



# chicago jewish history



**A WALK... Cover illustration.**  
Synagogue Bima, Beth Moshav  
Z'Keinim (Orthodox  
Jewish Home for the Aged).  
*Chicago Jewish Archives.*

## CJHS Publishes Significant Lawndale Book

### *A WALK TO SHUL: Chicago Synagogues of Lawndale and Stops on the Way*

The Society's much-anticipated Lawndale book has been published, and complimentary copies have been mailed to our active members. Many accolades have already been received by the authors, CJHS Board Member Bea Kraus and Past President Norman D. Schwartz, who devoted over three years to their planning, research, documentation, and writing.

The work was originally projected as a picture book—*Synagogues of Lawndale*—that would preserve, through photographs and text captions, the history of the many synagogues which stood in the Lawndale neighborhood of Chicago's West Side from about 1910 until the late 1950s.

Since not enough historical photographs of Lawndale synagogues could be located to suit the requirements of commercial publishers, despite the

*Map & key on pages 8-9; article continued on page 11*

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Meeting: Cong. Shaare  
Tikvah-B'nai Zion**

***Save the Date!*  
*Sunday, Sept. 7***

***Open Meeting at  
Congregation  
Kol Ami***

***Water Tower Place  
845 North Michigan  
Suite 913-E***

***Please note the time:  
3:00 p.m.***

***Invite your friends—  
as always, admission is free  
and open to the public.***

#### **CJHS TOUR**

***Explore Jewish history  
on an expertly guided bus  
trip. Dinner is included.***

**SUNDAY,  
AUGUST 24**

***Jews in  
the Illinois  
Heartland***

***Bloomington, Danville &  
Champaign Synagogues;  
Hillel at the U. of Illinois***

***Information & Registration:  
LEAH AXELROD  
(847) 432-7003***

## President's Column



Walter Roth

**ERIKA FROMM, PROFESSOR EMERITUS** in Psychology at the University of Chicago died on May 26, 2003 in her home in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. She was 93.

University of Chicago Professor Bertram Cohler said "Erika Fromm was a major figure in American psychology and psychoanalysis from her early work on dream interpretation to her later work on hypnosis and psychotherapy. Erika's contributions were magnificent and lasting. She was in addition a caring teacher and mentor."

My wife Chaya and I were friends of Erika, and two years ago I taped her oral history. The interview took place at her summer home in Michiana, Michigan, a few minutes' walk from our house.

She told me that she was born Erika Oppenheimer in Frankfurt, Germany in 1909 into an observant Jewish family. From a young age she aspired to an academic career. With Nazism on the rise, she rushed to earn a doctorate from the University of Frankfurt while it was still possible for a Jew to do so. She recalled her fear and the discrimination suffered by her family as Hitler came to power.

In 1934 she gained her doctorate and fled to Holland, where she stayed until her fiancé, Paul Fromm (a cousin of the psychoanalyst Erik Fromm), managed to obtain visas. They immigrated to the United States in 1938. Paul Fromm and his family were prosperous wine merchants in Germany, and though the Nazis confiscated their business, Paul was able to create a successful wine enterprise in Chicago. He was a lover of music and established the Fromm Music Foundation which continues to support contemporary American composers by annually commissioning new works and subsidizing premiere performances. Paul Fromm died in 1987.

Erika and I discussed her Jewish heritage. She was keenly aware of her Jewish roots. She described herself as a "non-believer," but we did not pursue that subject. She told me that she could trace the Oppenheimer family lineage in Germany back to the sixteenth century, but her life experience had left her with a bitterness against Germans. Erika's parents had not escaped the Holocaust.

Dr. Fromm wrote extensively. She published her last book in the year 2000, quite an accomplishment for a person 90 years of age, and she was in contact with a publisher about yet another project.

As we ended the interview, she handed me an article she had written in 1992 for a German magazine. The publisher had wanted to translate one of her books from the English language into the German language. She would not give her consent, and entitled her article, "Personal Feelings of a Nazi Refugee: why I do not want to be honored by Germans."

Erika Fromm was interred in a private graveside service at Oakwoods Cemetery on Chicago's South Side. The audiotape and transcription of her oral history can be found in the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies. ❖



chicago jewish historical society

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### Chicago Jewish History

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## Adele Hast Awarded Research Fellowship from Jewish Women's Archive

Congratulations to CJHS Past President Dr. Adele Hast, scholar-in-residence at the Newberry Library. In May 2003 she received a "Jewish Women Making Community" research fellowship from the Jewish Women's Archive in Brookline, MA. The national program supports research on the role of Jewish women in shaping community in North American cities.

She will study Chicago Woman's Aid, an organization that was active from 1882 to 1988. CWA

members were Jewish women involved in social service, civic reform, and philanthropy in both the Jewish and the larger Chicago communities. Dr. Hast will write an article on CWA, participate in a conference to consider results of the research, and present a lecture based on her findings. She would like to speak with women who were members of Chicago Woman's Aid about the organization. If you have information to share, please call Adele Hast at (847) 256-5768.



**Past Presidents of Chicago Woman's Aid  
at the organization's 100th anniversary celebration, 1982.**  
*Chicago Jewish Archives.*

This photo came to the Chicago Jewish Archives without identification of the individuals, but the Archives does have this list of past presidents of CWA. Can any of our readers match names to faces?

1953-55 *Mrs. Joseph Davis*  
 1955-57 *Mrs. William H. Sahud*  
 1957-59 *Mrs. Henry D. Hirsch*  
 1859-62 *Mrs. Otto R. Moss*  
 1962-64 *Mrs. Gus Friedman*  
 1964-66 *Mrs. Aaron E. Kanter*  
 1966-68 *Vera Teplitz*  
 1968-70 *Mrs. Mark T. Barnett*  
 1970-72 *Mrs. Alexander Lavin*  
 1972-75 *Mrs. Sidney Goodman*  
 1975-77 *Mrs. Herbert Portes*  
 1977-80 *Mrs. Alexander Lindar-Gorbunoff*  
 1980-82 *Mrs. A. Robert Eisenberg*  
 1982-84 *Mrs. Mrs. Julius Sagi*

### CJHS Welcomes New Members

Shirley Adelman  
 Sanford Altschul  
 Pauline Dunsky  
 Mr & Mrs Jack Jacobson  
 Betty Kahn  
 Rabbi Steven Lowenstein  
 Paula & Albert Madansky  
 Seymour Nordenberg  
 Mr & Mrs Bernard Nusinow  
 Bernard Reisin  
 Marshall Rosenthal  
 Richard Sher  
 Mr & Mrs Jeffrey Steinberg

#### Corrections To Our Spring 2003 Issue:

In the Sol Brandzel oral history excerpt, Frank Rosenblum, secretary-treasurer of the International of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, was referred to as "Frank Rosen."  
 CJH apologizes for the error.

