Forces in WWII. He then presented a slide show on the



Col. Fred R. Rosenberg

biographies and service histories of a dozen Jewish men, some from Chicago; one woman; and the three Jewish winners of the Congressional Medal of Honor in WWII.

Program Moderator Cyndee Schaffer was the co-author with her mother, Mollie Weinstein Schaffer *z"l*, of the book *Mollie's War: The Letters of a World War II WAC in Europe* (McFarland, 2010). The 300 letters that Mollie wrote to her sister are the basis of what may be the first collection of letters published by a Jewish WAC. Ms. Schaffer told us that for acceptance in the Women's Army Corps a young woman "had to be at least five feet tall, weigh at least 100 pounds, and have at least twelve teeth." Mollie had to eat heartily for a while to reach the weight. Her service in Europe lasted through September 1945, long enough for her to attend Rosh Hashana services in Frankfurt, Germany, in the Westend Synagogue. This was the only shul in the city to survive Kristallnacht and WWII.

Ms. Schaffer posed questions to our panel of four Chicago area World War II veterans, but the remaining program time was too short for them to fully speak of their experiences. In our Winter 2015 issue we published memoirs written by two of the panelists, Dr. Irving Cutler (U.S. Navy) and Allen H. Meyer (U.S. Army). Following are brief, edited memoirs of Sidney Brichta (U.S. Army Air Corps) and Joseph Groner (U.S. Army), as related to *CJH* in telephone interviews.

Sidney Brichta

Mr. Brichta is a native of Rogers Park. After graduating from Sullivan High School, he took classes at Wright Junior College for a year. Then, when he was finishing a very intense course at Armour Institute—now IIT—he qualified and took a job in San Diego, California, with Consolidated Aircraft. The company was building the B-24 Liberator bomber for the Army Air Corps and the Catalina PBY Flying Boat for the Navy. He was employed as a Junior Engineer/Inspector for about a year (at seventy-five cents an hour!).

In 1942, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps, although his job at Consolidated could have deferred him. The Army wanted college graduates as pilots, but because he had two years of college and had worked on aircraft, they thought he was qualified. He was sent to flight schools around the country: to Texas, Florida, and California for navigation, and even to Madison, Wisconsin for communications—all on a fast track.

He got his wings at Randolph Field, Texas, as a Warrant Officer, the senior-most rank above enlisted ranks, but subordinate to officers. Only college graduates received the rank of Second Lieutenant.



United States Army Air Forces Consolidated B-24D Liberator over Maxwell Field, Alabama.

After two or three weeks, he was shipped to Brisbane, Australia, as a replacement pilot, with a few hundred other men—then to Port Moresby, New Guinea; the Dutch East Indies; and the Phillipines. He flew sixteen combat missions. Then his plane was shot up and badly damaged on a mission (he was the co-pilot), but made it back to base.

He spent the rest of the War as a cryptographer, running a cryptography session, coding and decoding messages, sending messages to various squadrons.

CJH asked him if he encountered anti-Semitism in the service. He said "No," describing himself as a "tough guy." But his fellow airmen from the South, who had gone hunting since childhood, were amazed that someone from the city of Capone had never even fired a gun.

His younger brother Ira also enlisted and served as an artillery spotter in France and Germany. Setting a patriotic example, their father, an immigrant from Austro-Hungary, served in World War I as an Army medic on the Mexican border. Their mother was a Tuley High School graduate who became a music teacher.

Sidney Brichta was discharged and returned home from the war on New Year's Eve, December 31, 1945.

Along with many other veterans he attended the newly opened Roosevelt College, where he studied Business and Psychology, and where he met his wife.

He became an advertising copywriter, first in the Mandel Brothers executive training squad, then at Aldens mail-order company. In those days, it was very hard for a Jew to be hired at an agency. He did land a job at Burlingame-Grossman, and eventually became a partner. He still works on accounts, though he gave his computer to his grandchildren. Sid and his wife Elaine ^{z"l} moved to Northbrook almost 30 years ago. They served as co-presidents of Temple Beth-El.

He does not describe himself as an American hero. "Others are more qualified." He calls his service "a wonderful adventure for a 21-, 22-, 23-year-old."

Joseph Groner

Mr. Groner was born at Mount Sinai Hospital in Lawndale, but stayed only a few days before he was taken home to Humboldt Park! He attended Chopin Elementary School and Tuley High. His father, from Poland, also attended Tuley at a night school for immigrants. He was granted U.S. citizenship when he volunteered for military service in World War I.

Joe enrolled in a few courses at Wright Junior College while he worked full-time for Morrie Kaplan, R.Ph., at his drugstore at Belmont and Cicero. In September 1942, Joe enrolled in the University of Illinois Pharmacy School, but stayed only briefly.

He enlisted in the U.S. Army in November 1942 and was made a medic. He trained at Camp Grant in Rockford, Illinois, and then at Camp Stoneman in Pittsburg, California, for assignment on overseas transport medical duty.

He was assigned to the United States Army Hospital Ship Marigold, operating out of Seattle. It was a converted luxury liner that had earlier seen service as a troop ship in the Aleutian Islands. The Marigold was the largest hospital ship afloat. There were 786 beds, 22 doctors (four of whom were Jewish),



USAHS Marigold in Tacoma, Washington. June 10, 1944.

150 corpsmen (including Joe Groner), two dentists, two pharmacists, a minister, and a priest.

The ship was assigned to Europe and ordered to Naples to treat casualties and bring the wounded back to the USA. When that mission was completed, the ship went through the Panama Canal to dock at San Pedro, California. Mules pulled the ship through the Canal. The Marigold then transported a group of about 200 nurses to Honolulu, then New Guinea, the Phillipines (Leyte, Luzon, Manila), and Okinawa.

