



chicago jewish history

Eugene and Sylvia Cotton: Fighting the Good Fight

BY WALTER ROTH

On Monday, November 19, 2001, at Chicago's Mart Plaza Hotel, the Illinois Labor History Society held its Union Hall of Honor Awards Dinner—"Labor's Lawyers: A Tribute to the Labor Bar."

Inducted into the Hall of Honor were three Jewish attorneys: Marvin Gittler, Irving Friedman, and Eugene Cotton. Eugene Cotton was, perhaps, the most influential of the honorees when it came to political and legislative gains and benefits for union members.

Eugene Cotton was presented to the attendees by

Nina Helstein, daughter of Ralph Helstein, the late former president of the United Packinghouse Workers of America. Cotton had been general counsel of the union for twenty years, and was a close friend as well as a professional colleague of Ralph Helstein.

When Eugene Cotton died on November 11, 2009, the *Chicago Tribune* began its obituary: "He represented the meatpackers during the heyday of the Chicago stockyards and tried to better the lot of workers when labor disputes were bare-knuckle affairs."

continued on page 4

Save the Date! Open Meeting Sunday, March 21: "Cantor Dale Lind—Born to Sing!"



Murray, Dale, and Phil Lind as cantors, 1938. (Right) The three Lind brothers as entertainers, 1950s. Illustrations from Applaudience: Born to Sing! The Autobiography of Dale Lind—Cantor, Entertainer & Entrepreneur.

"Cantor Dale Lind—Born to Sing!" will be the the subject of the next open meeting of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society on Sunday, March 21, at Temple Sholom, 3480 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago. The program will begin at 2:00 p.m. following a social hour with kosher refreshments beginning at 1:00 p.m.

Admission is free and open to the public. The Temple parking lot is directly south of the building, across the street (Stratford Place) from the entrance to the Social Hall.

Cantor Dale Lind promises to entertain us with an informal talk about his long, rich, and varied musical career.

continued on page 3



President's Column



Walter Roth

OBSESSIONS AND COMPULSIONS.

Longtime readers of my columns and articles in our Society quarterly know that Meyer Levin is one of my two favorite Chicago Jewish writers. Some might even say that I am obsessed with him (and Ben Hecht and Hyde Park and...).

I am taking the liberty of writing this President's Column about a stage play that is not running in Chicago. My justification is that the

play was inspired by the life of Meyer Levin and the star is the well-known Chicago Jewish actor, Mandy Patinkin, who was born on the South Side, went to school there, and with the Patinkin family was a member of Congregation Rodfei Zedek in Hyde Park.

The play is called "Compulsion." (No, it is not about the Loeb-Leopold Case.) "Compulsion" has just concluded a month-long world premiere run at the Yale Repertory Theatre in New Haven, in a co-production with The Public Theater and Berkeley Repertory Theatre. The playwright is Rinne Groff.

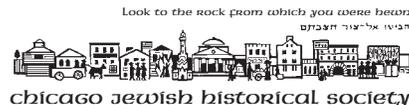
According to the Yale Rep program notes: "Sid Silver (Mandy Patinkin) wants nothing more than to bring Anne Frank's story to an American audience, and he believes he's the right man to adapt the young girl's diary for the stage. But his passion spirals into a lifelong obsession when a New York publishing house reveals its own plans for what would become one of the most powerful and enduring documents of the 20th century."

Sylviane Gold's review of "Compulsion" for the *New York Times* was published on February 10, and reads, in part:

"...Sid Silver makes a prickly, discomfiting hero, but Mr. Patinkin's impassioned portrayal gives the character heart and dimension. Yes, he is consumed by his orphan play out of anger and bruised self-regard, but he is also haunted by Anne and the fate of the six million other victims of the Nazi genocide. And his perspective on her is not entirely that of a crackpot.

"This knotty, absorbing play asks us to revisit the way our popular culture appropriated Anne Frank's account of her family's two years in hiding in German-occupied Amsterdam. It asks if we crossed the sometimes faint line that separates advocacy from exploitation, popularization from betrayal—even as Ms. Groff herself toes that perilous line, turning Mr. Levin's life to her own purposes...." The review is well worth reading in its entirety at www.nytimes.com/2010/02/14/nyregion/14theaterct.html.