# The Peoria Street Riots of November 1949

BY WALTER ROTH

In my President's Column in the Spring 2003 issue of *Chicago Jewish History*, I mentioned that Dan Sharon, Senior Research Librarian at the Asher Library, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, had brought to my attention the racial and anti-Semitic riots that occurred in November, 1949 in Englewood on Chicago's South Side. These riots followed similar disturbances in the Chicago area in the post-World War II years. They are worth examining today in light of anti-Semitic acts that are taking place around the world today. The following article is based on the reportage, editorials, and articles on the Peoria Street events that appeared at the time in the Chicago daily newspapers, the Jewish weekly *Sentinel*, and several monthly magazines.

**M**ike Hecht, a young Chicago journalist, was an eyewitness to the events. He described them in an article, "Civil Rights on Peoria Street," in the February 1950 issue of *The Jewish Frontier*, a publication of the Labor Zionist movement:

"The outlines of the story are simple enough. Two young Jewish war veterans, friends for many years, tired of living in crumbling flats and dingy one-room apartments, saved a few dollars, pooled their resources, and purchased a 2-story building at 5643 S. Peoria Street, in Englewood, a residential area on Chicago's Southwest Side. In October, Bill Sennett with his wife Gussie and their little daughters, ages 8 and 4, moved in to the upstairs apartment; two weeks later, Aaron Bindman with his wife Louise, moved in downstairs."

Their new home was located near a Catholic Church—the Visitation Parish Church—on the corner of Peoria and 55th Street (Garfield Boulevard), where the monsignor preached a sermon requesting good Christians not to sell their homes to "undesirables."

On Tuesday evening, November 8, 1949, Bindman held a reception in his home for union members. Among the invited guests were eight black persons. As if by pre-arranged signal, an alarm was sounded that Negroes had purchased the house, and a mob of "minutemen" assembled, shouting insults against Jews and Negroes. Wednesday morning, Bindman and some friends called on Chicago's Police Commissioner John Prendergast and other police officials for protection; all were unavailable. A visit to Mayor Martin Kennelly's office had a similar result.

By Wednesday night, a crowd of hundreds gathered around the Bindman-Sennet house; the three policemen assigned to guard the house made no attempt to disperse them. Maynard Wishner, a member of the Mayor's Commission on Human Relations, contacted the Englewood police and was told by an officer that "everything was all right." and that it was difficult to disperse the crowd because they were neighbors—but a fourth policeman was assigned to protect the home. According to Hecht, by Thursday morning, the whole neighborhood knew that Negroes had not bought the house and that the Bindman and Sennett families did not intend to sell their house.

Hecht writes, "The anti-Negro phase was almost completely dropped—the neighbors were now able to restrict themselves exclusively to anti-Semitism."

About 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, the crowd stormed the Bindman porch, shouting, "Let's go in and kill the Jews." The few policemen at the scene asked them to stop, and soon about 20 additional policemen arrived. The crowd, now constantly increasing in size, began to hurl stones and rocks at the home, shattering windows and causing other damage. The police did nothing to prevent this violence. Some of Bindman's friends attempted to come to his assistance, but they were beaten, as were other persons who were strangers to the crowd. The police finally arrested two rock throwers as well as two friends of Bindman. Taken to the police station, Bindman's friends were booked, but the rock throwers were released.

The mob grew through the night. By some counts, over 2500 persons surrounded the house, while hundreds of others were in nearby streets. Many persons were beaten, some seriously, including several University of Chicago students and a *Chicago Daily News* reporter. The police did not interfere with the activities of the crowd. An editorial in the *Daily News* complained that the police were almost provocative in their hostility to Bindman. A policeman had stated to the paper's reporter that the victims were properly beaten because they were Communists. "How do you know they are Communists?" the reporter inquired. "Because they are Jews," the policeman replied.

Hecht also notes that mobs roamed the business district near Peoria Street, smashing windows of Jewish-owned stores and attacking anyone they thought to be

Jewish. (Blacks did not dare to walk in the area.)

The Chicago press finally took up the story in greater detail. Editorials in the *Daily News* and *Sun-Times* called attention to the events, and launched an attack on Mayor Kennelly for his inaction during the week of rioting. Mayor Kennelly, now also facing mounting criticism from various Jewish organizations including Jewish veterans' groups, as well as the American Civil Liberties Union, issued an order to the police to restore order in Englewood.

Mike Hecht concludes: "Such are the bare facts and the broad outlines: 'A man's home is his castle' is accepted as gospel, a man invites into his home friends and colleagues for a peaceful gathering; his neighbors form a mob, which begins by shouting anti-Negro epithets, and winds up with a full scale three-day pogrom against Jews and 'strangers,' bragging that it will finish what Hitler left undone; the mob is instigated and organized by substantial interests; the police stand by permitting the violence to develop and flare, and in numerous cases, encourage and provoke the violence, while the Mayor and the police commissioner are too occupied to intervene, and newspapers have no space to report the event. People in Chicago are wondering about the state of civil rights."

**W**ithin a week after the Peoria Street riots, the Chicago Jewish weekly *Sentinel*, in its November 24, 1949 issue, carried a letter from Edgar Bernhard, an attorney and officer of the American Civil Liberties Union, to Mayor Kennelly, summarizing the events from the ACLU's viewpoint:

"I consider it my duty to report to you the deep disappointment in many quarters as the result of your handling of the recent outbreak of anti-Negro and anti-Semitic violence at 56th and South Peoria Streets Tuesday night, November 8. During your administration there has been a series of outbreaks of violence against Chicago citizens because of their racial, religious or ethnic origins. You have had at your disposal not only the entire police force of the City but the support of the City Commission on Human Relations and the support of numerous civic and church organizations interested in human relations, including the Chicago Division of the American Civil Liberties Union. The latter organizations have repeatedly brought to your attention the seriousness of these outbreaks and made constructive suggestions as to dealing with them. Delay, failure to speak out, and waiting to see whether the situation will not perhaps take care of itself have sometimes intensified situations and increased risks and

dangers which would have been at least allayed by forthright statements and decisive action by you at the inception of each such outbreak.

