

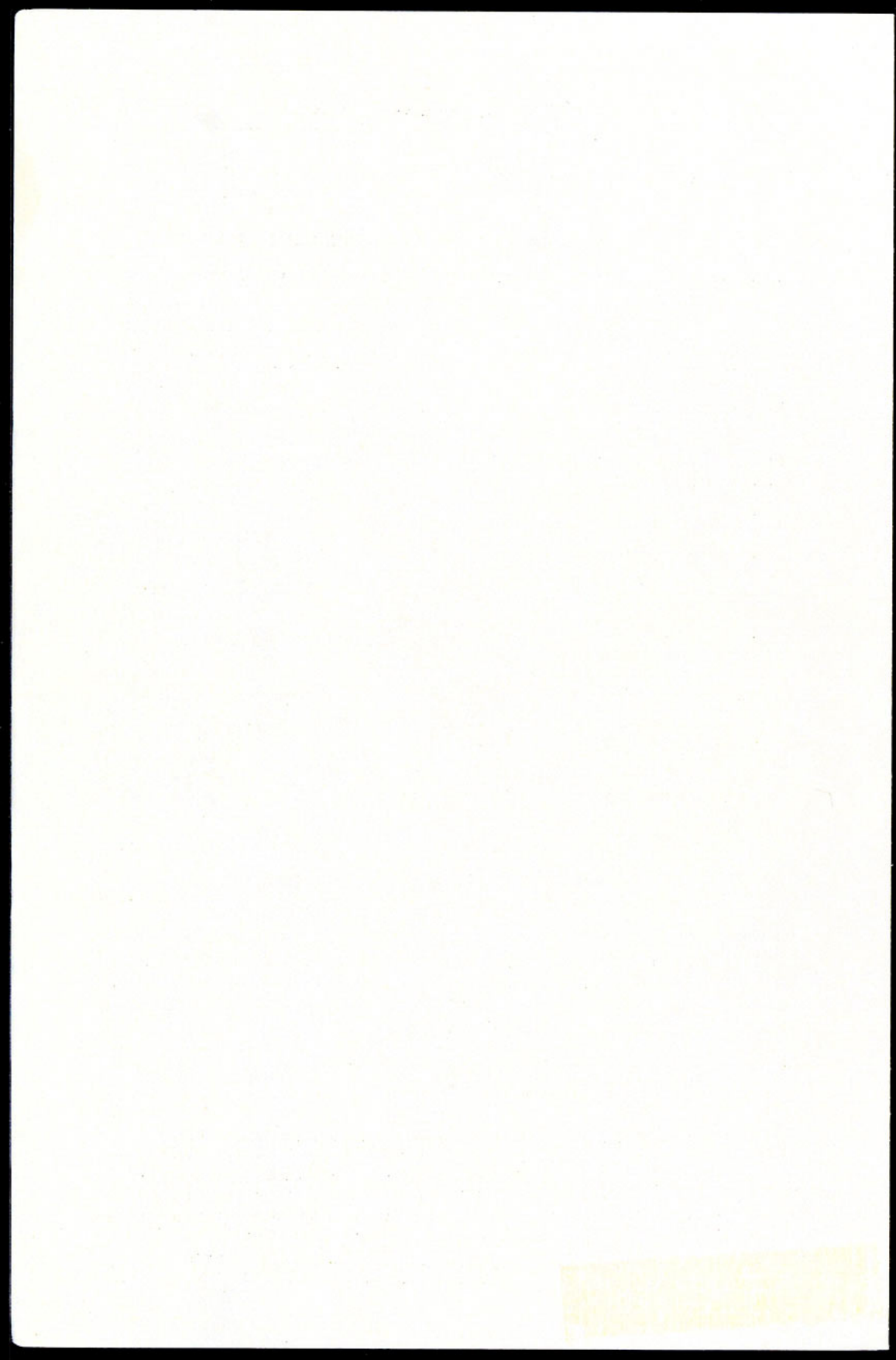
MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY



*Reminiscences of Fred Butzel, NCJW Centennial,
Slomovitz by Rockaway, Complete Index Volumes 1-31.*

Volume 32

Winter 1991, Kislev 5752





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 32

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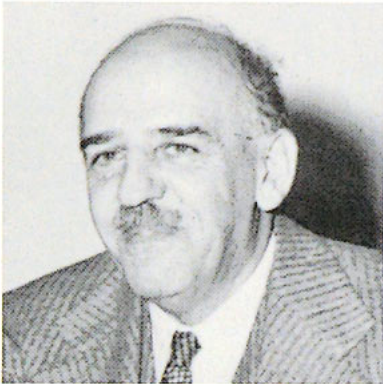
Leonard N. Simons

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DETROIT'S SOCIAL ENGINEER REMINISCES

as told to William I. Boxerman
by Fred M. Butzel (1877-1948)

Editor's note: This memoir of Fred M. Butzel, known as The "Dean of Michigan Jewry", was published forty years ago in March, 1941, in The Jewish Social Service Quarterly. These reminiscences were recorded during informal chats with Butzel - and now provide an unusual record of life in the early part of the century. This document comes from The Archives of The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.



Courtesy: Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.

Fred M. Butzel

Genesis

DETROIT'S organized Jewish community goes back to 1851. The main unit of organization originally was the orthodox Congregation Beth El, which subsequently split up into Congregation Shaarey Zedek and the reformed Temple Beth El. Shortly after in 1857, Pisgah Lodge of the Order of B'nai B'rith, was formed in Detroit. Its main objective was the Americanization of the Jewish immigrants. Great stress was laid on parliamentary law, which was considered one of the easiest ways to get the "feel" of American institutions. And all the Jews became parliamentarians.

About 1863 the Detroit Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society for the Support of Widows and Orphans was founded. It was popularly known as the "FrauenVerein". My aunt, Mrs. Emil S. Heineman, was for many years its president. Funds were collected by this group for the support of bona fide widows and orphans and the good ladies were very careful never to help anybody who did not fall into either one of these categories.

Temple Beth El, in its early days, had already organized the Detroit Jewish Relief Society. Down to 1891 this society looked after the relief needs of the community and the Orthodox Jews participated, despite the split in the synagogue. Unfortunately, the Rabbi of Temple Beth El, Dr. Louis Grossman, a Hungarian Jew who came to Detroit in 1883, tactlessly gave great offense to the members of Shaarey Zedek during a lecture there one Friday night. Thereupon Shaarey Zedek organized its own relief society. Endless duplication followed, as they vied with each other in "doing good".

The Beth El Relief Society worked exclusively through voluntary committees. For many years, under the leadership of Hannah (Mrs. Seligman) Schloss, another group of ladies sewed and made household supplies for poor families. This was known as the Ladies' Sewing Society. Poor women came to their meetings and begged for layettes, underwear, etc.

Along about 1895, Mrs. Sarah (Adolph) Krolik, a Christian school teacher who had married a Polish-Jewish peddler, grew disgusted with the relief activities as they were carried on by Jews. She was greatly impressed by the potentialities of Polish Jews and wanted them given more American education for self-help. She organized a group of young society ladies for volunteer service to teach little girls sewing, cooking, cleaning, and other



Frederick Magnus Butzel, seated first on the right in the 2nd row from the top, in his Detroit High School class. Butzel completed the Latin curriculum - and was one of 77 graduates from the school's temporary quarters in The Biddle House. Professor Florus Alonzo Barbour addressed the class on "Self Culture".

domestic sciences, long before this was introduced to the public schools. The prospective teachers themselves first had to learn something about these things in order to teach them. So Mrs. Krolik wrote and designed a sampler in which all of the various stitches were illustrated in the successive order of their difficulty. From this, the young society ladies learned how to teach. The book which she published on the subject was for a long time the standard in teaching sewing. The Self-Help Circle soon became an important element in the community.

The Jewish Women's Club

Another early group was the Jewish Women's Club, organized by Mrs. Ida E. (Bernard) Ginsburg, the mother of our Mrs. Golda Krolik. Associated with her was Mrs. Ida (Henry) Krolik, who succeeded to the presidency upon Mrs. Ginsburg's death. The Jewish Women's Club had almost purely cultural purposes. They had a program of readings, musicals, picnics, and other activities such as were provided for the non-Jewish women by women's clubs. They tried to raise the standard of decorum in Jewish society and to bring all the women together in various social undertakings. In 1925 they were integrated into the National Council of Jewish Women and undertook public work, such as sponsoring legislation and special pieces of social work.

