

MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY



Michigan played a pivotal role in the Jewish agricultural movement at the turn of the 20th century.



Jewish Farming in Michigan; W.M.U.'s Early Music Professor; U.P.'s First Jewish Families; Tricentennial Time Capsule; An Arctic Pioneer; Dr. Piero Foa; A Merchant of Lapeer

Volume 42

Fall 2002, Tishrei 5763

Michigan Jewish History
is dedicated to the memory of
Sarah and Ralph Davidson
and
Bessie and Joseph Wetsman
The parents and grandparents of
William Davidson and Dorothy Davidson Gerson

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Cover photo: Esther Rosen, mother of Rochelle Lupovitch, with her pet cow on her parents' farm in Rochester, MI, c. 1900. See "Jewish Farming in Michigan." Photo courtesy of Rochelle Lupovitch.

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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

Volume 42

Fall 2002

Tishrei 5763

The Journal of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan

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Jewish Farming in Michigan

By Holly Teasdale

While there have been Jews involved in farming since colonial times, the major Jewish agricultural movement in the United States began with the influx of Jewish immigration set in motion by the persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe and Russia in the 1880s. The young Jewish intelligentsia in Russia formed the idealistic socialist Am Olam movement, with the idea of rebuilding their lives through agriculture. Jewish farming was not unknown in Europe and Russia, but only on rented land. The young idealists wanted not only to live healthy lives but also to partake in the noble profession of agriculture. Their ideas included a quasi-religious belief in the spiritual value of farming.¹ Coming to the U.S. merchants, professionals, and students sacrificed wealth and station to take part in this idealistic notion of returning to the land that had been refused to them in Europe. The organizers of collective farms came from all walks of life. They were secular as well as religious. Some were dependent on the Baron de Hirsch Fund, while others supported themselves financially or sought funds from philanthropic groups.

Farming was promoted nationally in Jewish newspapers such as the *American Israelite* (edited by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise), the *Occident*, and the *American Jewish Advocate*. The Baron de Hirsch Fund was organized in 1891 by the legacy of Baron Maurice de Hirsch, with an endowment of \$2.4 million and a broad social and service agenda, of which agricultural settlement was one of many efforts. In 1900, the fund consolidated all of its farm-related activities into a separate organization—the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society (JAIAS), later shortened to the Jewish Agricultural Society (JAS).

Promoting Jewish Farming

Jewish farming settlements were encouraged by the founder of the Jewish Agriculturalist's Aid Society of America (JAAS, 1888-1910), Rabbi A. R. Levy of Congregation B'nai Abraham in Chicago. According to its charter, the JAAS's general objective was to "promote agricultural pursuits among the Jews in general, and to assist and encourage such of the Jewish poor as are unable and willing to establish themselves as farmers."² The society saw that farming was a way not only to assist a new wave of immigrants, but to promote assimilation and to counter prevailing stereotypes.³ By 1908 the Chicago society had assisted almost forty families throughout the Midwest. Of the states selected for settlement, Michigan was the second most preferred. It attracted twenty-three percent of the JAAS loan recipients, most of whom were homesteaders.⁴ Soon after the death of Dr. Levy, the Chicago office liquidated its affairs and surrendered its interests to the JAS in 1912.

The JAS provided low-interest loans, offered legal and business advice, and dispensed information on the latest agricultural techniques. Trained agents went to the farms to advise and confer with farmers. There were scholarships available to attend agricultural colleges, and the journal, *The Jewish Farmer*, was published in Yiddish and English.

Statistics compiled by the JAIAS in 1911 reported that there were 3,718 farming families in the United States.⁵ However, the U. S. Immigration Commission estimated that this represented only seventy-five percent of the actual total. Using these statistics, we can estimate that there were over one hundred Jewish-owned farms in Michigan in 1911, comprising almost ten thousand acres of farmland. However, it is difficult to be precise; among the problems in counting Jewish farmers is that no agency ever took a comprehensive census of farmers in the early years of Jewish settlement.⁶ Also, for many, farming was a short-lived endeavor—often only two to five years. Thus many families moved on before one of the Jewish agencies or benevolent societies was aware of them.

Michigan played a pivotal role in the Jewish agricultural movement around the turn of the twentieth century, and many important Detroit leaders of the time took an interest in Jewish farming in Michigan,

including Dr. Leo M. Franklin, Fred M. Butzel, Herman Jacobs, Judge Theodore Levin, Saul R. Levin, and Rabbi Leon Fram. However, their involvement is eclipsed by the stories of the many farmers who journeyed to begin to till the soil in the American heartland. These pioneers established their farming careers in one of two ways—through agricultural colonies or as individual farmers.

“...there were over one hundred Jewish-owned farms in Michigan in 1911, comprising almost ten thousand acres of farmland.”

Agricultural Colonies in Michigan

The beginning of Jewish farming in Michigan came at a very early period. In 1882, Lazarus Silberman, a Chicago banker, assisted twelve families to settle at Carp Lake, in Emmet County, about six miles south of the Mackinac Straits. There is very little documentation of this settlement.⁷ Like other experiments in the U. S. at this time, it had only a brief existence. In 1890, Isaac Berliner was assisted by the JAAS to settle at Twelve Corners in Berrien County on Lake Michigan, near Benton Harbor.⁸ The following year, Russian immigrants who fled the pogroms, founded the Palestine Colony in Bad Axe. These immigrants blended the love of Zion and the desire to become closer to the land.

Hyman Lewenberg read of the efforts of Jewish colonization in the 1880s and conceived of the idea of establishing a Jewish colony in Michigan. While peddling around Bad Axe in Michigan's thumb area, Lewenberg had become acquainted with bankers who owned immense stretches of land. They promised to sell land on easy terms if Lewenberg could bring together a sufficiently large group of Jewish purchasers. These negotiations resulted in the purchase of twelve contiguous parcels of land in July 1891 by Hyman Lewenberg, Aaron Kahn, Wolf Baerman, Sam Eckstein, Joseph Beckman, Moses Rosenberg, Abraham Goldman, Uriah Steinborn, Sam Steinborn, Jacob Lipowsky, Louis Malinoff, and Joe Malinoff. In the autumn of that year, Louis Kostikoff, Moses Heidenrich, and another bought land under the same conditions. Attuned to the ideal of establishing a new Zion in free America, they named their new colony Palestine.

Five or six crude sheds built out of saplings and partially burned logs were constructed and the clearing of land for planting began, with the families camping in the open while the work was started. When the winter of 1891-92 set in, some of the colonists were forced to return to Bay City and resume peddling. Those who remained in the colony relied on money from family members in Bay City to get by.⁹

A Jewish peddler who witnessed the colonists' suffering related their story to Martin Butzel, a prominent Detroit merchant, Congregation Beth El member, and president of the Beth El Hebrew Relief Society. Butzel turned for advice to a friend and fellow Beth El member, Emanuel Wodic. Wodic was an experienced farmer with twenty-five years of successful farming behind him. At the time, he was living in Utica, north of Detroit, on a small farm where he had retired due to his advancing years. His wife's illness had compelled him to give up his larger farm in Macomb County.

Emanuel Wodic had arrived in America in 1854 from Bohemia at the age of eighteen, and his first job was working on a farm in Long Island, NY. In 1856, he enlisted in the US Army. After a heroic career in the Civil War (he participated in the battles of Bull Run, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg), he was honorably discharged and went to Michigan. He bought a forty-acre farm in Macomb County, where over the next quarter-century, he became one of the foremost farmers in the county.¹⁰



Wodic: Emanuel Wodic, with his Civil War medal, undated.

Courtesy Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives, Temple Beth El, Bloomfield Hills, MI

Support and Advice for the New Colony

It was natural for Butzel to turn to Wodic as the ideal man to investigate the conditions of Bad Axe. When Wodic arrived in Bad Axe in March 1892, sixteen farms had been taken up. Upon Wodic's return to Detroit, Butzel called a special meeting of the Beth El Relief Society. Immediately a supply of clothing, groceries, and matzoh was sent to Bad Axe. Arrangements were made to procure fodder for the livestock, and a fund of \$1,200 was entrusted to Wodic to use according to his best judgment. At the same time, Butzel began correspondence with the Baron de Hirsch Fund, which had been in existence about year. The Fund appropriated \$3,000 for the colony.

Wodic bought equipment, livestock, groceries, and seed for planting for each family. Becoming the agricultural advisor and leader of the colony, he remained through the summer of 1892 teaching the colonists how to sow, cultivate, and harvest, and he oversaw the installation of a temporary sawmill to cut logs from the continuing clearing of the land. However, living accommodations were so poor that he lived in the village of Bad Axe, making the journey to the settlement everyday. Wodic received no compensation for his work. Almost from the start, religious services were conducted in the Palestine Colony every Sabbath, and Saturday was a day of cessation from labor. At first, worship was held in one of the little shacks; later a small synagogue was built. Charles Goodwin of Bay City was the spiritual leader, cantor,



Courtesy Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives,
Temple Beth El, Bloomfield Hills, MI.

Ben and Max Ellias, members of the Palestine Colony on horseback, c. 1890s.

and religious teacher in 1892, which he did without pay.¹¹ A modest Talmud Torah building was erected.

Despite the hard work and assistance, debts continued to build for the colonists, as all of the work was merely preparatory. Butzel used the money from the Baron de Hirsch fund to pay off the interest owed on the land. During the Succoth holidays in 1892, the colonists' products were exhibited at Temple Beth El—the first exhibition of farm products raised by Jews to be held in the United States. The Baron de Hirsch Fund loaned more money to the colony, again given in trust to Butzel and passed on to Wodic to help the colonists. However, Wodic had to leave the colony due to his wife's illness and death. The years 1893 to 1894 marked the height of the colony's agricultural activity. Unfortunately the crops of both years on which the colonists pinned their hopes had failed. The autumn of 1893 found them again unable to meet the interest on their land contracts, and again Butzel had to pay the debt.

The Demise of Palestine

The struggle was difficult, the crops unyielding, and the threat of eviction loomed. The colonists asked Butzel to speak on their behalf to their debtors. In his correspondence, Butzel pleaded for leniency: "You must have patience with these poor farmers, be they Jews or Christians.... You would not be so cruel as to set families with small children out of doors."¹² Despite Butzel's intervention and the extension of the contract repayment until 1906, the crop of 1897 again failed. A petition was dispatched to the Baron de Hirsch Fund in which the colonists suggested that it might be advisable for the Fund to buy the land outright. An agent was sent to investigate, but the Fund decided that prolonging the colony was not in anyone's best interest.¹³ The rest of 1897 and 1898 saw more financial tragedies, failed crops, and continuing problems. The real disintegration of the colony began in 1899 when three colonists abandoned their farms. By 1900, only eight families remained. Except for three



Courtesy Mrs. Hadassah Snider.

The Magnus farmhouse in Bangor.

the existing years of a colony, which usually lasted only a few years.¹⁴

The Sunrise Farm

Another agricultural colony was formed in Alicia, south of Saginaw, in 1933. Known as the Sunrise Cooperative Farm Community, it too had a short but energetic existence and was over by 1938. It was situated on a 10,000-acre plot known as Prairie Farm and at its height had ninety-seven families. Formed as a social and economic experiment by Joseph J. Cohen, a well-known anarchist who had successfully organized a commune in New Jersey, it was intended to be "a way out of the present misery and insecurity...along the lines of collectivist or communist collaboration in solidarity and mutual aid, and away from the present competitive struggle for existence based on private property."¹⁵ The idea was to have the cooperative members live and work as "one big family," producing primarily for the needs of the colony and only for outside markets to secure funds for unavoidable cash expenditures.¹⁶ Prairie Farm had been in existence since 1893 as a model sugar beet farm owned by the Pittcairn brothers, Pittsburgh millionaires and owners of the Owosso Sugar Company, and worked by various waves of immigrants.¹⁷ A group of Cohen's supporters met in Detroit to organize the colony, dubbing it the Sunrise Farm, and wrote up the prospectus for the colony. Although most of the colonists who embarked on their new life at Sunrise were born Jews, they renounced most religious beliefs for the ideals of socialism. As with most utopian ventures, they believed they were building a new world.

parcels, all land finally reverted to the sellers and was later sold to German immigrants.

The Palestine Colony was established by a small band of peddlers, utterly devoid of agricultural experience, separated from a larger Jewish community, with an insignificant initial capital settling on lands that were swampy, cut over, burned out and infertile. An agricultural depression in the United States at the time also weighed heavily against their success. It is almost surprising they lasted as long as they did. Despite all of the aid they received and the dedication of the colonists, the odds against them were simply too great.

The congregational and local benevolent society support provided by the Detroit Jewish community to the Palestine Colony was typical of the Jewish agricultural movement in the United States. An "urban patron group and semi planned settlement of aspiring farm settlers" began a relationship over

At its height, the colony had about sixty buildings, including a dairy, a blacksmith shop, tinsmith, machine and woodworking shops, creamery, shoe repair, and numerous storage buildings. There was a community kitchen and barbershop. They kept dairy and beef cattle, sheep, horses, and pigs. The crops were many, including corn, potatoes, mint, onions, carrots, and sugar beets. They maintained their own vehicles and farm equipment. There was a school for the younger children. At a young age, children were removed from parents and raised in the "children's community" until they were of the age to attend high school, when they were bused by the colony to Saginaw. The colony school had irregular lesson times and no structured education. In 1993 when those who had grown up on the farm during those brief years had a reunion, they likened their experience to "one big pajama party."¹⁸ While it was not always so easy, with endless work on the farm and multiple chores for all the children, those few years left lasting memories.

Ideals vs. Reality

The initial exhilaration for the colony soon gave way to dissension. There was a lack of money and resources, and the once high standards for membership were dropped to gain more members, who often had no skills to add to the community. Disagreements, arguments, and political differences eventually brought the colony to its knees. In 1938, the resettlement project was over. The Sunrise Cooperative was bought out by the resettlement department of the federal government, which allowed the individuals who were financially invested to walk away without too much damage.

As with most attempts at utopian societies, these farming colonies failed. They all suffered the same fate—brief struggle and abrupt death. They were generally planned with high ideals, under poverty and stress, and undertaken without understanding the dangers of their own making. The desire to initiate a Jewish life through labor, to spurn stereotypes, and to become immersed in an American way of life or to create an idealized one was met with poor planning, lack of knowledge, and for some, plain bad luck. The desires of Jewish-Americans to help their immigrant brethren establish lives for themselves made these developments a possibility, but even moral and financial support could not sustain these colonies for long. Very few in America were ever successful.

The Individualists

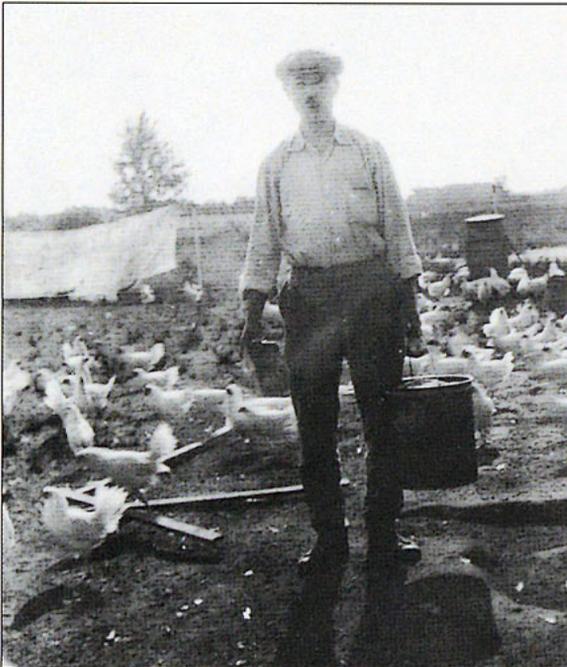
The JAS felt that the failure of colonized farming would be seen as a black mark on Jewish agricultural endeavors, instead of on the weakness of collectivist colonization.¹⁹ By the 1930s there were Jewish farmers in the vicinity of every fair-sized city in Michigan.²⁰ In the southwestern part of the state, Jewish farmers were eking out their existence with much success in the areas surrounding South Haven and Benton Harbor. Most of these farmers were aided through the JAAS and later the JAS.

Benton Harbor was in the center of the fruit belt of Michigan, yielding many successful fruit farmers. Of the twenty or so Jewish families that had farmed in the area, only one, the Rosenberg Brothers Orchards, remained in full time farming by 1983.²¹ Remembrances of this farming experience were recorded in *Michigan Jewish History* in Ceil Pearl Schnapik's article, "Jewish Farmers of the Benton Harbor Area."²² South Haven, known as a resort town, got its start as a farming community, most notably detailed in the 1999 book, *A Time to Remember: A History of The Jewish Community in South Haven*, by Bea Kraus. In the South Haven area, Jewish farmers did general farm-

ing as well as developing one of the largest commercial poultry groups in the section.²³ By 1920, twenty-eight Jewish farmers had established farms in the area. To supplement their income, the farmers began to let rooms to vacationers who came during the summer months to get a taste of the countryside. Eventually, it became more profitable to run a resort than a farm, and many abandoned the farms. At its height, South Haven had sixty-three resorts run by Jewish immigrants for Jewish vacationers.²⁴ With the coming of farmers, the Jewish urban population of South Haven increased as well. With loans from the JAS, the residents were able to erect a synagogue and community center building in 1928.

The Magnus Family of Bangor

Hadassah Snider, born in Tomahawk, Wisconsin, came to Bangor, Michigan (between South Haven and Kalamazoo), with her parents in 1923. Her memories of growing up on a farm are vivid. Her family's forty-acre farm, about four-and-a-half miles from Bangor, was primarily a poultry farm, but her parents also took in vacationers, as did so many in this growing resort area. She remembers the families on neighboring farms, named Babok, Moskowitz, Cohen, Offengenden, and Kaftuk. Some had been homesteaders in other parts of the country before they came to Michigan, including her family, which had homesteaded in Wisconsin from 1917 to 1920, where she was born. Many of the neighboring farms existed mostly as resorts, such as the Babok's and the Cohen's (Twin Pines Resort). Snider recalls that most of the farmers, including her own family, received guidance from the JAS and monies from the Baron de Hirsch fund:



Courtesy Mrs. Hadassah Snider.

Paul Magnus with his chickens, on his farm in Bangor, c. 1920s.

“My father [Paul Magnus] was able to purchase a farm with a loan from the JAS. The loan bought the land, a cow, a horse and left us with \$150 cash. The first winter, my father went back to Chicago to work as a milkman, and my sister Rose and my mother [Minnie Magnus] ran the farm in his absence. When he returned in spring we bought a bunch of chicks. They stayed in the attic until my father built the chicken coop.

“We were secular Jews—no religion. Many immigrants from Russia during this time were secular and socialists (Bolsheviks). My father came from Russia to America when he was sixteen years old and settled in Philadelphia to go to school and became a pharmacist. His real name was Peretz

Raivy, but while taking Latin, he changed his name to Paul Magnus: Paul for small, and Magnus for great, because he said he didn't know if he was going to be big or...a small man.

"My parents settled in Bangor because it was an area that the JAS was settling Jewish families in at that time. We were one of the last Jewish families to move into the area. I think one of the reasons my father became a farmer in Wisconsin was to avoid the draft, because farmers were exempt, but I cannot say for sure. When we left Wisconsin and went to Chicago, my father decided he wanted to become a serious farmer and they decided to move to farm in Michigan. He also thought that Jews should work with the land.