On March 2, the multi-talented star of "Compulsion" returned to his home town to perform musically in "An Evening With Patti LuPone and Mandy Patinkin" at the Cadillac Palace Theatre. ❖



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Open Meeting Sunday, March 21 *continued from page 1*

Born in Brooklyn, New York, to Jewish immigrant parents, Dale Lind was tutored from the age of five by his father, famed Cantor Joshua Lind. At age nine, Dale was hailed as “the world’s youngest cantorial prodigy.”

Emerging from tenement living, Dale and his brothers, Murray and Phil, formed their singing trio in 1938. In an era when radio, vaudeville, and night clubs were the main venues of entertainment, “The Three Lind Brothers” starred in all of them.

As a GI in World War II, Dale Lind witnessed the horrors of war in the South Pacific, the invasion of the Philippines, the return of General MacArthur to Leyte, and the signing of Japan’s Treaty of Surrender.

Entertaining thousands of troops with Danny Kaye, Danny Thomas, and other superstars, Dale and his brothers won fame that catapulted them into headlines after the war.

In the late 1960s, Dale returned to Chicago as a solo performer and a cantor. He even tried musical comedy, playing the lead in “Kismet” in a North Shore summer

theater production organized by his talented children. Eventually, he opened his own showplace, the Pavillon, in suburban Northbrook.

He served as cantor of the Albany Park Hebrew Congregation.



Dale Lind

After a dispute over ritual with leaders of the Chicago Jewish religious community, he embarked on a fulfilling twenty-seven year High Holiday cantorial engagement for his own Sons of Joshua Independent Congregation (B’nai Joshua) at the Orrington Hotel in Evanston.

Cantor Lind’s life experiences are well-told in his autobiography, *Applaudience—Born to Sing!*, copies of which he will be pleased to sign after the program, in the company of his wife, Jessie, and son, Cary. Copies of his CD, containing cantorial, folk, and popular music, will also be available for purchase.

This program was suggested to the Society by Barry Serota, z”l, the producer of Cantor Lind’s recording. We were saddened to learn of the recent sudden death of Mr. Serota, a devoted collector, producer, and promoter of cantorial music. May his memory be a blessing. ❖

Society Board of Directors Announces Changes

Urban anthropologist, educator, and author Dr. Carolyn Eastwood has resigned as secretary of the CJHS board of directors after ten years of outstanding service, but she will continue her active presence on the board. Muriel Rogers was elected to succeed her.

Attorney Charles B. Bernstein has resigned as program chairman and from the board. A charter member of the Society and a professional genealogist, Chuck played a key role in the publication of the Society’s Minsky Award books. He served with great distinction as our one-man program committee for nine years. The new committee consists of Jerold Levin, chairman; Herbert Eiseman, Elise Ginsparg, and Muriel Rogers. ❖

Renew Your Membership for the Year 2010

Renew your CJHS membership for 2010 and receive the Society’s sturdy 11-oz ceramic mug decorated with our distinctive narrative logo.

Mugs will be on hand at the Sunday, March 21 open meeting if you wish to renew your membership at that time.

Welcome, New Members of the Society

Howard I. Aronson
Chicago

Jerry Braus
Laguna Woods, CA

Rabbi Mark Covitz
*Beth Tikvah Congregation
Hoffman Estates, IL*

Jan Lisa Huttner
Chicago, IL

Dr. Alvin & Alice Korach
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Lenore B. Melzer
Chicago