Through the influence of Sarah Krolik, the late Fannie Berger organized a boys' club having an extensive program of military drill with wooden guns. It was very good discipline. The drilling proved very popular and it showed that our Jewish boys were hungry for any kind of organization. For the purpose of housing various enterprises, an old homestead was rented on the southwest corner of Brush and Montcalm Streets. Here the Ladies' Sewing Society did its stitching, the Self-Help Circle held its classes, and the Jewish Women's Club imbibed culture. Although the structure was antiquated and in great need of repair, before long it became a real community building. The rooms were occupied every minute of the day.

In 1898, four boys felt the need for training in English, and so I got my first job. We met every Sunday and I taught the boys English, grammar and composition. Among my pupils were David and Jake Stocker and Jesse Hirschman. Occasionally I also gave a talk on Wagnerian opera for the Jewish Women's Club or some other organization that met in our old building.

United Jewish Charities

There was a feeling that our poor were very inadequately looked after, and that the program for boys and girls was not good, especially in view of the fact that neither domestic science nor manual training was in the public school curriculum. Congestion of the Jewish population was beginning. It was hoped that strong charity organization would tend to cement the community and narrow the rift which had been caused when the relief societies broke up.

Dr. Leo M. Franklin came to Temple Beth El in 1899 and received a cordial welcome from all groups. I think it was in the fall of that year, at a meeting held in the vestry room of Temple Beth El (on the corner of Clifford Street and Washington Avenue), that the United Jewish Charities was formed. I took a small part in the organization. My



Dr. Leo M. Franklin

Courtesy: Pisgah Broadcaster

brother Henry was most active and drew up the constitution. It included the relief societies of both synagogues, the Self-Help Circle, and the Ladies' Sewing Society. The latter joined only for a limited purpose. The "Frauen-Verein" refused to come in and, of course, the Jewish Women's Club, by definition, did not belong.

We stated the cardinal principles of the United Jewish Charities to be two-fold: 1) to exclude all forms of solicitation, ticket-selling, program subscription 2) to discourage the starting of new institutions without approval. We felt that this problem was one which ought not to be left to the discretion of individual persons but should be decided by the UJC as the accredited representative of the community. This type of thinking was pretty advanced for that day, when one considers that some communities today have not yet reached this stage of development. For many years we printed the "cardinal principles of the United Jewish Charities" in our year book, together with a note reading: "The subscribers to the United Jewish Charities are all committed to these principles, and should discourage, whenever the occasion demand, movements not in conformity with the principles, which, it has been successfully demonstrated, represent the best-known organized endeavor for the amelioration of the condition of the worthy poor of our great city."

From the beginning we hoped that in a few years we would have an adequate building. The first president of the United Jewish Charities was David W. Simons and Bernard Ginsburg was vice-president. Joseph Wertheimer, the superintendent, who acted on a voluntary basis, just went around town giving doles. He was succeeded by a young lawyer, Louis James Rosenberg, who was hired on a part-time basis, but who soon had to give it up to look after his practice.

Blanche J. Hart succeeded Rosenberg and remained with the organization twenty-three years. Miss Hart had been an ardent admirer of Sarah Krolik and from the very beginning had taken a prodigious interest in the domestic science work. As soon as she was appointed, she went down to Cincinnati, worked there in the office of, and studied under, the famous Boris D. Bogen, the dean of Jewish social work in America. She got some records, the idea of confidential investigation of clients, and the belief that self-help was the objective in all relief work.

Fund-Raising By Straight Annual Subscription

The UJC, from the very beginning, was organized with a relief committee to look after families and children; an educational committee to work our social programs, especially for the young people; a house committee; and a finance committee to raise money. For all of the social work, including salary and rent, I believe we raised \$4,000 a year. And what a hard job that was! Miss Hart was empowered to give emergency relief up to five dollars without a committee meeting.

Let me emphasize again that it was assumed that for the purposes of the UJC, no raffles,



David W. Simons

Courtesy of: Archives of Congregation Shaarey Zedek

bazaars, luncheons, or any other means would be used in fund-raising. We relied for finances solely upon straight annual subscriptions. Almost every person added up what he had been giving previously and in consideration of not being bothered periodically and indefinitely, increased his subscription.

Also included, besides local work, were contributions to the Hebrew Orphan Asylum in Cleveland, the Montefiore Old Folks Home, and the National Jewish Hospital at Denver. These organizations just turned their subscription lists over to the new agency and we then made a lump sum appropriation equal to what they had already collected here.

The management of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum in Cleveland reserved for many years the right to take children from the community of Detroit without the permission of our relief committee. There was in our relief work the strong tendency to keep parents and children together, or if that were impossible, to board the children here in the community where we expected them to live. After many years of conflict, the Cleveland institution finally agreed not to take children without our permission. Following this understanding, very few children were sent to Cleveland, although we kept the appropriation at the same level.

Hannah Schloss Building

Within a short time the need for a Jewish community building grew more and more acute. Three necessities were pressing: There were very few bath tubs in the Jewish community; manual training was not available on the east side, where the Jewish population dwelt in large numbers; no gymnasium facilities existed. While we may smile at the mention of bath tubs, I may say that the lack of this facility among Jews constituted a serious problem. The absence of manual training work assumed added importance because there was at this time a tremendous desire for the vocational distribution of Jewish boys into handicraft.

A year or two after the organization of the UJC, Mr. Henry Krolik, who had had some disagreeable litigation with a friend, came to a settlement. Not wishing to use the proceeds of the case which he had fought only to vindicate a principle, he turned the amount he received in settlement over to the UJC to buy a site for a building. We finally got the large site on the north side of High Street (now known as Vernor Highway), just west of Hastings. This was in the very heart of the Jewish section. Plans for a building were drawn by Albert Kahn and cost of construction was set at approximately \$14,000.

In 1903 Mrs. Seligman Schloss was killed in a horrible railroad accident near Milwaukee. The local community was profoundly shocked. Her husband offered to give \$10,000 for a memorial building if the community would raise an additional \$4,000. This was done, but Seligman Schloss also gave the additional \$4,000, thus paying for the entire cost of the building. He did specify that the \$4,000 already raised by the community should be held in trust for the upkeep of the building.

The Hannah Schloss Memorial contained a great number of facilities both for previously existing purposes and for new enterprises. In the front office occupied by Miss Hart, we had our interviewing and relief distribution. Next door to that was a room which was used for classes in the daytime and occupied certain nights by young lawyers who gave free legal advice.

Across the hall was our office, and on Sunday morning this was used by the Hebrew Free Loan Society, which had gotten under way in the meantime. Its committee gave out the loans and appraised the jewelry, collateral, or the responsibility of the endorsers. Mr. Abraham Benjamin, who was secretary of the UJC, also handled the money for the Hebrew Free Loan Society. Once or twice our safe was rifled and all the collateral was stolen: and then of course the jewelry suddenly became extremely valuable.

Jacob Nathan organized a campaign of life memberships for the Hebrew Free Loan Society and many people gave single contributions of \$250. Thus was built up for the first time a decent capital, independent of the small amounts gotten from annual dues.

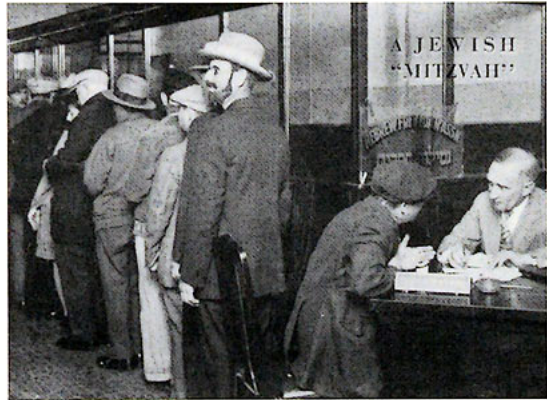
Next to this office a store room was located, where we kept clothes and supplies, and in the back was a large room for dances, concerts, and classes. On the second floor we had a suite for teaching housekeeping, consisting of a kitchen, bedroom, and little parlor. Mrs. Henry Krolik instituted a children's library known as the Babette Brown Krolik Memorial Library. Of course, almost every room did double and triple duty.

Bath Tubs a Major Activity

On the second floor was also a creche which Bernard Ginsburg outfitted and supported as a memorial to his wife. It was called the Ida E. Ginsburg Baby Day Nursery. Working mothers brought their babies there early in the morning and called for them in the evening. We even put in an overall factory for these mothers so that they could see their children during the day. This enterprise proved to be a hundred per cent failure and lasted only two years. The overalls didn't bring in enough money to pay for the denim used in making them. We found it cheaper to pension the women.

