

MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY



*Changing History in Mississippi by Gordon, Seferim,
Michigan Women: WWII, South Haven, Hebrew Free Loan*

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MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

... אשר ישאלון בניכם מחר את אבותם ... (יהושע ד:כא)

When your children shall ask their parents in time to come...

Joshua 4:21

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The Journal of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan

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CHANGING HISTORY: LOCAL ATTORNEYS IN 1964 MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM PROJECT

by Maynard M. Gordon

When the call went out to assure legal justice for all citizens of America, they responded without a moment's hesitation.

And, 30 years later, they would do it again, because taking their lives in their hands in the embattled racial battleground called Mississippi was secondary to their commitment as Jews and as members of the legal profession.

Non-Jewish silence during The Holocaust "was on the consciences of all the Jewish attorneys who went south in 1964..." *Zemmol*

Detroit area attorneys – white and black, gentile and Jewish – responded to the appeal from the National Lawyers Guild, whose president in 1964 was prominent Detroit rights defender, Ernest Goodman, for on-the-scene assistance in Mississippi on behalf of arrested civil rights workers.



Lawrence Warren

"Why are you going down there?" Lawrence Warren, one of the volunteers, recalls being asked. "It's not your problem."

Warren, then 26, answered the questioners this way: "It *is* my problem. When you see the tremendous inequities in the courts in Mississippi, you know it is your problem."

"If you can't be assured of your rights in court, there is no place else to go."

The willingness of local Jewish attorneys to leave their practices and families to help obtain Constitutional rights for blacks in the far-off Gulf South was in part sparked by the murder of a multi-racial trio of civil rights activists in the Magnolia State – James Chaney, a 21-year-old plasterer from Meridian, Miss.; Michael Schwerner, 24, a former settlement house worker from Brooklyn, N.Y.; and Andrew Goodman, 20, a student at Queens College who lived in Manhattan. Their bodies were reported missing on Father's Day but were not discovered in a Mississippi swamp until August 4.

"In court, we all dressed conservatively and were very deferential. It was a scary experience..." *Karp*

The cross-racial tragedy which took the lives of Goodman and Schwerner, who were Jewish, and Chaney, a black, was played out over and over again throughout the "Mississippi Freedom Summer" and the National Lawyers Guild "Project Mississippi."

MISSISSIPPI PROJECT

The Michigan coordinator for the undertaking on behalf of the Guild was George Crockett, Jr., later a Detroit Congressman and judge, with whom Warren drove to Mississippi.

Warren went on: "George told us that only three lawyers in all of Mississippi took civil rights cases and that it was crucial to represent defendants who had been denied voter registration rights and to get their cases moved to federal courts. He was the spark plug for Detroit lawyer involvement, but he did not understate the possible dangers involved."

Two black women attorneys from Detroit played a prominent role in the project - current Federal District Judge Anna Diggs-Taylor and Wayne County Circuit Judge Claudia Morcom, then Claudia Shropshire.

Judge Morcom, who was a member of Goodman's law firm in Detroit, stayed in Mississippi for a year in the project's Jackson office, recalling how the discovery of the bodies of Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner had reinforced her desire to help bring basic rights to Mississippians, two of whom were her parents.

"We all believed that being a lawyer was what it was all about," she says. There was and is no place for apartheid in the United States."

Allen Zemmol, now president of the Jewish Community Council of Detroit and in 1964 a partner in a law firm with the late former Governor of Michigan, John Swainson, had driven to Mississippi with Dearborn attorney Roger Craig, later a Michigan state senator.



Allen Zemmol

"The pressures on us were tremendous," says Zemmol, now a Comerica vice-president for legal affairs. "Larry Warren and I spoke in Yiddish on the Holiday Inn phones, in case our lines were tapped. We drove over to Greenwood and were told where to stop for gas, and where not to. We were warned against exceeding the speed limit in Yazoo City."

Zemmol, Warren and other members of the Jewish contingent, including Detroit area attorneys Irving Tukel and Ronald Karp, recalled putting in stints of court appearances in non-airconditioned courtrooms where outside temperatures exceeded 100 degrees.



Irving Tukel

"We were not only Jewish," declares Tukel, "but we were enemies of the authority. We were in a war zone, no doubt about it."

Among the bureaucratic - and oppositional - difficulties facing the attorney volunteers was the difficulty in finding notaries to validate filing documents for Federal courts. Zemmol, unable to locate a willing notary in Greenville, finally succeeded in doing so in

MISSISSIPPI PROJECT



Ronald Karp

Oxford - "driving defensively" across the state to avoid being arrested by sheriff's deputies.

"In court," says Karp, "we all dressed conservatively and were very deferential. It was a scary experience. In some of the towns, like Greenwood, we didn't feel safe in the white part but we did in the black neighborhood.

"In Jackson, we went to services in a Jewish synagogue on Friday night. The rabbi was quite young, but he declined to meet us in "shul," only at his home. He said "we don't like what's going on but we have to live here."

One of the motivations for Jewish participation in the Mississippi campaign to secure equal voting rights for blacks, says Zemmol, was the Holocaust experience, wherein non-Jewish silence accompanied the extermination of six million Jews.

"It was on the consciences of all the Jewish attorneys who went South in 1964," Zemmol recalls. "That's what made the experience so special for us as Jews, taking risks to help a persecuted race."

In commenting on the success of the Mississippi operation, in which 21 Michigan attorneys took part, Judge Morcom agreed with the Jewish lawyers involved that the F.B.I. was of less value in securing voting rights for aggrieved blacks than youthful volunteers like themselves.

"The film, 'Mississippi Burning,' overstated the role of the F.B.I.," says Judge Morcom, a former president of the National Lawyers Guild, whose year in Mississippi included helping integrate a Holiday Inn in Oxford along with Schwerner's widow, Rita.

Judge Morcom's photo, as Claudia Shropshire, appeared together with that of co-worker Judge Anna Diggs on the cover of the July 9, 1964 issue of *Jet Magazine*, and her file on the eventful Mississippi project includes photos with her then-boss, "Ernie" Goodman, in the *Detroit Free Press* of February 12, 1989, nearly 25 years after the momentous trek.



Ernest Goodman, 1964 president of National Lawyers Guild, and Judge Claudia Shropshire Morcom, "Project Mississippi volunteer".

Warren's recollections of the experience are particularly gripping. As Crockett's assistant in Jackson and a fledgling lawyer serving as a Michigan Supreme Court clerk, Warren remembers changing his Michigan license plates for Mississippi plates at the state border.

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"You didn't want to be driving around with Michigan plates," he said. "There were guys driving pickups with gun racks in the back."

Helping Free A Jailed Black

While spending the summer helping black defendants in Mississippi in 1964, Detroit lawyer Larry Warren heard that a 20-year-old black had been accused of reckless driving while driving five students from a North Carolina civil rights training school into Choctaw County, Miss. County Sheriff Joe Jones was asked whether he had a Mr. James Brown in his jail in Ackerman, Miss. He replied to Warren. "I don't have

a Mr. James Brown here, but I do have a nigger Brown, so you better come and get him."

Dressed in a black suit in 100-degree weather, Warren left minutes later, hurrying to free Brown. "You don't know what goes on in these jails," he told Detroit Free Press reporter Van G. Sauter who wrote in 1964 that Warren noted that the county courthouse monument's list of World War II dead separated whites from "colored."

Warren met Schwerner and Goodman the week before they disappeared. He watched, ready in case of a dispute with police, as they and others picketed a dime store in Meridian, Mississippi.

After the New York pair and Chaney vanished, Warren helped Rita Schwerner search for clues, driving her to Philadelphia, Mississippi, and



*Claudia Shropshire & Anna Diggs
on the cover of 1964 Jet Magazine*

escorting her into wood shacks housing rural blacks. The sheriff there met them in his patrol car, but was of no help.

On driving back to Detroit after his summer of service, Warren counted the miles to the Ohio River, and changed his "Ole Miss" sweatshirt for one bearing Michigan's state logo and his license plates from those of Mississippi to Michigan, as well.

A dinner honoring Michigan attorneys who journeyed to Mississippi was held November 6, 1964, at the old downtown Detroit Henrose Hotel. National Lawyers Guild Detroit Chapter President Donald Loria, himself one of the 21 honorees, introduced as guest speaker Michigan Supreme Court Associate Justice Theodore Souris, whose subject was "The Right To Counsel."

The first "Frank Murphy Award" of the Detroit NLG Chapter, named after a

MISSISSIPPI PROJECT

distinguished former Michigan Governor, was presented to Crockett. The diverse and statewide nature of the evening was reflected by the introduction of the honorees, made by another Supreme Court justice, Otis M. Smith, a black. They were: Oscar Baker, Bay City; Roger Craig, Dearborn; Anna Diggs, Bernard Fieger, Clarence Laster, Donald Loria, D. William Maki, Warfield Moore, Claudia Shropshire, Robert Stein, Myzell Sowell, Irving Tukel, Lawrence Warren, Allen Zemmol, of Detroit; Justin Brocato, Thomas Carey, William Culver, Richard Enslin, George Perdix, of Kalamazoo; Stuart Dunnings, Lansing, and Jerry McCoskey, Muskegon.

Goodman and Judges Crockett and Morcom spoke at a commemorative dinner at the National Lawyers Guild's convention in 1983 in Chicago, whose program book featured a cover photo of Crockett with Judge Diggs-Taylor.

Michigan's Jewish attorneys who took part in the Mississippi Project were listed among the honorees and the late Harold Washington, first black mayor of Chicago, expressed the mood of the ongoing struggle for equal rights to the attorneys this way: "Your efforts in the South during the sixties were an invaluable aid to the Civil Rights movement and to the struggle of democratic rights overall."



Judge Anna Diggs-Taylor

In a recent interview, Federal Judge Anna Diggs-Taylor described the Mississippi crusade as a "watershed for equal rights in the United States." She vividly recollects the "angry and hostile crowds which met our delegation at Sheriff Rainey's jail when George Crockett led a delegation from Jackson the day after Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner were reported missing."

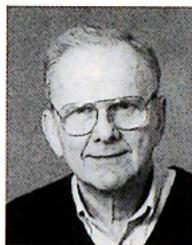
The cars of the northern volunteers were met at the outskirts of town and followed to the courthouse by locals "shouting the worst of insults," she said. "The sheriff offered no help at all, but it was the residents who paid an awful price for merely trying to register to vote. They were the true heroes."

Judge Taylor said it was a "bitter experience" when the local FBI office refused to help.

"I was a small part of the effort, but it was important to me to have been there and seen first hand the wrongs being done.

"No one felt safe," Judge Taylor said, "But unless the work was done, by all the attorneys who went down there, nothing at all would have changed.