Terry Lehman Pirrong
Webster Groves, MO

Beth Sair
Lincolnwood, IL

Jerry Spiegall
Deerfield, IL

Happy Stone
Highland Park, IL

Barton & Janet Wandel
Albuquerque, NM

David & Mary Wandel
Madison, WI

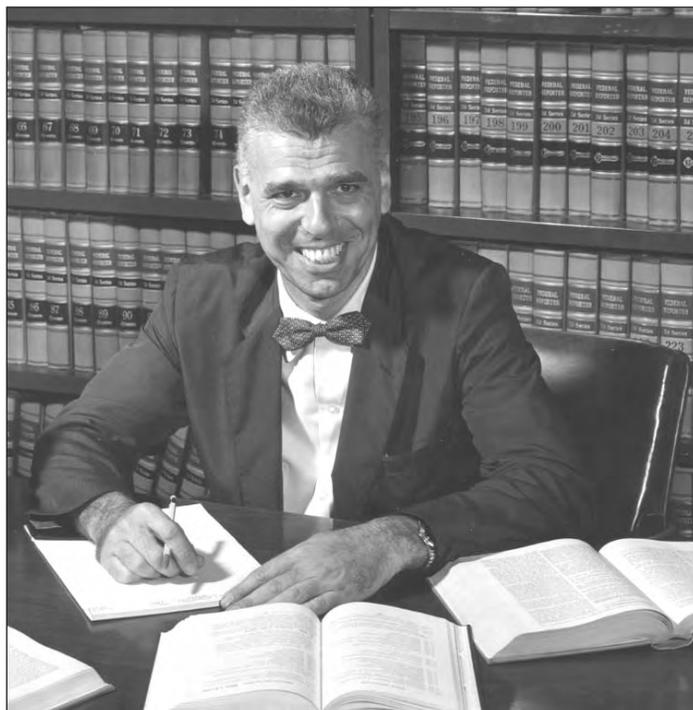
Eugene and Sylvia Cotton

continued from page 1

Although he spent most of his adult life in Chicago, Eugene Cotton was born in the Bronx, New York, on May 20, 1914, the son of Russian Jewish immigrants. He graduated from Columbia University Law School, began his career with a New York law firm, and then joined the New York State Labor Relations Board.

In 1940 he married Sylvia Glickstein, a social worker. The following year they moved to Washington, DC. where Eugene became an attorney for the Federal Communications Commission, on investigative assignments. With the nation at war, he was drafted into the Navy. After the war ended, he took a local appointment with the Congress of Industrial Workers (CIO) and the United Packinghouse Workers. In 1948, he became General Counsel for the Packinghouse Workers and moved to Chicago.

While working for the union, in 1951, he founded his own law firm, Cotton, Watt, Jones & King. Eugene Cotton was an enthusiastic civil libertarian, and his firm consisted of a very diverse group: Cotton, a Jew; Richard F. Watt, a former professor at the University of Chicago; Helen Hart Jones, a woman; and Irving M. King, an African-American. The firm represented national and local unions in the packing, aviation, and printing industries. Cotton was with the



Eugene Cotton, 1965. *City Club of Chicago photograph. Courtesy of Stephen Cotton.*

firm until it dissolved forty-four years later.

When the Packinghouse Workers merged into the Amalgamated Meat Cutters in 1968, Cotton became general counsel for its packinghouse department. He also served as president of the City Club of Chicago from 1966 to 1968.

The Cotton family lived in the Hyde Park-Kenwood neighborhood near where, in earlier years, the Nelson Morris and Gustavus Swift families of stockyard fame had their grand estates. It was also close to where his friend Ralph Helstein and his family lived.

Cotton's battles for his worker-clients should be remembered. He fought for fair wages, health insurance, and other benefits. According to members of his family, he was often at the plants where the working conditions described in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* still existed.

One of his most famous cases involved a six-month strike against Wilson & Company in 1959. Cotton made a historic five-hour plea in an arbitration that involved Wilson's action in discharging 3,000 of its employees and hiring replacements after a strike in which the union had succeeded in obtaining a wage increase. The National Labor Relations Board ruled for the union on the basis of Cotton's argument, and almost all of the fired union workers were reinstated. Cotton is quoted in the Union Hall of Fame Awards Dinner souvenir book as saying that it was the most memorable experience in his career. "My hair turned gray, almost as gray as it is today."

Professor Cyril D. Robinson of Southern Illinois University, in his forthcoming book on Ralph Helstein, tells of an interview with Eugene Cotton in 1993 in which he learned that Eugene came from a Jewish family in which the mother was religiously observant while the father was secular. Robinson also makes this point: "Being that in post-World War II years progressive political parties and movements had disproportionately large Jewish memberships, it is not surprising that a union that professed and acted upon ideals of racial and gender equality and working class advancement should attract Jews to its leadership posts."

In Robinson's book, Cotton's law partner Irv King states that he regarded Eugene's "ability to understand complicated legal issues and to devise arguments and strategies to accomplish what has to be accomplished in the face of legal obstacles as reflecting the best strengths of good lawyers".