"Eyewitness investigators, who have reported to us, have told appalling stories of human beings beaten and trampled upon; of the gathering of a crowd of over two hundred people with only three policemen on hand, and later of the gathering of several hundred more people with only twenty policemen on hand; of the fact that the policemen were speaking pleasantly to people in the mob and mildly asking, 'Why don't you go home?' instead of seeing to it that the crowds were dispersed; of the throwing of stones by the crowd—and still no dispersal; of physical attacks on people who happened to be walking in the neighborhood, some of whom did not even know what the crowd were gathered for; and of police being forced back by the crowd instead of the crowd being forced back by the police!

"You have been asked on a number of occasions by responsible people representing organizations whose membership includes several hundred thousand Chicagoans to issue a statement which would once and for all make it plain that the policy of the City Administration not only does not condone the violation of law and order but stands ready and able to enforce the laws of this city, the State of Illinois, and the Nation, which laws can be interpreted in no other way than to grant to all persons, regardless of race, religion or ethnic origin, the right to rent, buy, live and travel in any part of the city. Your attention has been called to rumors, which have been heard repeatedly from those engaged in mob violence, that you personally and your administration do not believe in upholding these laws and protecting the civil rights of minority group members who exercise these rights by moving into property which they own or have rented in areas, previously established in the minds of some people as 'pure white.'

"As reported by the Press, you have finally, as of Friday, made a public statement. In your statement, you made mention of "subversive groups and individuals who thrive on disorder." In view of police attitudes openly expressed during the 56th and Peoria violence, it is necessary for me to point out that it is the responsibility of city officials to protect the civil rights and persons of all the people, no matter who they are, where they come from or what any individual policeman may think of them."

Rabbi Morton M. Berman, president of the

*continued on page 6*

## Peoria Street *continued from page 5*

Chicago Division of the American Jewish Congress, and also president of the Chicago Rabbinical Association, also wrote a letter to Kennelly:

“Newspaper editorials have already pointed out the police’s failure and indeed their acquiescence in some of the mob action. You, Mr. Mayor, refused to take any forthright public position despite full knowledge of what was happening and of Chicago’s experience with similar incidents receiving nationwide attention during your term of office. Your vague statement calling for law and order issued a week after violence had ended will not convince anyone that he risks serious punishment if he resorts to violence to interfere with anyone’s right to live or visit where he pleases.”

On December 1, 1949, the *Sentinel* carried an angry editorial by its editor Jack Fishbein attacking Mayor Kennelly for his mishandling of the riots. Fishbein concludes: “And where is the conscience of Chicago Jewry? Silent...silent as the graves of the six million Jews who sleep their silent sleep in Buchenwald and Dachau and Treblinka.”

A less dramatic discussion of the Peoria Street violence was carried several weeks later in the January 2, 1950 issue of the *Congress Weekly*, the official organ of the American Jewish Congress, in an article written by Byron S. Miller, an attorney and AJC’s Midwest Director of the Commission on Law and Social Action. His article recounts much of the same material as detailed in Hecht’s account. Miller recalls that in the same week as the Peoria Street riot occurred, similar mob action had started in the neighboring Park Manor area, where a prior major racial riot and “innumerable” incidents of attacks on Negro families who had tried to move into that area had occurred. But there the police had moved promptly to put up barricades and to disperse onlookers, thus avoiding further violence.

The same police officer who had succeeded in handling the Park Manor outbreak was apparently (by lucky chance) brought over to Peoria Street on Saturday night, five days after the initial outbreak of mob action on Peoria Street. Using similar tactics, this officer and others were able to quickly disperse the crowd in Peoria Street neighborhoods and “the area has been orderly since then.”

Miller writes that this action came in the nick of time because “militant members of the Negro community” had decided to take matters in their own hands and to set out for Peoria Street to retaliate. If the crowd had not already been dispersed, Miller writes,

Chicago might have had another lethal race riot on its hands reminiscent of the murderous ones in the summer of 1919. This was avoided, though Miller notes that it was a very narrow escape. As a civil libertarian, Miller spelled out the need for community awareness and organization. He recalls that a citizen group, the Chicago Council Against Racial and Religious Discrimination, met with the Mayor and pressured him to issue orders to implement police procedures designed to produce the “kind of trained and disinterested policemen who would enforce the words contained in these orders.” Effective police protection was to be the result.

**B**y the time Miller was writing his article, almost two months after the riots, Peoria Street was quiet, and the first Negro family was moving in. Miller writes that the racial tensions remained high, and whites were fleeing the neighborhood, selling their homes at distressed prices. “If the whites would only stay and not see the Negroes as a violent threat to their safety, prices would not be depressed and whites would stay. Once this attitude is achieved, violence of the Chicago pattern will be a thing of the past.”

Miller could still hope for this result in January 1950. But Englewood soon turned into an almost entirely Black neighborhood as whites moved out. Racial violence continued on Chicago’s Southwest side, climaxing in the Marquette Park riots during Martin Luther King’s integration efforts in the 1960s. The struggle exemplified by the Peoria Street riots of November 1949 should be a reminder of the ever present danger of uncontrolled mob action, the need for leadership in our community, and the protection that must be made available to all citizens, no matter what their race, religion or ethnic origin might be.

Both Edgar Bernhard, who wrote the letter to Mayor Kennelly, and Byron S. Miller, who wrote the article in the *Congress Weekly* were partners of mine at the law firm of D’Ancona, Pflaum, Wyatt & Riskind (now D’Ancona & Pflaum LLC). Morton Berman was the rabbi of Temple Isaiah Israel until he made *aliyah* to Israel in 1955. Jack Fishbein continued as editor of the *Sentinel* for many years. They are deceased.

Mike Hecht, author of the *Jewish Frontier* article, and his wife live in suburban Chicago. Some of his more recent writings—memoirs—have appeared in *Chicago Jewish History* (Fall 1989 and Winter 1999). ❖

**WALTER ROTH** is president of CJHS. His latest book, *Looking Backward: True Stories from Chicago’s Jewish Past*, is available in bookstores and online.

*CJH* recently contacted Aaron Bindman, and he referred us to the article, “The Siege on South Peoria Street,” by N. Caroline Harney and James Charlton, which appeared in the *Chicago Reader* on January 14, 2000. We found the lengthy article in the online archives of the *Reader*. We are reprinting the following brief excerpts to conclude our Peoria Street story.