Detroit native Maynard M. Gordon has achieved worldwide recognition for his lifelong career as a distinguished automotive journalist. The author of The Iacocca Management Technique, locally he is a graduate of the Sholom Aleichem Institute and the United Jewish "Mittelschule."



Maynard Gordon

WHERE WERE YOU DURING WORLD WAR II?

Today's Michigan Jewish women remember with patriotism and pride

by Harriet Alpern

They were hardly "golden" years. Rather, World War II became women's "emboldened" years ---years that stretched their resolve and their mental and physical rigor to meet the challenges at hand. They left their private worlds for an unprotected and unfamiliar realm, where they could no longer control their destiny. As each tells her story, one common thread runs through all --- the feelings of patriotism and pride at contributing to victory through sacrifice and determination.

World War II was a landmark in our nation's history, when women in large numbers entered as official members of the armed forces---the Army, Navy,



High spirited off-duty nurses – Ethel Shilmover Grossman, middle window, right.

Marines and Airforce---and were stationed in many cases close to battle theaters. Women volunteers worked in hospitals and many women took their first jobs in factories and fields, replacing men for combat. General Dwight Eisenhower considered women's World War II accomplishments invaluable; he advocated their increased recruitment for the armed services.

These vignettes of Michigan Jewish women in World War II also include stories from survivors of the Nazis who moved to Michigan as well as emigres from the former Soviet Union living in our area - all residents of Michigan according to the Michigan Department of History definition as those who were born here, who lived here at one time, or who live here now.

WOMEN IN WWII

HENRIETTE GORDON KAPLAN – WAC of Cross Village, north of Petoskey

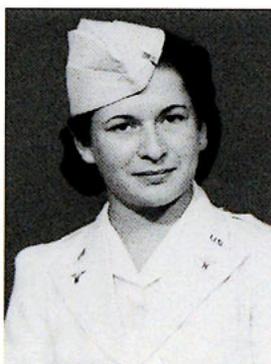
Henriette Kaplan served as a WAC - the Women's Army Corps - from 1944 to 1946 as part of the enlisted personnel and later as a Second Lieutenant. She started her career in intelligence work at the Pentagon. As a Lieutenant, she counselled female officers, who were separating from the service at the war's end at Fort Dix, New Jersey. She left the army to marry Leo Kaplan.

She was the only Jewish woman from the Petoskey area, and is named on a permanent plaque at her Temple B'nai Israel in Petoskey. Kaplan says she was proud to be part of the WAC's, associating with women of the highest professionalism.



Henriette Gordon Kaplan

ETHEL SHILMOVER GROSSMAN - Army Nurse in Pacific Theater



Ethel Shilmover Grossman

The story of this West Bloomfield woman reveals a sound professional with a taste for high adventure.

“The Battle of Midway and the Coral Sea were in progress when we left San Francisco. We zig-zagged 17 days through treacherous Pacific waters to reach the Fiji Islands in a large convoy, which included troop ships, destroyers, cruisers and airplane carriers. One of our pastimes on board was to watch each morning as the planes took off in flight to scan the horizon on their daily reconnaissance missions.

“Upon arriving at the Fiji Islands, there were no buildings or roads. We set up tents for our living quarters and for a 500-bed hospital. We adapted two warehouses--one for a hospital unit and the other a surgical area. The operating room was partitioned by blankets and used a special generator for electrical power. Every time casualties arrived from Guadalcanal and from naval battles, we worked round the clock with a break for a snack or a shower.

“I had volunteered for military service right after graduation from the St. Agnes School of Nursing, associated with the University of Maryland. Although I was only 20, I had to say I was 21 to qualify. I felt that was the patriotic thing to do. My parents were in shock, but did not try to stop me. So I left Baltimore for the Pacific theater in 1942.

“We were a whole division, including 35 doctors and 65 nurses. As the first Jewish graduate from this Catholic school of nursing, I was the only Jew in our corps. Nurses were the first women given official status in the army, before the WACS. Because of our education, nurses were commissioned as First Lieutenants.

WOMEN IN WWII

"Fiji was a tropical paradise with lush vegetation and little poverty. In our two-and-a-half years in the British colony, we mingled with Australians, New Zealanders, and East Indians. The East Indians originally had been brought over by the British to work on sugar cane and pineapple plantations. Their mercantile class ran the tailoring and retail shops and restaurants. In dealing with them we picked up some Fiji language which we called our 'taxi language.'

"Best of all, Fiji was free of the anopheles mosquito which breeds malaria. After patients were flown in from Guadalcanal, each plane had to be fumigated to eradicate the deadly insects.

"Despite the relative calm, danger lurked. At anytime we could have been captured by Japanese, who had already seized islands in our vicinity. Since we were close to Guadalcanal, which had been captured by the Japanese, New Zealanders maintained seven gun positions about the islands, enforcing blackouts from time to time.

"A personal note: I met my future husband, Manuel Grossman, on Fiji, when he was a supply sergeant and I was an officer. By socializing with him, I was violating the officers' code on fraternizing – so we had an undercover romance. Manie went back to complete training at officer's school, thus legitimizing our relationship.

"My only exposure to anything Jewish was a seder on Fiji. A Jewish chaplain attached to the John Hopkins Hospital contingent on Fiji managed to secure matzo, wine and Haggadahs for a Passover observance for all Jewish personnel on the island. Another nurse and I were the only women at the event. It was a rare opportunity for Jews to be together.

"The strategic points of battle kept changing. When the Japanese moved from our area, our hospital staff went to Calcutta, India. Here we received sick and wounded from Okinawa, the Burma Road and from B-52's. The Army took over former Indian palaces of marble with sunken baths – sleeping on army cots and eating army rations. Although we were unaware of it at the time, the Air Force was softening up the area in preparation for the atom bomb.

"The agonizing part of my job was being unable to save so many young lives. It was sad and frustrating to lose young Marines---some of them not yet 18--to malaria and wounds, after exerting every effort in our power. I hated war and all its consequences. However, this was balanced by my bitter feelings toward the enemy.

"On the other hand, at my last rotation in Augusta, Georgia, in 1945, I discovered that Americans are very forgiving people. Casualties from the European theater were often wheeled onto the orthopedic ward in heavy casts and with limbs in traction. Many of the orderlies were German prisoners of war, yet the American G.I.'s treated them as equals. When the German orderlies came to clean and sweep near their beds, the patients were friendly and conversed with them as if there had never been a war. To this day I can't figure it out. I knew how I felt toward the enemy and the cruel destruction they had wrought."

WOMEN IN WWII

BESS KATZ GORELICK - U.S. Marine

Joining the military, and especially a Jewish woman becoming a Marine, was decidedly a novelty in the 1940's and a bold step for 20-year-old Bess Gorelick. Bess remembers her basic training at Camp LeJeune, North Carolina, living in barracks. "It took adjusting and overcoming loneliness, but the camaraderie was great. Everybody had a sense of humor, making light of our mistakes, and we got along well."

One upset Bess recalls vividly was a gas mask drill: "We had to practice putting on our gas masks. We entered a huge tent, where they had released gas. My eyes were burning and tears were flowing. While the others were doing fine, I had to leave the tent. I discovered I had been issued a faulty gas mask.

"I laughed about it later, but it was devastating. People in our country don't realize the torture, because they've never been subjected to gas as have populations in other countries.

"When I first told my mother I was contemplating enlisting, she was in shock. She didn't try to dissuade me, because she didn't think I was serious. My friends and family, who were quite conservative anyway, thought I was nuts. Men, especially, couldn't understand why any women would volunteer for a tour of duty. When I did join, my parents weren't enthusiastic but did not object.

"I think my background influenced my decision. I came from a close, free-thinking family. In Russia my parents had been part of the politics of their day, and here my Dad, a carpenter, was active in his union and the Jewish 'Workman's Circle.' At home we all discussed, debated, and voiced our opinions on issues.

"I had been doing office work for a labor union, the United Retail Union. Even though I loved my job, I felt compelled to enlist in the service in 1943 to help the war effort. A friend, Mindy Bronston, had enlisted in the Marines and suggested that route to me.

"The Marines appealed to me because it was the smallest corps and had a mystique about it. I probably thought there'd be some nice fellows there, too.

"Women in the Marines generally did office work, except those who through aptitude testing showed special talent for mechanics and electronics. I was sent to Arlington, Virginia, near Washington, in a Navy annex doing payroll and auditing. We worked five days and were off duty on weekends.

"The few Jewish women went to the Jewish Center in Washington to socialize, to attend dances, and for Passover and other Jewish holidays. Occasionally, I went with a friend to her home in Brooklyn, sitting on a suitcase both ways in the crowded aisle of a full train.



Bess Katz Gorelick

WOMEN IN WWII

“Actually, my experience solidified my identity as a Jew. Being away from home was a turning point that drew me closer to the religious aspects of Judaism, even though mine was a secular labor background, not strong on religion.

“It wasn’t all smooth sailing in Washington. Men detested our presence in the Marines. They saw us as interlopers. Every time they spotted a woman in Marine uniform on the street they heckled us, calling us BAMS (Broad Ass Marines). Above all, they resented our wearing the Marine emblem.

“Here we thought we were doing something for our country. And they were destroying our self-esteem. Our response was to ignore it. Despite this the morale in our corps was high and we had a lot of fun together. I was proud of my part in winning the war.”

MANYA BARMAN FELDMAN - Partisan in East European Theater

When Manya and the last remnant of her family escaped from the Nazi Gestapo, they slept on the ground in a nearby forest, covered by any tattered blanket they could find.

Manya gives us her riveting account of her days as a Partisan in WWII: “Before the war we had a harsh existence in the Polish village of Dombrovitza near the Ukraine border. 3,000 Jews led a segregated life among 5,000 Christian villagers. I was the second oldest of five children in a close family. I spoke four languages--Yiddish, Hebrew, Polish and Russian.

“When the Nazis invaded they set up a ghetto. They forced families to double up and live crammed together in the small houses. They further tormented them with starvation diets and slave labor. In 1942 they brought Jews and others from all over Poland to begin the “Final Solution.” They dug graves to bury the victims as they shot them.

I became one of 15 women in this Jewish Partisan corps near Pinsk. My job was to blow up the railroad track.

“I hid in the woods with three other members of our family, my father, my brother and sister. My mother and two tiny sisters, too young to leave, perished in the village.

“We had no choice but to join the Partisans. We couldn’t see our way out alone. If captured by the Germans, we would have been tortured and killed.

“The Russians had sent some higher echelon military to organize Partisans in our area. Partisans were terrorists--escaped prisoners of war, from Russia and satellite countries, like Poland, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania. They dynamited railroads to intercept Germans going to the front, killed them and took their weapons. It was an amateur operation of about 5,000, until the Russians ultimately were able to supply planes, medication and dynamite from Moscow.