Nina Helstein is quoted by Robinson as stating: "Gene would come to our house armed with yellow legal pads. He and my father would engage in hours of war councils. My father valued and needed Gene's thoughts and advice. The adjectives he used in relation

to Gene's intelligence span "brilliant" to "gifted" with probably everything in between. He relied on Gene's judgment and was always confident of his integrity."

Research indicates that the greatest political challenge faced by the packinghouse union was the tension between the "Right" and the "Left", which reflected the animosities of the Cold War. The required signing of loyalty oaths and public declarations about membership in the Communist Party were constant threats to the unions and resulted in a great deal of litigation. While both Helstein and Cotton were clearly not Communists, they fought for the constitutional right to privacy for themselves and for union members.

Judge Milton Shadur of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals was a leading partner in another labor law firm, which also had as its partners United States Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg and Judge Abner Mikva. Shadur regarded Cotton as a superb advocate for his union. Cotton was well-known for his pro bono services to workers, and his firm provided pro bono services to many others, including demonstrators who were arrested for civil disobedience during the Chicago riots of 1968.

Sylvia Cotton's passion for justice strongly paralleled that of her husband. Following is an excerpt from Sylvia Cotton's obituary which appeared in the *New York Times* on November 6, 2008:

In her early years in Chicago, she was a strong advocate of school desegregation and greater federal aid to education. She joined and became an officer (usually president) of every PTA in her area. Twice the Chicago Urban League recommended her as a candidate for the Chicago Board of Education.

Then in 1970, she founded an organization, Illinois Action for Children, that has flourished and grown to become one of the leading voices on public policy decisions involving children's issues in Illinois. Her leadership led to the creation of the Office of Child Care Services of the City of Chicago and to important City and State initiatives to upgrade the availability of quality childcare—accomplishments recognized by official proclamation of the Chicago City Council in 2003.

Cotton acted following a 1968 study she did on childcare in Chicago that found an appalling lack of decent childcare alternatives for working parents. Years later Sylvia would say, "I really was an angry woman. And I guess I put that anger to good use." She organized a wide variety



Sylvia and Eugene Cotton.

Photograph courtesy of Stephen Cotton.

of childcare advocates and institutions—Jewish and Catholic charities, settlement houses, PTAs—and welded them into an effective political force. As she told one reporter, "I stepped on people's toes because I was outspoken about what I thought were the weaknesses in various legislative programs..."

Maria Whelan, current President of Illinois Action for Children, said, "With a combination of moral outrage and hard work, Sylvia was able to create systems to support children and working families in Illinois. Her legacy reminds us of the challenges that lie ahead as we fight to give every child a strong start in life." Her achievements were recognized by the Chicago YWCA (Community Leadership Award), by the Illinois Welfare Association (Public Services Citation), and by the Chicago City Council in 2003, which credited her activities with "getting elected officials on the federal, state and local levels to understand the day care crisis...and update city ordinances and state statutes governing day care centers."

On the occasion of Sylvia Cotton's retirement from Illinois Action for Children, her husband of more than sixty-five years captured her spirit: "She's one of the few people in the world who is constantly outraged by the outrageous. So many other people adjust to the evils in society. She is one of the few that, when she sees something that needs to be done, has the instantaneous desire to do something."

continued on page 6

Eugene and Sylvia Cotton *continued from page 5*

According to the Cottons' son, Stephen, Eugene was Bar Mitzvah in New York, and while not active in Jewish organization in Chicago, he had a close relationship with Rabbi Jacob Weinstein of K.A.M. Temple. Weinstein himself was involved in labor matters and acted as an arbitrator in labor disputes. Stephen also volunteered that his father spoke both the Yiddish and Hebrew languages that he apparently retained from his childhood.

Eugene and Sylvia Cotton were blessed with long and productive lives. Sylvia pre-deceased Eugene by one year, also at age 95. They are survived by their two sons, Richard Cotton of New York City, and Stephen Cotton of Andover, Massachusetts; daughter-in-law Rebecca Backman; former daughter-in-law Jamie Fellner; and two grandchildren, Rachel Cotton and Jon Cotton. ❖

WALTER ROTH, *president of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, is a practicing attorney with the firm of Seyfarth Shaw LLP. His profile of laborleader Ralph Helstein appeared in the Fall 2008 issue of CJH.*



Attorney Eugene Cotton before the Wilson & Company arbitration panel successfully pleading the union's 1959 case against super-seniority for strikebreakers. The panel found for the union. Illinois Labor History Society Union Hall of Honor Dinner Souvenir Program, November 19, 2001.