“**T**hough the Bindmans wanted to stay [in their house on Peoria Street], a year was enough for the Sennetts. In the fall of 1950 Bill Sennett went to Visitation Parish and told church officials that the two families wanted to sell the house for the purchase price plus improvements—\$12,000. The church promptly arranged to have a local bank buy the house.

“The Sennetts left Chicago in 1957.... The Bindmans moved out of Chicago in 1959. Aaron had left the union [the International Longshoremen’s & Warehousemen’s Union] in the mid-50s to work as a carpenter. Then he and Louise moved to Champaign so he could get his doctorate in sociology. He began teaching, ending up as a professor at the State University of New York at New Paltz. Louise continued to work as an occupational therapist [which had been her work at the Drexel Home in Chicago], then became a teacher of children with multiple disabilities. They had two children and remained activists, participating in the civil rights movement and working with peace and environmental and women’s rights groups. They’re still activists, though they’re now retired and dividing their time between New York and Oaxaca, Mexico. Aaron, who’s been a wood sculptor for years, also teaches sculpting classes in Oaxaca.

“In the summer of 1998 the Bindmans visited Chicago and drove around the neighborhoods where they’d once lived—Jeffery Manor, Hyde Park, and Lawndale. Fifty years ago all these neighborhoods were white, a mix of middle-class and working-class



**Aaron and Louise Bindman, SUNY New Paltz, 2000.**

*Image courtesy of Aaron and Louise Bindman.*

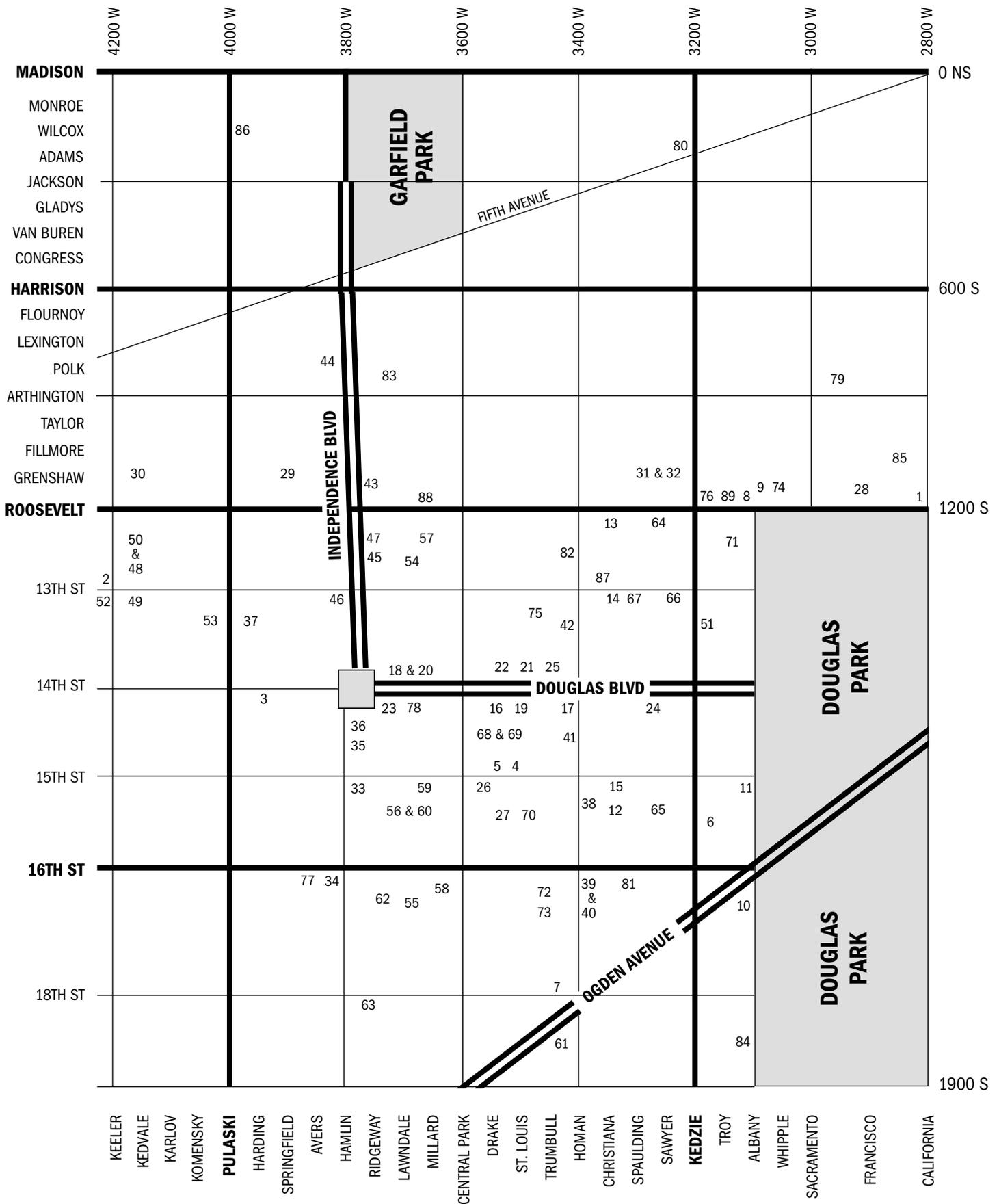
## Peoria Street Fifty Years Later

families. Now they’re predominantly African-American, except Hyde Park.

“Then the Bindmans drove into Englewood where they hadn’t been since they moved out in 1950. The first two black families had had moved into the neighborhood in August 1963.... That sparked a week of racial strife, during which 158 people were arrested. White flight followed. Visitation Parish is still at 55th and Peoria, but it merged with Saint Basil in 1990 and is now known as Saint Basil-Visitation. The parish is now mostly African-American and Puerto Rican.

“**W**hen they drove up to 5643 S. Peoria they were shocked to discover an empty lot. They got out of the car and stood looking at the weed-filled parcel of land. ‘At the time we were scared as hell,’ said Aaron. ‘But I’m glad we stuck it out for a whole year.’ Louise shook her head. ‘That’s crazy,’ she said. ‘I don’t even remember a lot of it. I can’t. We all know psychological trauma—you can blank out, block it out.’” ❖

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Note: Street distances south of Roosevelt Road are expanded to accommodate the many sites.  
 Grid courtesy of Irving Cutler—modified by Harold Kraus—further modified and designed by Bev Chubat.