In our basement, we had a manual training room which could never accommodate all the boys who wanted to get in and we also had a very large bathing establishment, with many tubs and dressing rooms. There were very few bathtubs, if any, in a radius of half a mile from our building and the bathing department was exceedingly popular. The tubs were booked solidly for quarter and half-hour periods every night in the week when the building was open.

It was never easy to make the entire Jewish community feel a sense of proprietorship in the United Jewish Charities and the labor union element especially held very much aloof. Our board consisted almost entirely of people of the middle and professional groups and the Jewish workingmen were not represented. There was quite a little feeling on that subject in the community. We were very fortunate to get onto the board George Avrunin, who belonged to the Arbeiter Ring and undertook to bring the various workmen's groups into the building to participate in our activities.



Hebrew Free Loan Society



George Avrunin

Despite the fact that our constitution provided for the election of the board by the constituent agencies of the United Jewish Charities, as the years went on nobody knew how the members were chosen. The UJC became more or less of a closed corporation. All contributors were eligible to vote at elections but people did not come to the annual meetings.

But there never was any doubt about the popularity of the Hannah Schloss Building. Other communities always frowned upon the idea of carrying on relief and educational work in the same building. It was considered demoralizing. As a matter of fact, so many activities were under way in the Hannah Schloss Building that the people who came for relief could never be identified. When a person went into one of our offices, no one

knew whether it was for the purpose of sending money to Europe, getting a job, arranging for a bath or getting rent money.

As I already said, our rooms were always available to the community. We even permitted a club of anarchists to meet there on condition that they would never exploit the Hannah Schloss or make it appear that they were anything but tenants.

Quite a number of years later we figured that 100,000 individuals made use of or received benefits of some kind at the Hannah Schloss. Of course I must admit that our statistics weren't so good because we made no allowance for duplications. Today's social statisticians will probably smile at yesterday's crude efforts in this direction.

Trisquare Club

The manual training department was extremely popular not only because it filled a specific need but because of the genius of its first and only director, Homer T. Lane, who had come here from Framingham, Massachusetts. He had charge of the playgrounds for the public schools in the daytime and gave us his attention at night. Lane founded in the City of Detroit the self-government movement for boys. A natural-born psychologist, he would always say, "What is important is not what the boy does with the stick of wood but what the stick of wood does to the boy."

In order to govern the manual training classes, he helped organize the pupils into a boys' club. This was the famous Trisquare Club with a membership of about 90. Today it does not sound revolutionary; but in those days the idea of boys having complete responsibility for their program, membership and discipline was unheard of.

Lane's work in the Trisquare Club was extremely far-reaching. He seemed to have the



Young Folks Dramatic Club 1918

Courtesy of: Federation Apartments

most intimate personal relationship with every boy in the club and was helping out in the solution of their most complex social problems. He had a flair for the Montessori method long before Montessori was known and many an approach developed much later had been used by him in the old days. I was always fascinated by his methods and, going down to the Hannah Schloss night after night, I watched him in action and was beguiled into spending money far beyond my means.

Much time was devoted at meetings of the Trisquare Club to parliamentary procedure, to arguing whether a certain motion was in order or out of order. Robert's Rules of Order was the Bible because the Constitution said that all officers should perform their duties according to these rules.

In a short time, the Trisquare Club was conducting debates, oratorical contests, athletic activities, picnics, and many other undertakings. The spontaneity and originality of the boys became widely known and many adults at various times joined the club, paying dues at the rate of two cents a week. The elections were hotly contested and the entire ghetto took sides. When Sam Buch told his mother he was to be elected president, she informed the neighborhood about it, and when he did not win, he got a good spanking when he returned that evening.

More and More Clubs

Among the presidents of the Trisquare Club were Morse Goldman, Isadore Levin, Ezra Levin, Dr. Samuel J. Eder, Mitchell Victor and many others who became prominent in the business and professional world. Active members included, among others, Gus Newman and Aaron Silberblatt. Ben Ginsburg and myself were elected as members and subjected to the same rules and regulations as the boy's.

In quick succession, many other boys' clubs were formed, all on the self-governing basis. These included the Homer Lane Club, the Washington Club, the Trisquare Juniors, the Fred Butzel Club, etc. Every time a new club was started they asked me to join. I suppose I joined every club there was, with the stipulation that I wouldn't be expelled if I didn't always attend. The Washington Progressive Club was organized in 1915, and functioned for six years. For many years the members have gotten together every year on Washington's Birthday to resume old friendships and reminisce about former activities. Some of the alumni of this group became outstanding communal leaders.

Within a few years a group council was formed, first with delegates from the boys' clubs only, and then with delegates from girls' clubs and even adult groups. This council met on one Sunday morning a month and undertook to make policies for the building and even to assign club rooms and the gym which we later acquired.

Meanwhile, the community was growing. Inside of five years, the Hannah Schloss Memorial was so crowded and uncomfortable that more space was necessary. Bernard Ginsberg built a large addition which practically tripled our floor space and in the new addition we had among other things, club rooms, a very fine standard-sized gym with shower baths and a commodious clinic.

The Hannah Schloss Clinic

The clinic in the first place was largely instituted to examine persons for relief who claimed to be sick and in many cases were malingerers. We had an idea in those early days that a work test would prevent "pauperization". The first doctor in charge of the clinic was Dr. Louis J. Hirschman. He was succeeded by Dr. Hugo A. Freund and ultimately the chief of the staff was Dr. Max Ballin, who, at his own expense, sent his assistant, Dr. Norman Allen, to the clinic every day. A great many of our well-known physicians started their practice in the Hannah Schloss Clinic. Our public always insisted on very high-grade service.

Parallel with the clinic for our sick, the babies' milk fund ran a clinic where mothers brought their babies for periodical examinations and milk formula. This was supervised by Dr. David J. Levy, who had just come to town. It was kept quite independent of the clinic and was intended as much for healthy babies as for sick ones. It was very popular and in fact was much better attended than any other branch of the milk fund clinics.

As soon as we acquired a gym, the boys' clubs really began to blossom out and before long we were using a great deal of energy in untangling the problem of gate receipts and graft. All the clubs of the city were anxious to come and play at the Hannah Schloss and many a night we had religious battles. As soon as scouting came to Detroit, Troop 23 was organized at the Hannah Schloss and was considered one of the "crackerjack" troops of the community.



Courtesy of: Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit

Early Boy Scout Troop 23

Note that only three boys could afford uniforms.

Besides Miss Hart, our staff consisted of Abraham Benjamin, who had charge of the books, Dee Benjamin, who worked in the relief department, and subsequently, Gussie Brown, the sister of David A. Brown. As the educational work grew there was a feeling that the Jewish masses were not getting sufficient attention and so we brought Mary Caplan here from Baltimore. She organized the mothers' clubs, canvassed the east side and got not only the Jewish but the Italian mothers to demand and receive classes in English and citizenship in the public schools during hours which would not interfere with their household duties.

As the organization expanded, Mrs. Rose Lipson was brought from Boston to head the relief department under Miss Hart. Later, in addition to the paid relief workers, the UJC had a relief committee composed of lay people, who got into the habit of holding weekly luncheon meetings to discuss the cases that had come up during the week. They showed a surprising amount of interest and always had opinions to voice and suggestions to make. Social workers today probably wouldn't agree with the findings of this committee on why people became dependents. Our discovery was that feeble-mindedness and illness were at the root of the trouble. We therefore concluded that until such time as the State made better provisions for these people, we couldn't make very much progress in decreasing the number

of applications for relief.

As soon as the Ginsburg addition to the Hannah Schloss Building was ready, we began to specialize in dances. The dance craze was at its height and two or three nights a week dances were given both for the general public and for specific clubs, usually under the management of one of the clubs in the building. The gate receipts took care of the music and refreshments.



Mary Caplan

For a number of years in succession, Mary Caplan organized exhibits of Jewish art. During the first year this consisted exclusively of an exhibit of works of art by Jewish artists lent by the people in Detroit, both wealthy and poor. She sought, however, to have family heirlooms, examples of handicraft and religious utensils of beauty and attempted to tie up the exposition with the local community. These exhibits were very popular. In succeeding years, we went further and got loans from out of town, and Jewish artists of national renown began to display their works. A great many things came from the Bezalel Art School. One year we devoted a night of the exhibit week to dancing and drama, another night to quartette and orchestra music, a third night to lectures on art and music, etc.

Boris Ganapol was in charge of our first musical school, and with his staff gave lessons to talented pupils in voice, piano, and violin. This service was discontinued later when we moved into another building. We did not have an art school until many years later.