Melville Herskovits: Did A Jewish Anthropologist “Own” Africa?

In the 1920s, a young Jewish anthropologist named Melville Herskovits embarked on an expedition to Africa and found striking similarities between the black cultures there and in America. The book he wrote about that experience, *The Myth of the Negro Past*, published in 1941, brought him great academic success and also public notoriety, as it debunked the belief that black Americans had no ties to their ancestral past.

Would this encourage the segregationist claim that this different heritage necessitated a barrier between the races? And later, would “black power” activists use his work for their aims? Herskovits would have ongoing disputes with black sociologists who argued that any unique characteristics found among African Americans were caused by racial oppression.

Who was Melville Herskovits? He was characterized as “one of the most important people you never heard of” by Vincent Brown, a historian at Harvard. Professor Brown coordinated the production of a documentary film, “Independent Lens: Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness,” which aired on Public Television on February 2, and was shown locally on WTTW.

Melville Jean Herskovits was born in Bellefontaine, Ohio, in 1895, to Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. Though not religiously observant, he was connected to his Jewishness, and for a time attended

Hebrew Union College with the idea of becoming a rabbi. But he pursued an academic career instead, at the University of Chicago, and then at Columbia University, where he studied under the groundbreaking Jewish anthropologist, Franz Boas. Herskovits's classmates included Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and also Frances Shapiro, whom he married. Frances Herskovits accompanied her husband on his expeditions and participated in the writing of his books.

He joined the faculty at Northwestern University in 1927 as a sociologist. He founded the University's Anthropology Department in 1938, and its Program of African Studies in 1948, and he established Northwestern's library of Africana. (One of his students was moved to comment that “Professor Herskovits seemed to think sometimes that he owned Africa.”) He remained at Northwestern until his death in 1965.

Ironically, he struggled with his Jewishness, refusing to ascribe any uniqueness to Jews, although he was making just such claims for Africans.

A fine article, “Jewish Professor, Black Culture,” by Eric Herschthal, was published in *The Jewish Week* on January 26, 2010, and can be found online at www.thejewishweek.com. The Independent Lens documentary film can be viewed on YouTube at www.youtube.com.— *Bev Chubot*

THE “JEWISH GEOGRAPHY” TRAVEL PAGE

CJHS Board Members Find Jewish Communities and Historical Sites Around the World



Herb Eiseman (with beard) and fellow Sar-El volunteers. From left: Guido Kloosterboer, Helen Moon (Australia), and Lynley Smith (New Zealand).



Above, from left: Eliahu HaNavi Synagogue, Alexandria, exterior and interior. Right: Neve Shalom Synagogue, Istanbul, interior and exterior.



Lubavitch Chabad Chanukkah Menorah, Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

ISRAEL Herb Eiseman spent four weeks in Israel as a volunteer for the “Sar-El” program, begun in 1982 during the Lebanon War by General Aharon Davidi. Approx. 4,000 volunteers, many of them Christian Zionists, come from around the world each year, traveling at their own expense, to help out at military bases, where they are provided room and board Sunday through Thursday. Herb was in Jerusalem for the impressive Chanukkah candle-lighting ceremony at the Western Wall.

ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT & ISTANBUL, TURKEY Leah and Les Axelrod took a cruise that brought them to two cities with a rich Jewish past, but a very poor present. They visited the oldest synagogue in Alexandria, the Eliahu HaNavi, which has only twenty congregants. Security was especially tight in Istanbul. They were able to enter the Neve Shalom Synagogue, which was car-bombed in 1982, with great loss of life. A clock is displayed in the sanctuary, stopped at 9:15, the time of the attack. They visited the Sephardic synagogue, but were not allowed to take photographs.

ARGENTINA Ed and Myrna Mazur celebrated Chanukkah in Buenos Aires. They found a sizeable Jewish presence in the textile district and lit the first holiday candle with a store owner's family there. They found a kosher restaurant, Sucath David, in the neighborhood. They visited AMIA, the Jewish community center, which has a Yaacov Agam sculpture. At the site of the Israeli Embassy, destroyed by a bomb in 1991, there is a memorial of twenty-one trees for the number of people, Jews and non-Jews, who were killed. — B.C.