**A WALK TO SHUL: Chicago Synagogues of Lawndale and Stops on the Way.** *Bea Kraus and Norman D. Schwartz.*

*"The intent of this book is to preserve the history of the synagogues, and the institutions and parks in proximity to them, which dotted the Lawndale area of Chicago's West Side from about 1910 until the late 1950s. The area called 'Lawndale' was bounded by California Avenue (2800 W), Keeler Avenue (4200 W), Harrison Street (600 S), and 19th Street (1900 S)."*

**SYNAGOGUES OF LAWDALE**

1. B'nei Israel, 2812 W. 12th St.
2. Mazike Hadas, 4224 W. 13th St.
3. Beth Israel Anshe Yanova, 3905 W. 14th St.
4. Beth Jacob, 3500 W. 15th St.
5. Beth Jacob Anshe Kroz, 3540 W. 15th St.
6. Anshe Karastishub, 3145 W. 15th Place
7. Knesses B'nai Itzchok, 3442 W. 18th St.
8. Anshe Lubawitz, Albany Ave. near 12th St.
9. Anshe Zedek Nusach Sfar, 1123 S. Albany Ave.
10. Beth Moshav Z'Keinim, Albany and Ogden Aves.
11. Synagogue of Marks Nathan, 1500 S. Albany Ave.
12. Anshe Pavalitch, 1539 S. Christiana Ave.
13. Beth Haknesseth, 1229 S. Christiana Ave.
14. B'nai Moishe Leib Anshe Antopol, 1303 S. Christiana Ave.
15. Nacia Lath Jacob, 1500 S. Christiana Ave.
16. Adas B'Nai Israel, 3513 W. Douglas Blvd.
17. Anshe Kanesses Israel, 3411 W. Douglas Blvd.
18. Anshe Pavalitcher Congregation, 3622 W. Douglas Blvd.
19. Beth Hamedrosh Hagadol Ub'nai Jacob  
Anshe Luknick, 3455 W. Douglas Blvd.
20. First Romanian Congregation, 3622 W. Douglas Blvd.
23. Kehilath Jacob, 3757 W. Douglas Blvd.
24. Mishne U'Gemorah, 3313 W. Douglas Blvd.
25. Tomchei Shabbos, 3432 W. Douglas Blvd.
26. Anshe Lubovitch, 1500 S. Drake Ave.
27. Beth Abraham Anshe Polem, 1533 S. Drake Ave.
28. B'nai Israel, 1134 S. Francisco Ave.
29. B'nai Itzchok, 3842 W. Grenshaw St.
30. B'nai Reuven, 4130 W. Grenshaw St.
31. Knesses Israel Shaeri Torah, 3242 W. Grenshaw St.
33. Anshe Chudakov, 1519 S. Hamlin Ave.
34. Anshe Mazir, 1612 S. Hamlin Ave.
35. Shearit Haplaita, 1445 S. Hamlin Ave.
37. Poalei Zedek, 1333 S. Harding Ave.
38. Anshe Sholom Center, 1521 S. Homan Ave.
39. Anshe Shavel Ve Yanove, 1615 S. Homan Ave.
40. Hevrat Sephardim Shel Syrian, 1615 S. Homan Ave.
41. Oel Jacob Kovne, 1448 S. Homan Ave.
42. Zhitomer Volin, 1332 S. Homan Ave.
43. Adas Hapoel Hamizrachi, 1107 S. Independence Blvd.
44. Anshe Sholom, 754 S. Independence Blvd.
45. B'nai Jacob Anshe Makarover,  
1241 S. Independence Blvd.
46. Knesses Israel Nusach Sfar,  
1308 S. Independence Blvd.
47. Temple Judea, 1227 S. Independence Blvd.
48. Am Kodesh, 1256 S. Kedvale Ave.
49. B'nai Ruven, 13th & Kedvale Ave.
50. Sharei Tfile B'nai Reuven, 1256 S. Kedvale Ave.
51. Tomchei Torah Beth Abraham, 1339 S. Kedzie Ave.
52. Agudath Jacob, 1318 S. Keeler Ave.
53. Beth Jacob, 1333 S. Komensky Ave.
54. Mikro Kodosh Anshe Lida and Pinsk,  
1253 S. Lawndale Ave.
55. Odessa Congregation, 1625 S. Lawndale Ave.
56. Anshe Chomak, 1526 S. Millard Ave.
57. Ateres Israel Anshe Tiktin, 1230 S. Millard Ave.
58. B'nai Jehudah, 1617 S. Millard Ave.
59. Bicher Cholim Anshe Russia Poland, 1508 S. Millard Ave.
60. Shaara Tfilo Nusach Ari, 1526 S. Millard Ave.
61. Ahavas Achim Chicago City, 3437 W. Ogden Ave.
62. Anshe Cobrin, 1621 S. Ridgeway Ave.
63. Congregation Anshe Motele, 1800-02 S. Ridgeway Ave.
64. Anshe Lohishim Je-Lebashaw, 1216 S. Sawyer Ave.
65. Anshe Makow, 1528 S. Sawyer Ave.
66. Shaarei Torah Anshe Mauriv, Sawyer Ave. and 13th St.
67. Tiphereth Moishe, 1302 S. Spaulding Ave.
68. Agudath B'nai Eretz Israel, 1418 S. St. Louis Ave.
69. Kolel Shomra of Jerusalem, 1418 S. St. Louis Ave.
70. Tickvat Yehuda, 1533 S. St. Louis Ave.
71. Persian Hebrew Congregation, 1237 S. Troy St.
72. Chaside Kobrin and Karlin, 1626 S. Trumbull Ave.
73. Lev Someach, 1628 S. Trumbull Ave.
74. Oel Itzchok, 1136 S. Whipple St.