Did Joe experience anti-Semitism aboard the Marigold? "No. Jewish men were exempted from clean-up on Friday nights. The Baptist minister was a wonderful human being. He arranged for us to have Jewish-style food. He ordered matzos from Australia."

The Marigold was the first ship to dock in Yokohama, as a Mercy Ship, even before the Surrender was signed. "The Japanese put a pilot aboard to guide us around the harbor minefield, but actually he was guiding us *into* the minefield. His treachery was discovered in time, and he was arrested."

Joe was assigned to make chest x-rays of the freed American prisoners of war. He did this dangerous work without any training or protection. Years later he developed a rare disease caused by the excess radiation.

Eventually the Army classified him as one hundred percent disabled.

After the war, he went to podiatry school and practised that profession. His wife Sue had developed a hearing problem at an early age, and he became interested in hearing aids. He was in the hearing aid business for thirty-five years.

Joe and Sue Groner now reside in a retirement community in Lincolnshire. They have three children and eight grandchildren (including two sets of twins). ❖



Sidney Brichta (left) and Joseph Groner. December 7, 2014.

Photograph by Rachelle Gold.

ED MAZUR'S PAGES FROM THE PAST

My 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 twenty-two 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.

SOCIAL EVIL AND THE JEWS

The commission, appointed by our State Senate to investigate the condition of the despicable white-slaves, had, at its Saturday session listened to information that makes the face of every respectable Jew blush with shame.

Girls who have been in disreputable houses declared before the commission that practically all proprietors of such houses are Jews. It was imagined before the investigation that the Jews are a majority among the scoundrels, the lowest creatures on earth—and now, this dreadful fact is being openly slapped into

the faces of the Jews, in the presence of an official investigation.

When investigations were made into the so-called Fire Trust, it was revealed that the Jews occupy an important place among the incendiaries. In Chicago and New York there are five Jews to one non-Jew involved in arson. When America was shocked by the criminal acts of professional gamblers in the underworld, Jewish names were almost the only ones mentioned as being leaders of the clique.

No matter how much we dodge the facts in the life of American Jewry, we cannot escape from explaining this unusual phenomenon. Various answers are given to this mournful question: how can there be such a rascally element among the Jews, who always have distinguished themselves and are still distinguishing themselves—in a large majority—by higher moral conditions than are non-Jews? The best answer to this question lies, apparently, in the higher spiritual structure of the Jewish race, which is a great asset and earns respect, but this can become, under certain circumstances, a great defect.

As long as a spiritually developed man is found in a good environment and under the supervision of high ideals and traditions, he will use his intellectual and spiritual faculties to beautify his life, so that he may disseminate his noble views among his fellow-men. However, remove from such a man the moral basis and place him in surroundings of indecency, filth and crime, and his historically, and naturally developed spiritual

fervor will be devoted to the most horrible and despicable acts.

The Jew, who enters the ranks of the underworld forgets, in time, the difference between good and evil, and seeks to become an expert in crime. He assumes no social responsibility, nor does he acknowledge the hatred with which he is looked upon. A closer alliance is necessary between Jews and a better education by the growing generation to prevent groups of the Jewish nation from becoming victims of bad morals and from occupying an "honorable" place in the underworld instead of playing a role in the world at large.

Daily Jewish Courier,
March 5, 1913

FROM THE PUBLIC ROSTRUM [ELECTION OF MAYOR DEVER]

We wish to extend sincere congratulations to the Jewish citizens of Chicago for their participation in the election of Judge William E. Dever to the office of Mayor. The large vote cast by the Jews for Dever was given to the candidate of the Democratic Party, which, since 1897, when Carter H. Harrison was elected Mayor, has been quite friendly to Jews. The Democratic Party here has given us great recognition by appointing Jews to important offices, by placing Jews on their tickets as candidates for high offices, and by seeing to it that they were elected. This recognition on the one hand, and the large vote cast by the Jews for Dever on the other hand, should serve as a lesson to the Republicans of the city who underestimated the strength of the Jewish vote.

Chicago Jews generally have

more confidence in the Democratic leadership than in the haughty Republican. The Jews don't have to approach the Democratic Party via the back door, nor need they resort to any mediators when they want a favor. This sentiment—the friendly relationship between the Democratic leaders and the Jews, is expressed in the columns of the *Courier* throughout the entire year, especially during campaigns.

The Republican party here has only five Jews in important offices: Hugo Pam and Hugo Friend, Superior Court judges; Morris Eller, member of the Sanitary Board; Emanuel Eller and Joseph Shulman, Municipal Court judges. Only a few other Jews have held small jobs here and there. The Ellers and Shulman need not feel grateful to the Republican Party for their offices, but rather to Mayor Thompson and his faction. Governor Len Small has not appointed any Jews to any high office. It is doubtful whether there have been three Jews in state jobs, Like Thompson, Small appealed to the Jewish vote before the election, but after the election, he turned his back on the Jews.

The Democratic Party, on the other hand, put into office Joseph B. David, Joseph Sabath, Harry M. Fisher, Superior Court judges; Michael Rosenberg, member of the Sanitary Board; Jacob Lindheimer, assistant county treasurer; Harry A. Lipsky, election commissioner, Henry A. Berger, county attorney; Jacob Arvey, alderman; Max Korshak, Fred Bernstein and Sidney Pollack, masters in chancery and quite a number of other Jews who

work in every city and county office controlled by Democrats. The new Mayor will undoubtedly appoint additional Jews to office. Let us not forget our two Federal judges, Julian Mack and Samuel Alschuler; and what about Congressman A.J. Sabath? They are all Democrats....