WOMEN IN WWII

"I was drafted into the Partisans' corps of nurses to help the sick. I cooked, washed, and did mending, while the soldiers went out on missions to capture the warehouses of enemy food supplies. Finally, I got sick myself nursing people in a typhoid epidemic. The sanitary conditions were horrible. We were besieged with lice, which were the typhoid carriers.

"By luck, when I was burning up with fever, the Partisans remained stationary in an area where they had created an airport on a frozen lake. The airplanes landed there at night, bringing munitions, medications, and clothing and taking away the wounded to Russia. The operation continued for about a month.

"This month in one place gave me an opportunity to get over the fright of my sickness and start recuperating. Without any medication whatsoever, I must have survived on a drop of water. It was pure luck. I was only 19 years old and I was resilient.

"At this point our family, as members of the Partisan army, were put in separate units. We could no longer stay together. When my father heard I was sick, he got permission to see me. We both cried, as he told me there was nothing he could do for me. He said he would request that we be united after I recuperated. But that did not happen. I never saw him again.

"I lost my hearing and my brain wasn't functioning. When the Partisans – now numbering 45,000 – moved on toward Russia to avoid the Germans, I stayed behind. I don't know why. I guess it was a harsh winter, and I simply refused to leave my "safe" haven. Even though the Ukrainians ran from German slaughter into the woods, I stayed. The remaining women were killed. But for some reason – I can't explain why – I was spared.

"Following my recovery I traveled with several Partisan groups. Many of these fighters, perhaps the members of my own family, had been annihilated in the Carpathian Mountains by the Germans. A small band of Jews, who suffered anti-Semitism and were denied weapons, organized their own Jewish Partisans.

"I became one of 15 women in this Jewish Partisan corps near Pinsk. My job was to blow up the railroad track. My operation caused damage for a distance of two kilometers. And, as a result, I held up the delivery of supplies to the front for about two days.

"Despite our daring and support, the Jewish men still clung to traditional views of women as subservient. They assigned our tasks accordingly."

Liberation finally came in 1944 and Manya did not wish to return to Poland. She went to a Displaced Persons Camp in Germany established by the United States. There she met her husband, Herman Auster (since deceased), also from Poland, and immigrated to the United States in 1950. She has two sons, Dr. Barry Auster, a dermatologist in Detroit and Dr. Steven Auster, a child psychiatrist in Boston.

However, her past still haunts her with recurring nightmares of guilt feelings and

WOMEN IN WWII

an aching loneliness inside.

"I helped defeat the Germans and I became emotionally strong and learned how to protect myself," said Manya. "The will to live was the only thing that kept me going. The fact that I survived is a final victory.

"I believe in sharing my story as a witness, so that our children and grandchildren know what happened. Especially in this time of Holocaust denial."

PEARL FELDMAN - Sgt. Major in WACS



Pearl Feldman

It was love at first drill for Pearl Feldman, who joined the WACs in 1942 to do her part in WWII. "I enjoyed meeting women, who came from every state. Through regimentation and group living, we learned how to take orders and become a cohesive group," Feldman recalls.

Her talent for military life earned her medals and promotions overseas. In Paris she became a Sergeant-Major in charge of 1500 women. "The WACs performed essential jobs on the front to replace infantrymen for combat. We drove trucks and jeeps, and assisted in anti-aircraft and intelligence units, in the signal corps and in office administration."

In the European theater the WACs were thrust into the middle of dangerous war zones. "In London we were billeted near Hyde Park, amid a regular barrage of buzz bombs. Everyone would keep telling us to run down to an air raid shelter, until gradually we got too busy to even hear the bombs drop. There was too much work to do. The demands were so heavy that eventually I wound up in the hospital with palsy from overwork.

"After D-Day we landed in Normandy, where we trudged through thick mud and tried to avoid land mines. When we entered Paris during the Battle of the Bulge we found fighting and blood on the streets. We picked up guns and swords off the ground as souvenirs. When we were stationed in Paris for a year, living was austere. Our diet consisted of K and C rations.

"My parents, who had originally come from Hungary, asked me to contact a Jewish family in Paris. They were more deprived than we were, so I brought them my food packages from home. Later the Nazis came and took away the husband and son by box car to Auschwitz. Most of my mother's family in Hungary were also purged, leaving only a cousin and her friend to emigrate to Detroit after 1945, along with our two surviving women friends from Paris."

"The army was equalitarian with Jewish women in the WACs. We were not singled out in any way. General Eisenhower gave women high marks for their role in victory, and I believe we were essential."

WOMEN IN WWII

Feldman has been a member of the WAC Veterans Honor Guard for 10 years.

ANN MILLMAN - Community Leader on the Homefront

On the homefront, committed Jewish women and children worked vigorously to contribute to the war effort, working through their organizations and as individuals – assisting in hospitals, selling U.S. War Bonds, collecting scarce materials, and operating U.S.O.'s for servicemen.



National Council of Jewish Women serve treats to servicemen at a U.S.O.

Courtesy National Council Jewish Women

Ann Millman was one who served with distinction. Already a well-known community figure, Ann was selected among a group of prominent women to become a Gray Lady. Subsequently, she was tapped for a key post, as assistant director of the original pioneer Red Feather Drive to raise funds for overseas needs of our armed services.

Millman served for three years as a Gray Lady with her friend Dorothy Fried – the only two Jewish women in the corps. The only thing aristocratic about the job was the stylish Gray Ladies uniform. They wore portraits in gray from head to toe. “We had flowing gray veils and white gauntlets to pull over our sleeves,” she reports. “They were cumbersome and we had to lift aside the folds to perform our many duties.”

Gray Ladies were trained at Grace Hospital as nurses aides, and assisted at induction centers, where new recruits were given physicals.

In 1944 Detroit organized a massive Red Feather drive to benefit our armed forces overseas, headed by women of the three faiths – Catholic, Jewish and Protestant. President of the League of Jewish Women, Ann Millman, mother of Sheila Millman Potiker, was appointed to the drive.

“The drive was modeled after our Allied Jewish campaign and was the forerunner of the current Torch Drive,” Millman explains. “Detroit was divided into postal zones and Ann Millman, Ann Landau and Ann Campbell Stark formed a triumvirate to organize the large sixth Postal Zone.

WOMEN IN WWII

Promoted as "The Three Anns," they garnered wide publicity and an outpouring of donations, which put them 120% over the top. Women proved themselves to be superb fund raisers for the war effort, and set a future high standard for Detroit .

RUTH FINEMAN GUTOW AND IRENE BUSSEY BIRNDORF -- Army Wives



Ruth Fineman Gutow

"We were like *"My Sister Eileen,"* explained Irene with obvious relish "with many misadventures in bizarre places." Through laughs and tears Ruth and Irene overcame torrid climes, housing crises, odd-ball neighbors and inebriated army officers.

The two high-spirited 20-year-olds, Ruth six years the elder, were a perfect match in wit and ingenuity and found in each other soul mates for life. Their husbands, Ben Gutow and Leonard Birndorf, both doctors in the reserves, were sent to the same training camp in Anniston, Alabama, and by happenstance ended up together in California.

Living frantic marginal lives as army couples, they moved from camp to camp. They not only adjusted to cramped quarters, but also scaled a few social hurdles. As Jews, they encountered ignorance rather than prejudice. At their new post in California, Ruth tells of a neighbor named Abbie.

"When she learned Ben and I were Jewish she claimed she had never met a Jew before---only what she called "sheenies who peddled bananas." On longer acquaintance we became fast friends to the point that on one visit to the base, Abbie invited my sister to stay with her next door.

"I was pregnant and had my baby there in Marysville, California," says Ruth. "Who do you think hand-made the bassinet? My neighbor, Abbie."

When they attended a party on a new base, Irene and Leonard found themselves the only Jews at his Officer's Club. Irene reported, "The officers were regular Army from upstate New York and had never met a Jew." She describes them as real drinkers---definitely not part of my culture at the time. At first we were ignored. But attitudes changed when the guys saw we could dance. They liked the way I did the Conga. After they realized that we smiled, were friendly and human, they included us in their circle."

When their men were sent to duty overseas, both women went back to Detroit, where they took jobs and waited---Irene for the birth of her baby and both of them for their husbands' return.

WOMEN IN WWII

For Irene the tension mounted. "My husband was a Battalion Surgeon, positioned directly on the field of battle and in the Battle of Midway."

Ruth returned to her teaching job at Winterhalter elementary school on Detroit. "I felt the stress of being separated from Ben, who was assigned to hospitals in the European theater after D-Day. But with a new baby I could appreciate my comfortable surroundings in Detroit, in contrast to Abilene, Texas. A newspaper report had called Abilene the worst town in the U.S. for army personnel with its cockroaches and rat-infested housing.

"In general, life was rough, but we made do. We had it better than many families of infantry soldiers. Irene and I were educated and worked. We could supplement our husbands' meager salaries. We both had wonderful, supportive families. They helped us nurture our babies.

"After our sheltered lives, we both regarded the war years as a tremendous eye-opening experience," Irene and Ruth agreed.

DORA TSURKOV - Doctor in Russian Army in WWII

The counterparts of our own women in the military, women from the former Soviet Union – our Russian allies in World War II – often served as doctors and nurses in hospitals or on the front lines of battle, replacing the depleted numbers of male troops. The victory of Russia was crucial to the defeat of the Nazis.

Dora Tsurkov was graduated from the Medical Institute of Uzbekistan and served in the Russian army from 1944 to 1946. Stationed in Minsk, she treated the casualties from the Russian air strikes on Germany. She now lives in the Detroit area as do her daughters and grandchild.



Dora Tsurkov

TSILYA URIKH - Nurse in World War II



Tsilya Urikh and friend

Since the war was fiercely fought in their own land which had been invaded by the Germans, the Russians and East Europeans experienced incredibly severe hardships and deprivation.

Born in Lvov, Poland, Tsilya Urikh escaped the Nazis, although her family perished. She served as a nurse on three fronts in World War II (from 1942 to 1945). "We worked night and day with two to three hours sleep," said Urikh, who was wounded and won six medals for valor. Now a "New American" she became a United States

WOMEN IN WWII

citizen in 1992 and has a son Alexander, and daughter Ida, in this area.

PEARL WEISS - On The Assembly Line



Pearl Weiss

Pearl Weiss never dreamed in Odessa, Russia that her fancy needlework would one day lead to a job on a B-24 bomber. Yet this talented seamstress and her husband, Joseph, both immigrants from Russia early in the century, dedicated their lives during World War II to victory. They chose as their battle front the assembly line at the Willow Run Plant, making B-24 Liberator bombers.