**COMMUNITY CENTERS, SCHOOLS & BUSINESSES**

21. Hebrew Theological College, 3448 W. Douglas Blvd.
22. Jewish People's Institute, 3500 Douglas Blvd.
32. Grenshaw Street Talmud Torah, 3242 W. Grenshaw St.
36. Young Israel of Chicago, 1407 S. Hamlin Ave.
75. American Boys' Commonwealth, 3413 W. 13th Place
76. Liberty Trust & Savings Bank,  
Roosevelt Rd. and Kedzie Ave.
77. Penn Elementary School, 1616 S. Avers Ave.
78. Herzl Junior College, 3711 W. Douglas Blvd.
79. Manley High School, 2935 W. Polk St.
80. Marshall High School, 3250 W. Adams St.
81. Howland Elementary School, 1616 S. Spaulding Ave.
82. Lawson Elementary School, 1256 S. Homan Ave.
83. Gregory Elementary School, 3715 W. Polk St.
84. Pope Elementary School, 1852 S. Albany Ave.
85. Shepard Elementary School, 2839 W. Fillmore St.
86. Chicago Jewish Academy, 3951 W. Wilcox St.
87. Douglas Branch Library, 3353 W. 13th St.
88. J. Weinstein and Sons, 3660 W. Roosevelt Rd.
89. Piser Funeral Home, 3125 W. Roosevelt Rd.

## Letter to the Authors of A WALK TO SHUL

Dear Friends Bea Kraus and Norman D. Schwartz,

I read your book, *A WALK TO SHUL*, with great interest, as I was born and raised in Lawndale, and worked a great great part of my adult life at the Jewish People's Institute, for about 12 years as educational director.

Both of you deserve a *yasher koakh* for writing this important work showing what a wonderful ethnic cultural area we lived in—rightfully known as the Great West Side. (The parents of one of my friends did not want to leave Lawndale. They spoke of it as “our Jerusalem.”)

Please note that the picture on page 72 is not of Theodore Herzl Junior College, as it is captioned. The picture is a view of Kehilath Jacob Synagogue, which is also pictured on pages 66 and 67.

Missing from the list of synagogues is Hagro Anshe Wilno, 3901 West Congress—slightly north of the boundaries of Lawndale. (Rabbi Zalesky was there for a number of years.)

The Douglas Branch of the Chicago Public Library, when it moved from 23rd and Millard, had a storefront facility on St. Louis Avenue just south of Roosevelt Road next to a fresh fish store and just south of Silverstein's Delicatessen & Restaurant. It was from there that they moved into the building at Homan and 13th Street, which housed an excellent



**Theodore Herzl Junior College, 3711 West Douglas Blvd.**

Photograph by Norman D. Schwartz.

Judaica collection on the second floor. I often wonder what happened to those marvelous books!

May I mention some cultural organizations and institutions not mentioned as stops on *A WALK*:

**Labor Zionist Alliance.** 3322 West Douglas Blvd. This was a gray stone building that also housed the J.L. Peretz Yiddish Folk School and the youth organization, Habonim.

**Jewish Children's Bureau, Lawndale Branch.** Southwest corner Douglas Blvd. at Spaulding.

**Va'ad Hakhinukh.** In the 3400 block of Douglas Blvd. in an old stone residential building.

**The Jewish Daily Forward, Chicago Branch.** 1256 South Kedzie Avenue. Built by the publisher—two stories, complete with printing press. The large staff wrote many articles for the Chicago edition. Jacob Siegel was the editor. The paper was edited and printed daily at this location.

**Labor Lyceum & Douglas Park Theater.** Northwest corner of Kedzie and Ogden Avenues. This

large building was the organizational center of the Workmen's Circle, home to one of its Yiddish folk schools, and site of Chicago's Yiddish theater.

**Mount Sinai Hospital.** 15th Street and California Avenue, opposite Douglas Park. Offered affiliation to Jewish doctors at a time when other hospitals were closed to them. The only Jewish hospital to observe the Jewish dietary laws.

There were also lesser and smaller organizations in the 1400 and 1500 blocks of Albany Avenue: the Douglas Park Day and Night Nursery and the Douglas Park Convalescent home. Both were run by laypersons.

Thank you for permitting me to offer these additions.

**Fagel R. Unterman  
Chicago**

*Thank you, Mrs. Unterman. The Herzl building is pictured above. Our front page article, continued on page 11, describes the genesis and primary focus of the book.*

## A WALK TO SHUL

*continued from page 1*

best efforts of Mrs. Kraus and Mr. Schwartz, they expanded their project to include other historically significant buildings in Lawndale—schools, community centers, and commercial buildings. Putting aside the limitations set by commercial publishers, the Chicago Jewish Historical Society underwrote the total cost of publication.

Mr. Schwartz photographed the Jewish Lawndale of old as it looks today, with most of the former synagogues converted to churches with African-American congregations. Mrs. Kraus interviewed former West Siders and sought out every possible resource.

The authors organized the book in a simple format. Each chapter is titled with a street name, so readers can easily plot the path from home to *shul*—and find lots of familiar stops on the way. The enclosed map and key provide a helpful overview.

Since the book was originally planned as a synagogue project, a great number of secular Jewish institutions are not included. CJHS welcomes comments and additions from our well-informed readers, such as native West Sider Fagel Unterman (see facing page). We encourage our readers to submit articles, memoirs, and photographs of old Lawndale for publication in *Chicago Jewish History*. ❖

To order:

**A WALK TO SHUL: Chicago Synagogues of Lawndale and Stops on the Way.** Paper, 160 pp.  
**\$19.95 + 3.00 s/h.**

Mail check in amount of \$22.95 to:  
**Chicago Jewish Historical Society**  
**618 South Michigan Avenue**  
**Chicago, IL 60605**  
**Phone (312) 663-5634**

## Chicago Tribute: City's "Markers of Distinction" Honor Notable Jews

"Since its inception in 1997, Chicago Tributes: Markers of Distinction have honored distinguished Chicagoans with the installation of markers in front of the locations where they lived or worked. The seven-foot tall

porcelain-enameled signs feature photographs and biographical highlights. Funded by the Chicago Tribune Foundation, the markers articulate the connection between the city of today and the historic individuals and events that shape our world...." This is an excerpt from the text to be found online at [www.chicagotribute.org](http://www.chicagotribute.org).

The Web site is maintained by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. Barbara Koenen is the project manager. Browse the site and see a map of marker locations, information found on each sign, requirements for nominating an honoree, and a nomination form.