Daily Jewish Courier,
April 6, 1923

A VISIT TO THE JEWISH SHELTER HOME ON A FRIDAY NIGHT

The Jewish Shelter Home is at 1214 South Turner Avenue. The dining room comprising almost an entire floor, with many windows, is kept immaculately clean and well ventilated.... Long tables extend from one end of the room to the other, covered with crisp, snow-white linen. Shining brass candlesticks decorate the centers of the tables, with the flames of the candles adding cheerfulness.... It appears that every object in the room is singing to the Sabbath Bride.

The doors open and multitudes of guests arrive. They are of all ages; old people with blurred eyes and yellow, wrinkled faces; middle-aged men, husky but with worried faces and sad eyes; youths with rosy cheeks and bright sparkling eyes. Here is a melting pot of human color and thought The more pious Jews sit at the head of the table and chant old familiar tunes. An elderly Jew with a long, snow white beard, and dressed in a satin robe, recites the blessings over a beaker of sparkling red wine, and the company answers "Amen."

After the blessings the feast begins. Huge portions of gefilte fish are dished out by elderly women with kind and motherly

faces. Elderly and middle-aged men assist in the serving. Many of the diners engage in conversations relating to their troubles, and that if it were not for the Shelter Home they would starve. There are also a few Gentile guests who especially enjoy the gefilte fish. They are very pleased with Jewish hospitality.

Nearby sits a Jew, dressed in a soiled, shabby and discolored satin robe, who wears side locks and a Van Dyke beard. On his head is a black velvet derby, wrinkled and soiled. He is the author of a rabbinical dissertation dealing with various laws of the Talmud. He came to Chicago to sell his work, but no one will buy it. The only place where he is treated with respect is the Shelter Home. Before and between the courses, songs are chanted by the more religious Jews.

Golden chicken noodle soup is served, followed by roast beef and luscious carrots cooked in sugar and fat (called tsimmes). Then comes dessert. After the first shift finishes, the tables are cleared and the second shift is served. About 75 guests are fed on Friday and Saturday dinner, and on holidays and weekdays a much higher number.

The men's dormitory on the second floor accommodates about 40 people. In an emergency, beds are prepared on the floor. There is also a dormitory for women. In the evening, many of the guests go down to the basement, which serves as a library. The luckier ones, who remain for the night, sit there and read. The others go out in the darkness of night and look for a place to sleep.

Daily Jewish Courier,
March 7, 1931.

A MAGNIFICENT PLACE ON THE NORTHWEST SIDE FOR AMUSEMENT The Jewish people of the Northwest Side, who are true lovers of the movies and have shown a desire to hear artistic music at these performances, are attending the magnificent Crystal Theater, North Avenue near California Avenue. This theater was built by Schaffer Brothers at a cost of over three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. No expense was spared to make this theater pleasant and comfortable for its patrons. The costliest and most complete ventilating system that could be provided, constantly supplies the theater with clean, freshly washed air. The 2,000 seats are very roomy and permit of a direct unobstructed view of the stage. A twelve-piece orchestra provides a magnificent symphony program as well as the appropriate music for the pictures. To spend an evening or an afternoon in the beautiful Crystal Theater is indeed a treat and a holiday occasion for all.

Daily Jewish Courier, June 7, 1918

Let's Go to "The Show"

BY EDWARD H. MAZUR, DAN MAXIME, AND GINI MAXIME

If you grew up in the Humboldt Park, Bucktown, Logan Square, or Palmer Square neighborhood between the 1920s and 1960s, you probably spent many hours at one of the theaters listed in this article. We saw double features, cartoons, "coming attractions" (not today's "trailers"), and newsreels—all for a quarter or less.

This list was compiled by Dan and Gini Maxime, Tuley High School graduates, residents of Las Vegas, Nevada, and Life Members of our Society.

The southern boundary of Dan and Gini's list is Chicago Avenue (800N), the location of the **Hub**, the **Alvin**, next to Braverman's Delicatessen and directly across from the very first Goldblatts Department store, and the **Oakley** near Oakley and Chicago Avenues.

Milwaukee Avenue, a diagonal street between Chicago and Division streets (1200N) had three theaters—the **Cameo**, the **Schindler**, and at the intersection of Milwaukee, Division, and Ashland—in those days known as "Polish Broadway"—the **Chopin**, which featured Polish language films.

The Chopin is still operating, not as a cinema, but as a venue for excellent live theater.

Continuing down Milwaukee Avenue between Ashland Avenue (1600W) and North Avenue (1600N), you and your friends or best guy or gal could have attended the **Paulina**, **Royal**, **Banner**, or **Wicker Park** theaters. From Western Avenue (2400W) to Logan Square (about 2400N) there were three movie palaces to choose from—the **Congress**, the **Harding**, and the **Logan**.

The theater and Logan Square were named for Civil War General and Illinois politician John A. Logan. The Square is dominated by the Illinois Centennial Memorial Column. Nearby is an often-overlooked little Norwegian church.

On the southwest corner of Division Street at Ashland, next to the Division Street YMCA, was the **Crown** theater. Today, the site houses a luxury apartment building with no parking, because directly across the street is the entrance to the CTA Blue Line stop at Milwaukee, Division and Ashland.

At Hoyne and Division was the **Balaban and Katz Biltmore** theater. This was the hiding place of the murderer Richard Carpenter who would meet his fate in the electric chair. Across the street from the Biltmore was a theater called the **New Strand**. The two primary theaters for my dime or quarter were the **Vision** and the **Harmony**. The former was on the north side and the latter on the south side of Division Street at Washtenaw Avenue.