After two of their three sons, Rube and Morris, joined the armed forces, the couple developed a deep personal commitment to the war effort. "They were a metaphor for thousands of similarly situated families," says their son, Harold, a retired social worker, who at the time was a university student in New York. "We were all proud of them."

Joseph, a cellist and intellectual, had earlier turned to bricklaying as his trade, after meeting his future wife in Detroit. While raising their family, Pearl became the family tailor, until she joined the staff of the elegant Walton Pierce fashion studio in Grosse Pointe.

"It was Pearl's idea to take jobs at Willow Run--not Joe's" says Liz Weiss, their daughter-in-law.

It was not easy. For two years, until victory, Pearl and Joseph parked their car in a lot near Seven Mile Road and traveled by bus an hour each way to the plant to work on varying shifts--sometimes at midnight. They both joined the United Auto Workers Union to hold their jobs, which included sewing, packing and assembling. Their inner rewards and satisfaction lasted them a lifetime.

COLONEL CLARA RAVEN - A Pioneer World War II Physician

Michigan's highest ranking servicewoman, the late Dr. Clara Raven, is best described in a 1970's biographical sketch by Evelyn Paxton used to nominate the remarkable Dr. Raven for the Michigan Woman's Hall of Fame.

"When the United States had joined Great Britain and France to declare war on Germany, . . . Dr. Raven was among the first four women physicians to be commissioned in the Medical Corps of the U. S. Army on July, 1943. Dr. Raven was assigned to the 239th General Hospital at Chalons-Sur-Marne near Rheims, France as a specialist in infectious hepatitis - which had immobilized hundreds of American soldiers there."



Clara Raven

Courtesy Michigan Women's Hall of Fame

WOMEN IN WWII

Dr. Raven later served briefly at the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission at Hiroshima. While serving in the Reserves in 1961, this dynamic lady became the first female physician to achieve the rank of full colonel in the Army Medical Corps. In later years the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner in Wayne County, Dr. Raven did pioneer research in the field of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, continuing a lifetime of record-breaking pioneering accomplishments.

Harriet Alpern is a community activist and free lance author. She serves on the Board of the American Jewish Committee. Ms. Alpern was tireless in pursuing the many leads for this important story.



Harriet Alpern

TALES FROM LeMANS

by Balfour Peisner

In the late summer of 1944, as the Allied Armies fought their way across France and into Germany, rest and relaxation camps were set up behind the lines for soldiers on leave from combat and to process replacements headed for the front.

I was in such a camp located not far from Lemans, about 35 miles southwest of Paris.

One day was very much like the rest, since we had lost all track of dates. Even the day of the week was usually a topic for argument. So one day, it came as a complete surprise, when at the conclusion of "retreat" – the lowering of the flag – an announcement was made that all men of the Jewish faith would be excused from duty the following day so that they could attend Rosh Hashana services in LeMans. Transportation would be provided. All those interested in going were to report to the front gate at 0700.

The following morning, as directed, I was at the front gate at 0700. I found a jeep with a driver waiting, and two other Jewish soldiers. Taking the last available seat in the jeep, we waited to see if any others would appear. We left when it became apparent that the three of us were the only ones going. The ride to LeMans took about half an hour. The country-side was lush and green in the late summer sun.

The driver took us directly to the synagogue in LeMans, a city of approximately

LEMANS

50,000 people, dropped us off and left.

The building was a traditional synagogue, with ark, and separate galleries for women. It was already full of men, all in American Army uniforms. Other than the Rabbi, who was a captain, I could see no other officers. The services were traditional orthodox, and the men all appeared to be participating fully. I remained until about noon, then decided to see what I could do of the city.

After lunch in a little restaurant - where the bread was delicious- I wandered around the downtown area.

I returned to camp that evening, hitchhiking rides on French trucks - all being propelled by charcoal burners.

On the following days I was questioned by the men around me as to what I had seen, and what I had done. It must be remembered, that even though we were in a foreign county, we were not familiar with it. We were travelling in a world of our own making, with practically no contact with the people of the land. We could see the towns and fields we went through, but that was all.

One evening, the following week, again at the end of retreat, an announcement was made that all men of the Jewish faith would be excused the following day to attend Yom Kippur services in LeMans. Transportation would be provided, and all those wishing to go should be at the front gate at 0700. For all others there would be a 25-mile hike with full field equipment.

I arrived at the front gate the following morning at about a quarter-to-seven. To my astonishment, there was a line of six by six trucks (the largest the army had) already full of "Jews." Another truck was brought up, and before it stopped rolling, men were swarming over it. It was full before I could get on. Another was brought up, and the same thing happened.

Eventually I boarded a truck, and we started out.

On the way to LeMans I was able to talk to some of the men around me. In answer to my question: "Are you Jewish?" they all gave the same answer: "Today I am."

A native Detroiter and 1942 Central High School alumnus, Balfour Peisner served as an Infantry Rifleman in the 9th Infantry Division. He was wounded in November of 1944 in the Huertgen Forest, Germany, near Bonn, about a month before the "Battle of the Bulge" was fought in this area.

A lawyer in general practice with his son, he is a member of the Holocaust Memorial Center and the U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and active on other community boards.



Balfour Peisner

SOUTH HAVEN'S JEWISH RESORT ERA: ITS PIONEERS, BUILDERS & VACATIONERS

by Bea Kraus

"FOR A GLORIOUS SUMMER VACATION we have everything the heart desires"

This caption captured the essence of the South Haven Jewish resort era. It appeared in an advertisement in the local Daily Tribune in 1942 for the thirty-sixth opening of Steuben's Summer Hotel. Each hotel, boarding house, farm resort, promised the best. The best food, the best accommodations, the best surroundings. People were drawn to these promises and were not disappointed.



Steamer entering the harbor at South Haven

During the years from 1920 through 1950 when families from Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Indianapolis and Louisville wanted to get away from stifling apartments and hot city streets they came to South Haven. The steamship U.S.S. Roosevelt brought in 2000 people at a time from Chicago. Twenty five thousand Jews would descend

upon this small lakeshore community when big city schools closed for the summer.

Some came with steamer trunks filled with fancy clothes. In the large resort hotels a more formal way of life found guests dressing for dinner and dancing. Those who came with children said goodbye to them upon arrival and knew they would be cared for. The price of the room included all the amenities.



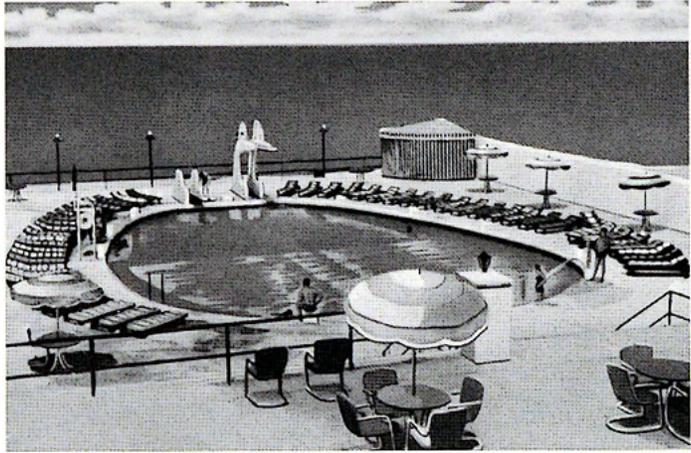
Vacationers arriving at the docks

Mendelson's Atlantic Kosher Hotel was the quintessential lakefront vacation spot. It was founded by David Mendelson, a Polish immigrant, who came to South

RESORT ERA

Haven in 1918 looking for a healthier life than the large cities had to offer.

“The 20-hour days were difficult for my parents, my two sisters and me,” said Becky Patner, one of the Mendelson daughters. “From a modest



Mendelson's Atlantic Resort

beginning of one building that had five guest rooms, we gradually expanded to 120 rooms and accommodated 250 guests in our main dining room.”

The expansion over a period of years was typical for most of the resorts. There wasn't enough money to build one large building so each year they added a few new rooms, another building or a cottage.

Our own daughter learned to walk on the grounds of the Silver Beach Hotel in 1955. I can still recall the dilemma we had each morning as we sat in the dining room overlooking Lake Michigan. Should we have hot or cold cereal, French toast or pancakes today? Maybe tomorrow we'll try the eggs. Lox, bagels, herring and smoked fish rounded out the week. Bread and pastries were served warm, baked on the premises. Lunch and dinner were as sumptuous as the first meal of the day.

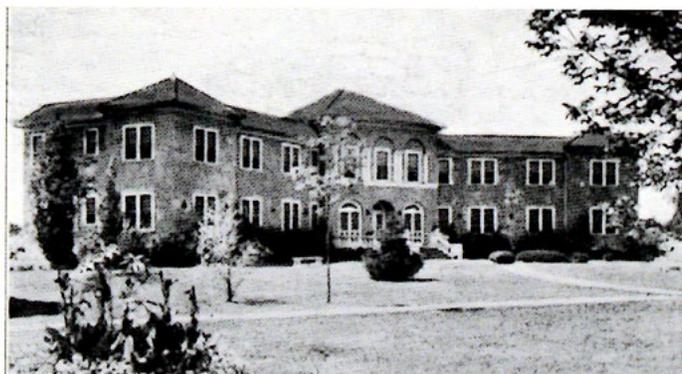
A path from each of the eight buildings of this resort conveniently led down to the soft white sand beach, the playground for adults and children. Other reputable resorts with beach access that flourished during this era were The Plantation House, The Plaza, Michigan Beach Hotel and Sleepy Hollow.

Just as popular were hotels requiring a short walk to the beach. Many like Glassman's Resort were surrounded by spreading stately shade trees and offered golf links, tennis courts, sandy beach and riding trails within a stone's throw. Others fondly remembered were The Biltmore, The Dewey, North Shore Valley Resort as well as Steuben's.

In 1929 Weinstein's Resort just north of the city was known for its hospitality, comfort and excellent food. Today, 65 years later, people are still drawn to the elegant dining room now called The Sea Wolf, managed by Max Weinstein's grandson Jim Wolf and his wife Sue.

No record of South Haven's early years would be complete without mention of Fidelman's Resort. In 1911, Morris and Belle Fidelman came from Chicago to a

RESORT ERA



Fidelman's Resort - Main Building

carefully worked out so the rooms would be cool day and night. Accommodations then were in place for 300 guests and further plans were being made to provide a swimming pool and golf course in back of the resort building. It was sold in 1985 and today is Camp Agudah, a Jewish Orthodox camp for boys and girls respectively.