Ed and Myrna Mazur (fourth and fifth from left) celebrate Chanukkah with Silvia Zimmerman and her family in Buenos Aires.

Report on the CJHS January 10 Open Meeting

“A Visit to Camp Chi—Both Old and New”

Our open meeting on January 10, 2010, was held at Temple Shalom, 3480 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago. During the social hour before the program, many of our attendees, former campers, had a chance to reconnect, and reminisce. Dr. Rachele Gold, CJHS membership co-chair, introduced the program.

Our guest speaker was attorney Jerry Tatar, a Wilmette resident, who worked at the present Camp Chi in Lake Delton, Wisconsin, for thirteen years. His mother, Shirley Clubman Tatar, was a camper at the old Camp Chi on Loon Lake in Antioch, Illinois, in the 1920s and '30s. She went on to become a staff member, and then Assistant Director in 1942.

His presentation featured a video recording he made with his mother when they visited the Antioch site in 2003. Shirley reminisces as the two of them walk through various parts of the camp. The grounds had remained in almost the same condition as when the Jewish Community Centers sold the facility to the Moody Bible Church in 1952. The video is interspersed with photographs of campers and staff.

The Video: Jerry and Shirley walk, and she provides the narration (expanded by bits of historical data inserted here by the editor to add context):

In those first years, there were 112 girl campers, ages 10 to 12, every two weeks. The cost was \$17.00 for each two week period. Children from the Marks Nathan Home were invited every period.

The Administration Building The staff, the drama group, and the nurse were based here. Gilbert & Sullivan operettas (abridged versions) were performed here every summer, one per period.

The Social Hall/Dining Room “You had to clean your plate!” There was a canteen, and the girls lined up for candy at its window.

The Library A place for Nature Study.

Mother Seman’s House The camp’s first director was Beatrice P. Seman. She was the wife of Philip L. Seman, director of the Chicago Hebrew Institute (CHI), which changed its name to the Jewish People’s Institute (JPI) in 1922 and operated from a new building on Douglas Boulevard after 1926. It was the forerunner of the Jewish Community Centers of Chicago (JCC). He served from 1913 to 1945. Beatrice was called “Mother Seman.” She was on-site all the time. Shirley Tatar calls her “rigid but remarkable.”

A Typical Cabin, A Typical Day Each cabin housed eight girls. There were shutters on the windows. The routine: breakfast; clean up—the bed made up tight “so a coin could bounce”—athletics and competitive games; hiking; nature study; and crafts (mostly making raffia baskets). Lunch; rest hour in your bunk; swimming (using the buddy system). Cabins were named after Jewish philanthropists, such as Hannah Greenebaum.

The Bobbies Shirley’s cabin was called The Bobby Cabin [after which philanthropist?], and the girls called themselves “the Bobbies.” Their only mischief was occasionally stealing ears of corn from the neighboring farmer. The Bobbies kept in touch all through the years.

Camp Henry Horner This was a nearby boys’ camp that was named in memory of Illinois Governor Henry Horner (who was Jewish) after his death in 1940. The camp had been founded in 1912 to serve immigrant boys. Today, run by the Jewish Council for Youth Services (JCYS), it welcomes both boys and girls.

Anti-Semitism Shirley says that Camp Chi did not experience any animosity from the local population.

The Counselors, The Letter Counselors wore blue uniforms during the week and white on Friday night and Saturday. Shirley became a counselor and then in 1942 was hired to oversee the Senior Camp at a salary of \$100 for the summer. She proudly tells of a letter she received from Philip Seman, a letter that she kept and can quote, in which he praises her work and doubles her salary. 1944 was Shirley’s last year at Camp Chi.

The Move, The New Job Camp Chi relocated to Lake Delton in 1952 and became co-ed. Perlstein Park Senior Adult Camp at Lake Delton opened in 1962, and Shirley Tatar became the Director.

Jerry Tatar received an MA from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration and worked for the Jewish Community Centers of Chicago at Camp Chi for ten summers, and then full time for three years as Assistant Director. He left Camp Chi in 1978 to finish law school. He received his JD from Loyola University Chicago. A practicing lawyer, Jerry still goes up to Camp Chi sometimes to help out.

Shirley Tatar passed away two years ago.