Frequently, my father would come to pick me up at the Harmony. He would walk into the theater backwards as the audience was exiting, and the two of us would sit through the next screening of a movie or even a double feature.

North Avenue, which was the natural boundary on the north for Humboldt Park, had three theaters—the **B&K Crystal**, the **Queen**, near Washtenaw, and the **Tiffin**, in the "high rent" district—across Humboldt Park west of Kedzie. At Armitage Avenue (2000N), there was the **Oak** on the northwest corner, later to become a

burlesque house. Across from that theater was Margie's Candies. At Armitage and Karlov there was the **Karlov** (not too many Jews in this area).

As we grew in chronological age if not wisdom and maturity, for seven cents or a dime we could take a red streetcar, and later a streamlined "green hornet," trolley, to theaters outside our community. This was of great importance once we became "hormonally activated" and started to want to be with our girlfriends, away from the prying eyes of our families and neighbors.

The new theaters included the **Alamo** and the **Famous**, the **Montclair**, the **Gateway**, (now the Copernicus Center), the **Milford** (before it became a ballroom), the **Manor** at North and Central, the **Times** and the **Patio**, on Lawrence Avenue near Milwaukee—quite a shlep! Of course, we always enjoyed going to the West Side to the **Marbro**, and the **Paradise**. Later, we ventured north to the **Bryn Mawr** in Edgewater and the **Granada**, the **Nortown**, the **Adelphi**, and the **400** in Rogers Park.

Yes, we called it going to "the show" Our local movie houses were certainly not palaces like the Marbro, but some, like the B&K Biltmore and Crystal, were better than others, most of which were little hole-in-the-walls.

We hope we've brought back some wonderful memories of what were simpler times. Please share your memories of "going to the show" with us for publication in a future issue of the Quarterly. ❖



Dan Maxime in his Las Vegas home memorabilia museum.

News! The Chicago History Museum has just accepted items from Dan's 57-year collection. They chose one of his greatest treasures, an 1897 election poster for Judge Murray F. Tuley. They also selected 10 issues of the Tuley Review Alumni Newsletter, the lively quarterly that Dan edited and published and Gini mailed to their fellow grads from 1993 to 2012.

DAN MAXIME (Maximovich until 1954) offers these "biographical notes."

In Chicago, on September 15, 1932, Max and Sophie Maximovich were riding a streetcar from the Humboldt Park neighborhood toward the east, to City Hall. They were going to pay their "fair share of taxes." But Sophie was with child and could not wait to deliver.

The Humboldt Park Hilton did not welcome Jews and the Motel 2 was booked solid for the High Holy Days. A rex-a-line (rags and old iron) collector on West Division Street offered them shelter in his stable. I was born and placed in his horse's manger on a bed of oats. Three local Wise Guys soon arrived, bearing gifts:

Stash the Saloonkeeper brought a barrel of Polish piwo and loads of kielbasa.

Smaczneho!

Rabbi Hyman Orbach brought a "Free Bris" coupon. He would perform the ritual eight days later (ouch). Fifteen years later, his son, Hyman Orbach Jr., would be my classmate at Tuley High, and would eventually become the renowned Director of the Division of Laboratories of the Chicago Health Department. Doctor Hyman—loved him. A real mentsh!

Vito the Precinct Captain brought a large jug of his father's homemade "dago red" and his mother's homemade lasagna and meatballs. Max and Sophie never had it so good.

Abbondanza!

The commotion attracted neighbors and curiosity-seekers. Straggling into the stable were six shepherds who had lost their way, and their sheep, en route to the Stockyards. They partook of the beer, wine, and food.

A bright-eyed two-year-old, Walter "Li'l Wally" Jagiello, toddled in, shlepping a concertina and a drum, and singing. By the age of eight he would be a musical star on Chicago's "Polish Broadway."

Finally, as a glowing red-white-and-blue aura illuminated the scene, Vito registered me as a Democratic voter and pinned an FDR campaign button on my swaddling clothes. And that is how I got my start collecting Chicago political memorabilia!

Remarks by Seymour H. Persky ^{Z"l} at Trumbull Elementary School Graduation, June 1999

Seymour Persky, an attorney, real estate developer, architectural preservationist, and generous donor to Jewish and secular charitable causes, died on March 22, 2015 at age 92. Mr. Persky was a supportive, longtime Board member of our Society. One of his civic honors/responsibilities was to twice serve as "Principal for a Day" at the Lyman Trumbull Elementary School, 5200 North Ashland Avenue. He established a music appreciation program for the Trumbull students, most of whom were from working-class Asian and Latino families. He was then asked to deliver the June 1999 commencement address. Afterwards he sent his manuscript to CJHS President Walter Roth. We thought our readers would enjoy reading a portion of Mr. Persky's humorous and inspirational talk.

I am a product of the Chicago Public Schools.

I attended Lawson School on Homan and 13th Street, the Clark School on Ashland and 14th, the Medill School on Throop and 14th, and graduated from the [unclear in handwritten text] School on the old, old West Side. It was easier to move than pay rent!

My father left us in 1928, and we moved from Lawndale back to the old, old, West Side. In 1929, I was seven years old, and there we were: my sister, my brother, my mother, and I. We were unspeakably poor, and we were on what was called Relief. The charity caseworker would come to inspect our house and determine if my mother was taking proper care of us. My brother, who was older, worked for L. Klein on Halsted and 14th Street for ten dollars a week. He saved up \$14.95 to buy a midget radio. We had to hide it when the caseworker was coming.