Fresh Air Society

The Fresh Air Society was from its inception very closely related to the United Jewish Charities, although not an integral part of it. Its leading spirits in the beginning were Ida Kopple, Lillie Wertheimer and Edna Selling. In response to appeals of Miss Blanche Hart, the Society undertook to visit old and sick people and bring them delicacies; and to take underprivileged children for whole days to Belle Isle and Palmer Woods and give them a good time.

Subsequently, about 1910, they rented a summer cottage on the Canadian shore of the Detroit River, and took groups of children there. The young women did practically all the work themselves and spent their summers there in relays. They had some difficulty about getting their Canadian cottage and thereupon obtained a very attractive place in Grosse Pointe, which became altogether too small as soon as they commenced to expand. Miss Hart of the UJC went out each year to act as superintendent and Miss Augusta Brown was her chief assistant. The children were taken largely from the groups helped by the charities, especially the Self-Help Circle.

The society was maintained by memberships and contributions. They raised money independently of the United Jewish Charities, even though they had agreed not to do so. We winked at it because we realized the need for the service they were rendering. The late Oscar Rosenberger, impressed by the worthiness of the cause and by the difficulties of the women in financing their work, undertook to raise the money to buy a new site. He

BUTZEL

found a very large piece of land with several hundred feet frontage on Jefferson Avenue, running back to a considerable depth to Lake St. Clair. A meeting of the wealthier men in the community was called at the old Phoenix Club. The meeting was characterized by a great deal of acrimony because each one feared the other would not give enough. However, the necessary amount was subscribed for acquiring the land and remodeling the buildings on the property. Rosenberger devoted a great deal of time to developing the project and for many years it was run by volunteers. This site was ultimately sold and the present camp at Brighton was established.

To be continued in next year's journal of Michigan Jewish History. Butzel tells an insider's story of the work of The Industrial Removal Office in placing immigrants in Detroit.

In Memoriam:



Morris Friedman
1900-1991

"A friend of Jewish History and the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan"

Born in 1900, in Biala, Poland, Morris Friedman immigrated to Argentina where he married his lifelong sweetheart, Sarah. In 1926, both came to Detroit. Morris and Sarah had an intense devotion to Yiddish, the language and its literature. Their home was always a "home away from home" for Yiddish writers, poets, and artists.

Morris was president of the Sholem Aleichem Institute in Detroit; chairman of the Allied Jewish Campaign Metropolitan Division; National chairman of the Histadrut Annuity Foundation; founder of the Morris and Sarah Friedman Foundation at Bar-Ilan University for Yiddish Teacher Education; a board member of the United Hebrew Schools, and a friend of history and board member of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. He was a gentle man with a strong and total commitment to the Jewish community.

PHILIP SLOMOVITZ: JEWISH JOURNALIST

By Robert Rockaway
with an Update by Philip Slomovitz

Dr. Robert Rockaway teaches in the Department of Jewish History at Tel-Aviv University. He authored The Jews of Detroit: From the Beginning, 1762-1914 (1986). Portions of this article are based on interviews with Philip Slomovitz. Some of the biographical information was published in an interview in American Jewish History, Autumn, 1990.



Robert Rockaway

In May of 1991, Philip Slomovitz donated his seventy years of collected papers to the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. Now they will be available at the Wayne State University Reuther Archives of Urban History for research by future generations of authors and scholars.



Philip Slomovitz receives first Leonard N. Simons Award for the Preservation and Dissemination of Michigan Jewish History. Left to right, host David Hermelin, Leonard Simons, Gilbert Borman, President; Slomovitz, and Walter Field.

In addition, Slomovitz received the first Leonard N. Simons Award for the Preservation and Dissemination of Michigan Jewish History. This was the most recent honor for a man who, as editor of Detroit's Jewish Chronicle and later as publisher and editor of the Jewish News, witnessed and participated in the most significant Jewish events of the twentieth century.

Throughout his long and distinguished career, Slomovitz courageously has spoken out in defense of American and world Jewry and on behalf of Israel. And in everything he writes, Slomovitz has been guided by his credo of "never to be silent when there is the merest semblance of injustice anywhere," and "to speak out without malice." His perceptive and insightful editorials have influenced three generations of local and national Jewish leaders and make him one of America's most influential Jewish journalists.

The author, Robert St. John, characterized Slomovitz as "always fighting for causes that are really noble, for the survival of freedom, equality and human decency." And the eminent Jewish historian, Salo Baron, admired Slomovitz for his "integrity, compassion, grace and courage," and for "fighting in print our common battles for justice and the imperishable religious values we inherited from our forefathers." In recognition of his significant contribution to American Jewish life, in 1981 the American Jewish Press Association presented Slomovitz with its Golda Meir Award for his more than sixty years "of devoted service to Jewish journalism and the Jewish people."

Philip Slomovitz was born in Nowogrodek, in the Russian province of Minsk, in 1896. His family moved to Lida, where he earned a diploma from the government Russian-Jewish school, completing the equivalent of a high school education at the age of thirteen. Shortly thereafter, his family emigrated to the United States and settled in New Jersey. After a year at Rhodes Preparatory School in New York, Slomovitz entered

JOURNALIST



*Philip Slomovitz in
the 30's.*

the University of Michigan. While at Michigan, he embarked on his life-long journalistic career. Beginning as a night editor on the Michigan Daily, the university's student publication, in 1916, Slomovitz later joined the Detroit News on its copy desk as a reporter. At the News, he gained expertise which led him to editorships with the Jewish Pictorial, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency news service, and the Detroit Jewish Chronicle, which merged with the Detroit Jewish News in 1951. Under his ownership, The Jewish News became the most profitable English language Jewish newspaper in the United States. Slomovitz sold the Jewish News in 1984, but remained on as editor emeritus.

In addition to his weekly "Commentary" column in the Jewish News, Slomovitz wrote articles for the Christian Century, Catholic Weekly Commonweal, Seven Arts Feature Syndicate, Syndicated Jewish Press Service and the Jewish Features Service. He also contributed articles to encyclopedias, anthologies and national magazines. Professionally, Slomovitz founded and was the first president (1942-1953) of the American Association of English-Jewish Newspapers, vice president of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, president of the Journalistic Society of Occident and Orient, and president of the American Jewish Press Association.¹

Slomovitz's services on behalf of Jewry extended beyond journalism. He founded the Jewish National Fund in Detroit and held national offices in the Zionist Organization of America, the American Jewish Congress, the Menorah Society, and the World Confederation of Jewish Writers, among others. In recognition of his services to his profession and the Jewish people, Slomovitz received numerous local and national awards, among them the St. Cyprian Journalistic Award, the first Smolar Award for Excellence in Journalism, the American Association for Jewish Education Award, and the American Jewish Tercentenary Award.¹

The esteem in which Slomovitz is held by the American Jewish community is attested to by a journalism scholarship in his name given yearly by the University of Michigan, and by two chairs established in his honor at Israeli universities: The Philip Slomovitz Chair in Journalism and Public Communication at Bar Ilan University, and The Philip Slomovitz Chair in the Hebrew Language, at the Technion.

His journalistic activities and personal involvement in American Jewish life over the past 70 years make Philip Slomovitz one of the nation's more astute observers of the American Jewish scene. From this vantage point, he detects a deterioration in relations between Jews and Gentiles. Looking at Detroit, for example, he feels that relations between the city's Jews and non-Jews were "much better" during the 1930s, an era of open and flagrant Jew hatred, than today. He explains this surprising claim by noting that in the 1930s "we had a very strong pro-Zionist movement among non-Jews. The American Christian Palestine Committee was exceptionally active and productive." He believes that "because of that our position was much stronger. I think there was less suspicion of Jews in the black ranks. But the Arab anti-Israel activities here, which were much later, of course, with the establishment of Israel, managed to involve the black

¹ Rockaway, Robert. Philip Slomovitz Interview. American Jewish History, Autumn 1990.

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community. And that created prejudices. I believe that there was a much better spirit at that earlier time than we have in the present."

The ongoing anti-Semitic tirades of Louis Farrakhan and Leonard Jeffries, head of the Black Studies Department at the City College of New York, together with the recent anti-Jewish riot carried out by blacks in Crown Heights, New York, reinforce Slomovitz's fears. He is especially concerned about the tentative and tardy response to these attacks by some Jewish leaders. Slomovitz feels that this caution and hesitancy is the result, in part, of Jewish ignorance among Jews.