By late 1940 Baron's Resort advertised modern conveniences, Florida chefs and an air-conditioned nightclub. Clips from the daily newspaper reported that Mickey Sharp, a headliner at Chicago's Latin Quarter would open the season at Baron's; Hershey Cohen & His Orchestra would offer "4-star acts nightly with Jimmy Spitalny, master of ceremonies."

Entertainment was an important feature in most of the resorts. Martha Raye and David Rose were two who performed at Mendelson's. One Friday night program at the Silver Beach Hotel consisted of 15 guest artists brought in from Chicago, Detroit and New York. The Michigan Beach Hotel hired a rumba teacher for their 1948 summer season. Dancing under a starlit sky at North Shore Valley every Wednesday and Saturday was the enticement the Yashenovsky family offered to prospective guests.

Every establishment scheduled a weekly amateur night. The Daily Tribune reported on one held at Weinstein's in July of 1949. "Among the many highlights of the show was an impersonation of Sophie Tucker by Jean Wolfson of Detroit. But the real show stopper was a skit by five handsome young men. One of them Mort Pliskin, who is now a well-known Chicago area cantor, was featured in the comedy skit entitled, 'Tzores' (trouble)." The original skits characterized Jewish life and the audiences loved them and came back year after year for more of the same.

People I interviewed for this article insisted they can still hear music when they walk past Dyckman and North Shore streets. The North Shore Pavillion, sentimentally remembered as 'the dance hall' was owned by Sol Dickstein. Here men wore jackets and women wore fashionable dresses, sometimes with big hats to match. The memory of those romantic evenings lingers on for those who experienced it. Cars filled with young adults would come for the weekend - a lovely setting for girls and boys to meet one another. *

RESORT ERA

On a Saturday night this area of South Haven was New Year's Eve on Times Square. People strolled and greeted one another warmly. Friendships were made and renewed year after year. This little town was vibrant, inviting and a way of life for car loads, boat loads and train loads of people who came to enjoy a few days, a week, a month or an entire summer.

But there was also a serious side to the South Haven story - one that tells of the plucky pioneer spirit and hardships that preceded the fun. Those who remember, former resort developers, want that story to take its rightful place in the historical record.

Si Reznik reminisces, "My father Abraham emigrated from Vilna in the late 1880's. In 1912 he bought a 40-acre farm in South Haven for \$50 down and a handshake. He brought his wife, his children and livestock onto the property even before he was able to raise money for a mortgage.

"The bedrooms upstairs were unheated and the winters were difficult. We had a sheet metal stove downstairs that my dad paid seventy-five cents for at an auction. I remember that the last thing we did after supper and after he rolled his cigarettes was to put in the last piece of solid wood, usually one that had a knot because it would burn longer.

"We had a large farm house surrounded by flourishing orchards. At first friends came to visit and left money on the sideboard because they knew we needed it. Later on we took in boarders for \$9.00 a week. We had cows and chickens and geese for 'shmaltz'(rendered fat). We made 'perrines' (quilts) with their feathers. We served our guests three full meals a day.

"Eventually, dozens of Jewish people who knew what we were doing came to see if this was an option for them. At the same time the Jewish Agricultural Society sent their supervisor for this district, Mr. Simon and his assistant Samuel



Early farmers packing peaches

Lith, to scrutinize the financial situation to see what the Jewish farmer needed. With their help in providing second mortgages with low payments, the newcomers were able to purchase land - because a first mortgage was never enough.

"The first synagogue in the area was built with money raised by the Jewish farmers. In 1924 Julius Rosenwald of Sears Roebuck in Chicago donated an

immense amount of money, \$5,000, for us to buy the land on the corner where the Phoenix Inn stands today.

"Before that, after Labor Day, people would come by horse and wagon from 25 miles away to buy ice because we had an ice-house. They each took a room,



First Hebrew Congregation of South Haven

brought their own linens. When it was Rosh Hashana we'd take the Encyclopedias out of the old bookcases, remove the shelves and there we would put the Sefer Torah. Chazzan Schwartz who came from the old country and lived with us, conducted the service."

To raise money for the newly built shul, Resnick's father ran pancake dinners to the Jewish farmers in the winter. By sleigh they went from one farm house to another carrying heated rocks wrapped in straw and then baked pancakes in the farm kitchen. They charged a penny for each one.

When the town started building up with many observant people coming each summer, a new synagogue was built in town and still functions today.

"My family came here because of the Depression," recalls Hy Warshawsky. "In late 1920, my father Louis who emigrated from Russia at the turn of the century, built a house with nine bedrooms where my mother and her three sisters and all their children would spend the summer. When the Depression hit, everything we owned in Chicago was lost and this was the last place we had.

"By 1930 there was a very vibrant Jewish community here. About 40 kids were in the Hebrew school and half of the farmers were qualified to be Rabbis. If you didn't come to 'shul' on time during the High Holidays, you didn't have a seat. Most of the financial support for this 'shul' came from the resort owners.

"The first Jewish people who came, came to be farmers. Many had never farmed before but they wanted to have a piece of land which they were forbidden from owning in the 'old country'. Many didn't last as farmers for too long because they lacked experience and couldn't make farming profitable. So they became business people. About 30% of the businesses on the main street were owned by Jewish people. Subsequently, they gave a college education to their children who then left to find their fortune in other places. The overall population of South Haven has held at about 6,000 for the last 40 years.

"When I was going to Hebrew school I had to sit in the butcher shop and Rabbi



Early businesses on Phoenix Street looking east

Miller would teach me between 'Shechting' (killing) chickens. He'd say, 'Read this line', and then he'd go back and kill more chickens." Warshawsky believes we have to remember the history, but he said, "Tomorrow is even better. What's happening today in our 'shul' is the best

thing that's happened to us in the last ten years."

Essential to writing tomorrow's history is the effort being put forth by today's young Jewish families, still attracted by the beauty of the Lake Michigan shore, who are raising children here. Their enthusiasm has awakened the small Jewish community of 35 families, primarily those who are year-round residents, to re-establish the synagogue as a comfortable house of prayer. Several summer weekend services and a "lo-x-box fund raiser" have been planned to advertise the rebirth of the First Hebrew Congregation of South Haven.

South Haven, where pioneer Jewish families were originally attracted to farm their own land, developed into a flourishing resort community that lasted for more than half a century. Now it is striving to revitalize a Jewish presence, to provide an education for its youngsters and to perpetuate Judaism for itself and for generations to come.

*Editor's Footnote: "My parents told me that South Haven was the place – the Catskills of the Midwest – where Jewish singles from the whole Midwest came to meet each other. The beach was where the girls met the boys... where indeed very many married couples that we know from that generation first met," said Detroit attorney Gerald Cook. Cook is the nephew of Ben and Harriet Teitel, one of the three daughters who eventually owned the Mendelson Resort with their husbands.

Bea Kraus is a free-lance writer who lives in Skokie, Illinois and South Haven, Michigan. After retiring from a career as a teacher in Chicago she is enjoying a second career as a writer.



Bea Kraus

CELEBRATIONS and DEDICATIONS

Congratulations from The Jewish Historical Society!

Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Biblical Playground Jewish Community Center Jimmy Prentis Morris Building



Linda Lee

Over 400 volunteers built the new Biblical theme playground and walking path at the J.C.C. on July 3 and 4th, 1994. The unique play structures include Noah's Ark, Moses' Hammock, King David's Citadel and Theater, and a Red Sea Challenge Course.

Linda Lee, co-chairman with Todd Sachse, and a member of the JHS/M Advisory Board.

Flossie Cohen, M.D.

Lifetime Achievement Award 1994 Michigan Women's Hall of Fame

Dr. Flossie Cohen was inducted into the Lansing Michigan Women's Hall of Fame on October 20 for her international leadership in the field of immuno-deficiency diseases.



Courtesy Michigan Women's Studies Assoc.

A Professor Emeritus at Wayne State University and a Michigania since 1953, this illustrious scientist established the Clinical Immunology Laboratory and the Clinical Immunology-Rheumatology Service, as well as the pediatric HIV/AIDS Clinic at the Children's Hospital of Michigan. She is a member of the Michigan Health Care Reform Task Force.



Photo by Mary Dale Clarke/Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall

**75th Anniversary Orchestra Hall
Ossip Gabrilowitsch
Music Director
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
1919-1936**

Conductor Ossip Gabrilowitsch's insistence on a new concert hall for Detroit resulted in the building of Orchestra Hall in only four months, in time for the opening of the triumphant

1919 season. Gabrilowitsch's wife, Clara Clemens, was Mark Twain's daughter.

Recently restored because of its "near perfect" acoustics, Orchestra Hall's 75th anniversary concert in October featured Detroit-born Ruth Meckler Laredo, a local Music Study Club prodigy now hailed as "America's First Lady of the Piano."

**Wayne State University Press
Leonard N. Simons Building**

In honor of his 90th birthday, the Leonard N. Simons Building on the campus of Wayne State University was dedicated on July 25 amidst a festive celebration. Originally designed by architect Albert Kahn in 1913, the handsome building on the corner of Woodward and Hancock houses the offices of the Press and other academic departments.

"I am pleased to share this glorious day with the University Press. It now has a home worthy of its high status in the academic world," said Simons in his dedication talk.

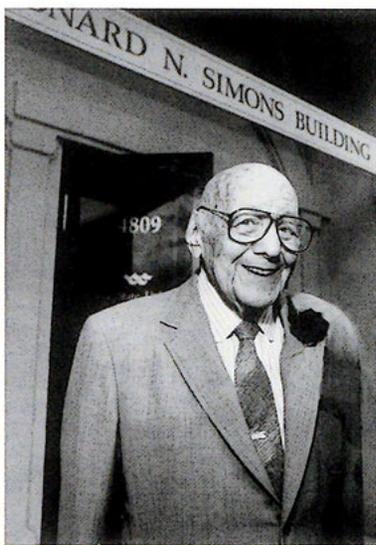


Photo by Rick Biolaczyc

Eight Over Eighty Awards Jewish Federation Apartments



Photo by Benyas-Kaufman Photographers, Inc.

Left to right – Hortense Falk, Clara Collens, Rose Love Greenberg, Neil Kalef, Arthur Lipsitt, Dr. Harry August, Dorothy Storchan, Ruth Redstone

Hortense Falk of the National Council of Jewish Women; Clara Collens, former concert violinist; Rose L. Greenberg, active in the Guild of Sinai Hospital; Neil Kalef; Arthur Lipsitt, now deceased, poet and organizer within the Home for the Aged; Dr. Harry August, professor emeritus of psychiatry; Dorothy Storchan; and Ruth Redstone, first woman board member of the Hebrew Free Loan; – these are the first eight senior citizens over the age of eighty installed in May in the new Senior Adult Jewish Hall of Fame.

The “Eight Over Eighty” selections recognize the continuing contributions of seniors to our community.