The neighborhood conditions became better in 1932 when Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President, and the allotment my mother received was raised to \$50 a month. That included rent at \$15 a month, leaving us a dollar a day to live on. As it has been said, "With God's help, we starved regularly."

We were Jewish and didn't celebrate Christmas. One year I hopefully hung up my stockings the night before Christmas, and when I looked in them the next morning I found my brother's feet.

Talk about school uniforms these days and you excite public comment. In 1934 and 1935 we all dressed the same. The relief agencies supplied all the children with the same clothes. We would kid each other and say that our mamas all shopped at John Sexton and Company. That was the company the relief agency hired to deliver their choice of clothing for us.

In 1935, we moved back to Lawndale, which was a

real improvement. My father came back home for a little while. It was a kind of sabbatical. He'd be gone for seven years and return for one.

I hated school. When I went to Marshall High, everyone was wealthier and smarter than me. The kids laughed at my clothes, my language, my never having lunch money, and my having to work at the lunch rooms around Marshall. I became a bum and a chronic truant. It was easier to peel potatoes for french fries and sweep floors than be laughed at because I was so poor and naïve. I know how tough it can be.

I had been going to high school for about four years when my home room teacher told me I needed some music credits if I was ever going to graduate. So I joined the Boys' Glee Club, which was an alternative to music class. The teacher was a lady named Mary Ballard. I sang well, and she encouraged me to try out for the annual operetta. I got the part, and the guys in the Glee Club kind of adopted me. Some have remained my lifelong friends. They encouraged my studying and talked about going to college and becoming this and that. The thought of my graduating high school became a clear and present dangerous possibility.

I graduated after ten semesters. People stopped mocking me and began treating me more seriously. Eventually, after the War was over, and with the help of the G.I. Bill, I went on to graduate from college and law school. I learned that success breeds success. Education and success are roommates. The most successful weapons against poverty are acquired education, acquired skills, and self-discipline. No one scoffs at a winner, and a winner who wants to conquer poverty must conquer himself. No one laughs at me any more—unless I make them do so. ❖



CJHS Marshall High School Mini-Reunion, Bernard Horwich JCC, June 4, 2006. The speakers, from left: Irv Bemoras, Izzy Acker, Program Chairman Charles B. Bernstein, Seymour H. Persky, and Ronnie Orzoff Robbins. (Not pictured, Harold T. Berc.)
Photograph by Sidney Bass.

Following is a selection from a rare book, *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue*, edited by Emanuel Hertz (1927, Bloch Publishing Co), a copy of which was a gift to CJHS President Emeritus Walter Roth from Dr. Joseph and Raya Shapiro.

The book is a collection of rabbinical tributes to President Lincoln dating from the 1860s to the 1920s.

Rabbi Adler delivered this eulogy in April 1865, shortly after the President's death. The immediacy of Adler's words transport us back to those dark days 150 years ago. This eulogy was delivered in the German language, and we enlisted a young scholar to translate it for us.

We first published this eulogy and one by Rabbi Bernard Felsenthal in the Winter 2000 issue of our quarterly, which can be found in the publication archive on the CJHS website.

**About the translator:
SUSAN WAGNER**

When she made this translation, Ms. Wagner was a fourth year student at the University of Chicago. From 1853 when her forebears immigrated from Germany to Freeport, Illinois, until 2012, six generations of her family operated Wagner Printing in that town, the site of a Lincoln-Douglas debate on August 27, 1858. In fact, her ancestor reported on the debate, sending his account to New York. Ms. Wagner sharpened her language skills as an exchange student in Germany and Switzerland.

Rabbi Liebman Adler A Eulogy for Abraham Lincoln

In this hour the earthly remains of the father of the fatherland are leaving the White House in Washington. As the bells toll throughout the land, far and wide, so also beat the hearts of all thinking and feeling beings in this land.

The mind can deceive itself and can also be tempted; it tends to the wrong paths. Not the mind of a single person, but that of millions. We only need to consider how many sensible Israelites, Christians, Mohammedans, and pagans there are and how differently they all think in terms of religion, and how differently the political parties think in the important matters of people. The heart can also be led astray, when it is taught to do so. But if the heart is met surprised and unprepared, all good men feel the same. The voice of the heart is God's voice.

While the beloved leader has lain murdered in Washington, few hearts in the land have been happy. The first news of the hideous event shocked all hearts and startled all feelings. Like an electric current the pain flowed in one moment over millions of square miles through millions of hearts. In this hour our hearts beat faster, the feelings are more excited, the pain is sharp again. It is as if one person whispers to another the question which was whispered to Elisha on the day that his master, Elijah, ascended into heaven, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today? (2 Kings 2:3)" This simultaneous sensation in an entire people is a holy revelation...that it is truly a great man, a noble person, a wise leader, that today in Abraham Lincoln is borne to the grave.

Is his memory worthy of the honor that is presently being shown to him? Is he worthy of the greatest and highest of the land gathering in Washington around his corpse in solemn, expressive ceremonies? Is he worthy of the honor and the tribute which his memory is receiving at this hour from millions of reverent people in tens of thousands of places of worship in cities and villages, even in the wigwams of the wild ones?

In ancient Egypt, there existed a Judgment Hall, which had to carry out a formal, strict investigation of the personal record of the deceased before a solemn, respectable burial was permitted. Over you, O Lincoln, the civilized world is sitting in judgment, a court of millions, and calling with one voice, "You are worthy of the honor! You are to be honored, sympathized with, and at the same time praised, by all countries, by all peoples, and by all times!" Thus, the manual workers will proudly call: "He was one of us, blessed be his memory!" The merchant class will proudly remember the fact that he also once ranked among its members and will honor his memory. The judicature will engrave in marble in their holy halls that he was a member of this class and will consecrate his memory. History's rulers will read with elation that Abraham Lincoln was a ruler who sat among them.