"My father had connections with an instructor at the Michigan State University extension program for agriculture and sought out valuable information such as how to build the chicken coop, the best feed to use, and what prescriptions to use. That is primarily what we raised on the farm—chickens. We had a large vegetable garden and flower garden for our personal use, and we canned everything, but we kept chickens for egg production. Most farmers were general farmers, but my father decided to specialize with poultry and eggs. He had an egg route in Chicago, which I assume he established through his route as a milkman. We all had chores around the house and farm—cleaning the chicken coop, collecting eggs, gardening, canning. My brother's job was to milk and care for the cow.

"My mother started to take in vacationers, but she couldn't stand dealing with the adults and sent them on to the resorts in South Haven (it was a small house), so we only took in children. It was more like a summer camp. She began taking them in when my sister Rose went to college to help pay for her college tuition...[and continued this] to help pay for my college tuition as well when it was my time to attend.

"The JAS used to bring out people to show my father's farm as a "model farm." The JAS agent, Mr. Simon, was a very nice man, and I remember him well. He used to come out all the time at the beginning. Later, he did not come by so often.... My mother emigrated from Poland (then Lithuania) when she was young and came to live with her brothers and sisters. She met my father in Minneapolis, where she had gone to live with friends, and my father was working following the harvests. He had left pharmacy to do other things and worked farms and odd jobs, until he met my mother and they settled in Wisconsin.

"There was a sense of community among the Jewish farmers – talking and sharing. There was talk of forming a co-op at one time between the Jewish farmers but they were all too independent.

"My parents had different priorities [from other farmers] and always upgraded the house first. We had electricity, a phone, running water. We were always the first to have these improvements. My mother believed in being self-educated and taking in the world around her; my father, too. Once a year my mother would go to Chicago to take in the symphony and museums and do some shopping. We received two Jewish newspapers a week, literary magazines, and there were always lots of books. We had a rich childhood—a sense of oneness with nature and the land, but a drive to be educated and worldly.

"My mother spoke Yiddish, and we spoke Yiddish in the home until I was eight or nine years old. My brother never learned to speak Yiddish because he was too young when we began to speak English in the home. My mother wanted to learn to



A Chanukah play production sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, Department of Farm and Rural Work, South Haven, MI, December 26, 1929. Hadassah Magnus, second from left.

speak English, although she never learned to write it that well. I knew so much about the family business and affairs as I was my mother's secretary; she dictated her English letters to me and I had to look at her correspondence and bills. She was an early suffragette and feminist. She raised me and my sister to be independent so we would not have to rely on a husband. It was very important to her that both of her daughters go to college, and we did. I left at the age of sixteen and attended Kalamazoo College and majored in chemistry and biology. I went to Chicago to find work and quickly realized there was no work for Jewish women in chemistry. I got a job through the WPA as a lab assistant in a tuberculosis hospital. But I always went home on weekends, vacations and holidays – the farm was always home to me. Friends from college always enjoyed coming for visits to the farm – it was idyllic, and my parents could always talk to them on their level. It was home, but I never wanted to farm myself.”

The Upper Peninsula's Cohodas Family

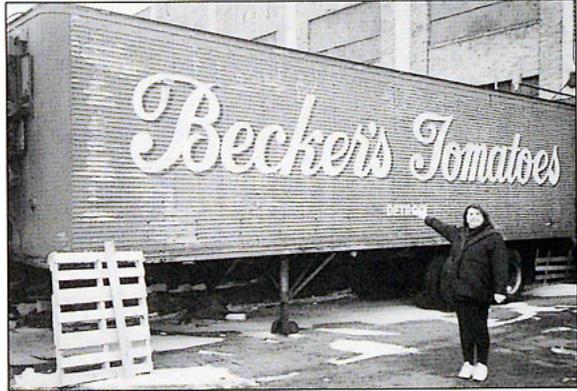
The Cohodas family, arriving in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan after *pogroms* in Russia, worked hard in their newfound home. The extended family worked all kinds of jobs to succeed.²⁵ Harry, who was later joined by his brother Sam, entered the retail produce business in 1915. In 1925, the year they became wholesalers, the Cohodas brothers, Sam and Harry, started buying crops and packing under their own supervision and with a Cohodas label.²⁶ In 1931, Sam Weksler, who himself was buying about 150,000 bushels of apples annually for Cohodas, suggested to the brothers at the opening of their Ishpeming (near Marquette) warehouse in 1931 that they grow apples themselves. Less than a year later, the Cohodas's became growers as well as distributors in Manistee (on the west coast of Michigan), buying up orchards and acreage for growing apples as well as cherries, with Weksler managing the business for them.

Harry Becker, The Celery King

Another farmer who supplemented a larger packaging and distribution business was Harry Becker of Harry Becker Tomatoes. Barbara Keidan, an artist, remembers her father's business and the supplemental farm they had in Decatur (east of Benton Harbor):

"My father had a business selling tomatoes and celery. He had a farm that supplemented it. The farm was in Decatur, but the packaging plant was in Detroit. My father was from Lithuania and grew up on a farm. Of course they rented, as Jews were not allowed to own land. He loved growing up on the farm. He emigrated to American in 1915 when he was 15 to avoid the Russian Army. He was so proud to be able to own a farm.

"I had a pony on the farm, with a hand-tooled saddle. We also had two other horses, Bessie and Queenie, that pulled the plow. I used to ride them, too. We never lived there because my father spent most of his time in Detroit with the packaging plant. It was a long drive to get there, especially long for a child. I remember playing with the farmer's kids when I was up there and embarrassed by the fact that we had so much and they had so little.



Karen Myerson discovers a truck of her grandfather Harry "Tomato" Becker.

"The farm was an auxiliary of his packaging business. The business was at Fort and Green streets at the Detroit Union Produce Terminal. He was called the 'Tomato' or the 'Celery King,' depending on what distributor was buying from him. He sold to big and little stores. He did not grow tomatoes on the farm, but bought those from other farmers. But he did grow onions and celery."

The Rosens of Rochester

Rochelle Lupovitch recalls the stories told to her by her mother, who grew up on a farm in Rochester, north of Detroit, at the turn of the last century:

"My grandparents, Max and Dora Rosen, had a 155-acre dairy farm in Stony Creek in Rochester. I know they had the farm in 1900 when my mother was born, and I believe they came to Michigan in the 1880s or 1890s. Emigrating from Russia, they settled here in Michigan. It was right down the road from Winkler Mill and Vanhoosen Farm. I used to wonder why my grandfather picked that particular piece of property. If you look at a map and drive straight up from Detroit on John R Road or Dequindre, it is a straight shot to my grandfather's farm. It must have been very convenient. He had a wagon with regular wagon wheels for the summer, which he changed to a sleigh during the winter.

"My mother could remember how few people there were out there. She stated that sometimes her only company was the alarm clock,...but she does remember other farmers and sharecroppers in the area and that she used to play with their kids.

“My grandmother also ran the farm as a resort. My mother could remember rabbis and others coming out in the summer to get out of the city and visit the countryside. Many liked to come because my grandmother kept a kosher home. My mother could remember at Passover how work intensive it was, as they not only had to clean the house but all of the dairy equipment and change all the feed – much more than just the cleaning of a home. There was a recession in 1919, and they lost the property. My grandmother wanted to keep at least the house and maybe one acre, but it wasn’t possible. It apparently was a huge stress upon her, and she passed away in 1922. The house is still standing, but surrounded by new development.

“They also had property with dairy cows on East Grand Boulevard in Detroit near the Packard Plant, probably in the 1910s. When pasteurization was introduced, they could not convert to the new technology. My mother remembered having a favorite cow and a pet peacock. After the sale of this property, they moved closer to Woodward Avenue on Farnsworth.”

Apple Orchards Across Michigan

Jarvis Franzblau still runs an apple orchard in Manistee Township, on Michigan’s west coast. His father, who came to the U. S. around 1900 from Poland, had been in the produce business in Detroit. “My father and grandfather in Poland worked on the land as horse traders. My father was in New Jersey for a while and tried farming there, but it didn’t work out too well. He got into peddling and other things to get by. He eventually ended up in Detroit with a produce business, but left in the 1940s to try his hand at the apple orchard business.” Franzblau’s uncle, named Goldstein, was a farmer in the orchard business as well in Romeo, north of Detroit. His cousin is still in business there.

Franzblau became a farmer after World War II, when he returned to Michigan at the age of twenty-one in 1945. “I never experienced any prejudice in the farming business. In the mid-1960s in Manistee, I became a manager of an agricultural co-operative, which I ran for thirty years—never had any problems. It was a way of life, but never had any bearing on me being Jewish. I still live in Manistee during the summertime. We are producing organic apples now, as fruit growing in Michigan has its difficulties. We’re still trying to make a go of it.”

Franzblau does not know of many other Jewish farmers, except for the few that may be left in the Benton Harbor area. There used to be about four or five farming families he knew of, but he doesn’t think there are that many now. “There were never many Jews in the Manistee area,” he states. “Even in the areas in Northern Michigan that there were, many have left now and moved on to other things. None of my children have gone into the orchard or family business. They have all gone on to be lawyers and doctors. But they all grew up on the farm in Ann Arbor. There were many Jews who owned farms, but most of them were not active producers.”

Conclusion

Why did so many Jewish farmers leave the occupation? There are many reasons that could be postulated, but two predominate. For many, the inability to establish an economically successful business in farming led Jewish families back to urban areas. In most cases, even if farming did provide an economic life, there remained other social and cultural needs that were not easily met in rural areas. A downfall of the Jewish agricultural movement in this country is the lack of concern for concentrated Jewish

settlement considering issues of *yiddishkeit* (Jewish identity) among many immigrant families.²⁷ This is perhaps why Jewish farms in southwestern Michigan fared so well; there was a rural Jewish community established that supplied the cultural needs of homesteaders if the farms could be made economically feasible. Of course, there were many other successful farms outside of South Haven that were and are successful.

After 1950, the numbers of Jewish-American farmers declined along with the general farming population. Farming has declined for a variety of reasons in all segments of the population in America. Many came to farming by different means, and they left or stayed for a variety of reasons. However, many individual Jewish farmers can be regarded as a success, and they have left an indelible mark on the history of the Jewish community and on the identity of Michigan and, indeed, America.



Holly Teasdale, CA, is the archivist at the Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives at Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

¹ Jewish Agricultural Society. (1954). *Jews In American Agriculture: the History of Farming by Jews in the United States*. Jewish Agricultural Society: New York: 23.

² Rikoon, J. Sanford. (1998). "The Jewish Agriculturalists' Aid Society of America: philanthropy, ethnicity, and agriculture in the heartland," *Agricultural History* v. 72 (Winter): 2

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Robinson, Leonard G. (1912). *Agricultural Activities of the Jews in America*. The American Jewish Committee: New York: 39.

⁶ Rikoon, J. Sanford. (1998). "The Jewish Agriculturalists' Aid Society of America: philanthropy, ethnicity, and agriculture in the heartland," *Agricultural History* v. 72 (Winter): 1.

⁷ Robinson, Leonard G. (1912). *Agricultural Activities of the Jews in America*. The American Jewish Committee: New York: 74. viii *Ibid.*

⁸ Rudin, A. James. (1972). "Bad Axe, Michigan: An Experiment in Jewish Agricultural Settlement," *Michigan History* v. 56, n. 2 (Summer): 121.

⁹ Davidson, Gabriel. (1943). *Our Jewish Farmers and the Story of the Jewish Agricultural Society*. L. B. Fischer: New York: 238.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*: 240.

¹¹ *Ibid.*: 244.

¹² *Ibid.*: 246.

¹³ Rikoon, J. Sanford. (1998). "The Jewish Agriculturalists' Aid Society of America: philanthropy, ethnicity, and agriculture in the heartland," *Agricultural History* v. 72 (Winter): 1.

¹⁴ Pamphlet: "Sunrise Cooperative Farm Community, Alicia, Michigan," 1933, Sunrise Cooperative Farm Community Collection, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Betzold, Michael. (1993). "Utopia Revisited," *Detroit Free Press Magazine*, (Dec. 26).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Davidson, Gabriel. (1943). *Our Jewish Farmers and the Story of the Jewish Agricultural Society*, L. B. Fisher: New York: 161.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*: 155.

²⁰ Schnapik, Ceil Pearl. (1983). "Jewish Farmers of the Benton Harbor Area," *Michigan Jewish History* 23, no. 2 (June).

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Davidson, Gabriel. (1943). *Our Jewish Farmers and the Story of the Jewish Agricultural Society*, L. B. Fisher: New York: 155.

²³ Kraus, Bea. (1999). *A Time to Remember: A History of the Jewish Community in South Haven*. Priscilla Press: Allegan Forest, Michigan: 11.

²⁴ Cantor, Judith. (2001). *Jews in Michigan*. Michigan State University Press: East Lansing, MI: 38.

²⁵ Treloar, Wilbert H. (1977). *Cohodas: The Story of a Family*. Northern Michigan University Press: Marquette, Michigan: 130-131.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Rikoon, J. Sanford. (1998). "The Jewish Agriculturalists' Aid Society of America: philanthropy, ethnicity, and agriculture in the heartland," *Agricultural History* v. 72 (Winter).

INTERVIEWS

All interviews for this article were conducted by the author in person or by phone, April-May 2002. The author would like to thank the interviewees for their incredible stories, and for their time and willingness to share their memories. Transcripts are available at the Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives.

Mr. Jarvis Franzblau Mrs. Hadassah Snider Mrs. Rochelle Lupovitch Mrs. Barbara Keidan

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Professor Julius Stulberg: Bringing Music to Western Michigan

by Sharon Carlson

Editor's Note: This article is another in our occasional series on Jews in education in Michigan. In Volume 41 (2001), we profiled Professors Moses Gomberg and Samuel Levin. Readers with suggestions on notable educators are encouraged to submit them.

"I've told my students that while I want them to love music, there are other values. You can't be a good musician without also being a decent human being." Julius Stulberg, 1973.

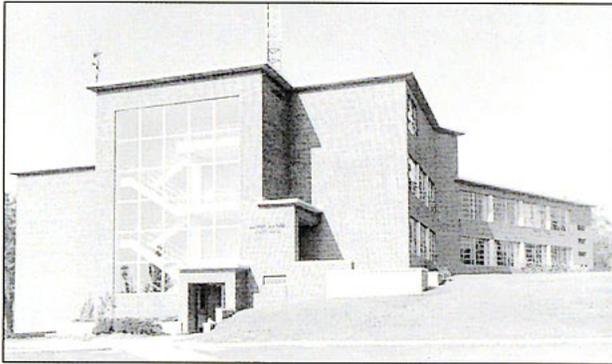


Julius Stulberg summed up his teaching and life philosophy for a 1973 interview. He lived this creed because Stulberg was an excellent musician and a caring teacher. A Professor of Music at Western Michigan University from 1945 to 1972, Stulberg transformed the college's orchestra. He also introduced Hillel on Western's campus. In the Kalamazoo community, he built a small junior symphonic group into a nationally recognized orchestral organization. He "taught life as well as how to play music" recalled a former Western Michigan University student.²

Stulberg was born in Kisielin, Russia (now in the Ukraine) on June 2, 1913, the son of Max and Rebekah Pudick Stulberg.³ Max and Rebekah were introduced by a matchmaker and visited three times, under supervision, before their 1912 wedding. When Julius was eight months old, Max had an opportunity to travel to New York City. He expected to earn enough money to send for Rebekah and Julius shortly, but life in the United States proved tougher than he anticipated, and the advent of World War I separated the family for six years. Wondering if he could earn enough money in the country, Stulberg decided to work for a relative who owned a scrap yard in Dowagiac, Michigan. After working for the Schpok family for about a year, he earned enough to buy his own horse and wagon and go into business. He learned of a scrap yard that was for sale in Marshall, Michigan, and decided to buy it. The family reunited in 1920 when Rebekah and Julius arrived in Marshall. The Stulbergs became active in the community and prospered with a family business, the Marshall Iron and Metal Company.⁴

An Accomplished Young Musician

Julius Stulberg's earliest musical influence may have been his uncle. Rebekah's brother in Europe played the violin. He was not a professional musician but had a reputation for his abilities. In Marshall, Julius studied with Louis Gregory. By the time he was a stu-



Harper Maybee Music Hall,
Western Michigan University.

dent at Marshall High School, he studied with John Martin, the founder of the Battle Creek Symphony. He was an accomplished high school violinist, performing with the Battle Creek Symphony. His ability was recognized as he won the state violin competition two years in succession. With the sponsorship of the Rotary Club of Marshall, Stulberg attended Interlochen Arts Camp in 1929. He won a medal for conducting. He returned the following year with the support of his parents and assistance from the Rotary Club and Ladies' Monday Club of Marshall. During his Interlochen experience, he made the acquaintance of Professor Michael Press of Michigan State University. Press helped him secure a music scholarship upon his graduation from Marshall High School in 1931. Stulberg studied music but majored in accounting.

The Michigan State University years proved to be life altering. He received ensemble training with Alexander Schuster, an outstanding cellist and authority in chamber music. Stulberg also formed a trio in 1931 with fellow students, David Pratt, cellist, and Joseph Evans, pianist. For several summers in the 1930s, the trio was a featured attraction at the Belvedere Hotel in Charlevoix. Throughout the year, the trio performed throughout the Midwest, concentrating in Michigan. An informational program described the trio as "wholeheartedly devoted to their chosen profession" and "rapidly gaining prominence in the realm of concert and radio."

Just before he earned his bachelor's degree in 1935, Stulberg became a teaching assistant to Professor Press. Stulberg recalled this turning point in 1964: "When I graduated, they offered me a job in the music department, and I never kept a set of books after that."⁵ He subsequently went on to complete a master's degree in 1938. His thesis, *A Violin Method for Adult Beginners*, was published the same year. While at Michigan State, he served as the Concertmaster of the Lansing Civic Symphony Orchestra. He also perfected his technique by studying first with Hans Letz of the Julliard Graduate School in 1939 to 1940 and with Bronislaw Huberman in New York during the summer of 1942.

Stulberg also met and married Esther Leiberman during his years in East Lansing.⁶ Born in Chicago, Leiberman was not a musician, but she was accomplished in her own right. She earned a bachelor's degree in science from Michigan State University and a master's degree in nutrition from the University of Michigan.⁷ Esther became her husband's greatest supporter, helping him carry on his vision and commitment to introducing students to music and helping them achieve their potential.

Growing Musical Ties in Western Michigan

World War II brought about a series of events that changed the course of Stulberg's life. It was during this time that he began his relationship with the Kalamazoo community. A few years earlier in 1939, Eugene Andrie had founded a youth orchestra with twenty-five members in the southwestern Michigan community. An orchestral music tra-

dition was established in the Kalamazoo community, with the Kalamazoo Symphony tracing its origins to the 1920s. Andrie's fledging organization was called the "Kalamazoo Little Symphony." In 1943, Andrie was called into military service. World War II found Stulberg teaching mathematics to Air Force navigators at Michigan State University. He took over the conductorship of the "Kalamazoo Little Symphony" on a temporary basis, commuting weekly to Kalamazoo for rehearsals and concerts.

Stulberg's commute shortened considerably when, in 1945, Western State Teachers College (now Western Michigan University) offered Stulberg a faculty position in the Music Department. His arrival on campus to lead the orchestra and teach violin and cello was enthusiastically noted in the press, which described Stulberg as "already well-known in musical circles in this city."⁸ By the time Stulberg arrived in Kalamazoo, his credits also included membership in the Artists' Bureau of Michigan Federation of Music Clubs.