Many of today's young Jews "don't know what is meant by anti-Semitism," he says. Consequently, they tend to panic at every manifestation of anti-Jewish prejudice. Those who panic "don't understand that no matter how you'll turn, as long as there is a Jew, there will be an anti-Semite," he says. "I don't generalize and say there will always be anti-Semites. But there will always be Jews. You cannot have this submission to self-hatred. This results from lack of knowledge." Slomovitz strongly believes that "knowledge creates a certain element of pride." He points out that "there is so much that is heroic and worthy of pride in Jewish life. A lack of knowledge creates a failure to confront danger."

Slomovitz believes that the lack of knowledge results from assimilation and the failure of Jewish education. "Jewish education is now facing a critical time," he says. "The American Jewish community is still bringing in Israelis to teach." Unfortunately, he says, "there are very few outstanding Jewish scholars who teach." Although "there are still many Jews who produce a lot culturally," Slomovitz is afraid that "in our school system, come another five, ten years, there won't be any scholars. You'll have those who can emulate the Sunday school, but that is not creating a cultural Jewish community."

In the past, the American Jewish press helped fill some of the gap in educating the community. Today's Jewish press is different and plays a different role, says Slomovitz. The early English-Jewish press was established by great scholars. "The Jewish Tribune was a scholarly journal. The American Hebrew originally had Jewish writers of distinction or rabbis who had a deep interest in it. So some of the early periodicals had a cultural foundation." Today, Slomovitz notes, "the Jewish press primarily has a very strong contemporary flavor." Those who work in the Jewish press today "are masters in contemporary journalism," he says. "They'll cover a story well when it deals with anti-Semitism. They'll cover a local story well. They will delve into American politics. They'll be very active with AIPAC. But they are no longer the scholars of the past who know Jewish history as the original founders did.

I think that the American Jewish community some day historically will be very proud of the early Yiddish newspaper," Slomovitz claims. "It was never a newspaper alone," he notes. "It was always a magazine. It was always interpretive. It had a high level of opinion." Slomovitz also believes that the Yiddish newspaper of yesterday was unafraid. "Otherwise," he notes, "there might never have been a Jewish, a Socialist member of Congress, like Meyer London." He feels that "because they were unafraid, they were able to speak out." Nevertheless, he feels that the present English-Jewish press

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serves a very important function. "It reaches the community," he says. "Philanthropically it does a marvelous job. While not the scholars that were, both the editorial staff and reportorial staff cover the Jewish scene very well."

Slomovitz still believes that the picture is not all bleak. The American Jewish community has made, and continues to make, valuable contributions to American life. "I think in the social services we have risen tremendously," he says. "If we have not attained what we want culturally, that's a very sad and serious problem." He believes it is a national problem.

He notes that there are many books of Jewish scholarship being published. We can be proud of the fact that we do have scholars who produce," he says. But Slomovitz is afraid that "what they do produce, what they write is not being read sufficiently." "Unless it's anti-Semitism and sensationalism, he claims, and unless it's sex, it does not have the proper response." He acknowledges however, that Jews do buy books and do read books, perhaps more than any other American ethnic group. He also admires the wonderful book fairs, such as those held in Detroit where he was on the first Jewish Book Fair organizing committee 40 years ago.

All in all, Slomovitz sees American Jewish life as filled with positives and negatives. But of one thing he is certain: Jews will continue to survive, as will Jewish life. In what form, and for how many Jews, is another question, and one no one can answer.

UPDATE: WITH EMPHASIS ON OPTIMISM By Philip Slomovitz



Photo by: Photo Center

Philip Slomovitz

With the privilege accorded me by the Michigan Jewish History journal editor, Judith Cantor, for a supplementary comment on the above Rockaway interview, my emphasis is on optimism.

While only three years have intervened since this interview in 1988, many new conditions have arisen to cause concern. With the newly-introduced Federation survey of the status of our community, it is heartening to know that increasing challenges are not being ignored and indeed will be on our agenda in the months and possibly the three-to-five years ahead.

While I always have been urging that priorities be placed on knowledgeably trained Jewish leadership, this need is now more urgent than ever. This urgent need for knowledge is threatened by the trend toward a decline, a lessening of learning. It is a danger to all of us. The most pressing responsibility today is to make the most vital commitment to our educational systems.

UPDATE

The menacing increase in intermarriage is also an issue that needs vastly increasing attention. I may be seriously criticized for saying it, but I am concerned with what I fear was too much tolerance resulting in the free rein within families and the communities' failure to adequately discourage the difficult trend

Of the many challenges that confront us, one of the most aggravating is the comfort that has been given by some Jewish spokespeople to unfavorable considerations of Israel's needs. Under the guise of striving for peace, there have been endorsements of movements harmful to Israel and to the Jewish position in the Middle East. I hope these blindnesses to realities will be abandoned.

These are among the issues challenging us. I am optimistic that the many studies in store for us as a result of the Federation survey of our present status will result in realistic aims and decisions.

Our fellow Jewish citizens as a community are now deeply involved in the preservation in a professional archive of our unforgettable history. The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, in conjunction with our leadership in Federation, has pursued that effort. It is a memorable commitment - a reason for great optimism - that will be valued by all of our citizens here and by world Jewry. It is a source of great pride to me to have had a share in it.



Photo by: Photo Center

Judge Avern Cohn, chairman of Archives Committee, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, addresses Slomovitz meeting.



Photo by: Photo Center

*Jewish Historical Society Directors at Slomovitz celebration, May, 1991.
Front: Philip Slomovitz and Gilbert Borman, president. 1st row: Dr. Abraham Rogoff, Gertrude Edgar, Leonard Simons, Anita Plous, Walter Field, Judy Cantor, Harriet Siden, Doris Easton, Adele Staller. 2nd row: Stanley Meretsky, Philip Applebaum, Levi Frank Smith, Jeffrey Borin, Robert Steinberg, Irwin Shaw, Benno Levi.*

1891-1991: A CENTURY OF SERVICE

National Council of Jewish Women,

Greater Detroit Section

by Dorothy Kaufman

Archivist, Greater Detroit Section, NCJW


One hundred years ago in 1891, National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW,) Greater Detroit Section, began as The Woman's Club of Temple Beth El.

In 1991, this local section of the National Council of Jewish Women is marking the birthday of what has become the oldest Jewish women's organization in Michigan and in the nation - and today one of the most influential.

In 1891, in the small Jewish community of Detroit, Rabbi Louis Grossman of Temple Beth El invited the women of his congregation to form a society to bring Jewish women into "relations of mutual helpfulness and cooperation and further foster practical philanthropy, culture, social service and education." In response to his appeal, The Woman's Club of Temple Beth El was founded. According to minutes of its first meeting in March 1891, the aims of the Club were "to promote kindness and helpfulness in general and to elevate the mental, moral and social status of young Jewish women in particular." Mrs. Bernard Ginsburg was elected president and Mrs. Henry A. Krolik, secretary. Monthly dues were 10 cents. Club flowers were pink and white carnations - the club motto, "Giving is Receiving." Early activities consisted of classes in literature, music, language and the arts.

Dr. Grossman expressed "the hope that through the experiences of the Woman's Club, all the Jewish organizations in the city might be ultimately united", which soon became a reality in the establishment of the United Jewish Charities in 1899. In 1896 the club's name was changed to The Jewish Women's Club of Detroit (JWC). Its growing membership soon encompassed all Jewish women in the community. In 1891, the club was invited to become a member of both the Michigan State Federation of Women's Clubs and the Detroit Federation of Women's Clubs.

During the existence of JWC from 1881-1925, eleven women held the presidency. In addition to Mrs. Ginsburg (who held office twice), Rose Wolenburgh, Mrs. Henry A. Krolik, Mrs. Rosa T. Rosenfield, Miss Bella Goldman, Mrs. Charles C. Simons, Miss



Sixth Anniversary.
MARCH 30, 1897.
PHOENIX HALL.

TOASTS.

TOAST-MISTRESS, MRS. RUDOLPH FREIDENBERG.

Sweet is the smile of home; the mutual look,
When hearts are of each other sure."

1 Home-Makers. - Mrs. Sarah Ewell Krolik
"Her presence lends its warmth and health
To all who come before it,
If woman lend us Eden, such
As she alone restore it." - *H'ittier.*

2 Home-Helpers. - Miss Henrietta A. Robinson
"She doth little kindnesses
Which most leave undone or despise." - *Love'll.*

3 Home-Seekers. - Mrs. Henry A. Krolik
"A feeble man can see the farms that
are fenced and filled, the houses that
are built. The strong man sees the
possible houses and farms." - *Emerson.*

4 Home and the World. - Mrs. Adolph Sloman
"Therefore bend ourselves together in a
union of workers to further the best and
highest interests of humanity."
Preamble, Com. of C. J. W.