Of the 80 existing markers there are 12 honoring Jews: Bessie Abramowitz and Sidney Hillman; Saul Alinsky; Edna Ferber; (Enrico and) Laura Fermi; Benny Goodman; Pearl M. Hart; The Marx Brothers; Paul Muni; Julius Rosenwald; Abe Saperstein; Hannah Greenebaum Solomon; and, of course, Ben Hecht, whose evocative writing continues to move us. ❖



**Marker of Distinction honoring civil rights attorney Pearl M. Hart, 2821 North Pine Grove.**

*Photos on this page by Bev Chubat.*



**Poster (artist unknown) featuring Ben Hecht quotation. Northbound platform of Sheridan "L" Station, CTA Red Line.**

*"The rain mutters in the night and the pavement is like a dark mirror alive with the impressionistic cartoons of the city"—Ben Hecht*

This year, the Chicago Jewish Archives has been engaged in an exciting project to expand its documentation of Jewish women in Chicago, mounting an exhibition as part of this project. The exhibition, titled "Shaping History: Chicago Jewish Women in the Twentieth Century," will be available until October 31, 2003. We have received several significant donations of material that expand our collections in this area and that will be a great benefit to researchers.



**H**ANNAH GREENEBAUM (1858-1942), the daughter of Michael Greenebaum and Sarah Spiegel, was born in a house on Union and Randolph Streets in the Haymarket area of Chicago, but the family eventually settled into a house on Adams Street. Hannah's father and Uncle Henry Greenebaum were active in the growing Reform movement, and helped found Chicago Sinai Congregation. In 1877, she and her sister Henriette became the first Jewish members of the Chicago Woman's Club. Two years later, she married Henry Solomon; they had three children: Frank, Helen, and Herbert, who died young.

FROM THE  
CHICAGO JEWISH  
*archives*

## Chicago Jewish Women in the 20th Century

By Joy Kingsolver

In 1893 Chicago hosted the World's Columbian Exposition. A Parliament of World Religions met at the newly-built Art Institute, and Hannah Solomon was put in charge of a meeting of Jewish women. When the men organizing the Jewish Denominational Congress declined to allow women representatives to speak as part of the program, she withdrew and proceeded with the Jewish Women's Congress. "Although [the rabbis] invited us to assist in arranging their congress,...the only part of the program they wished us to fill was the chairs," she later wrote. Out of the Jewish Women's Congress came the National Council of Jewish Women. Hannah Solomon was elected the first president by acclamation, and the roster of participants included Henrietta Szold, Rebekah Kohut, Sadie American, Julia Felsenthal, and many others who would become leaders in the emerging Jewish women's movement. By 1943, the NCJW boasted 65,000 members in over 200 chapters.

In 1897, Hannah Solomon organized the Bureau of Personal Service to assist immigrant women in finding work and housing. This group worked closely with the Associated Jewish Charities, Hull House, and other organizations. Hannah Greenebaum Solomon continued to be active in the NCJW and in women's issues, attending the International Council of Women Convention in Berlin with Susan B. Anthony in 1904, for example. Hannah Solomon died on December 7, 1942 at the age of 84. She was buried in Jewish Graceland Cemetery. In 1946 her autobiography, *Fabric of My Life*, was published; she had previously published a collection of her speeches as *A Sheaf of Leaves* (1911).

The Chicago Jewish Archives has been given a collection of photographs and articles about Hannah Solomon, her daughter Helen Solomon Levy, and granddaughter Frances Angel by Philip Angel, Hannah's great-grandson. The Archives has also received a donation of articles, letters and printed ephemera on the NCJW and other organizations from the Kraus family of Chicago. These two recent acquisitions will help to tell the story of a seminal time in the history of Jewish women.

**A**NNA SIMON (1889-1931) was a leader in Jewish women's organizations who worked alongside Hannah Solomon. President of the Chicago Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, she was also a leader in Hadassah and the Immigrants' Protective League. She was President of the Conference of Jewish Women's Organizations, founded in 1910 by Hannah Solomon and others, and on the board of the National Federation of



Temple Sisterhoods. She and her husband, Abe Simon, helped to found Temple Judea, and she is said to have been the first woman to speak from the pulpit of Anshe Emet Synagogue. Her interests included questions of women's rights as well: she worked on the Conference Committee for the American Birth Control League with Margaret Sanger, and was on the board of the Illinois League of Women Voters.

It was tragic when, at the age of 42, Anna died after a long illness. Tributes poured in, and memorials were held by Hadassah and the NCJW. Writing in *The Sentinel*, Jennie Purvin commented: "...when the Jewish woman who does not fear to come out of her home to take part in the work of the world measures up to the standards we set for the successful housewife and mother, lucky is the person who is privileged to stand shoulder to shoulder with her in the ranks. Lucky beyond measure, therefore, are those of us who had the privilege to call Anna Simon co-worker and friend. She was this exceptional Jewish woman."

The record of Anna Simon's career is preserved in photographs and scrapbooks donated to the Archives by her daughter, Marcia Simon Pomerantz.

**E**STHER MERCY was a woman with a fiercely independent spirit. An undergraduate at the University of Chicago, she sued the school in 1912 for slander, claiming that the Dean of Women said she was "no better than a woman of the streets." At issue was an expensive hat, given to Mercy by her fiancé, Warren Reynolds, who was separated from but still married to another woman. The hat featured enormous aigrette feathers and was said to be worth \$250—a scandalously expensive gift for a young woman to receive from a married man.

The school claimed that, by suing the university, Mercy was simply trying to gain publicity to further her ambitions as an actress. The case was reported in national newspapers with headlines accusing her of winking at the jury to influence the verdict. After a heated trial, the court awarded Mercy \$2,500, but the award was overturned on appeal when she could not afford to pay an attorney to continue the fight. Esther Mercy always felt that anti-Semitism underlay the incident. She kept a record of her ordeal by pasting clippings into geography textbooks and bank books, creating unique scrapbooks.

Later, Esther Mercy found it difficult to continue her education, since she could not gain admittance to other universities. She married Warren Reynolds on December 12, 1912, and they remained happily



married until they died, one day apart, in 1958.

Esther's daughter, Harriet Tuve, has donated Esther Mercy's original scrapbooks to the Archives. This wonderful collection, preserving the record of her story in fascinating detail, was given to the Archives through the efforts of Walter Roth and the Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

*continued on page 14*

## Archives *continued from page 13*

**R**ABBI AMY L. MEMIS-FOLER was ordained in 1993 at the New York campus of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Currently she is a rabbi at Temple Sholom in Chicago and the representative for the Chicago region of the Women's Rabbinical Network. This photo was taken at Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute, the Reform movement's summer camp in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.



Today, women fill roles that would not have been possible, or even imagined, when Hannah Solomon founded the NCJW. The Archives, as part of this exhibit, is actively seeking to expand its documentation of Jewish women's history, and put out a call for photographs of women rabbis. Several Chicago area rabbis responded with photographs and biographical information, which help us to document the changes in Jewish women's lives today.