Stulberg arrived as Western Michigan University began a period of phenomenal growth in the post-World War II years. Western expanded programmatically and physically. In 1945, Western's fall enrollment was consistent with the depression and war era, at 1,840. One year later, the enrollment more than doubled with 4,034 students.⁹ A new campus more than doubled the physical space of the institution. Campus programs were growing in new directions that moved away from the original teaching mission of the institution. Part of the growth included a new music building which was completed and dedicated in 1949.

Upon his arrival, Stulberg took charge of a floundering orchestral program. Precarious enrollment patterns during the war years had disrupted the program, and Stulberg soon increased the membership to the pre-war levels of about fifty members. Stulberg ambitiously planned to grow the program into to a ninety-piece orchestra to handle more sophisticated works and made a plea to the campus to attract additional participants.¹⁰ He continued to draw upon his networks in the musical community and began introducing Western students and audiences to known artists. In 1949, Ossy Renardy, a nationally known violinist performed with the orchestra. In 1963 and 1964, Henryck Szeryng appeared as a guest artist with the WMU Symphony. Accounts indicate that it was the first appearance Szeryng made with a university symphony.¹¹ In addition to his duties for the orchestra, Stulberg headed the Music Department's string instrument program. He continued in this capacity until his retirement in 1972. During a brief tenure from 1965 to 1966, he also served as acting head of the Music Department.

Stulberg continued performing as well, and in 1951 he founded the University's string quartet. With faculty members Marie Kurst, Muriel Matthews, and Angelo LaMariana, the group began with the mission of bringing chamber music to audiences on the campus and in the region.¹² He also continued to work with world-renowned performers and teachers of the violin. An especially gratifying experience involved a summer European trip for the Stulberg family. In the mid-1950s, Stulberg had made the acquaintance of Theodore and Alice Pashkus, then known as two of the outstanding violin teachers in the world. A mutual professional respect and friendship developed. They continued corresponding, and Pashkus invited Stulberg and his family to spend the summer of 1956 with them in Europe. Stulberg took part in helping teach the master class conducted by the Paskhuses in Folgaria, Italy. Stulberg later recalled this experience: "It was a joy to be associated with such mastery, in teaching and performing, and to witness and be a part of such sincerity."¹³



Julius Stulberg, left, with other members of the WMU String Quartet, undated.

An Active Jewish Community

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Stulbergs had been the only Jewish family in Marshall. There wasn't a congregation in Battle Creek. They eventually affiliated with the Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Lansing. Julius joined the Congregation of Moses upon his arrival in Kalamazoo. By the late 1950s, the Stulbergs were part of a small but growing Jewish community in greater Kalamazoo. The congregation began to grapple with how to handle the growth, which

included 200 member families. Julius Stulberg took part in the committee to plan and raise funds to build a new synagogue that included classrooms, office space, and other needed facilities. Completed in 1961, the successful building campaign culminated in a dedication program, in which Stulberg coordinated the musical portion with performances by the University Choir and the WMU Symphony Orchestra.¹⁴

Western's Jewish population also grew during this period. Religious organizations in the pre-war years were limited, with most affiliated with Kalamazoo's mainline Protestant churches or the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.¹⁵ Beginning in 1945, Stulberg helped found a campus chapter of Hillel to provide social opportunities for students and further the study and understanding of the Jewish religion. Hillel formed two years before organizations for Catholic, Episcopalian, or Lutheran students organized on Western's campus. A 1948 Brown & Gold annual yearbook entry described the organization as "an integral part of the school's expanding religious and cultural program." The organization maintained alliances with the Congregation of Moses.

By the 1950s, Western's Hillel sponsored programs that included serious study and discussion of religion and provided social outlets for the Jewish students on campus. Brown & Gold entries from the 1950s describe the social aspects of the organization, which included movies of 'modern' Israel, potato pancake parties, and square dances." Hillel took a leadership role in issues of religious tolerance and cooperation with other religious organizations. Hillel also took an active role in traditional campus activities. Hillel members won first place prizes for house display in the 1962 and 1963 homecoming weekends. Stulberg remained advisor into the 1960s. Although Western's Jewish population remains small, Hillel continues to provide a number of programs for about sixty to eighty students through the generosity of the Soref Initiative of Hillel International and the Detroit Jewish Federation. Shabbat dinners often draw students from both Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College.

The Kalamazoo Junior Symphony

Stulberg's greatest influence may have been his work in the community with the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony. Beginning as a temporary conductor, Stulberg took on the post as permanent conductor in 1945. In two years, Stulberg increased the membership of the organization to the degree that "Little Kalamazoo Symphony" was no longer appropriate. The orchestra's name was changed to Kalamazoo Junior Symphony in 1944.

Under Stulberg's leadership, the orchestra outgrew its first two homes as the average attendance of concerts reached 1,700 in the mid-1960s. The organization also became the training ground for adults playing with the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, which by the mid-1960s counted about a third of its members as alumni of the Junior Symphony. In 1969, the orchestra embarked on its first European tour. The month-long itinerary included Scotland, The Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Italy, San Marino, Monaco, France, Switzerland, and England. In addition to practices for the tour, members of the Junior Symphony undertook a year-long fund-raising campaign to finance their trip. It was among the first transatlantic concert tours taken by an American civic youth orchestra. In 1973, the orchestra embarked on a goodwill tour of Canada.¹⁶

The orchestra received many awards and citations, including the Award of Merit from the National Federation of Music Clubs, selection for worldwide broadcast by Voice of America and the BBC, selection by the National Conference of Music Educators as the outstanding ensemble among 150 competitors, and special citations from the American Symphony Orchestra League in the 1960s and 1970s. Stulberg also brought in guest artists and conductors to enhance the musical experiences of the Junior Symphony members. In 1968, Stulberg brought Max Wilcox to Kalamazoo. Wilcox had been Stulberg's piano accompanist for several concerts while he was a student at Western in the early 1950s.¹⁷

Planning to spend more time with his family and his second family, the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony Orchestra, Stulberg retired from his University position in 1972.¹⁸ At the age of 60, Stulberg died on May 16, 1974, following an apparent heart attack. The Kalamazoo Gazette editorial of May 17 noted, "The death of . . . Julius Stulberg . . . brings a special pang, not only to area music lovers, but to the hundreds of his current and former students and Junior Symphony members."

Promoting Young Musicians

In the years following her husband's death, Esther Stulberg played a key role in helping to continue his tradition of dedication to youth and music. The Julius Stulberg International String Competition began in 1975 as a result of the Kalamazoo Junior Symphony's desire to honor the memory of their director. Esther recalled: "When the idea for a Julius Stulberg String Audition came up, everyone on the board thought, 'This is what we can do to promote young people'—which had been the whole object of the Junior Symphony."¹⁹

In the years since, the String Audition has become one of the premier competitions for young musicians. Stulberg's daughter Mira Stulberg Halpert recalled, "It started as a memorial to my father . . . and it's now become truly international, very highly competitive."²⁰ Members of the Stulberg family continue to take an active role in the competition. Morris Stulberg, younger brother of Julius, serves as a life member of the Board of Directors. To date, 324 young musicians from around the world have been selected to compete in the event, and 81 have received the prestigious Stulberg award. It has launched numerous solo careers.

As Western Michigan University approaches its centennial year in 2003, it is fitting to recognize the accomplishments and legacy of early faculty members. Stulberg's dedication to music encouraged hundreds of students at Western. His work in the greater community of young musicians inspired hundreds more and continues to live through the Stulberg International Competition.



Sharon Carlson is the director of the Archives and Regional History Collections at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, MI.

- 1 "Conductor of Junior Symphony Dies at 60," Kalamazoo Gazette, May 16, 1974, A-3 .
- 2 Margaret Perry interview, April 22, 1990. Monique Coyne and Margaret Perry Interview, 23, Western Michigan Oral History Collection.
- 3 I am grateful to Morris Stulberg, younger brother of Julius, who provided information about the family in Europe and early years in Marshall. Information in this article is also taken from materials in the Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections and the Western Michigan University Archives and Regional History Collections.
- 4 "For 'Mr. Marshall,' Life is About Helping Others," Business Insight, November 1996, 19.
- 5 "Julius Stulberg Conducting," Kalamazoo Magazine, May, 1964, 10.
- 6 Obituary "Stulberg, Mr. Julius," Kalamazoo Gazette, May 16, 1974.
- 7 "Stulberg Widow Dies at Age 86," Kalamazoo Gazette, February 17, 2001, A-4.
- 8 "Elwyn Carter to Succeed Maybee as Head of WM College Music Department—Stulberg and Meretta Also Join Faculty" Kalamazoo Gazette July 1, 1945.
- 9 Knauss, James, First Fifty Years (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan College, 1953), 201.
- 10 "Western's Symphony Orchestra Director Looks for Prospective Members to Swell Ranks," May 19, 1950. Scrapbook, WMU Music Department, 1945-1954, WMU Archives.
- 11 "Orchestra" Brown and Gold, (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1964), 194, and Brown and Gold, (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1965), 152.
- 12 "Faculty Musicians Develop Chamber Music Ensemble," News Magazine for Winter, 1952, (Western Michigan College, Kalamazoo, Michigan), 10(2), 7.
- 13 "European Conquest: A Family Odyssey," News Magazine for Summer, 1957, (Western Michigan University), 15(3), 9.
- 14 "Congregation of Moses Dedication," June 1961.
- 15 Information taken from various editions of the Bronco Book published by Western Michigan College in the 1940s and 1950s.
- 16 "Junior Symphony to Tour Europe," Kalamazoo Gazette, January 31, 1968, 21.
- 17 "Former Resident to Lead Junior Symphony in February 25 Concert," Julius Stulberg History File, Kalamazoo Public Library. Wilcox has since distinguished himself as the recipient of a number of Grammy Awards for his work in classical recordings.
- 18 "Leaving WMU Post," Kalamazoo Gazette, July 1, 1972, A:005:4.
- 19 "Music and Youth: A Perfect Stulberg Memorial." Encore, February 1995, 38.
- 20 "Stulberg Widow Dies at Age 86," Kalamazoo Gazette, February 17, 2001, A-4.

Early Jews in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

By Willard Cohodas

Editor's note: The following is an edited excerpt from a historical review written in 1988 by prominent Upper Peninsula resident Willard Cohodas. It is, he wrote, "a brief history of the Jewish people living in the various communities and their synagogues and temples in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan since they first settled in this area."

Many areas of Michigan's Upper Peninsula were settled by Jewish individuals and families in the second half of the nineteenth century. Most of these early settlers began as itinerant peddlers, traveling from town to town. Many eventually settled and opened stores in towns across the U.P.

We find that the earliest Jewish families came to Marquette County, most to the city of Marquette, about 1860. One of the earliest settlers was Samuel Kaufman, who emigrated from Germany. He married the daughter of Mr. Graveraet, one of the founders of Marquette, who had married a Native American woman. Samuel Kaufman and his wife had about eight children, who were raised in the Episcopalian Church in Marquette. There is one large stained-glass window in the church called the Kaufman Window, which has all the heads of the Kaufman children portrayed. One son married Mrs. Brighting of Negaunee, Michigan, heiress to a mining fortune.



Tempe Beth Sholom in Ishpeming, established in 1952, celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2002.

L.G. Kaufman, the wealthiest of the sons, married the daughter of Otto Young, a Jewish land owner from Chicago. Other early Marquette families included the Getzes, Fines, and Cohens. Other prominent names were Rose, Nathansen, Stern, Bendig, Camden, Green, and Casper. After World War II, there was an influx of younger Jewish families.

Munising had about eight or ten Jewish families living there in the 1920s until about 1960, when the last Jewish family, the Chudakoffs, moved away. Other families included the Hankin family, the Marks family, the Osser family, the Baron family, and the Feldman family.

Ishpeming began to be settled by Jewish families around 1900. Some of the earliest settlers, the Kahn and Skud families, came there around 1895. Later settlers were families named, Narotzky, Arne, Lowenstein, Casper, Dubinsky, Cohodas, Malsin, Guefer, and Rice.

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, has had Jewish residents since the late nineteenth century. Along with their Canadian neighbors across the St. Marys River, these Jews built and have maintained an orthodox synagogue since about the turn of the twentieth century. Some of the families from the early twentieth century included: Kaden, Freedman (three sons: Louria, Ben, David), Nate Goldman, Mose Mezerou, Winkelman, Barish, Ben Oberman. And individuals, Harry Newmark, Mose Yalomstein, and Max Sonnlner. As of the 1980s, some of the few Jews in that area attend services, especially on the High Holy Days, at the Reform Temple in Petosky. At that time, the Barish Brothers Department Store in the Sault was being run by William Oberman, the third generation of Obermans to operate the store. His grandfather, Ben Oberman, his great-uncle Max Barish, and Max's brother, Joe Barish opened the store in 1913. Ben's son, Lester, took over the store in 1959 and operated it into the 1980s.

Other Towns

St. Ignace has several Jewish families. The Winkelmans live there, as does Larry Rubin, director of the Mackinaw Bridge Authority for twenty-five years [see *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 10, no. 1, (1970)]. He and William Cohodas were fraternity brothers at the University of Michigan in the 1930s.

Manistique has had a small Jewish population. Moses Blumrosen served as Mayor in 1903-04. In 1888 he married Jennie Rosenthal of Petoskey and for many years theirs was the only Jewish family in town. Later, as other families arrived, Blumrosen organized a congregation that met for the High Holy Days. Moses Blumrosen [an early supporter of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan] owned the largest department store in town and served as president of the First National Bank and as a member of the school board. Mrs. Blumrosen held religious classes in their home for the Jewish children of Manistique.

One of the Blumrosens' sons-in-law, Saul Saulson, built a dry goods store in Grand Marais in 1896. Newberry had several Jewish families living there in the early twentieth century. One family by the name of Nemark had a clothing store in the area.

Escanaba and the Garden Peninsula area had a very thriving Jewish community from about 1890 until about 1940. There are still a few Jewish families there. One of the most prominent was the Gessner family, which ran the large Fair Store. They were also prominent in banking. The large Stein family was also prominent. In

EARLY JEWS IN MICHIGAN'S UPPER PENINSULA



- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1: Marquette | 7: Newberry | 13: Iron River | 20: Hurley, WI |
| 2: Negaunee | 8: Escanaba | 14: Caspian | 21: Ontonagon |
| 3: Munising | 9: Gladstone | 15: Stambaugh | 22: Houghton |
| 4: St. Ignace | 10: Menominee | 16: Crystal Falls | 23: Hancock |
| 5: Manistique | 11: Marinette, WI | 17: Iron Wood | 24: Calumet |
| 6: Grand Marais | 12: Iron Mountain | 18: Bessemer | 25: Sault Ste. Marie |
| | | 19: Wakefield | 26: Ishpeming |

Garden, Michigan, there were a number of Jews around 1900. The family of Sylvia Caspar Cohodas's father came from there. At one time High Holiday Services were held in a hall in Escanaba. Now the few remaining families attend Temple Beth Shalom in Ishpeming.

Gladstone had a few Jewish families who joined forces with Escanaba for services. The well-known Winkelman family had its start there and in St. Ignace.

Menominee had a small Jewish population in the early twentieth century, but it joined the much larger Jewish community of Marinette, Wisconsin, across the river, where there was at one time two synagogues. The Cohodas family came to Marinette at the turn of the twentieth century, and Willard and Arnold Cohodas were born in Menominee. Many of the Jewish settlers of the U.P. are buried in Marinette because there were very few Jewish cemeteries in the region.

Iron Mountain at the turn of the twentieth century had a large Jewish population. There were many members of the Cohodas family. A conservative synagogue was established around 1930, and was still in use in the 1980s. Circa 1960, Iron Mountain established its own small Jewish cemetery.

Iron River, along with Caspian, Stambaugh, Crystal Falls, and two other small towns, had a conservative synagogue for quite a few years. However it closed during the 1970s and its congregation joined the synagogue in Iron Mountain.

Ironwood, Bessemer, Wakefield, and Hurley, Wisconsin, with several other small towns had a temple building for a few years, but due to population decline, it had to close. There are still a very few Jewish families left. One very old and prominent family, the Ablemans, still lives in Bessemer. In the 1980s they celebrated the centennial of their department store, then run by a third-generation family member.

Ontonagon had one Jewish family by the name of Muskott, who came there in the late 1890s. They ran a department and food store for many years. Two sons, Roy and Hank (Henry), were taken to the synagogue in Hancock, after it was built in 1912. It was a 120-mile round trip each weekend for Hebrew studies. On the day of their Bar Mitzvah service, there was such a snowstorm that everything was shut down and the



Temple Jacob in Hancock, built in 1912, held a 90th anniversary celebration in August 2002 to honor family members of the founder.

service cancelled. In 1988 Henry Muskott was still living in Ontonagon at age 92. In the 1940s, a Jewish man served as principal of the Ontonagon High School.

The Copper Country—Houghton County and surrounding areas whose major towns are Houghton-Hancock, South Range, and a few smaller villages—was a very busy area around 1900. The copper mines were in full operation. The mine strike of 1913 was devastating, and the area never recovered. There were over a hundred Jewish families there at one time. At first they held services in Calumet, then in Hancock and Houghton. In 1912, they built the beautiful little synagogue that still stands on the side of a hill at the Hancock end of the bridge. It has been declared a national historical building. In Calumet there is a small, very old Jewish cemetery. A newer and well-kept cemetery is located in Houghton. (More on this in “The Jews of Houghton-Hancock and Their Synagogue,” by Rochelle Berger Elstein, *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 38 (1998).)



Octogenarian Willard Cobodas is the son of Harry Cobodas and nephew of Sam, members of one of the first and most notable Jewish pioneer families in the Upper Peninsula. Willard and his wife, Lois, live in Marquette and were founding members of the Beth Sholom congregation in neighboring Ishpening. Willard, whose written memoirs are invaluable, as a young boy attended services at Temple Jacob in Houghton-Hancock, where his mother taught in the Sunday School.

An Ebullient Senior: Dr. Piero Foà

by Bernard Goldman

In 1911, Carlo Foà, a young Italian physician visiting the Netherlands, returned home to Turin where his wife impatiently awaited both his return and the imminent birth of their child. Surely he brought her unrecorded mementos from his stay in Holland, but the most important item in his baggage was (as later described by his then-unborn son, Piero) a “newfangled contraption with all sorts of wires and switches, resistors and magnets and a string galvanometer so sensitive to external vibration that it could be used only at night when the streetcars were not running.” It was the brainchild of the Dutch physiologist Willem Einthoven from Leiden. Today we call it the electrocardiograph (ECG). We can only guess how much coaxing was required before the mother-to-be would let her husband test the device on her. But it worked, producing what may have been the first fetal ECG tracing ever made.

From Italy to America

It was an auspicious event for a future scientist. Piero Foà, who celebrated his ninetieth birthday in 2001, still proudly displays that graph in his home in the Detroit area, where he has lived for over forty years. It was his first, if unconscious, introduction to medical science. Not surprisingly, Piero followed in the profession of his father, Carlo (1880-1972), and his grandfather, Pio Foà, who retired from the university chair he held in pathologic anatomy in 1923. Over the years, the Foà family, resident in Italy at least since the early decades of the fifteenth century, included merchants and butchers, writers and explorers, teachers and lawyers. Rabbi Tobia Foà founded a Hebrew publishing house in 1551 in the small town of Sabbioneta, in north central Italy not far from Parma. Records show that Rabbi Moise Foà was allowed to stay for six months in nearby Mantua in 1634 if he promised not to preach.