Jewish National Fund Awards Grant for Tree Planting in Detroit

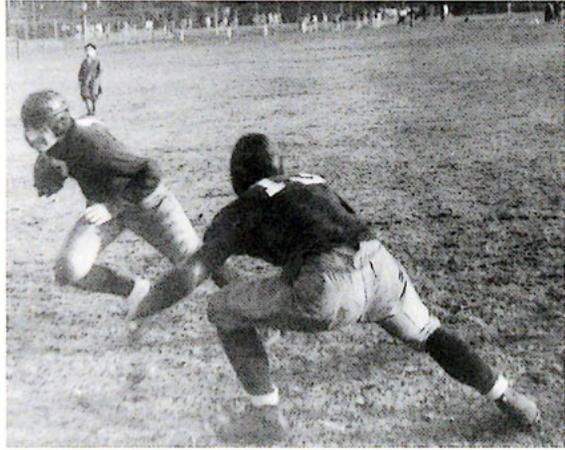
Mayor Dennis Archer and his wife, Judge Trudy DunCombe Archer, along with JNF Board member Jack Robinson, plant one of (the) 600 trees at Davison Elementary School in Detroit. Robinson said: “So many of us are planted in Detroit,” at the ceremonies made possible by a \$3000 grant from JNF to Greening of Detroit, an organization dedicated to planting trees in the city.



Photo by Glenn Trieste Photographic

Dr. Robert Luby
1994 Michigan Jewish Sports Hall of Fame

A star quarterback on the Tartar football team and captain of the track team during his days at Wayne, Dr. Robert Luby was inducted this November into the 1994 Michigan Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.



Courtesy Michigan Jewish Sports Hall of Fame

Dr. Robert Luby, Wayne University

Born in Hamtramck in 1918, in his childhood he lived near his family's store - "Luby's Classy Clothes" on Joseph Campau. Pursuing a five-decade career as a teacher and administrator, he was director of the Detroit Public School's Department of Health, Physical Education and Safety, and now serves as associate Director of Development for the Interlochen Music School near Traverse City.



Photo by Robert Benyas

Irwin Shaw
4th Leonard N. Simons
Jewish History Award

Irwin Shaw Receives the Fourth Leonard N. Simons Jewish History Award. He also was awarded a Medal from President Boris Yeltsin for his participation in the World War II Convoy to Murmansk. George Stutz introduced Shaw, describing his decades of service to the community.

Israel Jordan Peace Accords
Prime Minister Yizchak Rabin, President Bill Clinton
and King Hussein
October 26, 1994



UJA© Robert A. Cumins

President Bill Clinton and guest
David Hermelin

David Hermelin, guest of presidential delegation at the signing of the Jordan Israel peace accords at the border crossing near Aquaba, Israel. Marlene and Paul Borman and Jane Sherman also attended the historic signing.



Photo by Benyas-Kaufman Photographers, Inc.

CELEBRATIONS and DEDICATIONS

The Honorable Paul D. Borman
United States Federal District Court Judge
September 12, 1994



Photo by Glenn Triest Photographic

Paul D. Borman at his Investiture as United States Federal District Court Judge by the Chief Judge, the Honorable Julian Cook. Borman is a past president of the Jewish Community Council. He was appointed by President Clinton.

Yeshivah Beth Yehudah Annual Dinner.

Governor John Engler and Senator-elect Spencer Abraham

Governor Engler and Senator-elect Spencer Abraham at the November Yeshivah Beth Yehudah annual dinner honoring Ann Newman. Ann Newman is a JHS/M Life Member.



Photo by Benyas-Kaufman

**William Davidson Gifts
Jewish Theological Seminary of America
and PARKS of Detroit.**



Photo Courtesy Detroit Free Press

"There is a very important need for Jewish Education in the United States," said William Davidson, past president of Congregation Shaarey Zedek and grandson of a past president, Joseph Wetsman. His landmark \$15 million gift this fall, will establish the William Davidson Graduate School at the Jewish Theological Seminary. The focus will be on the training of teachers and principals for Jewish schools and educational programs in the United States, a creative commitment to Jewish continuity in this country.

In addition, affirming his support for Detroit and his belief in the value of sports for young people, the Pistons Palace Foundation is expected to donate more than \$1 million dollars to PARKS, a Partnership to Adopt and Renovate Parks for Kids in Detroit. Davidson, Chairman of Guardian Industries and owner of the Detroit Pistons, said: "I played in many city parks and my love for sports grew out of these experiences."

SEFERIM/BOOKS

A PRICE BELOW RUBIES

by Naomi Shepard, Harvard Press, 1993. \$27.95

A very interesting treatise on seven Jewish women who were rebels and radicals in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, A Price Below Rubies should appeal to today's Jewish women.

The book is a collection of biographies of the seven, who each made an impact in her own country, from Czarist Russia to fledgling Palestine to Western Europe and to the United States. Among those whose stories are told are Rosa Luxemburg and Emma Goldman. An informative introduction provides an excellent background on the role of Jewish women from biblical times.

Reviewed by Doris Goldstein

Doris Goldstein is a librarian who maintains her interest in books - whether residing here in her hometown or in her new home in Palm Springs.

THE TIMETABLES OF JEWISH HISTORY: A Chronology of the Most Important People and Events in Jewish History

by Judah Gribetz, Edward L. Greenstein and Regina Stein, Touchstone Books, \$20.00

A tremendous chronicle of Jewish history, this is a work that no Jewish home should be without. Written in an easy-to-read intelligent style, and arranged in chronological order, significant events of Jewish history are related to the general history of the world from pre-Biblical days to the modern era.

With this guide, the learned scholar or even youngsters could easily trace the history and culture of our people through the ages. Not a book one could sit down and read in one sitting, although it is difficult to put down once started, it is rather a life-long reference to be turned to again and again. "Timetables" is also filled with numerous tables, maps and photographs, all of which add to the understanding of the depth and richness of our people and their many contribution to the world. Written in a concise and clear manner, it perhaps could even ignite a spark in the reader to add to the rich ongoing history of our people.

Reviewed by Jeremy Zeltzer

Jeremy Zeltzer, who recently received his M.A. from Wayne State University, has a deep commitment to Jewish history and culture.

The following books are all reviewed by Alan Goldstein

Retired attorney Goldstein, with his wife Doris, critically examines scores of recently published non-fiction books.

A DIVIDED PEOPLE

by Jack Wertheimer, Basic Books (Harper Collins), 1993. \$25.00

This timely and significant book is a history of American Jewry from the end of World War II to the present. The emphasis in the book is on the divisions that exist in American Jewry, how they developed and where they are leading. Wertheimer lays the groundwork for the present split between Orthodoxy and the rest of Judaism, and speculates on the difficulties that may be faced in the future because of this split.

Professor Wertheimer, a leading professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, is well qualified, and writes a thoughtful and interesting book.

THE IMAGINARY JEW

by Alain Finfielkraut, Nebraska University Press, 1994. \$25.00

This series of nine extended essays is in part autobiographical on the post World War II status of French Jews. The ideas apply equally to American Jews. The author, Finfielkraut, born in 1949, is a real thinker and philosopher and is able to express ideas that the thinking Jew often senses, but is unable to articulate. With observations that really strike home, this book is the best – a must read!

BEHIND THE TIMES

by Edwin Diamond, Villard Press, 1994. \$24.00

This excellent and interesting book provides an inside look at the New York Times from its purchase by Adolph Ochs in 1896 until the present day. It highlights the major figures involved in the Times; the major departments including news, editorial and book reviews; the Times financial and circulation history; and the changes in policy and style.

The author acknowledges that the Times is the greatest newspaper in the United States, and studies it in a very readable narrative style. The Jewish ownership of the Times is covered as are its difficulties with its editorial policies because of this ownership. Although there is some minor criticism of the paper, the tone of the book is sympathetic and informative.

JUDAISM FACES THE TWENTIETH CENTURY:

A Biography of Mordecai M. Kaplan

by Mel Scult, Wayne State University Press, 1993. \$34.95

This biography examines the life of Kaplan from his childhood in Russia through his career in New York City as a teacher, rabbi and preeminent Jewish thinker - until his death in 1983 at the age of 102. It includes not only the history of the growth of the Conservative movement – in which Kaplan was a teacher and leader for more than five decades – but also the founding of the Reconstructionist Movement.

The book is a comprehensive, in depth, work on the man, his writings and his influence on American Judaism. Scult is a qualified biographer who does not talk down to his readers. I recommend this very well written book which is understandable and interesting to laymen.

CRUSADERS IN THE COURTS

by Jack Greenberg, Basic Books, 1994. \$30.00

This is the autobiography of Jack Greenberg, who for 23 years was the Director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the lawyer who, for them, was the cutting edge of the fight for civil rights from 1961 to 1984.

It is well written and factual. Greenberg doesn't boast or inflate his role. He gives due credit to the many others involved in the civil rights movement. It is apparent however that he was the brains and the driving force while he was director. This in an important book and tells a story worth telling.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO: THE BIRTH OF THE HEBREW FREE LOAN

by Milton Marwil

1895 saw the genesis of the Hebrew Free Loan Association in Detroit which followed the Biblical precept of Exodus 22:25, "If you lend money to any of my people, do not act toward him as a creditor - exact no interest from him."

Only two other cities in America had comparable associations: Pittsburgh, the first with a free loan association in 1890, and New York, the great Jewish metropolis, second, in 1892. Other eastern and midwestern cities, with even larger and older Jewish populations did not yet have such associations.

In Detroit in 1895, there were fewer than 5,000 Jews, a little more than one percent of the 352,000 estimated total population of the city. Mostly the newer Jewish immigrants were small business men and peddlers. By now, some of the older German Jewish families, as well as earlier Polish Jewish immigrants, were well established in successful businesses, and there were also a few professionals among them.

The nineteenth century was a time of political emancipation for the Jewish people, but only a few enjoyed social acceptance. Urban assaults were frequent and sometimes violent against the Eastern European Jewish immigrant.

"The Panic of 1893" was the beginning of an economic recession that lasted until 1897. Business activity declined considerably and unemployment reached 33 percent in some urban areas. In Detroit, a city undergoing industrialization, this was a period of upheaval with its attendant anti-Semitism virus. With little interference from the constabulary, life was made wretched for the poor Jewish peddlers by the out-of-work Irish and Polish laborers. Recent immigrants themselves, they set upon the Jewish vendors, mocking and beating them, sometimes with fatal results.⁵

In the fall of 1895, after the Holy Days when people are more spiritually minded, ten gentlemen convened for a philanthropic 'minyan'. With the age-old institution of free loan societies in the back of their minds, and the overt abuse of their kinsmen before their eyes, they joined together to launch an ancient institution of Jewish life in their city - the Hebrew Free Loan Association of Detroit.