We encourage donations of any material—photos, documents, memorabilia—that would help to preserve a record of Jewish women's history. Contact Joy Kingsolver at 312-322-1741 or [archives@spertus.edu](mailto:archives@spertus.edu), or write to the Chicago Jewish Archives at 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago IL 60605. ❖

**JOY KINGSOLVER** is Director, *Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.*

## The Windows of Shaare Tikvah

**A. RAYMOND KATZ** (1895-1974) was born in Kassa, Hungary. He had a strong Jewish heritage. His mother's family, the Altmans, produced many generations of rabbis and scholars.

He designed the stained glass windows of Shaare Tikvah. His impressive body of Judaic art includes stained glass windows at Chicago's Anshe Emet Synagogue as well as Shaare Tikvah. His murals, sculptures, and paintings can be found in over two hundred synagogues around the country.

**M**r. Katz came to America in 1909. He studied art, first in New York at Cooper Union, then in Chicago at the Art Institute and the Academy of Fine Art. As a teenager he was already working as a poster artist. In 1919 he was hired by Paramount Pictures in Los Angeles. A few years later he came back to Chicago to head the Balaban & Katz poster department. He created elegant posters for the Chicago Civic Opera from 1927 to 1930 and handsome murals on Jewish themes for the 1933 Century of Progress.

After settling in New York in 1949, he painted, published two books about his art, and created five acclaimed portfolios of prints. Mr. Katz died in New York at 79 years of age. ❖



**A. Raymond Katz:**  
**Sabbath Window. Original pen and ink drawing.**

*Judaism in Art: The Windows of Shaare Tikvah.*

## CJHS May 18 Open Meeting at Congregation Shaare Tikvah-B'nai Zion

A panel of six speakers presented “The History of Shaare Tikvah” at the Chicago Jewish Historical Society open meeting on Sunday afternoon, May 18, at Congregation Shaare Tikvah-B'nai Zion, 5800 North Kimball Avenue, Chicago. Tours of the synagogue building and its noted stained glass windows were given during the social hour that preceded the program.

After greetings by current Rabbi Dennis Katz, the founding days of the congregation from 1942 to the late 1940s were reviewed by Mayer Stiebel and Jay I. Weisman, both sons of founders. Mr. Stiebel is a retired kosher caterer and an activist in Jewish Conservative movement circles in Chicago. Mr. Weisman, a lawyer, is active in the Jewish community of Lincolnwood.

Solomon Gutstein, rabbi, lawyer, and former alderman of the 40th Ward, reviewed the years 1947-71 during which his father,

Rabbi Morris A. Gutstein, served the congregation. Solomon Gutstein discussed the synagogue’s stained glass windows, designed by artist A. Raymond Katz (see page 14). The Gutsteins, father and son, co-authored the book, *Judaism in Art: The Windows of Shaare Tikvah*.

Neil Handelman, a photographer and past president of the

congregation, spoke on the period from Rabbi Gutstein’s retirement until 1995. Irving Federman, a lawyer and current president, brought us to the present.

Last year B'nai Zion, the oldest Conservative congregation on the North Side, sold its buildings and became a partner in Congregation Shaare Tikvah-B'nai Zion. ❖



Left to right: CJHS President Walter Roth, Neil Handelman, Mayer Stiebel, Irving Federman, Solomon Gutstein, and CJHS Program Chair Charles B. Bernstein. Photograph by Norman D. Schwartz.

## Martin “Red” Mottlow: Radio Sports Reporter Wrote About Marshall High School Basketball

Martin “Red” Mottlow died of cancer at Evanston Hospital on Monday, May 12, at the age of 76.

A pioneer in radio sports broadcasting, he worked at WIND, WCFL, and WFYR until he retired from full-time radio work in 1995. He was inducted into the Chicago Sports Hall of Fame in 1990.

Experienced with the spoken rather than the written word, he dedicated himself to a difficult four-year effort—researching, writing, and self-publishing the book, *Fast*

*Break to Glory: Marshall High School’s 98-Game Winning Streak*.

Mr. Mottlow was a native Chicagoan and a Marshall graduate. He was determined to record the story of his school’s great 1939-44 Junior basketball dynasty—the tough little Jewish kids of Lawndale and their coach, Lou Weintraub.

*Fast Break* formed the basis of our article on the Marshall team (Spring 2003). CJHS has donated a copy of the book to the Asher Library at Spertus Institute. ❖



Martin “Red” Mottlow <sup>Z”L</sup>  
Image from back cover of his book.

# About the Society

## What We Are

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society was founded in 1977 and is in part an outgrowth of local Jewish participation in the American Bicentennial Celebration of 1976. Muriel Robin was the founding president. The Society has as its purpose the discovery, preservation and dissemination of information concerning the Jewish experience in the Chicago area.

## What We Do

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

## Volunteer Opportunities

Would you like to become more involved in the activities of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society? We'd love to have you! Following are the various committees on which you can serve. Contact the Society at (312)663-5634 or any of the Chairpersons listed here.

### ■ PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Do you have a great idea for a meeting topic? The Program Committee would welcome your input. Join in the planning, implementation, and presentation of our bi-monthly and annual meetings. Call Charles Bernstein (773) 324-6362.

### ■ MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Society's membership continues to grow, and you could help us introduce Chicago Jewish history to even more people. Share your ideas and energy! Call Clare Greenberg (773) 725-7330.

### ■ TOUR COMMITTEE

Bring your knowledge of our area to the planning, enrichment, and promotion of our popular roster of tours on Jewish history. Contact Leah Axelrod (847) 432-7003.

### ■ EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Contribute your writing to our quarterly publication, *Chicago Jewish History*. We are eager to receive articles and memoirs from our members—reports and reminiscences of events and unique personal experiences in your own Chicago Jewish history. Contact Editor Bev Chubat (773) 525-4888.

## Membership

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

## Dues Structure

Membership runs on a calendar year, from January through December. New members joining after July 1 are given an initial membership through December of the following year.

Life Membership .....	\$1000
Historian .....	500
Scholar .....	250
Sponsor .....	100
Patron or Family .....	50
Individual or Senior Family .....	35
Synagogue or Organization .....	25
Senior Individual or Student .....	20

Make checks payable to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, and mail to our office at 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605. Dues are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Look to the rock from which you were born  
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