Her granddaughter, Laura, is a summer camper at Lake Delton, so the family of Shirley Tatar is continuing its connection to Camp Chi that began on Loon Lake almost a hundred years ago. — B.C.



Thanks to Beverly Newman, Ellen Shubart, and Florence Wallace for donating these and many more photographs.

Loon Lake: Camp Chi girls and staff, 1930s and 1940s.

Lake Delton: Camp Chi boys and staff, 1959.



***Early Birds—Mark Your Calendars! Open Meeting Sunday, May 2
“Passionate Pioneers: The Story of Secular Yiddish Education
in North America, 1910-1960”***

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society and the Chicago YIVO Society will co-sponsor a program featuring author Fradle P. Freidenreich in a discussion of her new book, *Passionate Pioneers: The Story of Secular Yiddish Education in North America, 1910-1960*, on Sunday afternoon, May 2, at Temple Beth Israel, 3601 West Dempster Street, Skokie. Former *folkshule* students and summer *kemper*—brush up your memories. Everyone—look forward to learning about a fascinating component of Jewish cultural history. The program will focus on Chicago. Further details will be posted on our website and in an announcement postcard.

Dan Sharon's Book Notes

BLUE IN CHICAGO. By Bette Howland.
183 pages. *Harper & Row, 1978.*

This collection of short stories is one of the best works of American Jewish fiction set in Chicago that I have ever read. Rereading these stories after many years, I was reminded of how funny some of the passages are. I laughed out loud several times when encountering the narrator's descriptions of her quirky relatives. (Howland has said that these characters were based on actual members of her family. I hope they weren't annoyed.)

The locales vary—South Haven, Lawndale, Woodlawn, Hyde Park, Waldheim, a farm in Indiana, and others. “Public Facilities” is set in a bleak public library in Uptown. “Twenty-Sixth and California” is a grim depiction of a trial in Violence Court. The portrayal of the stormy marriage of Rudy, a tough Jewish cop, and his equally tough wife, a Gentile native of Appalachia, is a mixture of amusing and sad.

Howland captures the flavor of Chicago so well. Sharply etched images stand out—a description of a Chicago winter, fear of street crime, racial tensions, a group of men saying Kaddish, a recounting of riding the Roosevelt Road streetcar over forty blocks to go to the beach in the summer. The narrator remembers her father dressing to walk a picket line. He puts on layer after layer of clothing to ward off the cold and also to ward off the anticipated blows of the police or the company goons. I felt I knew some of the people written about here.

When Bette Howland's next book, *Things to Come and Go*, was published in 1983, Johanna Kaplan wrote a review in the *New York Times*. Kaplan looked back admiringly at *Blue in Chicago* and commented: “Miss Howland's cranky, unsentimental passion for her native city and its remarkably various inhabitants make her an ideal observer. Nothing escapes her, yet she manages to be at once sharp-eyed and compassionate. Always she locates the common human thread: the baffled, blundering steps toward connection between generations and communities, and everywhere the dissonance between desires and attainment.”

Blue in Chicago can be found at the Asher Library, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, as well as the Chicago Public Library's Harold Washington Library Center, Legler Library, and Sulzer Regional Library.

THE SOUP HAS MANY EYES: From Shtetl to Chicago—A Memoir of One Family's Journey Through History. By Joann Rose Leonard.
192 pages. *Bantam Books, 2000.*

This book begins with a beautifully poetic expression of the author's love for her two sons. Then Leonard looks backward to her family's origins.

There is an earthy description of Jewish life in an Eastern European village of about a century ago. In sad contrast to Leonard's account of a warm Jewish family, she describes a young Jewish man having himself maimed to avoid service in the hellish Russian army. She evokes the terror of a pogrom in 1919, with Cossacks attacking Leonard's family, and the anguished search of a Jewish mother for her daughter who has disappeared during the chaos (a relative of Leonard's). Then, the illegal crossing of a border and the trauma of emigration to America.

Some of the family stays where they disembarked, in New York City. Another branch moves to Chicago, where they open a laundry on State Street and settle into an apartment on Roslyn Place.

There is an account of the author's uncle driving his wife and family from New York to Chicago in his Model T Ford for a family Bar Mitzvah. “...frugal Sophie, well aware of the expense of feeding a family of five on a nine-hundred-mile trip, always ties to the side of the car a five-pound salami and a four-pound loaf of pumpernickel. Whenever anyone is hungry, she hacks off a chunk from each. And so the journey goes, the oily reek of garlic turning the heads of gas station attendants, pedestrians, and other motorists as their mobile deli passes.”