Ring, bells, dully and terribly; the faithful echo of our hearts! And the bells, as we hear them here, will ring from village to village, from city to city. Hearts will overflow with melancholy for your sad return trip from Washington, which was the glittering scene of your public deeds and the field of your concerns and sufferings after your peaceful, quiet, once so happy home in Springfield.

Continued on page 16

Eulogy *Continued from page 15*

A short time ago, the people called and you were led to Washington to the ruler's seat; today, God is leading you back. His calls you must follow. We must give in to them. O, how we would have rejoiced...How gladly we would have seen your life's luck tied to that of our country. How happy it would have made us, if you could have enjoyed the remainder of your term in peace and quiet and reconciliation, after your lot in the president's seat was so much unrest, worry, and sorrow.

But God wanted it otherwise. Providence gave the country a mild ruler in a time of war. Perhaps it now needs a stronger one in the forthcoming work of peace, so that the severe always goes hand in hand with the tender. However, the full, warm joy has been removed from that which time may reveal as a happy message. The sad fate of the leader, the dreadful act against the chosen one of the people, will remain the bitter drop that spoils the sweetest goblet of joy.

Praise be to God, that he, who committed the terrible act, was not among us in faith, that the Israelites did not produce such a monster! At any rate, as men may be, we now have to read in the newspapers that this act is reminiscent of the "wicked Jews who killed Jesus Christ."¹

As men may be, our ancestors, who 2,000 years ago condemned to death a private man working against the legal order under the observation of all legal forms, are being called from the grave and set as counter-parts on the side of the Presidential murderers. This reproach would hurt Christianity even more, that after 2,000 years of existence, in our enlightened age, in the century of schools and books, members of its

confession were capable of such a horrible act. But we are far from such narrow-mindedness, to seriously blame the entirety of a religion for something for which individuals are responsible. We would commit a serious sin if we wanted to call out in our pain, "The wicked Christians have killed our Abe Lincoln. They have killed the savior of their own country!"² We mourn, rather, the shared leader together, Jews and Christians, and pray, Jews as well as Christians, for the peace of a soul; of course, by our religious teachings the devout of all peoples and every belief take part in blessedness. He may also, even as non-Israelite, stand before us as an enlightening model in his strict honesty, in his pure morality, in his non-hypocritical devoutness, in his generosity, in his good heart and in his luminescent patriotism. We should do modestly in our limited lives what he practiced to the furthest extent in his high position.

While the body of our great, beloved, former President is being carried out of the White House, the new head of government is moving in. It is now our obligation to the fatherland to be faithful to its head and not to wait with honor and acknowledgement until death makes us soft. The new President remained firm and unshakingly true to the Union, when all around him wavered and fell; we forget that he once wavered when all stood firm around him. By forgetting, we act in the spirit of the late President, the confirmed patriot.

Your body, Abe Lincoln, is carried now from city to city, from state to state, until its final resting place, to add dust to dust. Your spirit, however, rises to God. He looks after the worlds, He measures the celestial spheres, all the puzzles of the world are solvable for Him.

He looks after a magnificence in the circle of the just, against which the magnificence of Washington sinks into dust. In the book of history, the pencil is already busy...ensuring your immortality.

Your spirit, Abe Lincoln, is before the judicial bench of God. There your acts are angels speaking for you. Let our prayer for the welfare of your soul ascend from the depth of our hearts, together with the praying nation, into heaven. ❖

1 Translator's note: Text in quotes originally in English.

2 Translator's note: Text in quotes originally in English.

Liebman Adler (1812-1892)

He was born in Lengsfeld, in the Grand Duchy of Saxe-Weimar. From an early age he was educated by prominent Hebrew scholars, including his father and the father of Reverend Ignatz Kunreuther [Chicago's very first rabbi and shochet]. In 1854 he immigrated to America, where he served a Detroit congregation until 1861, when he was called to Chicago, to the pulpit at KAM, a position he occupied continuously, with the exception of 1872-76, until his retirement in 1882. Rabbi Adler was a widely published scholarly writer as well as a preacher. He was the father of Dankmar Adler (1844-1900), the great Chicago architect-engineer. Young Dankmar enlisted in the Union Army on his eighteenth birthday in August, 1862, serving in the First Illinois Artillery and later in the Engineer Corps of the Military Division of the Tennessee.

—H.L. Meites, *History of the Jews of Chicago (1924, reprinted by the CJHS in 1990).*

President's Column *Continued from page 2*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN HAS BEEN DESCRIBED BY HISTORIANS AS THE FIRST PRESIDENT WHO REALLY KNEW JEWS

On September 20, 1862, President Lincoln had a lot on his mind. The Civil War was raging, and within a few days he would issue a preliminary draft of the Emancipation Proclamation. Still, he managed to find the time to write a testimonial to his podiatrist. "Dr. Zacharie has with great dexterity, taken some troublesome corns from my toes...He is now treating me, and I believe with success for what plain people call backache. We shall see how it will end."

Without my commenting on the legendary skills of Jewish physicians, this is one of many unexpected vignettes in the exhibition "Lincoln and the Jews," now on display at the New-York Historical Society. drawn largely from the Shapell Manuscript Collection, assembled by collector and philanthropist Benjamin Shapell. A portion of this material will be exhibited at the magnificent Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield, Illinois, in August.

Leah Axelrod, our Society's terrific tour chairman, has arranged a day trip to Springfield on Sunday, August 23, to tour the exhibit. Details and a reservation form are on the inside back cover of this issue.