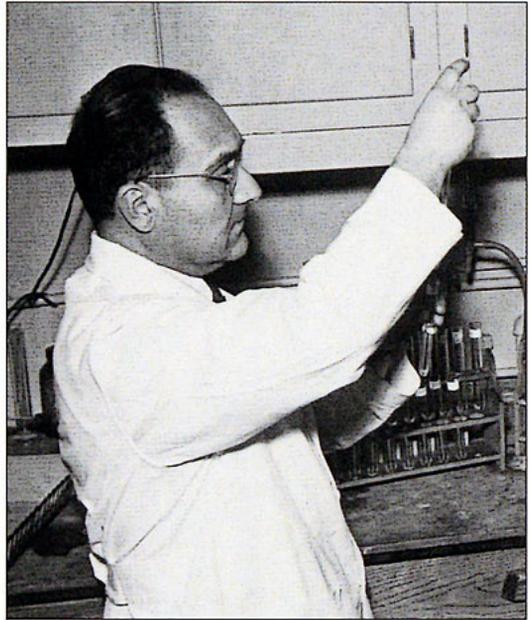
In the Italian Alps, c. 1925. Piero Foà, kneeling at left; fourth from left, Piero's sister, Ornellia.

Piero Foà received his medical degree in 1934 from the University of Milan, where he completed internships in medicine and surgery at the university's hospital and also taught biochemistry while earning a doctorate in chemistry. By that time, 1939, the enactment of the racial laws

that fascist Italy had copied from Nazi Germany impelled the young physician to immigrate to the United States. In 1940, he passed the Massachusetts State Board Exams for medicine. His first appointment in America as a research fellow in the Department of Physiology at Yale University (1939) was followed by research fellowships at the University of Michigan in Surgery (1939-42) and in Medicine (1942-43). He also received certification for medical practice in New York in 1941. That year, a more important achievement occurred on April 6, when he married Naomi Levin, a local Ann Arborite and graduate student in biochemistry who was his laboratory assistant.

Premier Research at Sinai Hospital

The Foàs left Ann Arbor for Chicago in 1944 when Piero accepted a professorship in physiology and pharmacology at the Chicago Medical School. He headed its Endocrine and Metabolic Clinic, and then served as Chief of the Endocrine and Metabolic Clinic at the Mount Sinai Hospital in Chicago. Their last major move took them back to Michigan in 1962, when Piero accepted the chairmanship of the newly established Department of Research at Sinai Hospital in Detroit, with a co-appointment as Professor of Physiology in the Wayne State University Medical School. Under the leadership of Foà and others, many important contributions to medicine were made by researchers at Sinai Hospital. [For more on Dr. Foà's role at Sinai, see "A Sinai Hospital Retrospective," *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 40 (2000).] In 1982, Foà became a professor emeritus at Wayne State, but did not retire either from pure medical research and writing or from teaching. He remains a doctor, the title he holds, which is derived from his native Italian *dottore*, taken from the Latin *docere*, to teach.



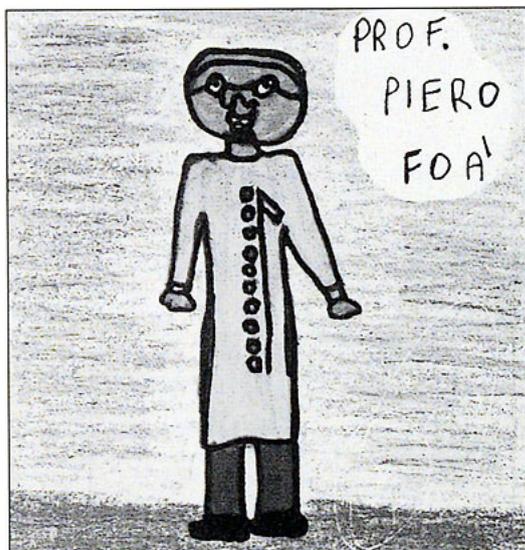
Dr. Piero Foà in one of the laboratories of the Hamburger-Jospey Research Building, Sinai Hospital, Detroit.

Since the 1940s, one of Foà's primary concerns has been in research in the field of diabetes. One can only call formidable the list of over 135 fellow scientists, in fourteen different countries and the U.S., who have collaborated with Foà in the last thirty years in his research relative to diabetes and the physiology of the pancreatic islets. The results of his intensive concentration have been reported in his 200 scientific publications. Along with a continuous flow of research publications and papers on the subject, he produced a charming book that explained for youngsters the pathology and body chemistry of diabetes. The color illustrations were drawn by a class of primary

school children in Italy, who were inspired by a talk their teacher invited Foà to give in 1986 after one of their classmates was taken ill by the disease.

A Fulfilling Career and Family Life

At all levels of research and discourse, Foà remains the *dottore*, returning repeatedly to Italy, accepting invitations for short and long visitations to hospitals and universities in Padua, Milan, and other cities. His technical lectures, seminars, and visiting professorships have taken him to hospitals and universities in the Far East, South America, Africa, and Europe. Along the way, he has received teaching awards, silver and gold medals, merit awards, and distinguished service awards from a variety of medical associations, universities, and foundations. These include the Silver Medal for Most Original Work, Illinois State Medical Society (1953); Michigan Diabetes Association Meritorious Award (1972); the American Medical Association Hektoen Gold Medal (1974); and the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching, Wayne State University (1980). Dr. Foà has served on numerous professional boards, edited journals, and contributed to both scientific and semi-popular literature.



Foà's favorite drawing of himself by one of the youngsters at the school in Empoli, Italy, where he spoke to the class on diabetes, 1986.

None of these accomplishments carry more luster for the Foàs than their two children, four grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter. Piero's love of mountain climbing and skiing and his joy in horseback riding have been curtailed in recent years by his wife's good sense and the demands of age. But neither has stopped him from continuing part-time lectureships at Wayne State University Medical School or laboratory research. Now a nonagenarian, Foà has recently begun a research project on a new type of mosquito repellent. As a born Italian, he prefers red wine to white, Naomi's excellent *osso buco*, twentieth-century art, and the ebullience of youth.

Bernard Goldman is Professor Emeritus at Wayne State University's Department of Art and Art History. He is a frequent contributor to Michigan Jewish History.

The Barmon's Lapeer Adventure: 19th-Century Merchants in Eastern Michigan

By Thomas M. Klein

This is a story of business failure, but failure can teach us much about the past. The central figure is Jacob Barmon, a young Jewish man who with his younger brother, Henry, immigrated to Buffalo, New York, from Lipno, Poland, as a teenager in 1850. Henry moved on to Owosso, Michigan, but Jacob stayed in Buffalo, opened a clothing store, and made a handsome living. The 1860 census showed that Jacob, at age twenty-seven, had assets of \$10,000 and had switched his profession to hoop-skirt manufacturing. This enterprise lasted barely five years, due to a shift in ladies' fashions. Looking west for new opportunities, Jacob tried his luck in Lapeer, Michigan.

Lapeer: Boom and bust

The people who settled around Lapeer, in eastern Michigan between Flint and Port Huron, in the early 1830s had anticipated eagerly the Territory of Michigan's plan to build a rail line from the top of the St. Clair River across the state to Grand Rapids, through Lapeer County. New steamboat transport on the Great Lakes, combined with the Erie Canal, would take produce from Michigan's rich soil to eastern markets. Sadly, after the financial panic of 1837, Michigan's "internal improvement" projects were abandoned,¹ and Lapeer's newcomers were then stranded in a vast forest with wolves and unfriendly Indians, unable to move crops. They sank into subsistence farming, living from hand-to-mouth.

In the late 1860s, as Jacob Barmon settled in Lapeer, prospects changed. The new Chicago and Lake Huron Railroad pushed west from Port Huron through Lapeer. A north-south line, the Detroit and Bay City, also passed through Lapeer. Suddenly, Lapeer held promise as a viable market town and small commercial center.

Jacob Barmon planned a clothing store and a dry-goods store on Nepessing Street in Lapeer and persuaded his two unmarried brothers, Morris and William (aged twenty-four and twenty-one), to leave Detroit and join him. (Jacob's parents, Bernard and Rebecca Barmon, and their younger children had left Poland and settled in Detroit around 1860. Bernard joined Congregation Shaarey Zedek and served as treasurer.) Lapeer boomed as anticipated, and the Barmons did well. Morris married a Buffalo girl, Rachel Hyman, whose mother was related to Jacob's wife, Sarah Binnard Barmon.

On March 18, 1872, Jacob and Sarah purchased property on North Court Street, just north of the town's main avenue, to use as a residence and a dry-goods store, paying \$1,200. Eighteen months later, Jacob's younger brother, Henry, purchased the property for \$3,000. The deed was signed on September 29, 1873, but this deal—and

much else—collapsed. Ten days earlier, in New York, Jay Cooke and Co. had failed, triggering massive financial panic and bank failures. Railroad construction, the driving force of the post-Civil War economic boom, stopped. The depression lasted until 1879.

Family Solidarity

The Lapeer stores could no longer support the Barmon clan; customers made do with what they had, while creditors clamored for payment. Jacob and Sarah now had eleven children and another on the way. Young Morris and Rachel had two children. Their family solidarity prevented personal disaster. On October 17, 1873, Bernard Barmon (Jacob and Henry's father) bought the North Court Street property for \$2,000, enabling Jacob to pay his creditors.

Bernard Barmon did not trust banks, either back in Russian Poland or in America. He apparently kept his own money in gold coins. His caution saved the day. Bernard Barmon dumped this property twelve years later for a mere \$870. From \$1,200 to \$3,000 to \$870 within a few years, we can witness the surge and collapse of real estate values after the panic of 1873.²

Jacob and Sarah Barmon moved to Detroit and struggled for a decade to get back on their feet. In 1886, Jacob and his family went west to Spokane Falls, Washington. Morris and Rachel moved from Lapeer to Buffalo, where Morris opened a clothing store, presumably with the help of Rachel's father, Nicholas Hyman, himself a successful clothier. The third brother, William Barmon, still a bachelor, stayed in Lapeer and kept the clothing store open.

Lapeer: Living as Jews in the 1880s

By the late 1870s, farm prices recovered, some local industry developed, and there was new business for the Lapeer clothing store, now run by William Barmon. In 1879, he persuaded his younger sister, Hannah, and her husband, Hart Wolenburgh, to join him. The store expanded and moved into a handsome new brick building. A master tailor joined the firm and looked after the cutting of cloth and sewing of suits. A second chapter of the Barmon family in Lapeer began.

William Barmon remained a bachelor, but Hannah and Hart Wolenburgh raised a family in Lapeer. They had eight children and retained their identity as Jews. There appears to have been only one other Jewish family in Lapeer at that time, the family of Michael Lowenstein.³ Our understanding of the times and how Jewish people got along in Lapeer comes from the local newspaper, the Lapeer Democrat. We read about happy events in people's lives, people recovering from illnesses, people going out of town, etc. From browsing issue after issue, we get a sense of who fits in and who does not. We also learn of the town's racial and social prejudices.

William Barmon was a real pal of the editor—getting many free plugs for his store in the "Sayings and Doings" column. William was an "in" person. Similarly, the



A. M. (Morris) Barmon, April 1911. Morris and his younger brother William came to Lapeer in 1870 to help Jacob and Sarah Barmon with their new clothing and dry goods store. A year later, Morris married Rachel Hyman whose father helped Morris start a clothing store in Buffalo after the panic of 1873.

Wolenburghs received interested attention; the paper published news that their daughter sang in the school concert, that a cousin from Buffalo came for a visit. And it was noted, respectfully, in September 1882 that the family was going to Detroit for the Jewish High Holidays. When Hart Wolenburgh moved to Detroit, the *Lapeer Democrat* wrote: “[H]e has lived here many years and has the entire confidence of the community as an honorable and upright business man and an exemplary citizen in every respect. His family, too, are all such as any town may be proud to claim as residents....”⁴

Lapeer was not, however, a bastion of acceptance and tolerance. The *Lapeer Democrat* reported that a Chinese man:

A Chinaman . . . arrived in town Saturday with a view of opening a laundry, but when told of the popular prejudice existing here against the almond-eyed celestials, he hied himself away to pastures more congenial to Mongolians. Went to Saginaw. The Chinese must go.⁵

Regarding the few African-American residents of Lapeer, the *Lapeer Democrat* chuckled at this revolting incident:

Some of the rougher element amused themselves on Saturday night by showering unfresh hen fruit about the house and premises of a colored woman familiarly known as Aunt Hattie Davis, living on Court Street north. Citizens passing on their way to church next morning were compelled to hold their noses.⁶

There are not any explicit anti-Semitic comments in the *Lapeer Democrat*; but, in contrast to the nice notes about the Barmon and Wolenburgh families, the other Jewish resident of the mid-1880s was unmercifully ragged in the *Lapeer Democrat*.⁷

What was there about William Barmon and the Wolenburghs that made them socially acceptable to their ethnocentric neighbors? One important, and not uncommon, tactic was their attempt to conceal their Polish origins and to claim German ancestry. In June 1880, when asked by the federal census enumerator where she was born, Hannah Wolenburgh replied, “Europe.” Her husband: “Europe.” His parents: “Don’t know.” Her parents: “Europe.” For the Michigan census of 1884, the family was more specific, but still cautious enough to be untruthful. The Wolenburgh family reported they and their parents came from “Germany.” William Barmon in 1880 reported being born in Germany; in 1884 he said that both his parents were born in “Prussia/Poland,”⁸ which was partially true, but he also said that he was born in “Prussia/Germany,” which was a total fib.⁹ The key to the Barmon/Wolenburgh’s acceptance in the Lapeer of the 1880s was social assimilation and a denial of their Eastern European roots.

The Business Failed: Revelations of Small Business Finance

William married in 1886 and moved to Kansas City, Missouri. The business split; the tailoring went to the master tailor, the furnishings (haberdashery) to Hart Wolenburgh. Hart’s portion did poorly; he soon went bankrupt and moved to Detroit.

The *Lapeer Democrat* published a summary of the bankruptcy documents. The list of liabilities revealed how the business was financed. Long-term capital came from better-off family members; short-term working capital consisted of credits from wholesalers, mostly connected with the Barmon family.

When he took over the business, Hart Wolenburgh purchased the store's furnishings and existing inventory from his brother-in-law, William Barmon, who took in exchange a promissory note. At the time of bankruptcy, \$1,200 remained outstanding. Hart's mother-in-law, Rebecca Barmon, lent him the balance needed for the purchase of the premises: \$800 remained outstanding.

Family connections also show-up in the financing of inventory. A major supplier was A.D. Rosen & Co. of Detroit, the owners of which were cousins of Hannah Wolenburgh. Two other suppliers were Wile Bros. & Co., and Brock, Weiner and Geisner, both Buffalo companies. Hannah's brother, Morris, by then established in Buffalo, no doubt smoothed the way for this extension of credit.

There was no bank among the list of creditors, despite Hart Wolenburgh's good social standing in Lapeer. Bank credit at the time, even if available, was dangerous for the small merchant. Wholesalers could be persuaded to extend terms on unsold inventory; banks were rigid on demanding repayment following original terms. A small-town Jewish storekeeper needed benevolent relatives with savings to open their premises and a good reputation with wholesalers to secure stock.

Strong Family Ties Are Key

Looking back on the Barmons' business ventures in Lapeer, we see the crucial importance of strong family ties among Jewish merchants. Jacob Barmon possessed capital for the first Lapeer store thanks to his early success in Buffalo. However, when he was wiped out by the 1873 financial panic, his father dug into savings to bail him out. Morris's father-in-law in Buffalo likewise survived the panic in good enough shape to help Morris re-start his life there. Morris Barmon developed a solid reputation with wholesalers, and this in turn opened avenues of inventory finance for Hart

The Wolenburgh Failure.

The extensive clothing store of Hart Wolenburgh, Lapeer, was closed by chattel mortgage last Monday morning. Liabilities about \$15,000; assets about \$10,000. Chattel mortgages were given as follows, and recorded with the city clerk:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| G. G. White, Lapeer..... | \$ 500.00 |
| Butzel Bros. & Co., Detroit..... | 2,784.21 |
| S. Simon & Co., Detroit..... | 615.00 |
| Wm. Barmon, Kansas City, Mo..... | 1,200.00 |
| Rebecca Barmon, Kansas City, Mo..... | 800.00 |
| A. D. Rosen & Co..... | 450.00 |
| Burnham, Stoppel & Co., Detroit..... | 252.67 |
| S. A. James & Co..... | 356.87 |
| D. W. Northrup..... | 116.00 |
| Wile Bros. & Co..... | 1,332.87 |
| Brock, Weiner & Geisner..... | 682.25 |

This figures up to a total amount of \$10,091.33. There are some other creditors of various amounts. The inventory of the stock is now being taken, and the sale of the goods by chattel mortgage is advertised to take place on Tuesday, Dec. 16th. White & McLennan, attorneys for Samuel Weiss & Son of New York attached goods of the stock by replevin to the amount of \$800 on Wednesday morning, on the grounds, as is claimed, that the goods were bought subsequent to Mr. Wolenburgh's insolvency. This claim was finally settled satisfactory to those concerned.

Newspaper notice of business failure.

Wolenburgh. In 1886, when Hart Wolenburgh needed cash to buy-out William's share in the revived clothing store, his mother-in-law came up with the needed cash. Those in the family with money felt obligated to help others with temporary cash needs. This was the key to small-scale, Jewish business development.

Barmon/Wolenburgh family life in Lapeer revealed a dark side of living in a small town, away from a large Jewish community. The Anglo-Saxon population of Lapeer in the post-Civil War decades was openly racist and hostile to those with clear ethnic differences. William Barmon and the Wolenburgh family sensed that they could own up to German-Jewish roots, but not to a Russo-Polish Jewish heritage. To get along in Lapeer in the 1880s, or in any other town in which there was just the odd Jewish family, one had to blend in and minimize differences in appearances or manner. Here, assimilation, short of denying Jewishness, was the order of the day.



Rebecca Goldman Barmon, c. 1880. Mother of Henry, Jacob, Mathilda, Nancy, Morris, William and Hanna. In 1886, she loaned Hanna's husband, Hart Wolenburgh, money to buy-out William's equity in the Lapeer store.



Thomas Klein was born in Detroit and graduated from Central High School (1946) and The University of Michigan with a PhD in Economics (1958). His maternal great-grandmother was a younger sister of Jacob Barmon. Now retired and living in Silver Spring, MD, he was Senior Economist with the World Bank in Washington, DC. He is completing a book on the Barmon family's immigrant experience. Klein thanks Thomas Lilley for research in Lapeer; Wendy Rose Bice, Marcy and Jay Brett, Heidi Christein, and Ruth Cubine for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

1. See Lanman, James H., *History of Michigan*, Ch X. New York: Harper and Bros (1855).
2. Details on real estate transaction from the Lapeer County Register of Deeds.
3. Source: The author scanned the 1870 and 1880 US population censuses for Jewish-appearing names.
4. *Lapeer Democrat*, May 20, 1891.
5. *Lapeer Democrat*, July 16, 1887.
6. *Lapeer Democrat*, December 17, 1884.
7. *Lapeer Democrat*, July 30, 1887.
8. 1880 Census of the United States, State of Michigan, Lapeer County, Lapeer City, ED 42 (Wolenburgh) and ED 174 (Wm.Barmon); 1884 Census of Michigan, Lapeer County, Lapeer City, First Ward.
9. Obfuscation was easy because of the many changes of sovereignty over Poland. William and Hannah Barmon's mother, Rebecca Goldman, is believed to have been born in Danzig in 1804; so she actually was born in "Prussia/Poland." However, Prussian control over central Poland was lost before the birth of Bernard Barmon (believed to have been 1807). Bernard and Rebecca's children (and the Wolenburgh family) owed their allegiance at birth, de jure as well as de facto, to the Tsar of Russia. The correct notation of their birth in the population census should have been "Russia/Poland."

