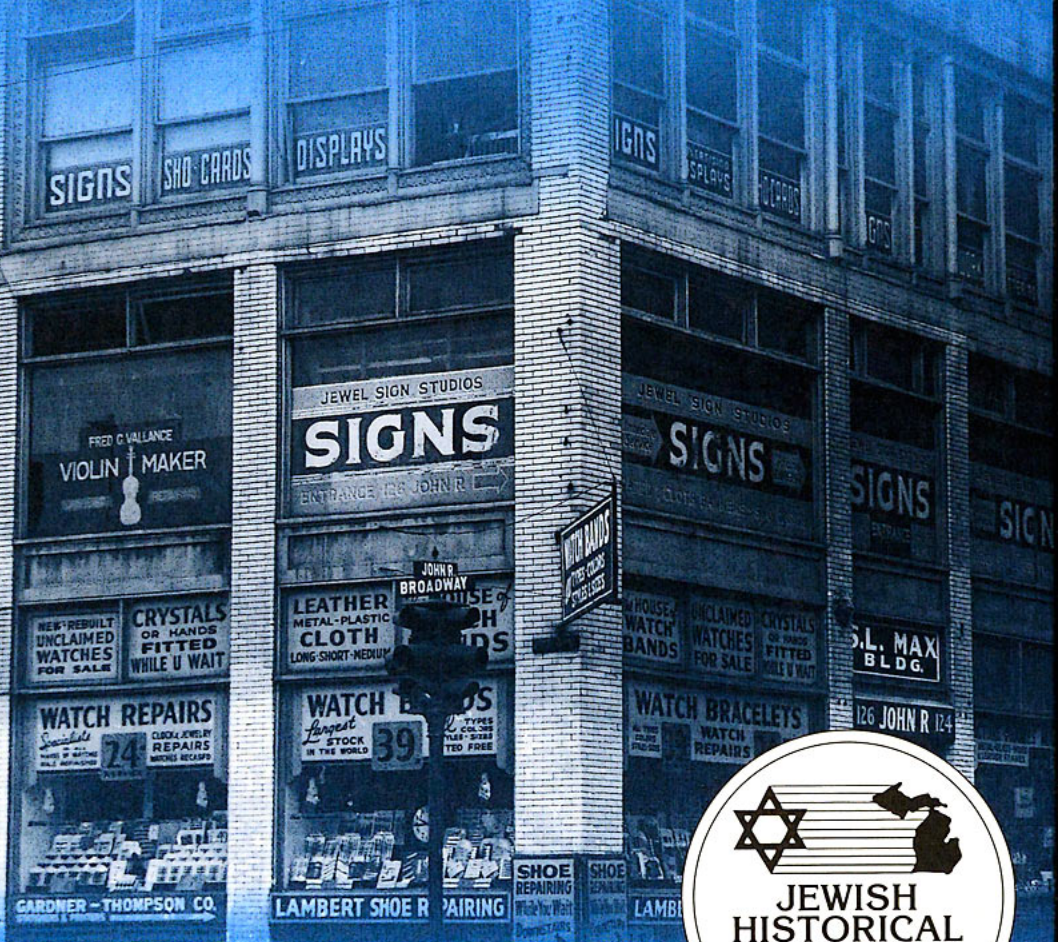


MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY



Situated on the corner of John R and Broadway, the House of Watchbands sat in the center of what was once the hub of Jewish commerce in downtown Detroit.



Detroit's Broadway Avenue; Reading the Buildings of Our Past; Sculptor Samuel Cashwan; Author Faye Moskowitz Remembers her Jackson Childhood; Midland's Temple Beth El

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Fall 2003, Tishrei 5764

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: Throughout the 1950s and 60s, Broadway Avenue in downtown Detroit was the hub of Jewish commerce. Sydney Max relocated his store, House of Watchbands, to the street in 1927. To lure customers, he plastered his large store-front windows with inviting signs. Photo courtesy of the Max family.

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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 43

Fall 2003

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Memories of Broadway

By Alan Kandel and Janis Waxenberg

New York City has its Broadway, often referred to as the “Street of Dreams.” Downtown Detroit also has its Broadway, which in the 1950s might have been called the “Street of Jewish Dreams.” Once named Miami Avenue, the short street east of Woodward became Broadway around the turn of the century. At one time, the Detroit Board of Education had its headquarters there.