Professor Jonathan D. Sarna of Brandeis University, and the author with Mr. Shapell of a new book, *Lincoln and the Jews*, states that "Lincoln played an important role in turning Jews from outsiders in America to insiders—it is a subject that has really been overlooked."

In all likelihood, Lincoln probably encountered few or no Jews in person until he became a young man. But at a time when anti-Semitism and nativism ran high in the United States there is no evidence of Lincoln harboring any animus toward us. A prominent Lincoln scholar, Harold Holzer, the exhibition's chief historian, observes that "the most important thing you could be to Lincoln wasn't a Christian or a Jew, but a Republican."

President Lincoln was assassinated on Good Friday. Many rabbis heard the news as they were preparing for Shabbat services, and it was during Passover, as well. They incorporated in their sermons the concept that "more than all others, the House of Israel" had cause to mourn this great loss since "Abraham Lincoln had served as American Jewry's shield and protection."

Thanks to Lincoln's personal intervention, the military chaplaincy was widened to embrace non-Christians. He appointed the first Jewish chaplains to the armed forces and placed many other Jews into

positions of authority as well. Remarkably, he justified one such appointment with the statement, "We have not yet appointed a Hebrew," a sign that he had made the inclusion of Jews a priority.

As President, he took increased note of the presence of non-Christians in the United States. At the time of his death in 1865, there were approximately 150,000 Jews in the United States. In Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and in his deeply religious Second Inaugural he made a conscious effort to redefine America through phrases such as "this nation under God," that embraced Jews and other non-Christians as insiders.

We know that Lincoln, an avid theater-goer, attended two plays in Washington, "Gamea" and "Leah" that incorporated the theme of anti-Jewish persecution in ways that contemporaries considered highly relevant, not only to Jews, but also to the condition of black people, and the desire to abolish slavery.

Mary Todd Lincoln, following the President's assassination, often told of her husband's hope to visit Palestine after his second term ended. The introduction of steamships, which made long-distance travel safer and more pleasurable, inspired many Americans of the time to make the trip. Herman Melville and Mark Twain published books based on their travels to the Holy Land, and Ulysses S. Grant and William Seward toured there as well.

"WE CALLED HIM RABBI ABRAHAM"

Not to be overlooked by Society members is a monograph titled *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham: Lincoln and American Jewry, A Documentary History*, edited by Gary Phillip Zola and published by the Southern Illinois University Press. Zola is the executive director of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. He has edited a highly accessible narrative and produced a text illustrated with documents that are mostly in English, but some in German, Yiddish, and Hebrew, that will be useful to scholars of Lincoln, the Civil War, and American Jewish history from the nineteenth century through the modern era. (And did you know that the first profile portrait on the Lincoln penny was made by a Jewish engraver?)

Like Holzer, Sarna, and Shapell, Zola contends that "the Judaization of Lincoln has gone hand in hand with the Americanization of this country's Jewry." Memorializing Lincoln proved to a path to integration, rendering them like other Americans. By putting a Jewish stamp on their commemorations, they ensured their place in America as Jews.

Continued on page 18

Research Inquiries

The Face on the Baby Shoe Box

Before my father, Mort Gibian, opened his shoe store, Mort Gibian Bootery, at 1640 West Howard Street, in the early-1950s, he owned a baby shoe factory. I can't remember the name of the brand but do remember that my picture was on the shoe boxes. Unfortunately, no one saved any boxes. I would love to see a picture of one. I have pictures and mementos of the store but none of the factory. Is there anyone who can help? I think the factory was in business around 1945-48.

Barbara Gibian Heinrich
bgheinrich@comcast.net

CJHS Vice President Jerry Levin comments: My grandfather, Jacob Siegel, owned a shoe factory in Chicago. The name of the business was Monarch Shoe Co., doing business as Monarch Youngster Shoes, at 18 South Throop Street.

After Jacob died it became my uncle Meyer's business. (I am named after Jacob, so this was before I was born.) Mom would take my sister and me down to Uncle Meyer's factory to have lasts made of our feet from which they would fabricate our shoes. As time moved on, Monarch could not complete with the big guys from St Louis. So about 1950 they stopped making shoes and just manufactured children's house slippers. They closed the business about 1961.

Buttons, Haberdashery, and Movies

I am researching material about early Chicago Jewish merchants and manufacturers. Do you have any info about A L Singer & Co. (I believe they made uniform buttons in the late 1800s and early 1900s) and Kohn Brothers, haberdashers.

Any info you can provide would be greatly appreciated, especially by my wife, Roberta Teitel, Chicago born and bred. Her father was the Charles Teitel who operated movie theaters in the city, 1930s-1970s, including the World Playhouse...

S. Morton Zweig, M.D.
smzca@yahoo.com

Our editor answers:

A newspaper advertisement and a history of A.L. Singer & Co., 173 Adams St., Chicago, appear in a collection of businesses in the Postal Museum at Southern Illinois University. postalmuseum.si.edu. I was unable to find anything on Kohn Brothers.

The Deluxe Teal Blue CJHS Logo Tote Bag Goes to Cancun, Mexico



Our sturdy carry-all is made in the USA. It is perfect for toting proudly on travel abroad or on our CJHS tours.

Members at the \$100 annual level and above receive the tote with 2015 membership. The tote is available for purchase by all members and friends at \$20 each.

Purchase totes online via PayPal with your membership renewal, mail a check to the CJHS office, or mail your check with your tour reservation.