A Letter from the Jewish Community for Detroit's Tricentennial Time Capsule

Written at the invitation of then Mayor Dennis Archer, Judy Levin Cantor's letter reporting on the Jewish community was sealed in the Detroit 300's Century Box to be opened in 2101.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, on New Year's Eve one year ago, Mayor Dennis Archer and Edsel B. Ford II broke open the Detroit Century Box amidst a grand ceremony at Orchestra Hall. This copper box had been officially sealed shut in 1900, labeled with instructions for its opening in one hundred years. The contents of the box contained fifty-five letters written at the request of Mayor William C. Maybury representing the different aspects of the Detroit community at that time. (Three of those letters, from members of the Detroit Jewish community, were reprinted in *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 41, Fall 2001.)



Maud Lyon, Executive Director of Detroit 300, Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, and Edsel Ford II, Chairman of Detroit 300, seal the Tricentennial Time Capsule in a special ceremony at the Detroit Science Center on December 31, 2001. The capsule is scheduled to be opened in one hundred years on December 31, 2101.

It seems like only yesterday that the Century Box was opened revealing the fifty-five intriguing messages. But now it is already time to write messages for a new Detroit Tricentennial Time Capsule to be opened on December 31, 2101.

Greetings to Detroit Region's Citizens of 2101!

The tri-county Detroit metropolitan area, as well as Windsor in Canada's Essex County, has just completed a splendid, year-long 300th birthday celebration. We extend congratulations to you in the Detroit region as you begin your 400th anniversary gala. It is my honor and responsibility to write the letter to you about this area's Jewish community, particularly during the twentieth century.

In a quick review of earlier history, the first Jew who came to British Detroit was Chapman Abraham, a plucky fur trader who arrived by voyageur canoe in 1762 and established a business and residence within the fort of the city. Through the 1800s, adventurous Jews in modest numbers continued to be attracted to this area, which was among the first in America to have a guarantee of religious freedom written into the Northwest Ordinance as well as to offer free public education through high school. Temple Beth El and later Congregation Shaarey Zedek were first established in the mid-nineteenth century in Detroit, and continue as leading Jewish religious organizations of the nation to this day.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the promise of America—of religious freedom and of new opportunity—beckoned to many Jewish people suffering from severe oppression and poverty in Eastern Europe. At that time, Detroit was already one of the nation's leading industrial cities with a healthy thriving economy. Along with other peoples, Jewish immigrants were attracted to this city in large numbers, increasing from 1000 in 1880 to more than 30,000 by the 1920s. Arriving without skills and without capital, but with great ambition and fine dreams of making a better life for themselves and their families, many Jewish immigrants put packs on their back and struck out to make an immediate living as peddlers. These immigrant people also tried to preserve their Jewish religious heritage, transferring their tradition to the new world to be passed on from generation to generation.

These ultimate entrepreneurs, peddlers within Detroit and throughout the towns of Michigan, often developed their businesses into small retail establishments—dry goods stores, shoe stores, shops for drugs, novelties or candy. In addition, those who had put down roots earlier in the nineteenth century, whether of German or Eastern European origin, were by the 1920s operating some of Detroit's successful downtown retail businesses: B. Siegel's and Himelhochs on Woodward Avenue; Sam's Cut Rate; People's Outfitting; Cunningham Drug Stores; and Winkelman's Women's Apparel.

In answer to the pressing needs of the many immigrants, in 1899 Rabbi Leo M. Franklin of Temple Beth El led the consolidation of the then-existing self-help charitable groups into a central philanthropic agency, the United Jewish Charities. David W. Simons, who later was elected to Detroit's City Council, was its first president and Fred M. Butzel, a valued leader. One of the charter groups was the Hebrew Free Loan Association, which was first established to make interest-free loans to needy newcomers so that they could get a start by buying goods for their pack. The Fresh Air Society camp was begun in 1902. A first Jewish community center was built in 1903; boys' clubs and the Boy Scouts were introduced along with vocational training and sports teams. United Jewish Charities evolved over the years into the current Jewish

Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, a major philanthropic and social service agency up to this time and for the future.

In 1912, Rabbi Judah L. Levin led a march of rabbis, community leaders and supporters down Detroit's Brush Street in a drive to raise money to build a Jewish hospital. With the slogan "Buy a Brick to Save the Sick," \$7,000 in nickels and dimes was collected from the neighborhood Jewish people. Reinvested through the years, four decades later the resultant substantial sum was contributed to the building fund, which led to the opening of Sinai Hospital in 1953. Sinai Hospital continued to serve the city as a leading medical and research facility for over forty-five years, but with changes in the economics of health care, it was sold to the Detroit Medical Center and in 1999 merged as Sinai/Grace Hospital. The proceeds of the sale of Sinai Hospital were established in the Jewish Fund, which continues to provide citywide grants for health care as well as support for the Detroit Medical Center.

"...Detroit Jewish people stood in opposition to slavery and have continued to work for social justice to the present time."

Even in the days before the Emancipation Proclamation, Detroit Jewish people stood in opposition to slavery and have continued to work for social justice to the present time. In the 1850s, Rabbi Leibman Adler of Temple Beth El was an early preacher for abolition, and despite the law of the land, Mark Sloman and other Jews were assisting runaway slaves escape to Canada via the Underground Railway. During the Civil War, from only 151 Jewish families in all of Michigan, 181 men and boys enlisted to fight in the Union Armies. Moreover, throughout the twentieth century, there is a proud record of rabbis, community leaders, and Jewish organizations working to educate against discrimination and for the passage of the groundbreaking Civil Rights Act of 1964. In 1967, in the face of dangerous hostility, Detroit Jewish lawyers joined their black colleagues in the South to implement voter registration. As the century draws to a close, Jewish citizens continue to lead in the ongoing effort to break down racial barriers, to enforce fair housing, and to bring about harmony among all peoples.

Education of their children was the highest priority for the early immigrants. As soon as a family was economically viable, the children were sent to college. Consequently, a strong professional class developed, including doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, accountants, teachers, social workers, etc. This continues to this day, when indeed Michigan is represented by a senator in the United States Congress, Carl Levin, who is a member of the Jewish faith.

In the field of architecture, the accomplishments of Albert Kahn, a son of an immigrant rabbi, constitute a distinguished part of the urban scene throughout the Detroit region. Hired in 1910 to design the first factory to accommodate an assembly line for Henry Ford, Kahn later designed the Fisher Building, known as the "Jewel of Detroit," as well as numerous other distinguished industrial, public, and private structures.

Following World War II, the Detroit area's new tax codes encouraged the development of office buildings and shopping centers outside the central city, while expressways to the outskirts of the city were cut through established residential districts. Furthermore, in common with numerous other Detroiters, as families prospered

and as the metropolitan area developed new residential areas, many Jewish families moved in a northwesterly direction into the suburbs. New synagogues and community institutions and ethnic shops followed the building of new Jewish neighborhoods, which currently stretch from Oak Park on the south to West Bloomfield on the north.

The Jewish population of the metropolitan area today approaches 100,000. Jewish people have continued a significant presence in the city of Detroit itself in many important ways. They contribute outstanding personal leadership as well as significant philanthropy to all the major cultural institutions of the city, including the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Detroit Symphony, the Detroit Public Library, the Detroit Zoological Society, and the medical centers. A visionary without equal is Max Fisher, a leader in the remaking of the face of Detroit's cultural center. Jews are strongly represented in the Detroit legal community, as judges as well as lawyers; as physicians in the Detroit Medical Center; and on the faculty of Wayne State University. Moreover, Jewish builders are investing heavily in the revival of the city, at Brush Park north of downtown, at Campus Martius, as well as in the restoration for re-use of historic buildings. Three small Jewish congregations continue their presence in urban Detroit.

Furthermore, the Detroit Jewish Initiative is an organized multi-faceted commitment of the Jewish community to the city of Detroit. One of the most visible projects, in partnership with other foundations and donors, is the rehabilitation of several urban recreation centers, which are under the auspices of the City of Detroit Department of Recreation. This is an important contribution, which recognizes that the success of the city of Detroit is vital to the success of all peoples in the metropolitan region.

Certainly, the Jews of the Detroit area have been shaped by the cataclysmic international events of the 20th century—mass emigration, two world wars, the Holocaust, and the birth of the state of Israel. Facing the challenge of assimilation, through Jewish education and a strong synagogue community, they have tried to maintain their Jewish identity and heritage, while continuing to make vital contributions to Detroit life—as did that first Jew to arrive in Detroit in 1762, fur trader Chapman Abraham.

I cannot predict how life will be for you Detroiters in the twenty-second century. The technology of our own time is moving so fast as to bring incredible changes and speed to our lives on a regular basis. But the excitement of the 300th birthday of Detroit has left our region invigorated, with a revived waterfront, the promise of a new downtown, and closer to re-realizing its potential as a great metropolis. I trust that the twenty-second century finds this area thriving and prospering and its people living in peace.



With warmest wishes,
Judith Levin Cantor
Dec. 31, 2001

Judith Levin Cantor is a past president of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan and author of Jews in Michigan (Michigan State University Press, 2001). Three other members of Detroit's Jewish community contributed letters to the Tricentennial Time Capsule: Paul Gross, meteorologist, on the environment and global warming; Julie Fisher Cummings, on philanthropy in the city; and Gary Torgow, on Detroit business and predictions for the coming century.

Louis J. Goldberg: A Champion of Children in Detroit

By Shirlee Rose Iden

Editor's note: This article is another contribution to our occasional series on leading Jewish citizens who have been honored with public schools named for them. This series began in 1994 (Vol. 35) and continued in 1998 (Vol. 38) and 1999 (Vol. 39). Schools documented include: Morris Adler Elementary (Southfield), Fred M. Butzel Junior High (Detroit), Davison Elementary (Detroit), Albert Einstein School (Oak Park), B. Benedict Glazer Elementary (Detroit), Samuel Gompers School (Detroit), Seymour Gretchko Elementary (West Bloomfield), Louis Tendler Elementary (Detroit). We welcome information about other schools that have not been reported on in our journal.

Almost one hundred years have passed since Louis J. Goldberg's untimely death at age thirty-seven. The elementary school named for him in Detroit was demolished in recent years, no longer a monument to his service to the schoolchildren of Detroit and to quality education. Yet Louis Goldberg's role in early twentieth-century educational history, and his steadfast labor for the causes in which he believed, established a significant legacy that has stood over time as a source of pride to his family and to the Jewish community.

Goldberg was the first Jew to serve as President Pro Tem of the Detroit Board of Education. Appointed by the Mayor William C. Maybury of Detroit to fill a vacancy on the board for four months in 1896, he soon decided to continue his educational service to the city and its schoolchildren. He secured the Republican nomination for school inspector for the 14th ward in 1901 and was elected to a four-year term. As a Board of Education member and president, Goldberg earned a reputation as a conscientious champion for the children of Detroit. His constant goal was to provide honest and efficient management of the schools so that students would receive the best possible education.

A London Childhood

Born in London, England, in 1866, Goldberg was educated at the London Jews' Free School. Noted novelist and essayist Israel Zangwill was his classmate. As seniors, the two young men followed the tradition of the school and taught in its classrooms. Goldberg arrived in Detroit with his parents in 1888 when he was twenty-two. For several years, he worked in a clothing store owned by his uncle, Henry Goldberg, and then entered the same line of business on his own. For many years he owned and operated a successful and prominent clothing store at 1086 Michigan Avenue in Detroit. He was married to Sarah Cohen, and they had four children: Laura (Mrs. David Pollack), Marvin, Daniel and Walter Irving.

During his term on the Detroit Board of Education, Goldberg became involved in the purchase of school sites, transactions then overseen by the Board. At one time, a citizen remarked that he must have profited from a sale because he voted to pay \$6,000 for

land previously offered for \$3,700. Completely innocent in this and any other Board land deals, Goldberg set out to challenge the Board by establishing a new committee to oversee real estate transactions for the schools. This controversial proposal was strongly opposed by a significant number of Board members and appeared to have little chance of passage. Goldberg convinced two Board members who were out of town to rush home for the crucial Board vote. He himself, ill and hospitalized, was carried to the meeting, against the wishes of his wife and doctor. His dramatic appearance took his opponents by surprise. When he was moved to the front of the room and spoke to his motion, emphasizing the funds that could be saved for the Detroit Public Schools, he won the day. The motion passed by a vote of eight to seven. In time, the new real estate oversight committee was able to save thousands of dollars for the school district.

“Honor the Name”

This incident was dramatized in a radio play produced by the Detroit Public Schools' radio station WDTR in May 1949. It was part of a weekly series called “Honor the Name,” in which people for whom Detroit schools were named were profiled and honored. Several actors portrayed Goldberg, his wife, school board members, and citizens. Miss Charlotte Hamlin, then principal of the Goldberg School, made a brief statement at the end of the play, and the announcer praised Goldberg as “an energetic, conscientious leader... [who] led the fight for more and better buildings, for better equipment in the schools and for better salaries for teachers.”

After this controversy, Goldberg continued to serve the Board and Detroit's school pupils with honesty and integrity. He was elected president pro tem of the board, the first Jewish person to hold that position. Unfortunately he did not live to serve out his term. He died on March 10, 1903. Newspaper accounts of the

time indicate that he had been ill for some time and died at the Detroit Sanitarium of “appendicitis complicated with other diseases.” Rabbi Leo M. Franklin of Detroit's Temple Beth El delivered the funeral oration at the service held at Goldberg's home. According to the Detroit Free Press, “all the friends of the family were unable to enter the residence, and several hundred people collected in the street in front of the house.” In attendance were members of the school board, the Detroit Teachers' Association, various unions, and other city dignitaries. Goldberg was buried at the Shaarey Zedek section of the Beth Olem Cemetery in Hamtramck.

Goldberg Elementary School

The Detroit School Board ordered that all school flags were to be flown at half mast in Goldberg's memory, and classes were cancelled on the afternoon of his funeral. Detroit schools superintendent Wales C. Martindale said, “The public does not know what it has lost by the death of Inspector Goldberg. He was a man who was thoroughly honest and when he was right could not be induced to change his opinions by any influence.” In



. Vote for .

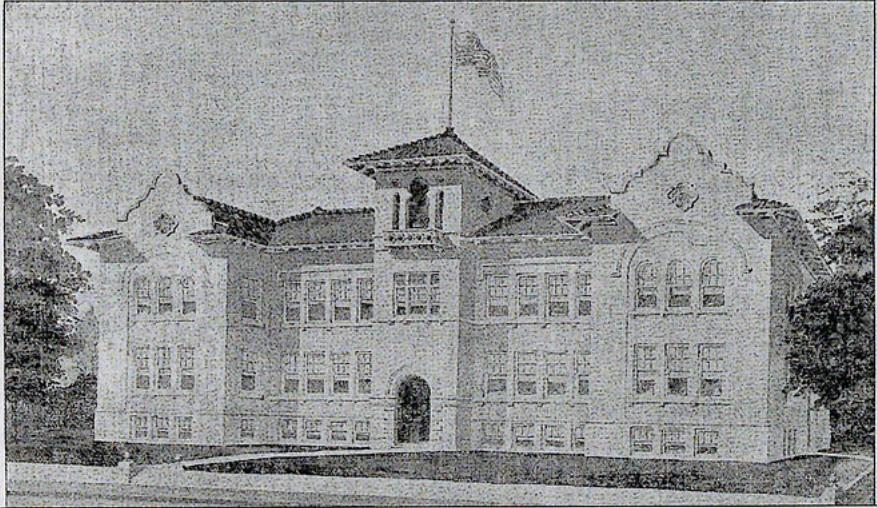
Louis Goldberg,

Republican Candidate
for School Inspector

14th Ward.

Caucus Thursday, March 14th, 1901
from 4 to 8 P. M. Local Time

*NEW HOME FOR SOME BRIGHT BOYS AND
GIRLS OF DETROIT DURING SCHOOL HOURS*



“Architects Malcomson & Higginbotham have prepared plans and figures for the new Goldberg school, now in course of erection on the north side of Piquette avenue, between Fourteenth and Vermont avenues. The new school, when completed, will cost \$50,000. The [15-room] structure will be built of pressed brick with stone trimmings, and will be two stories in height.” *Detroit News Tribune*, April 9, 1905.

1905, the Louis J. Goldberg Elementary School was established in Detroit at 1330 Marquette Street, between Piquette and McGraw (although a *Detroit News Tribune* photo and caption from 1905 reports the location as “the north side of Piquette avenue, between Fourteenth and Vermont avenues.” It is reported that the school was relocated about 1920 between or near Ferry and St. Antoine. According to Goldberg’s grandson, Dr. Ronald I. Pollack, the school was torn down a few years ago.

Goldberg’s example of service to schools and education inspired members of his family. His brother, Hiram C. Goldberg, was elected to the Detroit Board of Education in 1904 and served for many years. Ronald Pollack, a grandson, is retired from the Macomb Intermediate School District’s Department of Special Services. Lucille Pollack, a granddaughter, taught in the Detroit Public Schools for many years.

In March 2003, a century will have passed since the death of Louis J. Goldberg. The years have not dimmed the value of his contribution to the Jewish community and the educational community of Detroit. Feisty and fierce, he fought for what he perceived as right, and many are his beneficiaries.



A former editor of the Southfield Eccentric, Shirlee Rose Iden has taught history at MCCC and OCC and has received numerous awards. She is a long-time member of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan and a frequent contributor to Michigan Jewish History.

Michigan's Arctic Pioneer: Edward Israel and the Greely Expedition

By Douglas Wamsley

On West Main Street in Kalamazoo stands a marker commemorating one of the city's residents. It states:

"Near here is the grave of Edward Israel, who went on the nation's first polar expedition, led by Lt. Adolphus W. Greely. The team set out in 1881 for Ellesmere Island in the Arctic Ocean. Expedition scientist was Israel of Kalamazoo, age 22, a recent graduate of the University of Michigan. He collected valuable astronomical information and assisted Greely in many administrative chores. Disaster struck in 1883 when the relief ship was sunk en route. After a severe winter, 18 of the 25 expedition members died. Israel died on May 27, 1884. The entire city of Kalamazoo, with mixed sorrow and pride, honored Israel when the body was returned in August of that year."