5 Home Life influenced by Club-Life. How?
Miss Rachel A. Malcomson
"And the best 'o' working is, it gives
you a crisp hold 'o' things outside
your own lot." - *George Eliot.*

6 Home and Religion. - Rabbi Louis Grossmann
"For what doth the Lord require of thee but
to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk
humbly with thy God?" - *Micah.*

7 Mothers in Israel. - Mrs. Agnes D'Arcambal
"Blessing she is: God made her so,
And deeds of weak stay boldness."
Fall from her useless as the snow." - *Love'll.*

Jewish Women's Club 1897 program
at Phoenix Hall



Teaching English to immigrant girls, c. 1904

Miriam D. Goldman, Mrs. Max May (who also served twice) and Mrs. Samuel R. Glogower, all served as presidents. In 1925, the Jewish Woman's Club merged with the national organization which had been founded in Chicago in 1893 - The National Council of Jewish Women.

JWC: Early Philanthropies and Advocacy

Innovative philanthropic projects became the focus of JWC. In the early 1900's, in conjunction with other groups, the organization instituted a plan of traveling free libraries for local factories. In 1905, in support of the Russian Relief Fund, a collection was taken, "the first time in the club's history, resulting in the sum of \$119.08." (By 1916, the women were able to raise several thousand dollars for Jewish War Sufferers).

The liberal thinking of the organization was evident by the stand taken by president Mrs. Henry A. Krolik (1898-1906) who invoked market strategies for social protest. Her campaign against the purchase of "white label" garments discouraged sweatshop labor, and was the beginning of the social consciousness of JWC and its efforts to educate public opinion. In 1907, JWC members marched with the women of the nation for suffrage..

Ida E. Ginsberg Scholarship Fund

Annual dues were increased to \$1.00 in 1903 and one-third of the collection maintained the Ida E. Ginsberg Scholarship Fund (now Education Assistance Fund), granting Jewish students financial aid to further their education. By 1922, eighty-four girls benefitted from the fund.

The Penny Lunch Project

In 1911, during the presidency of Bella Goldman, JWC sponsored a Penny Lunch Project at the Bishop, Bishop Annex and Clinton Schools in Detroit, which were located



Bishop School, c. 1905, where Jewish Women's Club sponsored a Penny Lunch Project.

in areas with mixed nationality residents. Nutritious lunches were provided for undernourished children who could only afford one cent. The volunteer operation served 500 to 800 children daily and was successful for 14 years. In 1925, JWC relinquished its management to the Detroit Board of Education. The Penny Lunch Project proved to be the forerunner of public school lunchrooms in Detroit.

89 Rowena Street and the YWHA

In November, 1919, the Jewish Women's Club, Inc., opened a residence for employed Jewish girls at 89 Rowena Street, Detroit. In conjunction with the residence, club activities were started. With sixty-five clubs using the building as a clubhouse, it soon outgrew its quarters. As a result, the residence arrangement was terminated, and in 1921 the program was reorganized as the Young Women's Hebrew Association (YWHA). Many activities were subsequently opened to young men in the community and co-educational programs were developed. The "Y" functioned through three departments: Summer Camp, Bureau of Personal Service and Education and Recreation.

Camp Jeddo was a summer vacation camp for young women under the auspices of the "YWHA" on Lake Huron in Jeddo, Michigan.

The Bureau of Personal Service offered guidance and assistance to young women. A free employment bureau was also available for them.



Camp Jeddo show, c. 1933

Statistics tell the story of YWHA popularity. In its fourteen room building, the membership swelled from 205 in 1922 to more than 1700 in 1930, and building attendance grew from 12,000 to some 43,000 during that period. After the merger of the JWC with The National Council of Jewish Women, in 1925, the Y continued to function as a committee of The Detroit section. However, the "Y" eventually joined with the Jewish Centers Association in a request for better facilities and subsequently the 1930 Allied Jewish Campaign provided funds to purchase a building at Woodward and Holbrook Avenues. In December, 1933, therefore, the YWHA merged with the Jewish Centers Association to form the Jewish Community Center.

DETROIT SECTION

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN

VOL. 12-NO. 5 JUNE 1938

PHOTO BY ANTON FRANK

How do you talk about this to young people? The Council of Jewish Women, Detroit, is doing it through the "Franklin Hills Day" program. Proceeds go to the "Franklin Hills" school for German refugee children.

Franklin Hills Day

Wednesday, June 15 - 11 to 4 o'clock

TO RAISE \$2000.00 FOR OUR REFUGEE CHILDREN'S FUND

Tickets: \$ 2.00 Mrs. WALTER LASH, Treasurer

Patrons: \$10.00 Mrs. SIMON J. ELLEN, Chairman

Patrol \$5.00

Fundraising program for German refugee children, 1938

NCJW and the German Jewish Children's Aid, Inc.

The United States, in 1934, granted permission to the German Jewish Children's Aid for entry of 120 German children yearly to the United States. NCJW, including Detroit Section, participated and later assumed complete responsibility of this operation. In 1941, the project was turned over to the National Refugee Service. (By this time, 511 children had been brought to 93 American communities).

The Big Sister Movement in Detroit

The Big Sister Movement was inaugurated by Detroit Section in Fall, 1933, to provide enrichment opportunities for culturally deprived young women. Professional guidance was given by the Detroit Jewish Social Service Bureau. Other participating agencies were North End Clinic, Jewish Centers, NCJW, Camp Jeddo, and the Jewish Children's Home.



Mrs. Victor Roemer, Mrs. Harry Cohen and Miss Emma Butzel at Council Resale Shop, c.1934

**SPECIAL
RUMMAGE
SALE!**

Monday and Tuesday June 12 and 13

**500 NEW HATS
19c Each**

Women's Men's Children's
USED CLOTHING
Outfit The Family

RESALE SHOP
89 MACK Formerly Rowena

Council Resale Shop

Detroit Section opened its first Resale Shop in 1934 on the first floor of 89 Rowena Street, but soon relocated to larger quarters on Cass Avenue.

Merchandise included clothing, bric-a-brac and household articles donated from members and contributed by local merchants. Even though the store was open all week long for a full business day, still the shop was

manager by volunteers in its early operation. Proceeds were designated specifically for the Ida E. Ginsburg

Scholarship Fund. (Two other resale shops later opened in Detroit, as well as one each in Berkley, Troy and Royal Oak, with revenue supporting all NCJW projects).

Historical Highlights 1941-1951

During World War II, NCJW volunteers hosted U.S. .O. functions at Detroit's U.S. .O. Center and raised money for the National Overseas Program and Service to Foreign Born. In 1945, \$10,000 was contributed toward this program as well as toward the establishment of residences for homeless young women in Athens and Paris. Another new project initiated at this time, Ship-A-Box provided packages of toys and educational materials to children



NCJW staffs U.S.O. Center, W.W.II

throughout the world.

The 12th Street Council Center opened in December, 1944 - a joint operation of Detroit Section and the Jewish Community Center and the first cooperative venture of a social service agency with a volunteer organization. One hundred twenty-five women served 1,000 people in recreational and educational programs.

By 1946, Detroit Section, Jewish Welfare Federation and Resettlement Service coordinated "Service to New Americans," helping new arrivals in their adjustment to the United States. N.C.J.W. members taught English to adults and also conducted nursery school classes.

The first Golden Age Program was started by N.C.J.W. at the 12th Street Center. A Joint Employment Placement Service and Community Workshop were established in cooperation with Jewish Vocational Service. Senior citizens were assisted in gaining employment and those who were unable to retain regular employment were placed in suitable jobs.

Detroit Section's first Angel Ball was held on Thanksgiving Eve, 1955 at the Sheraton Cadillac Hotel. This gala event honored members who contributed 100 volunteer hours or donated the equivalent of merchandise to the Resale Shops. Angel Ball was a tradition for twenty-five years.

Four More Decades of Service

The next three decades (1961-1981) flourished with community services. If a need was discovered in the community, NCJW attempted to solve the problem. In the sixties, Operation Friendship, a program for convalescing mental patients began, later to become independent agencies in both Wayne & Oakland Counties.