President's Column

Continued from page 17

We must not forget that in the Lincoln era, American Jews were as divided over his Presidency as non-Jews. For example, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, a gradualist in regard to the abolition of slavery and a committed Democrat, criticized Lincoln several times in editorials before the Civil War. Wise would change his tune after Lincoln's death, but some Southern Jews cheered his assassination. The letters written after 1865, and assembled by Zola, are among the most interesting. Jews of every stripe: rabbis from different denominations, scholars, Yiddishists, socialists, and composers such as Irving Berlin, lauded Lincoln, each in his own fashion. A reading of Zola's volume will undergird the thesis that Lincoln's memory served as an Americanizing force for Jews in the United States.

On behalf of the officers and Board of Directors of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, I wish all a happy and healthy summer and look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events. ❖



Three Terrific Tours in 2015

Sunday, July 12 – “Chicago Jewish Roots”

Guide: Dr. Irving Cutler Author of *The Jews of Chicago, From Shtetl to Suburb*

A sentimental journey via motor coach to historic Jewish neighborhoods and sites – from downtown to Maxwell Street, Lawndale, Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, and Wicker Park. Stops will be made at a former famous Lawndale Synagogue (now an African-American church) and also at the Garfield Park Conservatory. There will be a short walk on a fascinating street. Places on the way include the Jewish People’s Institute (JPI), Mount Sinai Hospital, synagogues, theaters, schools including Marshall, Herzl, and Penn, and facilities associated with famous residents such as Golda Meir, Benny Goodman, and Admiral Hyman Rickover.

10:00 am – 4:30 pm Bernard Horwich JCC, 3003 West Touhy Avenue

10:30 am – 4:00 pm Marriott Hotel, 540 North Michigan Avenue (Rush Street Entrance)

\$40 CJHS Member / \$45 Non-member

Sunday, August 23 – Springfield, Illinois: “Lincoln and the Jews” Exhibit

Guide: Randall Saxon President of the Illinois State Historical Society

An excursion to the magnificent Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum to view “Lincoln and the Jews”— the traveling portion of the exhibit mounted last spring at the New-York Historical Society. *Springfield is the exhibit’s only other venue.* The artifacts and documents focus on significant, and previously unknown, relationships and transactions between Abraham Lincoln and his Jewish friends and associates. There will be time to explore some of the other galleries of the museum. Bring a sack lunch. There will be a dinner stop (cost not included). Luxury motor coach with restroom.

7:45 am – 9:00 pm Bernard Horwich JCC, 3003 West Touhy Avenue

8:15 am – 8:30 pm Marriott Hotel, 540 North Michigan Avenue (Rush Street Entrance)

\$75 CJHS Member / \$85 Non-member

Sunday, October 11 – “Chicago’s Historic North Side Jewish Cemeteries”

Guides: Mark Mandle and Herbert Eiseman Chicago Jewish Historical Society

A walking tour through the grounds of three historic cemeteries: Hebrew Benevolent Society (Jewish Graceland), founded in 1856; beautiful Rosehill Cemetery, where many renowned Jewish Chicagoans are interred; and New Light Cemetery in Lincolnwood, founded by German Jews in 1895 and lovingly restored and rededicated in 2006 with a new chapel and a Holocaust Monument where an annual memorial service is conducted. Travel between sites via motor coach.

11:30 am – 4:30 pm Bernard Horwich JCC, 3003 West Touhy Avenue

12:00 pm – 5:00 pm Marriott Hotel, 540 North Michigan Avenue (Rush Street Entrance)

\$40 CJHS Member / \$45 Non-member

RESERVATIONS 2015 Chicago Jewish Historical Society Tours

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Apt _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

CJHS Member Non-Member

Roots Horwich ____ Marriott ____

Springfield Horwich ____ Marriott ____

Cemeteries Horwich ____ Marriott ____

Number of persons _____

Make check payable to: Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

Mail to: Leah Axelrod, 2100 Linden Avenue, Highland Park, IL 60035-2563

Questions? Phone Leah at (847) 432-7003 or email: leahaxe@aol.com

Total \$ _____



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



chicago jewish historical society

610 South Michigan Avenue. Room 803 • Chicago, IL 60605-1901

Non-Profit Org.
PRESORT
U.S. Postage
PAID
Chicago, IL
Permit No. 6590

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Our 2015 Tours: Reservation Form**
- **Program Reports:**
Saul Bellow Centenary
Hillel on Campus
Chicago Jewish WWII Vets (Part 2)
- **Let's Go to "The Show"**
- **Eulogy for Abraham Lincoln**

Our History and Mission

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 by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago and the American Jewish Congress. Two years after celebrating our "double *chai*," the Society's

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 & 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. You may also order online at our website.

Visit our website — www.chicagojewishhistory.org

All Issues of our Society periodical from 1977 to the present have been digitized and posted on our website in pdf format.

Simply click on "Publications," and scroll down through the years.

There is an Index to the issues from 1977 to 2012.

Pay Your Dues Online

Visit our website to pay dues via credit card or PayPal, or use the printable membership application to pay by check.

About the Society

unique mission continues to be the discovery, collection, and dissemination of information about the Jewish experience in the Chicago area through publications, open meetings, tours, and outreach to youth. The Society does not maintain its own archives, but seeks out written, spoken, and photographic records and artifacts, and responsibly arranges for their donation to Jewish archives.

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

- A subscription to *Chicago Jewish History*.
- Free admission to Society public programs. General admission is \$10 per person.
- Discounts on Society tours.
- 10% discount on purchases at the elegant Spertus Shop.
- Membership runs on a calendar year, from January through December. New members joining after July 1st are given an initial membership through December of the following year.

Life Membership.... \$1,000

Annual Dues:

Historian..... 500

Scholar..... 250

Sponsor.....100

Patron.....65

Member.....40

Student (with i.d.).....10



Like us on Facebook