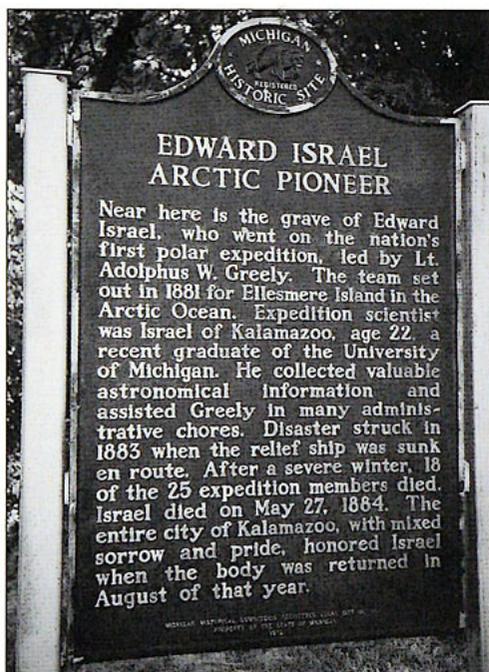


Photo by Glenn H. Cantor

Edward Israel was the only Jewish member of that expedition. His notable contributions to the expedition, as well as his strength of character under trying circumstances, form part of a memorable story of American history now long forgotten.

In 1879, a plan for international scientific cooperation in the Arctic was proposed in Hamburg, Germany, at the First International Polar Conference. The project, known as the International Polar Year (and the predecessor to future scientific cooperation in the polar regions that continues to this day) was the first to involve simultaneous recording of scientific observations by multiple nations. Twelve major arctic stations, sponsored by different countries, were established from which the observations were to be taken. The United States contributed two expeditions to

this endeavor, one expedition to be based in Port Barrow, Alaska, and the second to be located at Lady Franklin Bay, Ellesmere Island, Canada.



The Greely Expedition, 1881.

Lt. Greely is seated in the front row, fourth from left and Sgt. Israel is the sixth from left.

The Lady Franklin Bay Expedition, the most northern of all these scientific stations, was situated in what today is the eastern Canadian arctic, thirty miles from the Northern Greenland coast, a desolate location considered remote even today. The Lady Franklin Bay Expedition was under the direction of the U.S. Army Signal Service and its commander was Lieutenant Adolphus W. Greely, a Civil War veteran and senior officer in the Signal Service. The expedition, also known as the Greely Expedition, consisted of twenty-five volunteers. Few of them had any arctic experience or even a minimal understanding of the demands and rigors of such an expedition, a factor that would lead to discontentment and disagreement among its members. Many of the volunteers had been transferred from various military posts in the American West, then being settled.

One of the few bright spots in the roster of the Greely Expedition was the selection of its astronomer, young Edward Israel. Israel had recently graduated from the University of Michigan as a meteorologist and came highly recommended. At the age of twenty-one, he was the youngest member of the expedition and the only one of Jewish heritage. Greely noted that in order to accompany the expedition, Israel "cheerfully accepted service as [an] enlisted man." (Greely 1886, Vol. I: 39)

The Greely Expedition left New York on June 12, 1881. They made a relatively unobstructed passage up the coast of Labrador and steamed further north along the Greenland coast. On August 4, 1881, they reached their destination at Lady Franklin Bay. Their transport ship, Proteus, departed after leaving the members of the Expedition and their supplies. The plan was that the transport ship would return the next year to resupply the expedition, and failing a return next year it would try the following season.

Once disembarked, the Greely Expedition immediately began its series of scientific observations. Responsibility for a substantial portion of those observations rested with Edward Israel. He had charge of all the astronomical and pendulum observations. In addition, he had responsibility for the observations of magnetic intensity as well as general charge of the magnetical observations. The total number of magnetical, meteorological, and tidal observations exceeded five hundred per day, testifying to the enormity of the labor involved. (Greely 1886, Vol. I: 132) The observations were faithfully and continually carried out during the extended stay at Lady Franklin Bay. Although the Expedition was to be scientific in nature, its geographic results were equally impressive. Members of the expedition achieved a new "farthest north" for the highest latitude ever attained, besting by ninety miles the mark previously established by the British Arctic Expedition of 1875-76. Greely also sent exploring parties into the interior of the Ellesmere Island, and there discovered Lake Hazen, the most northern fresh water lake in the world. While his principal responsibilities were with the scientific work, Israel was a frequent volunteer for exploratory work and participated in several excursions.

Although the members of the Greely Expedition had reason to be proud of their efforts, a series of events largely outside of their control adversely affected the Expedition. In 1882, the resupply ship failed to reach them at Lady Franklin Bay. When a supply ship again failed to reach them the next year in 1883, Greely complied with his orders and retreated southward to Cape Sabine, further south along the Ellesmere Island coast. A difficult but successful journey of more than four hundred miles over ice and water brought them to Camp Clay on Sabine Island in September 1883. The dedication of Israel was apparent during this retreat. In the published scientific results of the expedition, edited by G.E. Curtis in Washington, DC, Curtis noted that "on the abandonment of Fort Conger [their camp at Lady Franklin Bay], the pendulum itself was courageously brought away and carried down to the camp, from which the survivors of the party, of whom the lamented Israel was not one, were rescued. It seems almost inconceivable that any instrument could have gone through that terrible journey over ice hummocks, etc., intact." (Greely 1888, Vol. II, 702) On the retreat to Cape Sabine, on September 17, while attempting to haul the boat out of the ice, Israel broke through the young ice and "was rescued with some difficulty." After being transported to the station by dog sled he suffered no permanent injury.

The winter spent at Cape Sabine was one of unequalled privation. The supply depots that were expected to be deposited on a predetermined location by the supply ship were, for unexplained reasons, never removed from the ship some months before when it visited the area. Of the twenty-five members of the Greely Expedition, eighteen died during the winter, principally from starvation. The situation became so desperate that one man was executed for stealing food. Israel apparently braved the difficult situation honorably. In October 30, 1883, Greely noted that: "Israel is suffering excessively from our unaccustomed privations, but he refrains from any utterances in the nature of complaints." (Greely 1886, Vol. II: 185) Young Edward Israel died on May 27, 1884, at Cape Sabine. In an expedition notorious for bitter feuding and harsh feelings, negative comments about Israel are singularly absent. His commander, A.W. Greely, who referred to Israel as "a great favorite," also had the following words of praise after his death:

"Sergeant Israel was a young man of some fortune, a graduate of Ann Arbor University, a promising astronomer, with a future before him. His death affected me seriously, as his cheerful and hopeful words during the long months he was my bag-companion did much to hold up my hands and relieve my overtaxed brain. He had always endeared himself to all by his kindness, consideration and unvarying equanimity, and was often called at Sabine our 'Benjamin.' His services were very valuable in our scientific work, and despite his weak physique he had sought field service. In reading the burial service I was mindful of him and his people, and omitted every portion that could be distasteful to his coreligionists." (Greely 1886, Vol. II: 310)

On June 22, 1884, less than one month after Israel's death, the seven surviving expedition members were rescued by a relief expedition under the command of Admiral Winfield Scott Schley. Schley braved the treacherous ice to reach Cape Sabine and the Greely expedition members. A few more days and all likely would have perished.

The bodies of the dead were returned to the United States. Edward Israel was buried in the Hebrew Society's lot in Kalamazoo. The Greely Expedition had met its objectives of producing comprehensive scientific observations for the International Polar Year. It had also achieved impressive geographic results with its various exploring parties. The price of these results however was exceedingly high.

Edward Israel's contribution to the scientific results of the Greely Expedition received appropriate praise. G.E. Curtis, in speaking of the reductions made by Edward Israel of sextant observations by various sledge parties, wrote: "[t]he general accuracy and high character of his work justifies the belief that, in cases where the assignment of values was necessarily, to a greater or less extent, a matter of judgment, the figures adopted by Sergeant Israel after consultation with the observers, are of the highest attainable value and cannot now be improved by revision." (Greely 1888, Vol. II: 61) Curtis also wrote: "In general, . . . Sergeant Israel's computations indicate great care, even in the smallest details, exhibiting a greater degree of precision than is necessary to be applied to observations of this character." (Greely 1888, Vol II: 61)

The story of the Greely Expedition is now a footnote in American Arctic history. The conduct of Edward Israel in that difficult ordeal however still serves as a proud example even today.

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Douglas Wamsley is an avid enthusiast in arctic history and exploration. The New Jersey resident has researched and written numerous articles on the subject.

Celebrities & Celebrations

A Year of Celebrations for Detroit's Jewish Community Center

During 2002, the Detroit-area Jewish Community Center commemorated many important milestones—its 75th anniversary, the 50th anniversary of the Detroit Jewish Book Fair, and the 10th anniversary of the Janice Charach Epstein Gallery.

Organized social, recreational, and educational activities have been a significant aspect of Jewish communal life in Detroit since the turn of the century. The first center of these programs was the United Jewish Charities' Hannah Schloss Memorial Building on High and Hastings Streets. Here, acculturation began with provisions for English classes, vocational training, employment, and medical services. The building was renamed the Detroit Jewish Institute in 1906.

In 1921, the Young Women's Hebrew Association (YWHA) was organized at 89 Rowena in Detroit, run by the National Council of Jewish Women. Soon after 1926, when the new Jewish Welfare Federation was established, the Jewish Centers Association (JCA) was created. The first building was opened on East Philadelphia and later moved to 21 Melbourne Street. The JCA also organized clubs at



Courtesy Sharon Alterman.

Visitors to the West Bloomfield JCC in April 2002 viewed the exhibit, "A Scrapbook of Memories," commemorating the JCC's 75th anniversary

various centers, synagogues, and schools. In 1933, the Jewish Centers Association and the YWHA merged. A building at Woodward Ave. and Holbrook, the first to be called the Jewish Community Center, was dedicated.

In 1939, the Jewish Community Center was remodeled and enlarged into a state-of-the-art facility, the Aaron DeRoy Memorial Building. Subsequent Jewish Community Centers were located at Dexter and Davison, and at Curtis and Meyers in Detroit. In 1954, the first suburban branch opened on Ten Mile Road in Oak Park, and in 1976, the Center moved to its present West Bloomfield location.

Many events were held throughout the year to celebrate and highlight this 75-year history. In October 2001, the celebration opened with a concert for the community at Orchestra Hall in Detroit featuring the Klezmatics. Crowds returned to the JCC on

Curtis and Meyers, now the City of Detroit Northwest Activities Center, in December for an open house. A panel discussion addressed the role of the JCC in the history of Jewish Detroit at a March 2002 meeting. Panelists included Irwin Shaw, past JCC executive director, Melba Winer, and U.S. District Judge Avern Cohn. A festive dinner/dance honoring past JCC presidents was held in April and a photo exhibit highlighting the Center's history was mounted. The exhibit also traveled to the Oak Park JCC for closing festivities in June, where a birthday carnival was hosted by the JCC, Jewish Apartments and Services, Jewish Experience for Families (JEFF), and the Neighborhood Project. —*Sharon Alterman*

Michigan Journalism Hall of Famer Charlotte "Tavy" Stone

On April 20, 2002, the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame inducted into its ranks the late fashion editor of the *Detroit News*, Tavy Stone. Her Hall of Fame profile states that she "covered fashion and lifestyle...with a zeal that few possess."

Charlotte Lefton was born in Detroit on August 3, 1928. She called herself "Tavy" as a young child because she had trouble pronouncing her first name. But she had little trouble tackling anything else! She was an outstanding student at Highland Park High School and a student of the famed pianist Mischa Kottler. At sixteen, she enrolled at the University of Chicago and graduated with a degree in philosophy.

After her marriage to William Stone in 1950, Tavy worked as a free-lance publicist and journalist for the *Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press*, contributing stories on fashion, style, and shopping. In November 1979, she became the full-time fashion editor for the *News*, succeeding Marji Kunz. During Stone's tenure there, the "Accent on Living" pages and the *Sunday Michigan Magazine* were



Photo by Gerry Kerran, 1982. Courtesy Mariynn Silver.

expanded to accommodate all of her articles. Managing Editor James Vesely said, "Any newspaper would be lucky to have Tavy Stone. Tavy's energy and determination made her quite special and in her way she became part of the great legacy of Detroit journalism."

Stone combined sophistication, experience, and wit in her writing, and her reporting was not confined to Detroit or Michigan. In 1980, she interviewed future-First Lady Nancy Reagan aboard the presidential campaign plane. In 1982 she was one of only twelve journalists to gain admission to the wedding ceremony of Lady Diana Spencer and Prince Charles. Stone loved Detroit. Her civic activities twice won her the City of Detroit Citizen's Award.

Charlotte "Tavy" Stone died of cancer in 1985. On November 7, 1987, through the efforts of the Fashion Group of Detroit, Inc., and many of her friends, a library named in her honor was dedicated in the Detroit Historical Museum. It is a non-lending research facility and has a unique collection of books and articles covering the entire spectrum of the fashion business. Stone is one of only 106 people to be honored by induction into the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame. —*Esther Mintz*

Detroit Jewish News Celebrates 60th Year

In March 1942, Detroit had over 1.7 million residents, even though thousands of men and women were serving in the Armed Forces, including Detroit's biggest Jewish hero, Hank Greenberg. There were no Jewish day schools, and the Jewish Center was located on Woodward at Holbrook. Twelfth Street was the heart of Jewish commerce, housing caterers, cleaners, delicatessens, jewelers, pharmacists, printers, and apparel and furniture stores. The two stores dealing in Jewish books and other religious items—Pieman's near Blaine Street, and Chesluk's near Clairmount—were a short walk from each other on Twelfth.

It was a difficult time to launch a new weekly publication in the Jewish community, though. Hundreds of Jewish



men had recently departed to do their part in the war effort, and hundreds more were readying to join. Budgets were tight. But more important, there was already a Jewish weekly serving the community. For twenty-six years, since 1916, *The Detroit Jewish Chronicle* had reported on the happenings of Jewish interest.

Most people saw no need for another local Jewish weekly. However, several prominent community leaders, including rabbis and community leaders such as Leonard Simons, formed an advisory board and some provided financial backing. Under the leadership of well-known editor Philip Slomovitz, the new weekly, *The Detroit Jewish News*, was launched and became a success. *The Detroit Jewish Chronicle* was incorporated into *The Jewish News* in 1951. Slomovitz was the first recipient of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan's Leonard N. Simons History Award in 1991, for his great understanding of the significance of history. After his death in 1993, the JHSM archived his papers, which are now in the Reuther Library at Wayne State University in Detroit as part of the Jewish Community Archives. Slomovitz wrote the "Purely Commentary" column throughout his career at *JN*, and published a book of those columns under the same name.

In 1984, *JN* was purchased from Slomovitz by Charles A. Buerger, who published the *Baltimore Jewish News*. He sent Arthur Horwitz to Detroit to work on the paper. By 1996, Horwitz was publisher of Detroit's *JN*, and in 2000, he and Michael Steinhardt purchased it along with the *Atlanta Jewish Times*. Under its present editor, Robert Sklar, the *Detroit Jewish News* continues its proud tradition of informing and connecting the Jewish community.

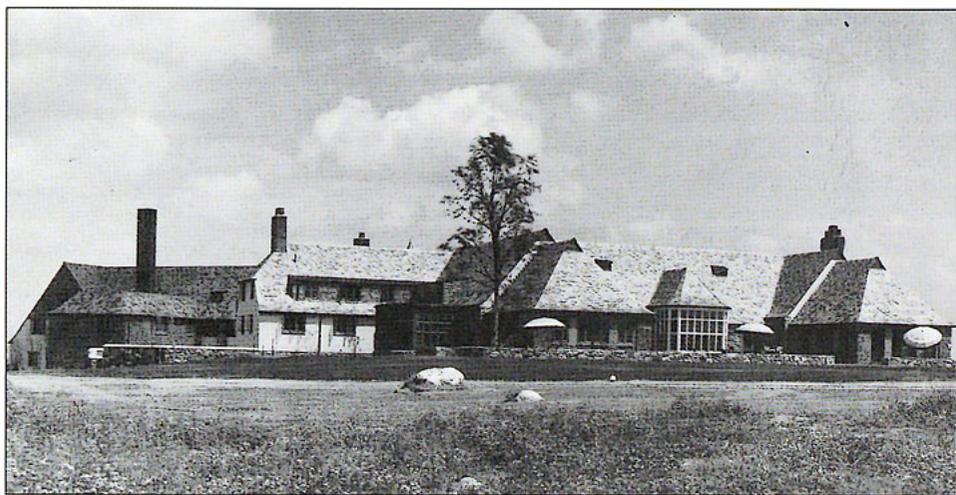
As *JN* celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in 2002, it received five Rockower Awards for journalistic excellence from the American Jewish Press Association. During its sixty years, more than 3,120 issues have been published. There have been several American and Israeli wars, and many changes in the local Jewish population and neighborhoods. Each issue has stirred the full range of emotions. Its writers are from all segments of the community, and their articles appeal to all segments. The Letters to the Editor can irk or inspire, and readers respond with their own opinions. The Detroit Jewish community keeps in touch with the local, national, and international community through the *Detroit Jewish News*. —*Irwin Cohen*

Franklin Hills Country Club Celebrates 75 Years

In 1925, a group of Detroit Jewish leaders began searching for a rustic retreat ideally suited for a golf and country club. The group included men such as Leo Butzel, Andrew Wineman, and Judge Charles Simons. Each was an active board member of the Redford Country Club, Detroit's first Jewish country club, originally known as the Phoenix Golf Club. Originally founded in 1913—an offshoot of the Phoenix Social Club—the Redford Country Club became the social home of Detroit's most prestigious and affluent Jewish leaders, men banned from joining other golf clubs simply because of their "ethnicity."

Their pleasant 113-acre parcel straddled the Rouge River, in an area known as Duboisville. It was built as a nine-hole course, but as the Roaring 20s got underway, Redford Country Club's leaders decided to upgrade the course to eighteen holes.

Photo courtesy Albert Kahn Associates.



They retained Donald Ross, the preeminent golf course architect of the time, to tackle the job. An associate of Ross's firm surveyed the area, while Ross supervised its design. In 1921, the new course debuted, but club leaders soon realized the site wasn't suited to their tastes. Redford's greens and tees remained too close together for truly competitive play, and frequent flooding of the course caused much frustration. More significantly though, the once quiet and serene town of Redford announced plans for the construction of Edgewater Park, an amusement park located on the shores of the Rouge River, right across the street from the Redford Country Club. The time had come to find a new home.

The search began. Club leaders looked for a parcel large enough to accommodate a sprawling clubhouse, two golf courses, riding stables and bridle paths.¹ Their travels took them to a remote corner of Farmington Hills, a horse farm on the corner of 13 Mile Road and Inkster Road. Within a year, they acquired nearly 180 acres, enough to build the course and clubhouse of their dreams.

This time, Donald Ross personally visited the site and designed an eighteen-hole course. Albert Kahn, one of Detroit's favorite architects and a Redford Country Club member, designed the English Tudor style clubhouse. Both men incorporated the land's natural hilly terrain, large boulders, and fieldstones into their designs. So numerous were the boulders, that Judge Charles Simons, Redford's president during the construction period, almost dubbed the new club "Gray Boulders." Instead, in deference to the nearby village of Franklin, the name Franklin Hills Country Club was chosen.

In 2002, Franklin Hills Country Club celebrates its 75th anniversary. Over four hundred members now frequent the clubhouse—still boasting its original design and rustic beauty—and they play the recently fully-restored Donald Ross golf course, which has been hailed nationally as a true gem. —*Wendy Rose Bice*

¹ Art Sarason letter. Franklin Hills Country Club archives.