Besides being men with a common interest, they were friends and neighbors. They all lived near each other in the Hastings Street area, east of the downtown. Some were in the same businesses and some must have shared membership in the same synagogue, mutual aid society or lodge.

Dr. Joseph Beisman was the one professional man. His office was on East Adams, not too far from his home on Hastings Street, north of Gratiot, which was



*Dr. Joseph Beisman,
Founder
495 Hastings Street*

Courtesy Detroit Free Press, May 11, 1903

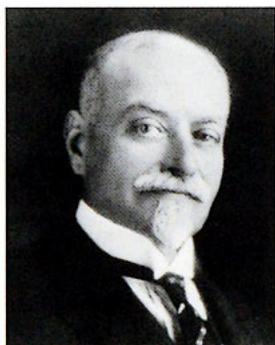
FREE LOAN SOCIETY

then a residential neighborhood. Doctor's house calls were common in those days and in his later years he was the obstetrician who delivered me at home and who was my pediatrician. Fee for service was paid on the spot, usually charging what the patient could afford. The Detroit Free Press of May 11, 1903 contained a feature article about Russian Jews in Detroit – with the pictures of ten successful Jewish citizens, including Dr. Beisman.

The rest of the founders of the Hebrew Free Loan Society were small business men, half of whom worked from their home addresses. Michael Davis and Jacob Burnstine were in the junk or scrap business. The latter must have been a man of substance, having his place of business, called Jacob Burnstine & Co., away from his home. He was the only business man of the ten with a telephone: number 1919.



*Michael Davis
First President 1895-1901
261 Winder Street*



*Selig Koploy
President 1901-1907,
1908-1913
289 Hastings Street*

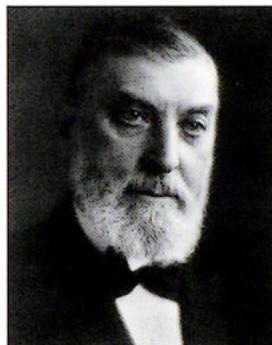
Selig Koploy was listed in the 1895 Detroit City Directory as a shoemaker, and he indeed owned a shoe store on a main commercial street of the time – Gratiot Avenue.

Moses Rubenstein made cigarettes and Jacob Lasky made cigars in their respective homes, a not uncommon turn-of-the-century trade. The latter was a jobber for Havana and domestic cigars as well.

Julius Rosenthal sold notions wholesale from a store on Gratiot avenue. Jewish peddlers purchased their dry goods and household goods from him, and retailed it from backpacks and wagons in the towns and rural roads of the state.

William Roth sold live poultry in a store around the corner from his home on Napoleon. After one hundred years, the streets are still there except for Hastings and Napoleon which fell in the way of Interstate 75.

Jacob Levin sold tailor trimmings. His business founded in 1884 has been continuously pursued by members of his immediate family and in ever larger quarters in the city for one hundred and ten years. It is now managed by three grandsons and a great-granddaughter. Jacob Levin came to the United States in 1875, celebrating his Bar Mitzvah on the boat as it plied through the north Atlantic. This unusual observance was



*Jacob Levin,
Founder
321 St. Antoine*

FREE LOAN SOCIETY

a precursor of his activity in Jewish life. Besides his work as a founder of the Hebrew Free Loan, he led the move to establish a Jewish Home for the Aged in 1907 and became its first president. He was a founding member of Yeshivah Beth Yehudah, the city's first Jewish day school.

The tenth man, David Meister, had a small grocery store on Hastings south of Gratiot, and lived in back or above the store. He seems to have prospered both financially and communally. In later years he was an organizer and first unpaid superintendent of the Jewish Old Folks Home, president of the Hebrew Cemetery Association called Machpelah, and president for fifteen years of the B'nai Israel Synagogue known as the Mullet Street Shul. He was also a member of the Beth Jacob synagogue.

In 1895 there was one Reform temple and either three or four Orthodox synagogues. Interchangeable names may have caused the discrepancy. Dr. Joseph Beisman, Michael Davis and Jacob Levin were members of Shaarey Zedek, although Dr. Beisman appears to have been a member of Temple Beth El ten years later. And William Roth was buried in 1923 in the Temple Beth El section of the Elmwood Cemetery on East Lafayette. Jacob Levin was active in Shaarey Zedek until 1907 when it became affiliated with the Conservative movement and hired a rabbi from the new Jewish Theological Seminary. He then joined a more traditional synagogue. David Meister belonged to two of the orthodox synagogues. The lack of proper archives does not place the names of the remaining five founders in any religious organization, but it can be assumed from their interest in "Gemulith Hasodim" –good deeds– that most were synagogue members.

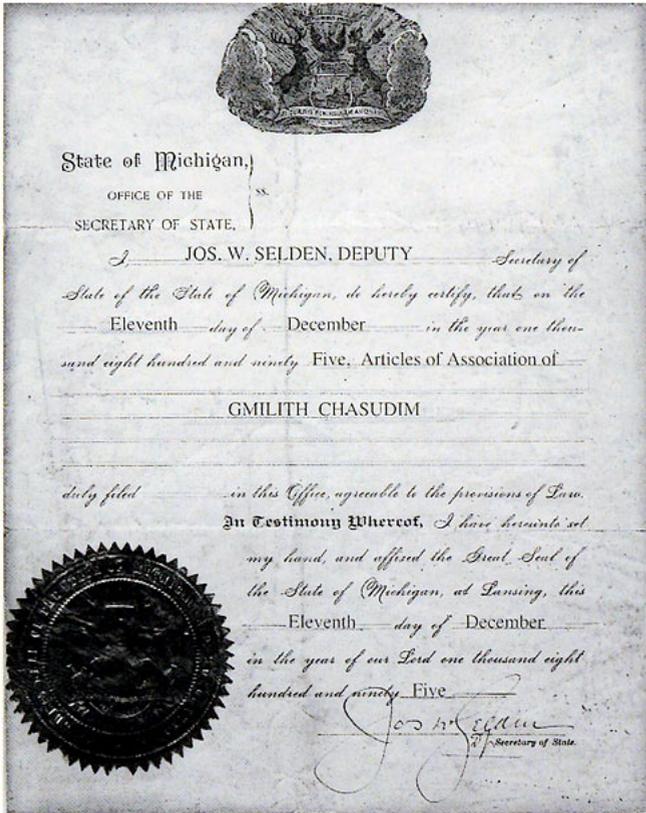
The founding group met in an office in back of Selig Kopluy's shoe store. The office must have been of no mean size because all the business of the Association was carried on there. Their first act of business was to draw up a constitution under the name of "Gemulith Hasodim," translated freely as "acts of loving kindness." Dr. Joseph Shellfish was the assistant secretary on the 5-man Constitutional Committee, or Committee on Laws, which concluded its labors on October 27, weeks before they were submitted to the state. However, his name does not appear with the 'Minyan' of ten names the next month on the official document of incorporation.



*Dr. Joseph Shellfish,
Constitution Committee
205 Gratiot Avenue*

The Articles of Association were recorded in the office of the county clerk on November 30, and officially filed with the State of Michigan on December 11, 1895. The State of Michigan document translated "Gemulith Hasodim" as "True Favor Association" and further stated, "Purpose and object to provide for relief of distressed members and other such benevolent and worthy purposes and objects as effects the members and other needy persons of the corporation." Although this wording fulfills the philanthropic creed of the Jews according to the laws of the Pentateuch, and satisfied the state officials of their corporate obligation, actually the

FREE LOAN SOCIETY



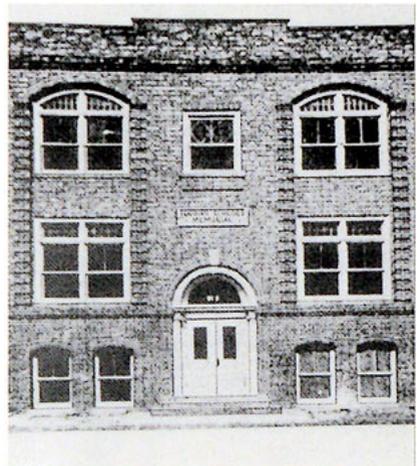
sole objective of the petitioners was to establish a free loan association. Perhaps, they reasoned, a non-interest loaning institution had a commercial flavor inimical to a not-for-profit charter. Be that as it may, they soon called themselves the Hebrew Free Loan Association.

Michael Davis was elected the first president and he kept the office for six years. Selig Koploy, the second president, also presided for another six years and then after an interval of a year, for five

more years until 1913. Those two gentlemen were the only chief executive officers of the organization from the original ten. The association moved in 1907 into the new Hannah Schloss Memorial Building on High Street, later called Vernor Highway.

In 1895 the Hebrew Free Loan Association of Detroit solicited donations from themselves and others and canvassed membership from the entire Jewish community, taxing each member five cents a week. They opened for business with an initial pool of about one thousand dollars.

According to the constitution, the office in Koploy's store had evening hours only, except on Friday and Saturday when it was closed for the Sabbath. The constitution provided that the Secretary and Treasurer



Hannah Schloss Memorial Building

FREE LOAN SOCIETY

must furnish bonds of one hundred and three hundred dollars respectively. They made loans from five to twenty-five dollars on notes for sixty days that could be renewed, usually with a piece of jewelry as security. An indigent Jew could get loans for a variety of needs - and the peddler could now get loans to get started in business or to enhance that business -in order to launch his new life as an American.

These pioneer founders set up a free loan society to help their needy fellows that has worked and endured for a century. To this day it continues to provide a vital source of help to those in need, and indeed will continue far into the next century.

- ¹ Archives, Congregation Shaarey Zedek
- ² Archives, Hebrew Free Loan Association
- ³ Archives, Temple Beth El
- ⁴ Detroit City Directory 1895 and 1896
- ⁵ Dinerstein, Anti-Semitism in America P.53
- ⁶ Rockaway: The Jews of Detroit, Wayne State University Press. P. 82, 103

Milton Marwil's first appearance in the 1991 Michigan Jewish History traced the history of the Beth Olem Cemetery, now in the Cadillac Motor Car Company parking lot. With this article, Marwil, a member of the Executive Board of the Jewish Historical Society, launches the centennial celebration of the Hebrew Free Loan Association.



Milton Marwil

FOOTNOTES FROM THE EDITOR

It was a great honor for me to be asked to speak on behalf of the JHS/M about the publication of journals at the May conference of the American Jewish Historical Society in Waltham, Massachusetts. It is rewarding to know that our journal, Michigan Jewish History, which is subscribed to by libraries and universities around the world, is considered a model for other Jewish historical societies.