The Orchards, a residential treatment for emotionally disturbed young boys was opened, owned and operated by Detroit Section. Presently an independent agency, the Orchards Children Services provides both outpatient and inpatient treatment for boys and girls. In 1968, Detroit Section assisted in establishing one of the first day care centers in the area at Detroit's African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Other projects continue to be developed to serve community needs: Meals on Wheels (in cooperation with Jewish Family Service) provides kosher meals to Jewish homebound; SPACE supports the growth of changing families through peer groups and workshops; CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) investigates and recommends secure placement of children within the probate court system in Oakland County. Dor L'Dor (Generation to Generation) pairs seniors and sixth graders in song and friendship; "Up and Out" provides recreational programs for seniors; Family to Family, in cooperation with Jewish Welfare Federation, matches American and Russian families for friendship and Jewish



Seniors and sixth graders in Dor L' Dor concert, 1985

NCJW

experiences; Greater Detroit Access Guide provides a directory of accessible facilities for handicappers and the elderly. The NCJW Research Institute for Innovation in Education at Hebrew University in Jerusalem supported by the Detroit Section develops, implements and evaluates programs serving the educational needs of Israel's disadvantaged young.

In keeping with national priorities – aging, children and youth, constitutional rights, Israel, Jewish life and women's issues – NCJW volunteers continue to effect social change. From its small beginnings one century ago, Greater Detroit Section 1991 membership now totals 1800 women and men with 1300 as life members. As the section begins its second century, education, service and social action continue as the primary concerns. The growth of the organization marks an unprecedented success for the Detroit Jewish community and attests to the quality of leadership of the women who make it possible



NCJW 85th anniversary, 1976. Detroit section presidents: Josephine Weiner, Ann Daniels, Ruth Klein, Regine Freund Cohane, Phyllis Welling, Freddy Shiffman, Sondra Nathan and Golda Krolik.

These historic pictures are from the archives of The NCJW, Greater Detroit Sections

*Dorothy Kaufmann,
NCJW archivist*



THE "YOUNG WOMEN'S HEBREW ASSOCIATION," Under the Auspices of the National Council of Jewish Women Early Recollections by Lea Damsky Field

An ad in the then current Social Service magazine from a Jewish Center in Detroit, Michigan announced an opening for a woman to direct dramatics and plan programs. I immediately sent a letter and my resume and to my delight, a prompt answer asked me to come for an interview.



Lea Damsky Field

Detroit was an overnight journey from Utica, New York, by train. I took a sleeper bunk bed; however, I slept very little.

Taking a taxi to the Jewish Center at 89 Rowena Street, I found myself in front of a large old home. The sign read "Young Women's Hebrew Association under the auspices of the National Council of Jewish Women." Miss Landsman, the executive director, and Mrs. Samuel Glogower, president of the National Council of Jewish Women, conducted the interview and showed me through the house. It was, as I have said, a large old home with many bedrooms on the second and third floors. These became meeting rooms and were rented to other small groups for meetings during the week, with the exception of two bedrooms on the second floor. One large front room and bath were occupied by the executive director and the other was to be occupied by the dramatic director.

The first floor was made up of the former dining room and living room and now served as the recreation room. There was an office and a so-called "powder-room." The kitchen and servants' quarters were occupied by the caretaker and his wife. In back, the three-stall garage became the auditorium with a raised platform for a stage. Its capacity was 120 chairs.

The interview was very successful and I was offered a good salary which included the room and bath on the second floor. As dramatic and program director I put the dramatic department on a more professional basis. First, I had three classes each week - beginners, intermediate and seniors. I taught them speech, diction, poise, stage presence and gestures. Instead of only presenting one-act plays with an all-girl cast, and girls trying to take men's parts, I encouraged men to come to our classes.

Then, in preparation for a three-act play to be presented at the end of the season, I turned my attention to creating a proper stage. I only had a raised platform and a curtain which had to be pulled by hand and a few scattered over-head lights to work with. There was no budget to speak of, so all alternations had to be done by volunteers. I decided to visit each young men's group who held their meetings at the Center and asked for electricians, carpenters, paper-hangers, painters and those involved in various crafts to help. As a result, we had floodlights, dimmers, stage scenery, even stage hands to move "flats" and change furniture during intermissions. I used my former experience in the Theater Stock Company in Utica, when I still had been a student, to make this little theater as professional as possible.

My "crew" fell into the spirit, worked evenings and became a jolly group, happy to be part of this "great adventure."

During the evenings when I had no classes, I would start a "Sing-Along" with those

YOUNG WOMEN'S HEBREW ASSOCIATION

young men and women who just dropped in because they had no place to go and wanted to meet other young people. Soon word went out that everyone would feel welcome.

Miss Ella Vera Feldman, the new executive director, noting the success of our informal evenings, started the Saturday Night Dances once a month at Webster Hall with a live orchestra appealing to singles. Webster Hall was a residential hotel on the Wayne State University campus for married and foreign students. It was amazing how many came - an average attendance of 300. A very nominal fee offset the expense of the orchestra. These dances became very popular and continued year after year.

It was nearing the end of the winter season and time to present our first three-act play which we had been rehearsing for many weeks. We posted notices in the club rooms, sent invitations and tickets to the Board of the National Council of Jewish Women and reserved a section of seating for them - and many came! We played three nights at a charge of \$1.50 a ticket. The auditorium was filled to capacity well before showtime and we had to turn many away. The "players" all gave a fine performance and even the "stage hands" knew their "cues." It was a huge success.

Quoting from the YWHA booklet of 1928, "...this very briefly tells the story of what the Young Women's Hebrew Association, with its limited facilities of a fourteen room house, has been able to do for the Jewish youth of Detroit."



Sunday evening Open House at The YWHA. Lea Damsky, program director, met her future husband, Walter Field, at The YWHA.

MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

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Jacob Rader Marcus

This work completes the history Marcus began in 1974 when Wayne State University Press published his classic three volumes on The Colonial American Jew, 1493-1776. The story now continues over the next 100 years with that enviable combination we have come to expect from Jacob Marcus - impeccable scholarship and a fluent pen. His highly readable and unaffected style masks the basic research and meticulous documentation that stands behind every page. An historian's historian, Marcus is also the common reader's writer.

The first volume in this tetralogy of United States Jewry, 1776-1985, subtitled The Sephardic Period, opens with the trumpet call of revolution that was answered by the small Spanish and Portuguese American Jewish community, and its political, economic, religious, and social development as part of the infant nation seeking its voice and identity. The second volume, The Germanic Period, Part 1, covers the years between 1841 and 1860 and the next major generation of Jewish immigration, the European Ashkenazim, as it carried the rich gifts of its cultural heritage westward across the Hudson River, along with the ever-present burden of anti-Semitism.

The Germanic Period, Part 2, which forms the third volume, brings the reader through the Civil War to 1920, the interaction of the German and Russian components of American Jewry, its social and cultural conscience, its creation of Reform Judaism. The final volume, The East European Period, unfolds with the influx of Jews from Eastern Europe beginning in 1852 and the dispersal across the American landscape, while the mini-dramas of the garment industry, social welfare societies, unionization, political activism, affluence and poverty are played against the background of industrialization, World War I, and an America coming of age. After 1921 the various ethnic communities merge in the concept of the American Jew as we move into contemporary American history. The first two volumes of United States Jewry are now available from the Wayne State University Press; volume III and IV to come off the presses in 1992.

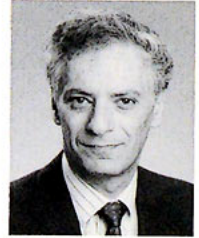
*Reviewed by, Dr. Bernard Goldman,
Director, Wayne State University Press, 1974 - 1984.*

BOOK REVIEW

**HARMONY & DISSONANCE:
VOICES OF JEWISH IDENTITY IN DETROIT, 1914-1967**

By Sidney Bolkosky

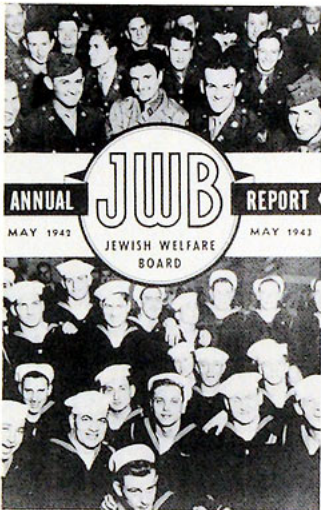
The Detroit Jewish Community is generally viewed by outside observers as one of the most unified, generous and stalwart bulwarks of commitment to Jewish causes in America. Its leadership has achieved local, national, and even international acclaim for its support and dedication to religious, political, social and philanthropic endeavors. To some it would appear that the community has been monolithic, always unified, and divorced of serious controversy. Not so, says Dr. Sidney Bolkosky, in his Harmony & Dissonance, an examination of Detroit Jewry from 1914 to 1967.