Adele Staller Recipient of 2002 Simons Award

Adele Staller, current JHSM co-president and a familiar name in these pages, received the 2002 Leonard N. Simons History Award at the Jewish Historical Society's annual luncheon on June 2. Staller, a native Detroiter and longtime resident of Southfield, is an active JHSM member and leader. For nearly twenty years, she has been instrumental in coordinating and leading bus tours of historic Jewish Detroit for JHSM groups as well as for numerous community organizations and synagogues. Staller presently serves on the board of directors of Adat Shalom Synagogue and its Sisterhood, is a past president of the former Beth Achim Sisterhood and member of its board, and is an officer of the Michigan Branch of the Women's League of Conservative Judaism. She is a retired teacher from the Detroit Public Schools and volunteers as a tutor for Russian students preparing for their citizenship tests through the Jewish Family Service.



Photo by Jim Grey.

Five Simons Award winners gathered at the JHSM Annual Meeting. Standing: left, Irwin Shaw; right, Alan Kandel. Seated: left to right, Judy Levin Cantor, Mary Lou Simons Zieve, Adele Staller, the 2002 recipient.

At the ceremony presenting the Simons Award, Mary Lou Simons Zieve, daughter of the late Leonard Simons, spoke of her father's desire to instill Detroit Jews with a sense of pride in who they are and where they came from. She praised Adele Staller for following the precepts of her father. Staller's niece, Cheryl Chapin Guyer, said that her aunt "truly understands the uniqueness of Detroit's Jewish community" and "enhances all of our collective memories" as a teacher, historian, and storyteller. Staller is the twelfth recipient of the Simons Award. Four past recipients were present at the June program: Irwin Shaw, Judith Levin Cantor, Alan Kandel, and Mary Lou Simons Zieve.

Leonard N. Simons History Award Honoring Those Who Have Made a Significant Contribution to the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan

Awardees 1991-2002

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Philip Slomovitz | Mary Lou Simons Zieve |
| Avern L. Cohn | Judith Levin Cantor |
| George M. Stutz | Michael W. Maddin |
| Irwin Shaw | Alan D. Kandel |
| Emma Lazaroff Schaver | Sidney M. Bolkosky |
| Leslie P. Hough, Philip P. Mason | Adele W. Staller |

Detroit Historical Museum Presents "Polish Presence in Detroit"

In November 2001, the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan participated in an exhibit and program at the Detroit Historical Museum presenting artifacts from



Photo by Jim Grey.

At the December event "The Ceremonial Arts of Chanukah," accompanying the exhibit "The Polish Presence in Detroit," were, left to right; Jill Grannan, exhibit curator; Judy Cantor, member of exhibit committee and curator of Jewish Room exhibit; Adele Staller, JHSM co-president; Howard and Lili Camden, lenders of ceremonial candlesticks for the exhibit; Sharon Alterman, chair of the program; Charlotte Dubin, JHSM Advisory Board member; Douglas Harris, museum docent and JHSM member; Rob Kaplow, JHSM Recording Secretary.

Polish immigrants to Detroit, with a room devoted to a mid-20th century Jewish home preparing for the Sabbath. The Jewish artifacts and photos were assembled by Judith Cantor in cooperation with the museum's curator, Jill Grannan.

Artifacts included items originally brought from Poland by families of local people. These included: candlesticks on loan from Howard and Lili Camden; a menorah loaned by James Grey; a mortar and pestle from Adele Staller; kiddush cup of Rabbi Judah Levin by Judy Levin Cantor; hand embroidered textiles from Sylvia Babcock, Peggy Daitch, and Evelyn Kasle; and a lace table cover by Harriet Siden. Also included were a letter from a relative in Poland to his family in America by Gerald Cook; prayer books printed in Warsaw and Vilna from the Archives of Shaarey Zedek; photos of a Jewish family, a business, a sports hero, a congregation. Early year-books of Detroit high schools attended by Jewish and gentile Polish young people were on view. At the entrance to the exhibit, the plaque of Congressional Medal of Honor awardee Raymond Zussman, loaned by the Jewish War Veterans, attracted considerable attention.

Because of popular interest, the Detroit Historical Museum exhibit, originally scheduled through March 2002, was extended through June.

Davidson Named Michiganian of the Year

In May, 2002, *The Detroit News* named William Davidson one of the twelve 2001 Michiganians of the Year. Honored "for his generosity to educational, recreational and musical endeavors," Bill Davidson explains: "I was taught to always share my good fortune with others, and never to forget where I came from, my family roots."

Davidson is a Guardian of the Heritage Council of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, and the journal, *Michigan Jewish History*, is dedicated to the memory of his parents and grandparents. Davidson is a majority owner of the Detroit Pistons and Palace Sports and Entertainment, and president and CEO of Guardian Industries Corp. He has endowed the William Davidson Institute in the Business School of the University of Michigan, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, park restorations in Detroit, as well as landmark endowments to the Jewish Federation and in Israel.

The Michiganian of the Year Awards honor outstanding citizens who have helped make living in this state a richer experience for all. Previous winners within the Jewish community include: 1979-Dr. Barnett Rosenberg; 1981-Misha Rachlevsky; 1982-Zalman Konikow; 1983-A. Alfred Taubman; 1984-Elliot Wilhelm; 1987-Alan E. Schwartz & Irene Walt; 1988-Sue Marx & Pamela Conn; 1990-Milton London; 1992-Leon S. Cohan & Mary Fisher; 1994-Rabbi Charles Rosenzweig; 1995-Charlotte & David Fauman, Albert Meyer; 1996-Judge Hilda Gage; 1997-Geraldine & Dr. Melvin Lester; 1998-Peter Cummings & David Hermelin; 1999-Max Fisher; 2000-Dr. Jerome P. Horwitz.

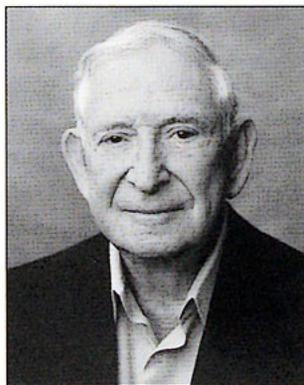


Exhibit Features "A Few Good Women"

Four local Jewish World War II women veterans are featured in "A Few Good Women: The Role of Women in the Military During the Second World War" on exhibit at the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in Lansing through October 2002. The exhibit curator was alerted to the special stories of these servicewomen when they were highlighted in Harriet Alpern's article, "Where Were You During World War II," published in *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 35, Winter 1994. Ethel Grossman was an Army nurse in the Pacific theatre, Bess Katz Gorelick was a U.S. Marine, and Pearl Feldman a Sgt. Major in the WACS on active duty in the European theatre. The fourth veteran is Colonel Clara Raven, a Michigan Women's Hall of Fame inductee. She was one of the first four women physicians in the Medical Corps of the U. S. Army and was assigned to France and later Hiroshima. The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan salutes their patriotism at contributing to a hard-fought victory.

The Michigan Women's Hall of Fame is located at 213 W. Main Street in Lansing. Phone: 517.484.1880.

Upcoming: Two Notable Exhibits at MSU

Two important exhibits drawing attention to rescue from Nazi tyranny and to Michigan Jewish life and activity during the 1930s and '40s will be mounted this fall at the Michigan State University Museum in East Lansing. The MSU Museum, MSU's Jewish Studies Program, and Congregation Shaarey Zedek of East Lansing, with assistance from the Michigan Humanities Council and cooperation from the Michigan Jewish Historical Society, will sponsor the exhibits and a coordinated public program during 2002-2003.

From November 17 until June 15, 2003, the museum will host "*Varian Fry: Assignment-Rescue*," a U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum traveling exhibit. In cooperation with Jewish Studies, the museum will also host an original five-part companion exhibit, "*Uneasy Years: Michigan Jewry During Depression and War*." Ken Waltzer and Kirsten Fergmaglich, historians at MSU, are co-curators of the exhibit, which will explore the ambivalences in Michigan Jewish life during this era. Michigan Jews were increasingly integrated into Detroit and small town life, yet they were also increasingly uneasy amidst the Depression and rising anti-Semitism, anxious and concerned on behalf of European Jews who were confronted by Nazi persecution and war. The exhibit will feature photos of Jewish-owned businesses from around the state, Jewish family and social life, and synagogues and religious life during the 1930s. It will highlight the sharp divisions in America over involvement abroad in the late 1930s and early 1940s, as well as American and Michigan Jewish responses to immigration and refugee matters. The exhibit will also show Michigan Jews' activities in uniform and on the home front during the war.

The public program envisioned includes keynote speaker Sheila Isenberg, author of *Varian Fry - American Hero*, who will appear at MSU on November 18, and Pierre Sauvage, filmmaker, who will appear in early April 2003. Sauvage is completing a film, *And Crown Thy Good: Varian Fry in Marseilles*. The public program will also include speakers and panels on the subjects of rescue, rescuing children, and on Michigan Jewish life in the 1930s. An outreach program is to be planned in partnership with schools, organizations, churches, and synagogues.

For more information on the exhibits and museum times, call 517.432.3358.

Upper Peninsula Congregations Mark Milestones

Two congregations in the Upper Peninsula marked major anniversaries this summer. The 50th anniversary of the Temple Beth Sholom in Ishpeming was celebrated in July. Beth Sholom continues to hold year-round, monthly services, with visits from a student rabbi from the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. The congregation serves the needs of students and faculty at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, as well as local UP residents. Willard and Lois Cohodas were among the founders, and their daughter Lynn's husband, Rabbi Samuel Stahl of San Antonio, Texas, delivered the keynote address at the half-century festivities.

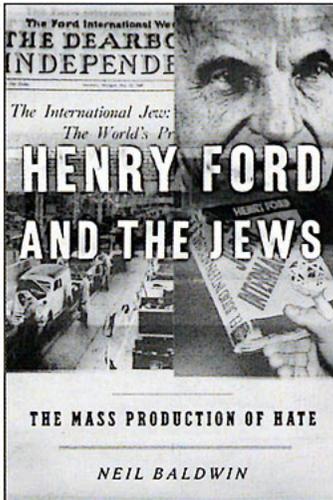
Temple Jacob in Houghton-Hancock marked its 90th birthday in August. Former residents and congregants from around the country gathered for the special occasion. See articles about Temple Jacob in *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 14, no. 1 (1974) and Vol. 38 (1998).

Seferim/Books

Henry Ford and the Jews: The Mass Production of Hate

By Neil Baldwin
Public Affairs, 2001, 416 pages

Members of the Detroit Jewish community have long memories. Senior Detroiters especially will recall the anti-Semitism of Henry Ford I. In his 1991 history of the community, Professor Sidney Bolkosky reminded his readers that Ford published his infamous anti-Semitic newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*, ninety-one times between 1920 and 1922.¹



In writing his recent book, *Henry Ford and the Jews: The Mass Production of Hate*, Neil Baldwin has drawn on fresh material including oral histories, archival correspondence, and unpublished family memoirs. Although the story of Henry Ford and anti-Semitism has been told often, Baldwin's book makes a case for linking Ford's distorted views to his early exposure to the McGuffey Reader, the ubiquitous schoolbook first published in 1836 in which Protestant Christianity and political conservatism were deeply imbedded.

Baldwin also depicts the anti-Semitic bias of two men who greatly influenced Ford's thinking: E.G. Liebold, Ford's general secretary, and W.J. Cameron, editor of *The Dearborn Independent* and public voice of the Ford Motor Company. Baldwin states that Liebold published a 250-page anthology from *The Dearborn Independent* called *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem*. He also quotes historian Norman Cohen, who said, "all in all, the 'International Jew' probably did more than any other work to make the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion famous." Through Liebold, known anti-Semites, including American Nazi Fritz Kuhn, G.L.K. Smith, and Father Charles Coughlin, made their way into Ford's circle. Baldwin also analyzes Ford's relationship with the young American hero Charles Lindbergh. Both Ford and Lindbergh accepted the Grand Service Cross of the Supreme Order of the German Eagle from Nazi Germany. According to Baldwin, Ford once casually remarked, "When Charles comes out here, we only talk about Jews."

A considerable portion of *Henry Ford and the Jews* is devoted to the reactions to Ford of the Detroit and American Jewish communities, which vacillated between fear, anxiety, and opposition. There were Jewish workers on the automobile assembly line who felt that Ford was misrepresented, and there were Jews prominent in the community who were slow to recognize Ford's anti-Semitism. Baldwin discusses the

attitudes of prominent people, such as architect Albert Kahn and businessman Edward C. Levy, toward their relationships with Ford. At the national level, leaders of the American Jewish Committee, Jacob Schiff, Cyrus Adler, and Louis Marshall, were concerned that bad public relations might result from attacking Ford. They subsequently became involved in public protest and legal action leading to Ford's recantation, real or feigned. Baldwin recognizes two notable Detroit figures who challenged Ford vociferously and in print: Rabbi Leo M. Franklin of Temple Beth El and Philip Slomovitz, editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*.

In his extensive research, Baldwin made use of the Rabbi Leo M Franklin Archives of Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives at Wayne State University in Detroit. He also researched in the Archives of the Cranbrook School in Bloomfield Hills and in the collections of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. He interviewed relatives of prominent Detroit families, such as the Butzel and Albert Kahn families, as well as Mary Einstein Shapero, granddaughter of Rabbi Franklin. *Henry Ford and the Jews* includes about 75 photographs and an extensive bibliography.

Henry Ford I died in 1947, and his successors have been at pains to obliterate the stain of anti-Semitism on the family name. In a 1999 article in *Michigan Jewish History* (Vol. 39, Fall 1999), the role of grandson Henry Ford II is detailed, pointing to his long friendship with Jewish philanthropist Max M. Fisher, his steadfast support of the State of Israel, and his opposition to the Arab boycott of Israel. The article also notes the economic ties between Israel and the Ford Motor Company. Nevertheless, Neil Baldwin's *Henry Ford and the Jews* serves as a reminder that constant vigilance is required to combat anti-Semitism in our times.

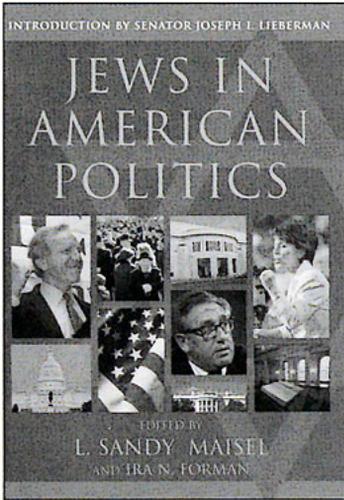
Reviewed by Alan Kandel, a longtime contributor to Michigan Jewish History and recipient of the 2000 Leonard N. Simons History Award from the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.

¹ Sidney Bolkosky, *Harmony & Dissonance: Voices of Jewish Identity in Detroit, 1914-1967* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 80.

Jews in American Politics

Edited by L. Sandy Maisel and Ira N. Forman
Bowman & Littlefield, 2001, 512 pages

Shortly after I moved to Michigan two decades ago with a political science degree in my hand, I was proud to tell my friends and family back in Minnesota that Michigan's congressional delegation included three Jews—Senator Carl Levin and Representatives Sander Levin and Howard Wolpe. But if I thought then that that fact reflected a strong history of Jewish congressional representation from Michigan, the Solomon Project book, *Jews in American Politics*, has disabused me of that notion. The book reveals that only one other Jew has represented Michigan in Congress since it reached statehood in 1837: Julius Houseman of Grand Rapids from 1883-1885.



Jews in American Politics, edited by L. Sandy Maisel of Colby College and guided by Ira Forman of the Solomon Project and the National Jewish Democratic Council, provides a serious look at the impact of Jews in American political life. It contains articles on the Jewish agenda and, more specifically, Jewish influence on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, Jewish voting patterns, Jewish radicalism and Jewish neo-conservatism. Authors also examine the history of Jews who served in presidential administrations, in Congress, and on the federal bench. The book contains an introduction by U.S. Senator and 2000 Vice-Presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman, and also a special prologue by political scientist David Shribman about the Lieberman candidacy.

For a political junkie like me, the book also contains a treasure trove of Jewish trivia, with chronological lists of the Jews who served in national politics since the founding of the republic, and a significant section with biographical sketches of them. The lists include Jewish members of presidential cabinets, the U.S. House and Senate, the Supreme Court, governors, and mayors of the larger cities.

Unfortunately, not many Michigianians are profiled in the sketches. The aforementioned Levins, Wolpe, and Houseman, and Republican activist and financier Max Fisher are included. An interesting notation about Senator Levin is that he is the first Jew elected from Michigan to the U.S. Senate, and now is the most senior Jewish member of that body. But names that come to mind are not mentioned in the book, such as Jim Alexander, who served as both Oakland County Republican party chairman and Governor Engler's representative in southeastern Michigan, Morley Winograd or Rick Weiner, former chairs of the Michigan Democratic Party, and Bob Naftaly or Doug Ross, both of whom served in Governor Blanchard's cabinet.

I began to ponder some of the fascinating data, such as why there have been more than 150 Jewish members of the U.S. House of Representatives, but only 17 Jewish governors. (And only 7 of those came from states with significant Jewish voting populations.) Other political anomalies cited include the two Jewish female U.S. Senators who represent California, Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, the two Jewish U.S. Senators who represent Wisconsin, Russ Feingold and Herb Kohl, a state which has less than a 2% Jewish population, and Minnesota, with less than 2% Jewish population, where the 1994 U.S. Senate race provided the first example in U.S. history of two Jews running against each other for the U.S. Senate (a feat which will be repeated this year in that state).

Certainly *Jews in American Politics* will be a major reference and resource for Jewish political scientists and any Jew involved in or interested in the Jewish contribution to the American political system. It may also serve to stimulate the entrance of future generations of Jews into politics.

Reviewed by Allan Gale, Associate Director of the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit. Gale has degrees in political science from the University of Minnesota and interdisciplinary Jewish studies from the Midrasha-College of Jewish Studies.

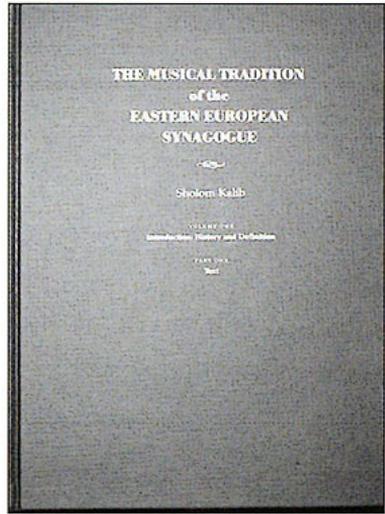
The Musical Tradition of the Eastern European Synagogue

By Sholom Kalib

Volume One (two parts): Introduction History and Definition; Musical Examples

Syracuse University Press, 2002, each part 277 pages

In the spring of 1978, while in the final preparations for a monumental concert service for the cantor and youth choir, Sholom Kalib revealed to me the concepts of a project that he was about to undertake: the exploration and documentation of the Eastern European musical traditions, including historical data and an analysis of its various musical-liturgical traditions. The impetus for Kalib's pursuit of this huge scholarly task was his firm belief that, through acculturation, sociological revolution, and assimilation, this musical tradition is in a serious state of deterioration and perhaps on the verge of extinction. After more than twenty years in which Kalib traversed the United States, Canada, and Israel to research his project by interviewing and recording knowledgeable native Eastern European cantors and *baaley t'fi-lab* (lay prayer leaders), the first volume of what will be a five-volume (ten-book) thesaurus has been published by Syracuse University Press.