* * *

Don't miss the exhibit "World War II Remembered" at our own Detroit Historical Society at Woodward and Kirby until June, 1995. This fascinating retrospective of local people and events during the time of the proud struggle includes photos and memorabilia submitted by members of our Jewish Historical Society. Including uniformed and costumed mannequins and posters of the day, this colorful exhibit is also enjoyable for children.

* * *

Watch for Benno Levi's article "From Tyranny to Freedom: Resettlement, 1934,"

FOOTNOTES



Photo by John Mayer

Hugh Broder, Adele Staller, Carol Roberts, Sharon Alterman, Barbara Marcuse, Dr. Aaron Lupovitch, along with other participants, enjoy the visit to the historic Beth Olam Cemetery on the October JHS/M tour of Historic Jewish Detroit.

which first appeared in our 1992 journal, to be re-published in the state's Spring 1995 issue of Michigan History. This beautifully written narrative describes Levi's 1934 exodus at the age of eleven from his home town in Germany and his resettlement in Detroit. Levi is treasurer of the JHS/M.

The JHS/M has supplied artifacts,

photos, and archives for exhibit to the splendid Michigan Museum of History in Lansing, as well as to the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. We are pleased to thus help present a fuller representation of life in Michigan.

"For Your Family or Your Organization: How to Set Up an Archives," by Jewish Community Archives director Sharon Alterman, which first appeared in our 1993 Michigan Jewish History, has been republished by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit under a grant from the Max M. Fisher Jewish Community Foundation.

Milton Marwil's story, "A Child's Remembrance of Palestine Past" - his own reminiscences about his 1924 trip to Palestine - has been published in the Jerusalem Post on Sunday, September 11, 1994. JHS/M Board member Marwil's historical retrospective of the 1895 birth of the Hebrew Free Loan one hundred years ago appears in this issue of Michigan Jewish History.



A tour of homes in the Boston-Edison historic district proved a big attraction in September. Our tour group, including children of the families who had lived there at one time, were hosted in the former homes of Rabbi Leo Franklin, the Sloman Family, Abraham Siegel, Meyer Prentis, and Benjamin Siegel. Harriet Siden was chairperson of this event.

FOOTNOTES

"Becoming American Women: Clothing and the Jewish Immigrant Experience, 1880 - 1920" is the fascinating new major national exhibit at the handsome Chicago Historical Society. December 7 is the date of the JHS/M Great Day in Chicago which will tour this exhibit and the Spertus Museum, the largest Jewish museum between the coasts.

The Jewish Museum in New York has opened an exhibition "Jewish Life in Czarist Russia: A World Rediscovered," on view through March 5. Preserved in the State Ethnographic Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, the artifacts have been on tour to museums in Jerusalem, Amsterdam, and Cologne and Frankfurt in Germany.

Such a list makes one want to bring closer to realization the JHS/M dream of a small Jewish museum in the Cultural Center of Detroit - to interpret for both Jews and non-Jews, for schoolchildren and tourists, the proud history of Jewish life in America, Michigan, and in Detroit.

Congratulations to JHS/M supporter Mary Lou Zieve on her election to the presidency of the Detroit Historical Society.

The first 20th Century Jewish encyclopedia written in Russia is seeking names and information about American Jews of Russian origin who have achieved prominence. Send relevant material to: Russian Jewry Encyclopedia Project, American Jewish

Committee, Office of European Affairs, 1156 Fifteenth Street NW, Washington DC 20005.

Judith Levin Cantor, editor



Photo by James D. Grey

The World Jewish Monuments exhibit was brought by the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan to the Jewish Community Center in February. The event was chaired by Sharon and Larry Berry.



Photo by JLC-RKIVES

Sylvia Babcock and Joseph Kramer archiving the remaining papers for the Philip Slomovitz collection. Alan Kandel and Evelyn and Ben Paxton also participated in this project, chaired by Judy Cantor. Over 70 feet of the Slomovitz papers have now been indexed and placed in the Jewish Community Archives. The JHS/M is now turning to the papers at the Burton Library and is signing up volunteers.

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN ANNUAL REPORT, JUNE 1994

by Gilbert Borman - Immediate Past President

Four years passes very quickly. It seems like only yesterday that I became President of the Jewish Society of Michigan. But it really has been four years and the by-laws do strictly state that I am not eligible for another term. Continuity was one of the most important goals that I set four years ago- I can honestly say that the Historical Society is ready for the future. We have momentum in membership and leadership, coupled with financial strength and a higher community profile. The Jewish Historical Society is moving forward.

I would like this afternoon to briefly touch upon what I believe I have learned in my four years as President of JHSM. My comments are not only aimed at you the members of our Society, but rather to the entire Jewish community, both locally, nationally and internationally.

In four short years the entire world has seen dramatic pivotal events reshape the entire world political map and also seen tremendous parallel changes to our national and world Jewish communities.

Five years ago a State Department thinker by the name of Fukiyama published a book called The End of History. He couldn't have been more wrong. The only thing we can definitely say is that world events are occurring at a very fast rate and on a global basis in a way we have never seen before. America, Israel and the Jewish



Photo by Robert Benyas

Suzanne Shifman, chairman of the day; Rube and Elizabeth Weiss, who presented special readings and Judy Cantor, newly inducted president.

world are transitioning through what I believe will be one of the most difficult and challenging periods in human history. Global, economic and social orders are being realigned and forever altered. The very same shock waves that are creating information super highways are transitioning world events into a brave new world of continuous dramatic change.

It is in precisely this new landscape that modern Judaism finds itself today- for our people to survive in this era will be quite a challenge.

In America, Judaism has become a voluntary association. Modern Jewish identity must be shaped in an era of mass communication, popular television and, yes, Nintendo. The Jewish faith is not entertainment. It is a heritage. Our goal and



Photo by Robert Benyas

Gilbert Borman, delivering Annual Report

challenge as modern Jews is passing on that heritage to the next generation – by the shaping of self-identity and by building links between the individual and his heritage. The modern Jewish heritage is shaped through Jewish identification in terms of Israel, the community and family – and the link of history.

The new great truth is that we have all become educators. Jewish education has become the foremost concern and focus of virtually every Jewish community. Each and every one of us has a duty to help prepare

the next generation. We must make sure that our story gets passed on. The challenge is to present ourselves in a modern context – if we cannot find relevant ways of teaching people who they are – new generations will not know and will stop being Jewish.

The initial question we must be asking ourselves is: What are the cornerstones of our heritage and what is it about being Jewish that will make people want to stay Jewish? The Jewish heritage has everything to offer. Religiously, intellectually, spiritually and socially it can be the most satisfying way of life that one could find. Appreciating it may take a little work. We must convince the next generation that the work is worth it- whatever is given towards the effort pays for itself many time over. Our values are timeless and the Jewish visions of Tzedukah, Tikkun Olam and the Zionist dream can provide a satisfying life of meaning.

So we have a lot going for us. We just have to make better use of what we have.

We start by telling our children that they are the heirs to a unique story and a unique faith- for more more that 3500 years we have been the Jewish people. Find me a Babylonian or Assyrian or a Khazar. You cannot. No other people can claim such permanence. This is where we must begin with our children.

‘You are special. You are the latest edition of the world’s best and oldest story. If you will look you find whatever you need to find- who you are, where you came from and what it is that makes you special. No one can force you to be Jewish. There are many who do not want you to be Jewish- but I do want you to take our heritage and give the precious gift to your own children.’

Look at what we have to offer:

The State of Israel alone has reshaped the modern Jewish identity. Whatever we

ANNUAL REPORT

were before the Diaspora has been taken out, sifted through 2,000 years of history, and placed back in the original Holy Land. Never before in history has a people been disassociated from its homeland and recreated itself. We have now done it twice! No other people has even done it once.

Jews outside of the Holy Land must find the roots of their heritage here that also provide the needed self identity and pride in Jewish achievement. The Jewish contribution to American society has been enormous- we just don't talk about it enough any more. In every field of American life, the Jewish contribution has been outstanding. When American society was less open we persevered and did our part in building the nation, and when the gates of opportunity were opened, we showed that Jews were proud to contribute effectively in every aspect of American life.

This story, if properly told can give American Jewish youth the two things it needs to succeed: — standards of excellence and pride in our people.



Photo by Robert Benyas

Rabbi Irwin Groner congratulates Walter and Lea Field on their 65th wedding anniversary and Leonard Simons on his 90th birthday.

every other modern problem arrayed against educating the young. It is no small wonder that the modern Jewish family is very hard pressed to provide all of the information and experiences necessary for the transmission of Jewish identity. The modern Jewish family, in whatever its form, must have one central value- we must tell our children who they are.

It follows then that the Jewish community itself must help to bridge the gap between what families themselves can provide. Synagogues, Federation and various organizations of the Jewish community must be focused on doing more to instill Jewish self-identity. I never had a class on what it meant to be Jew- I wish I had. Everything I have learned is because I wanted to learn it. If I had had such a class, I would have wanted to learn more. We must make sure that we are giving every child we possibly can the tools they need to keep themselves Jewish. If their identity is

there, their lifestyles will follow.

In a world without clear maps, with blurred identities, the case for Jewish history is very simple. Jewishness is ultimately carried by the individual. We must bring all of our resources to bear on shaping each identity through education. The self identification grounded upon a vision of who you are and what your community is and has done, can and will succeed despite everything modernity can throw against it. Indeed, we should not be surprised to find that modernity will do us the kindness of helping to build what we need, such as the film "Shindler's List," which this year dramatically raised Jewish consciousness and identity.

Orwell once said "Who controls the present controls the past, who controls the past controls the future." While he was applying this to the misuse of history, it is no less true with the proper use of history. We can use our past to build our future. With our past we would be foolish not to do so.

We have an exciting, dynamic and amazing story to tell. What I have learned in four years as President of JHSM is that thoughtful innovative programming can tell our people's story and tell it well. The Jewish Historical Society has learned that we can tell all sides of what it means to be Jewish in America in the modern age and stimulate Jewish minds, young and old. We will always need your support to do so, but with the help you have given us and the strength of our hearts I can predict that the succeeding generation of Jews will exceed and excel as no other generation before has ever done.



Photo by Robert Benyas

Officers and Board of Directors: First row, left to right: Doris Easton, Suzanne Shifman, Ida Levine, Harriet Siden, Abraham Satovsky, Benno Levi, Adele Staller, Cynthia Mandelbaum, Hugh Broder, Judy Cantor, Stanley Meretsky. Second row: James D. Grey, Cynthia Brody, Gilbert Borman, immediate past president; Sheldon Satovsky, Jeffrey Borin. Not pictured: Gertrude Edgar, Denise Brown, Helene Cherrin, Dorothy Kaufman, Milton Marwil, Steven Parzen.

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