Dr. Sidney Bolkosky

The title itself demonstrates that all was neither uniform nor peaceful during these important formative years. Bolkosky's use of the words "Voices of Jewish Identity" in the subtitle also points out the varying types of "Jewishness" that we encounter in this massive study supplemented by various appendices. These include informative statistical data and numerous photographs of individuals, institutions and important events. It also provides a detailed description and analysis of what transpired with these individuals and institutions during a period of over fifty years in a unique American city with peculiar problems and strengths.

Professor Bolkosky has added another impressive study to the growing number dealing with specific Jewish communities in the United States. He charts "the movement from a German to an Eastern European majority; from laborers and peddlers to merchants to businessmen; from Talmudic scholars and students to professional occupations. Dramatic social, intellectual, spiritual, and economic changes produced tensions and conflicts." Permeating his narrative are concerns with general, large-scale subjects like "immigration, assimilation and Holocaust" as well as such local concerns as "Federation, Council, Labor Zionism, Coughlin, and Ford." Thus he succeeds in pulling together both a general as well as a specific treatment of the Jewish experience molded by local as well as national and international events. Beginning somewhat ponderously, this volume captures your imagination as it weaves the changes occurring in the community so greatly shaped by industrial modernization and coping with the other myriad problems of urban America and a vibrant minority.



It is with the more modern period that Bolkosky's narrative flourishes. The story becomes more intense, powerful and meaningful as he deals with this community's response to such local problems as swift demographic changes, severe economic depression,

BOOK REVIEW

organizational battles, religious-cultural diminution and racial conflict. He does not ignore the national and international scenes as he covers the rise and violence of anti-Semitism, Zionism, and the creation of the State of Israel, and the impact of the Holocaust. And, unlike other communal studies, he deals with the status of women and treats with empathy and understanding and detail the role of that significant group within the Jewish community.

In a moving conclusion to this study, Bolkosky examines Detroit Jewry during "a year of change, 1966-1967," marked by three crises, the assassination of charismatic Rabbi Morris Adler, the Six-Day War, and the Detroit riots. The Jewish community responded admirably and nobly in his estimation to these disastrous events, not unlike its efforts to deal with the other turbulent occurrences of the twentieth century. Detroit is a unique community and this is a unique volume. Be sure to read it.



*Reviewed by Bernard Wax
Director, 1966-1991
American Jewish Historical Society*



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The Jewish Historical Society

FOOTNOTES FROM THE EDITOR:

Ralph Raimi announces the private publication of a new book, The Philomathic Debating Club, 1989-1950, for \$25 postpaid. This 160-page paperbound history is available through Raimi at 46 Glen Ellyn Way, Rochester, N.Y. 14618. Parts of this book appeared as an article by Raimi last year in the November, 1990 Michigan Jewish History. Sources for the information include the archives of The Jewish Historical Society, including donations or records from the family of Philip Nusholtz and from Isadore Berger, and the Leo M. Franklin Archives of Temple Beth El.

Michigan Jewish History would like to publish a review of Jewish Boy Scout troops in the Detroit area. A report of the troop at Shaarey Zedek during the 1930's has been received from Reuben Glazier. Troop 23 and Temple Beth El Scout recollections are sought for a more inclusive overview in 1992. Pictures, honors, and lists are welcomed.

1991-1995 will mark the 50th anniversary of World War II, which will also be commemorated by the Michigan Department of History. This Journal seeks reminiscences, letters, pictures, etc. for preservation in a special section in our Archives. Moreover, in the future, Michigan Jewish History would like to publish a special feature issue of this watershed event in American and Jewish life.

Recollections and memorabilia may include participation in significant military engagements, liberation of the concentration camps, visits at the displaced person camps, encounters with our Jewish chaplains, Detroit reunions, and other personal historic occasions. Furthermore, work on the home front should be of interest.

Moreover, some families may still have memorabilia from Jewish participation in World War I and the Spanish American War, which of course would be welcomed and treasured.

The Society acknowledges with gratitude the acquisition from Harry Weinsaft of the pictures of the ship Exodus and its encounter with the British on the shores of Palestine. This is a priceless link in the story of our people.

Congratulations on Saginaw's 100th! A 160 page hard-cover book commemorating The 100 Years of The Saginaw Jewish Community, is available for \$18.00 at 517/793-0680.

PRESIDENT'S 32nd ANNUAL REPORT, JUNE 1991

Gilbert Borman

It is my duty and pleasure to report on the progress and future of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. We have made important strides - the goals we set this past year were met or exceeded. We have set our sights on even higher achievements for this year.

We have moved to our new office in the Maple/Drake Jewish Community Center, where the facilities enable us to function more efficiently. For the first time, we have a part-time professional, Miriam Cohen, overseeing the needs of the Society.

Among the highlights of this past year were:

(1) A full calendar of scheduled events: - Renee Wohl of CAJE provided penetrating insights into the Dreyfuss Affair; Mort Zieve fascinated with a history of Jews in Film. Michael Bar Zohar's latest book was presented at the annual Jewish Book Fair; with the American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Community Council, we participated in the conference on Blacks and Jews at Wayne State University. We exhibited at the annual Local History Conference also at Wayne State. We teamed up with Jewish Experience for Families (JEFF) to give a bus tour of Jewish Detroit for our New Americans from Russia.

(2) Our Journal continued its fine tradition of collecting and recording local history. Past journals have provided important source material for current historical studies, including the forthcoming second volume of "The Jews of Detroit" series, Harmony and Dissonance, authored by our own Prof. Sidney Bolkosky.

(3) An event honoring Philip Slomovitz at the home of David and Doreen Hermelin: - a breakthrough for our Society. Mr. Slomovitz donated his papers as the first major collection of our archives. In addition, Mr. Slomovitz became the first recipient of the Leonard N. Simons Award - established to honor those who have made outstanding contributions in the preservation and dissemination of our local history.

(4) The Society has been cooperating with the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit to evaluate potential sites for a new Jewish community archives. We expect to place our collections with Federation's so that scholars will be able to go to a centralized source for their research.

Now we look forward to a new year which is equally dynamic and fruitful. If you have not already renewed your membership, please do so as soon as possible. Your continuing support is vital to building our Society's future.

CALENDAR OF FUTURE EVENTS

IN COMMEMORATION OF 1492...CELEBRATION OF SEPHARDIC CULTURE
by Shirley Behar, President, Detroit Area Sephardic Community-
with Mediterranean Desserts by Cateress Annabelle Cohen
Jewish Historical Society (661-1000,Ext. 267), Thursday, DECEMBER 12, 1991, 7:30 P.M.

JEWS AND THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE NEW WORLD, 1492-1992 WAVERLY
CONSORT, University Musical Society; lecture by Judith Laikin Elkin, Rackham
Amphitheatre, Saturday, MARCH 28, 1992, 7 P.M. and 8 P.M.

Teofile Ruiz, Stephen Haliczzer, Todd Endelman, Richard Popkin, Thomas Trautmann,
Rackham Amphitheatre, Sunday, MARCH 29, 1992, 1 P.M. and 7:30 P.M.

Recital of Ancient to Contemporary Sephardic Songs, ACADEMY OF EARLY MUSIC,
February 1992.

MAPS AND THE COLUMBIAN ENCOUNTER, an exhibit of rare and historic maps
from the time of Europe's discovery of the New World, CLEMENTS LIBRARY,
University of Michigan, AUGUST 15 -SEPTEMBER 15, 1992.

Additional conferences on September 12, 13; November 8, 9; and December 6, 1992.
Sponsored by the Jean and Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, U of M and the
National Endowment for the Humanities; Judith Laikin Elkin, conference director. (313)
763-5857.

SPANISH MUSIC IN THE AGE OF DISCOVERY, Judeo-Spanish Songs of Exodus
and Diaspora - The Waverly Consort, American Artists Series, Kingswood Auditorium,
Cranbrook Schools, Sunday, APRIL 5, 1992, 2 P.M., with preview lecture at 1 P.M., \$14
to JHS members, (\$4 savings) 851-5044.

MICHIGAN LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE, Wayne State University, McGregor
Center, Friday, APRIL 10 and Saturday, APRIL 11, 1992.

AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY CENTENNIAL NATIONAL
CONFERENCE. Washington, D.C., Friday, MAY 15 - Sunday, MAY 18, 1992. To
inquire about joining Michigan delegation for this grand event, call 661-1000, ext. 267.

In the planning: JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING at Reuther
Archives and McGregor Center, Wayne State University, June 1992.

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Membership, tributes, and endowments to The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, founded in 1959, support the collection, commemoration, and publication of the history of the Jews of Michigan. Michigan Jewish History is the oldest continuously published journal of local Jewish history in America.

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