Sholom Kalib, a native of Dallas, Texas, was born in 1929. From his early youth he was imbued with the love of Eastern European *bazzanut* (cantorial art) and biblical cantillation from his father, a son of a *bazzan* (cantor). When the young Kalib moved to Chicago, he was exposed to a community with an unceasing wealth of knowledge of Eastern European *bazzanut*. He was closely associated with two of the foremost cantors living in Chicago during that time, Joshua Lind and Todros Greenberg. Kalib was a practicing cantor for many years, and until his recent retirement, he was a professor of music theory at Eastern Michigan University.

The impressive and thorough scholarship represented in the first two books of Vol. 1 is presented in an elucidating and cogent manner. In the first part, Introduction: History and Definition, the author meticulously traces the historical development of his subject. He takes us from the earliest developments of liturgical song from post-biblical times to the present. He examines in minute detail the various aspects of synagogue liturgical music: biblical cantillation, the Missinai Tunes (melodies created for individual texts in the eleventh through the sixteenth centuries in Southwest Germany), the evolution of the musical traditions of the Eastern European synagogue. He presents a complete study and analysis of the *nusach* (traditional chant) that

permeated this genre. There is also a thorough examination of the art of *bazzanut* and a review of the place of the choir in the synagogue service. Also evaluated is the value, or lack of such, that our society and congregations place in the choir. Kalib gives a detailed chronology of the erosions of Eastern European synagogue music that, he asserts, began as early as the later part of the nineteenth century, an erosion that began even while in its "golden" era and continues unabated to this day.

Every subject discussed in the first part (text) is illustrated by musical examples in the accompanying volume, part 2: Musical Examples. The research here is voluminous. Kalib shows by comparison the derivation of the various subjects he's discussing through layers of multiple examples. For instance, in his discussion of how the prayer modes developed, one of his musical examples shows how the Eastern European *Viddui* (confessional) mode (recited during Yom Kippur) may have derived from the Yemenite Psalm Mode. He illustrates this with three musical staves, one atop the other.

The documentation is erudite and brilliantly conceived. To be sure, a work of such scholarship and scope will not be easily understood by just anyone. Even those who have been involved in synagogue music their entire lives will find these volumes opening new vistas never realized, and will make one aware—even proud—of the immense history and musical sophistication that we might take for granted. But there is enough historical data in the text volume to be of great interest to anyone—even those who have no musical knowledge—seeking a detailed historical perspective of this fascinating subject. The format of having two separate volumes, one containing the text, the second the musical illustrations, enables the reader to have both volumes open at the same time instead of having to constantly refer to the back of the book for the musical examples.

We now anxiously anticipate the publication the other volumes of this treasure: Vol. 2, The Weekday, Minor Holiday, and Life-Cycle Event Services; Vol. 3, The Sabbath Services; Vol. 4, The Three Festival Services; and Vol. 5, The High Holiday Services.

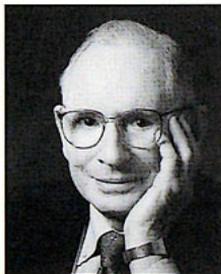
At the time I was apprised by Dr. Kalib of his intentions in writing this work, my first reaction was that this task will be an epitaph to the glorious history of Eastern European synagogue music. After studying and learning from this wonderful two-book volume, I now feel that, perhaps with a greater appreciation and understanding of what this music has to offer, instead of its becoming extinct, it will experience a much-deserved renaissance.

Reviewed by Cantor Jerome B. Kopmar, cantor emeritus of Beth Abraham Synagogue in Dayton, Ohio, and an adjunct professor of vocal studies at Sinclair Community College in Dayton.

In Memoriam

Peter Blum
1924-2002

Archivist and Author



The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan is saddened by the death of author and member Peter Blum. Born in Czechoslovakia, Blum worked in the beer industry for many years, including for the Stroh Brewing Company for nineteen years in brewing development. He became the company's archivist in the 1970s. Blum was the author of *Brewed in Detroit: Breweries and Beers Since 1830* (Wayne State University Press, 1999) and of "Detroit's Jewish Brewers," *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 40 (Fall 2000). In recent years, Peter Blum was especially interested in and supportive of the work of the

Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. His enthusiasm for history and archival work will be missed.

Dr. Seymour Gretchko
1931—2002

West Bloomfield Schools Superintendent

Dr. Seymour Gretchko, who received the Michigan School Superintendent of the Year Award in 2000, died suddenly on March 19, 2002. Gretchko was a passionate advocate for public education across the state. *Michigan Jewish History* has twice profiled Dr. Gretchko, first in 1997 (Vol. 37) in a historical survey of Jewish school superintendents. In that article, Gretchko stated, "My reverence for learning is certainly rooted in Jewish tradition."

A profile of the Seymour Gretchko Elementary School in West Bloomfield, was published in this journal in 1998 (Vol. 38), in an article on Michigan public schools named for leading Jewish citizens. Gretchko, it noted, "achieved the possibly unique distinction of hav-



ing a public school named for him not only during his lifetime but while still actively employed in the district." The West Bloomfield School district headed by Gretchko was praised as having successfully moved toward the goal of harmony in a place "where Arab, Christian, Jewish, and more than a dozen other ethnic groups speaking at least forty languages, live, study and grow together." The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan pays tribute to this remarkable citizen and leader. Seymour Gretchko's legacy will live on in the generations of lives he profoundly changed.

Milton "Bud" Marwil 1910-2002

Bibliophile, Traveler, Community Activist

Just a year and a half before the death of Milton Marwil last January, my wife and I became his immediate neighbors, after having known him and his wife, Lenore, since 1954, shortly after our arrival in Detroit. The Marwil's landmark book emporium in the vicinity of Wayne State University catered to the intellectual needs of college and graduate students as well as to the general public for many years. The store still bears the Marwil name. Bud was a bibliophile, but did not remain buried in his books. He embraced life in its totality as a globetrotter, community activist, student of history, institution builder, and philanthropist. Following Lenore's death, he became an expert in preparing culinary delights, inviting guests to partake of his Shabbat meals. He also could be seen during the spring and summer months carefully and diligently tending the flowers in his garden.



History held a lifelong fascination for Bud. He received his bachelor and master degrees in history from the University of Michigan. He was born into a family that had come to Detroit in the second half of the nineteenth century. His forebears had been active in synagogue affairs, and Milton Marwil continued their practice of communal service. The list of his activities includes the presidencies of Congregation B'nai Moshe and the Hebrew Free Loan Society. He was among the founders of the Hillel Day School of Metropolitan Detroit, continuing as a member of the Board of Directors. He founded the Detroit Children's Book Fair and was among the founders of the Jewish Book Fair, which recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. Marwil was a charter volunteer of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan and a contributor to its journal. Two important articles came from his pen—one about the historical Beth Olem Cemetery in an industrial area of Detroit, and the other marking the centennial of the Hebrew Free Loan Society.

In memory of Lenore, Bud established the annual and popular Lenore Marwil Jewish Film Festival, in cooperation with the Jewish Community Center of Detroit. Fine films of Jewish content are made available each spring for the benefit of the entire community.

Bud had a zest for travel, which began in his late twenties when he circled the globe and ended when he was eighty-nine in a solo auto trip to California and back. His itinerary on the global tour included visits to far-flung Jewish communities in Europe and Asia. During that two-year-long journey, he tutored Jewish children in exchange for room and board. Long before Israel's statehood was declared, Bud Marwil visited the historic Jewish homeland, first when he was fourteen on a family trip and then again on his global tour, and he witnessed the growth of nascent settlements in Eretz Yisrael. Marwil was an avid Zionist throughout his life and served, like his father, as president of the Zionist Organization of Detroit. Little did he envisage that his youngest child and some of his grandchildren would one day become permanent residents of Israel.

Before and during World War II, Bud served in the cavalry of the U.S. armed forces. Among my favorite photos is one of him seated impressively on a beautiful horse.

Even as he treated the books in his library and bookstore so tenderly, so was Bud in his relations with friends and neighbors. His affable manner, considerable lore that he shared with others, and humorous anecdotes made him a favorite in our community and a treasured personality in our midst. —*Rabbi Milton Arm*

Rudolph “Rudy” Newman

1927-2002

Pilot and Machalnik



Native Detroitter Rudy Newman, who died in January 2002 at the age of seventy-four, played a heroic role in the birth of Israel in 1948. He was quick to admit that adventure more than Zionism fueled him initially in his roles as gun runner and air force pioneer, but support for Israel became an important part of his life.

Newman’s generosity, strength, and courage, which distinguished him throughout his life, became apparent early on. As World War II raged, he and youngsters in his Delray neighborhood collected newspapers and tin foil, spearheaded war bond sales and followed the day-to-day operations of the war. For Newman, the challenge was to be a direct part of the action. As he told *Michigan Jewish History* in a 1997 (Vol.

37) profile, he convinced his mother to sign papers stating he was seventeen in 1943 (he was just sixteen), and he joined the U.S. Navy’s radio navigation program and then flight school.

The 1997 profile tells of Newman’s career as a fighter pilot and later a volunteer pilot for Israel and an El Al pilot. He delivered one of the first large bombers to Israel in its struggle for statehood and survival. He also organized the first flight school in Israel and was proud to have taught Motte Hod, who became a top general in the 1967 war.

In 1949, Newman married Ann, whom he met in Israel. She survives him along with their four children and twenty grandchildren. They maintained close ties with Israel and visited there frequently. Newman was affiliated with several religious and education institutions in the Detroit area, which in turn honored him. Rudy Newman was an adventurer, fighter, pilot, and businessman. But, he told the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, his proudest title was “machalnik”—overseas volunteer for Israel. —*Shirlee Rose Iden*

Ben Paxton 1911-2002 Business Pioneer

Ben Paxton, who passed away in January 2002 at the age of ninety, lived life to the fullest extent. His many interests focused on history, printing, and journalism, as well as his devoted family. Paxton used his skills as a business pioneer and came into ownership of the Hershey Paxton Advertising Agency, which included among its clients major Detroit retail food markets such as Farmer Jack, Wrigleys, Packers, and Big Bear.



Ben Paxton was born in Poland and came to Detroit with his family in 1921. He attended Northern High School and Wayne State University, where he became proficient in several languages. During World War II, Paxton served in the U.S. Army with honors and distinction; as a tech sergeant, he took part in three major campaigns—Normandy, European, and the Battle of the Bulge.

The Detroit Jewish community was important to Paxton. He was involved with Congregation Shaarey Zedek, the Institute of Retired Professionals of the Jewish Community Center, and the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, where he served on the advisory board for many years. He was also an active member of the Jewish War Veterans, where he served in national public affairs and as a local service officer. The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan will miss the support and devotion of Ben Paxton. —*Alan D. Kandel*

George M. Stutz 1901 - 2002

For most of his 100 years, George Stutz gave generously of his time and resources to Detroit and its Jewish community. Stutz passed away in Sarasota, FL, on January 5, 2002.

Few people have experienced the range of Detroit historical events that were part of George Stutz's professional and volunteer life. In 1930, while serving as Wayne County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, he helped organize Detroit's Emergency Relief Fund for those made desperately poor by the Great Depression. He also brought joy to indigent children as a volunteer for, and eventually president of, the Old Newsboys' Goodfellow Fund.



George Stutz and his wife, Mary, holding the 1993 Simons Award plaques, with, from left, JHSM President Gilbert Borman, Federation President David Page, and Leonard Simons.

Photo by Jeffrey Borin.

In 1931, Stutz was elected to the boards of the Hebrew Free Loan Association and the Jewish Family Service, later becoming president of each. In 1932, he was elected to the Board of Governors of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit. Stutz also was president of the Sinai Hospital's Shapero School of Nursing and sat on the boards of the Jewish Home for Aged, the Fresh Air Society, the House of Shelter, and the Detroit Service Group, as well as national and overseas boards. A founder of Temple Israel, he was president from 1947 to 1949 when the congregation embarked upon the building of its Manderson Road sanctuary.

In recognition of Stutz's many contributions to society and community, the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit presented its longest-serving active volunteer with the coveted Fred M. Butzel Award for Distinguished Community Service. The presentation, in 1975, took place some fifty years after Detroit College of Law student George Stutz was introduced to community service by none other than Fred M. Butzel. Stutz's many contributions were recognized by the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan in 1993 when he was the recipient of the Leonard Simons History Award. —*Charlotte Dubin*

Sonia Syme 1918 - 2001

A Gracious Teacher and Community Volunteer



"Every once in a while, someone comes along who inspires you to search deep within your soul to find the passion to learn Jewishly and the vigor to live as a Jew. For me, Sonia Syme was such a person." Detroit *Jewish News* editor, Robert Sklar wrote these words remembering Sonia Syme, the beloved wife of Rabbi M. Robert Syme of Temple Israel in West Bloomfield. She was the treasured mother of Rabbi Daniel Syme of Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills, classical pianist David Syme, and Michael Syme, of blessed memory,

Mrs. Syme, 83, passed away on September 25, 2001, in the middle of the holiest of holidays, surrounded by her family. That she took her last breath during the High Holidays somehow befits the devout scholar and musician who taught hundreds of children, and later teenagers, the rituals and perfections of Jewish life. She was director of religious education for Temple Israel's Sisterhood and planned its retreats for more than twenty-five years. She also helped found the Institute on Judaism, an annual one-day retreat designed to introduce Judaism to secular teachers from Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties.

Anyone who came in contact with Mrs. Syme benefited from her warm elegance and vast repertoire of Judaic knowledge. She taught classes at the College of Jewish Studies and was an expert on *responsa* — the scholars' method of exploring Jewish answers to modern ethical dilemmas. She served on the board of directors of Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills, often assuming leadership roles as chair of its professional affairs committee and as vice-chair of the board. Mostly though, she is remembered as a loving and gifted mother, wife, sister, grandmother and friend to the hundreds of those who were touched by her magic. —*Wendy Rose Bice*

Footnote from the Editor

By Aimée Ergas

With the growing interest in community and family history, the job of publishing *Michigan Jewish History* becomes more rewarding each year. The rewards come as we hear increasingly that the journal has been included in the bibliography of a scholarly article or as a resource for an exhibit. We are proud to be among the respected documents of the important history of our community and state.



This 2002 edition came together from more diverse sources than ever—an unexpected letter of inquiry, a chance passing of a historic marker, and of course dedicated digging in local archives. The authors and contributors whose names appear here have our sincere thanks for their efforts and enthusiasm. As always, certain individuals have helped beyond the call of duty, including Sharon Alterman, Charlotte Dubin, Jim Grey, Bernard Goldman, and Alan Kandel. Our colleagues at Goodwill Printing have our appreciation for their expertise and cooperation. My sincerest thanks to Judy Cantor for her enormous support and wisdom.

As I prepare for a year abroad with my family, I turn over the journal's reins with great confidence to Wendy Rose Bice. Her sharp eye and pen will assure that *Michigan Jewish History* will continue to present articles of interest to our readers and of significance to the historical record.

Jewish Historical Society Presidents' Report 2001-2002

By Adele Staller

The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan began the 2001-02 year in an unusual way, as Joan Braun and I served as co-presidents, the first time in JHSM history that the office was shared. Because we both have served previously as president, the transition was smooth. We continue to follow the precepts set down in our mission statement and by-laws: "To foster the collection, preservation and publication of materials on the history of the Jews in Detroit and Michigan." We have promoted tours, lectures, meetings, and publications that inform the community about Michigan Jewish history and activities.

The fall of 2001 marked the publication of the forty-first volume of our journal, *Michigan Jewish History*. This project is our society's most far-reaching exposure to the public. We attribute a great deal of its success to our editor, Aimée Ergas. We also rely on our JHSM members to contribute ideas and articles for publication.

We cooperated several times this year with the Janice Charach Epstein Gallery at the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield. In September and October the postcard exhibit, "Past Perfect: The Jewish Experience in Early 20th Century Postcards" was a great success. Another highlight of our partnership was the introduction of works by the Spanish artist, Anna Lentsch, sponsored by Myrle and Richard Leland and the JHSM. In November and December, we sponsored special events accompanying the exhibition, "Portraits of Honor: Detroit's Holocaust Survivors."

Our past president, Judith Levin Cantor, was our featured author at the November Jewish Book Fair. Her new book, *The Jews of Michigan*, was very well received and was reviewed in the fall 2001 issue of *Michigan Jewish History*. November also had us traveling to Flint to co-sponsor a presentation about the Flint Jewish community by Nora Faires, an associate professor of history at Western Michigan University. We toured the exhibit of photographs and artifacts on local Jewish history in Flint. This exhibit was the basis for the article, "Jewish Life in Postwar Flint" in the fall 2001 issue of *Michigan Jewish History*.

In December, JHSM and the Detroit Historical Museum, in cooperation with the Jewish Community Council, presented a festive holiday event at the Museum. "The Ceremonial Arts of Chanukah" was a slide-lecture presentation by Rabbi Joseph Gutmann, professor emeritus of art history at Wayne State University. This event was accompanied by a docent tour of the exhibit, "The Polish Presence in Detroit," featuring a model of an early twentieth-century Detroit Polish-Jewish immigrant home. Also on exhibit were menorahs from the Judaica collection of Doreen and the late Ambassador David Hermelin.

Photo by Jim Grey.



The 2002-2003 Jewish Historical Society of Michigan board of directors:
standing, left to right: Jim Grey, interim editor Wendy Rose Bice, Ellen S. Cole,
Charles I. Mayer, Joan Braun, Rob D. Kaplow, Stuart L. Gorelick.

Middle row, left to right: Myrle Leland, Harriet F Siden, Stanley N. Meretsky,
Judith Levin Cantor, Benno Levi. Seated in front row, left to right: Adele W. Staller,
Robert M. Rubin, Gerald S. Cook, Robert W. Feldman.



The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan sponsored several events surrounding the photographic exhibit "Portraits of Honor: Detroit's Holocaust Survivors" at the Janice Charach Epstein Gallery at the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield.

The exhibit, shown in November and December 2001, included black-and-white photographs by Dr. Charles Silow with brief biographies of the survivors.

At the December event, shown above, Holocaust scholar Professor Sidney Bolkosky spoke about his upcoming book, *Searching for "Meaning" in the Holocaust*.

Attendees included, from left, Manny and Natalie Charach, Silvio Benovenuto, Sylvia Nelson, gallery director, and Prof. Bolkosky

Our spring 2002 programming highlight was "An Afternoon with Albert Kahn," a tour sponsored in cooperation with Preservation Wayne. Two buses traveled the streets of Detroit, viewing buildings designed by the prominent architect Albert Kahn. Our docents were Norma W. Goldman, from the College of Lifelong Learning at Wayne State University, and Katherine Clarkson, executive director of Preservation Wayne. We have had many requests for repeats of this tour and of our tour of Jewish Detroit. We plan to include them in future programming.

Another spring activity was a preview performance of a play at the Jewish Ensemble Theater (JET) entitled *Dance Like Nobody's Watching*, by Kitty Dubin. JHSM advisory board member Sylvia Babcock and her daughter, Nancy Grosfeld, underwrote an afterglow at the West Bloomfield JCC's new restaurant, Milk and Honey, where we were treated to a question-and-answer period with the playwright. Our JHSM Annual Luncheon in June featured speaker Charles A. Forbes, chairman and CEO of Forbes Management, Inc., whose presentation about the relocation of the Gem Theater in Detroit was fascinating.

We look forward to continuing to learn and explore the wealth of information about the Jews of Detroit and Michigan under the leadership of our new officers and board of directors, led by new president Robert Kaplow.



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