Where there is a gap in the historical record, Leonard uses her imagination to create dialogue and action. Her stated purpose in writing *The Soup* is to let her two sons know where they came from. In this she succeeds magnificently. This is a small gem of a book—a heartfelt and compelling account of a Jewish family's triumph over adversity. And what of the mother and her disappeared daughter? They are miraculously reunited many years later.

The Soup Has Many Eyes can be found at the Asher Library, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, and also at many branches of the Chicago Public Library.

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 22 different foreign language communities in Chicago.

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

The directors of the Peoples' Soup Kitchen find themselves compelled to appeal to the public for further support. The two kitchens, at 615 Canal and 3831 S. Halsted, have, during the last three months, relieved much suffering. On Canal St. from 1,000 to 1,500 persons daily were provided with one hot meal. From 3831 S. Halsted, more families than individuals have been provided with food, their number averaging from 100 to 300 daily. In all probability, it will be necessary to keep these kitchens open two months longer. It will require about \$500

more to continue the work to the close of the winter.

The Reform Advocate,
Week of February 22, 1894

NEW YORK GRAND OPERA COMPANY AT THE EMPIRE THEATRE

Impressario Endika S. Sabalatchi presents for the first time in Chicago the following operas in Yiddish, beginning Monday, April 20 with *Troubador*; Tuesday April 27 *Rigoletto*; Thursday April 29 *La Traviata*; Friday April 30 *Il Trovatore*; Saturday Matinee May 1st *Rigoletto*; Saturday Night May 1st *Lucia*;... The orchestra will be directed by Mme. Mary Kaguli. Tickets are 75 cents, \$1.00, \$1.50, \$2.00, \$2.50 and \$3.00.

Forward, April 22, 1920

Yesterday, the manager of the Palace Theater brought a check for \$1,443.70 to the *Forward* office. This is the profit of the benefit performance for the Jewish unemployed. Others have also contributed to the fund. Total of contributions to date—\$2,872.97.

Forward, January 27, 1921

MORRIS WINCHEVSKY IN CHICAGO

The grandfather of the Jewish labor movement, the writer and poet, Morris Winchevsky, who will leave soon for Soviet Russia, is now visiting Chicago. Before he leaves for Russia, Winchevsky is making a lecture tour over the country, in the name of the Jewish Federation of the Worker's Party. Tonight he will deliver a lecture in the Douglas Park Auditorium before a gathering of Chicago Jewish workers, who are ready to extend to him a hearty welcome.

A farewell banquet will be given tomorrow night at

Rosenthal's Restaurant, 936 Roosevelt Road, in honor of the guest. All friends and supporters of the pioneer of the socialist movement among the Jews, and all admirers of his literary talents are cordially invited to come.

There will also be present the guests of the Jewish Federation, Dr. I. Hendin and Shachno Epstein (Berson), who have come to Chicago in the interest of the new labor newspaper, *The Freiheit*.

Daily Jewish Courier,
April 3, 1922

FROM THE PUBLIC ROSTRUM

The Courier recently made public the fact that the multimillionaire and businessman who became a member of the Ku Klux Klan is none other than William Wrigley, the famous manufacturer of chewing gum. Wrigley is also the president of the National League baseball team, the Cubs,... The recent provocative acts of this organization should have opened the eyes of Mr. Wrigley, who is a man of understanding and intelligence....

By admitting Wrigley as a member, the Ku Klux Klan caught a good cow to milk. From him they can obtain a large sum of money for their propaganda purposes, not only here in America, but also in Europe. Since most European countries are predominantly Catholic, the Klan will direct its wrath against the Jews....

...No sooner does Henry Ford quiet down with his propaganda against Jews, then up springs a Wrigley, who helps to continue it. Jews have no luck.

Sunday Jewish Courier,
January 7, 1923

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



chicago jewish historical society

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- Eugene & Sylvia Cotton
- Dale Lind Program Preview
- Melville Herskovits
- Jewish Geography
- Camp Chi Program Report

What We Are

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

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

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

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

About the Society

What We Do

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

Membership

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

Dues Structure

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

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

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

www.chicagojewishhistory.org