Courtesy of Esther Ressler

SERLIN'S

Located on the corner of Broadway and Grand River, just one block from the J.L. Hudson Company, the bustling store was owned by Jacob Ressler and Bill Serlin, brothers-in-law. The store sold the odd mixture of radio supplies and jewelry and survived until sometime after the Depression.

In the 1950s, Broadway was close to the heartland of the organized Jewish community. Just a short distance away, on Griswold to the south, stood the Downtown Synagogue, and two blocks away, on Madison Avenue, was the Fred M. Butzel Memorial Building, for many years home to the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.

Broadway stretches about a quarter of a mile, Grand Circus Park at its western end and Gratiot at its east. Between 1920 and 1980, even as the Jewish community migrated northward away from the Hastings Street area, Jewish merchants found Broadway a congenial location for their business enterprises. By the 1960s, 50 or more Jewish merchants lined both sides of the busy thoroughfare.



Courtesy of Paul Wasserman

HENRY THE HATTER

In March, 1953, Seymour Wasserman and his wife, Doris, (far left) celebrated the grand opening of Henry the Hatter on Broadway Ave. Joining the couple are Murray and Dorothy Appleby (center). Wasserman's original business partner and Sy's uncle and his wife, Jack and Phoebe Wasserman.

Two stores became especially well-known, both for their owners and their patrons. The Enggass Jewelry Store was founded in 1865 by the grandfather of Clarence Enggass, who served as head of the company for 56 years. In 1937, Enggass became president of the Jewish Welfare Federation.

Henry the Hatter was founded in 1893 by Henry W. Komrofsky. After Komrofsky's death in 1941, Sy Wasserman, a young New Yorker just returning from his service in World War II, heard of the store and came to Detroit to purchase the business. Wasserman's love of fedoras, passed down to his son Paul, saw them through the ups and downs of retailing and Detroit. Throughout their years, the store remained a popular shopping spot with countless Detroiters, including Mayor Coleman A. Young, and his aides who often swooped into the store to pick up a hat or two, their large limousine idling outside.

By the late 1960s, after the 1967 riots dealt a serious blow to the spirit and the infrastructure of much of the city, owners of many of the Jewish stores began selling or closing their businesses. Many stood boarded up for years. Now a part of Detroit's past, the downtown area is enjoying a healthy revitalization. While Broadway may not reclaim its Jewish presence, many merchants remain. Henry the Hatter, Serman's, Simmon's & Clark and J.L. Stone's are now neighbors of the magnificent Detroit Opera House and are within sight of Comerica Park, home of the Detroit Tigers, and Ford Field, home of the Detroit Lions.

Courtesy of Walter P. Reuther Library



BROADWAY AND GRATIOT

The hub of Detroit's wheel came together at the intersection of Broadway and Gratiot in this 1920 photograph. Note the police officer in the traffic tower.

Partial list of Broadway's Jewish merchants (1950 - 2000)

- | | |
|---|---|
| Alexander Licht Wholesale Ladies' and Children's Clothing (Jerry Licht) | Midwest Furs (Irving Pokempner) |
| Broadway Market | The Pants Store (Harry Goodman) |
| The Broadway | Paul's Cut Rate Drugs (Deutch family) |
| Broadway Men's Store | Phillips Shoes (Eisenstadt family) |
| Conn's Clothes | Reno Radio |
| Display Creations (Henry Leopold) | Serlin's (Jacob Ressler and Bill Serlin) |
| Enggass Jewelers (Clarence Enggass) | Serman's Clothes (Serman and Ross families) |
| Finsterwald's | Shell Optical and Jewelry (Dr. Sam Shell) |
| Greenstone Jewelers | Shirt Box (Jules Kondritzer and Barney Guyer) |
| Hall's Magic Shop | Sibley's Tailors |
| Henry the Hatter (Paul Wasserman) | Simmons & Clark Jewelers |
| The House of Watchbands (Max Family) | Spilkin Radio & Electronics |
| Kay's Bridal | J.L. Stone's Clothes (Sheldon Stone) |
| Lafayette Electric | Todd's Clothes (Phil Elkus) |
| Lefkofsky's Deli (Lefkofsky family) | Wohlmuth's Clothing |
| Marty's Delicatessen (Marty Horwitz) | Wurlitzer Store |
| Messenger Taxicab Co. (Abe Hertzberg) | |

Shell Optical and Jewelry, Dr. Sam Shell

Dr. Sam Shell is truly a jack-of-all-trades. Reflecting over his long and full life, Shell recalled his many careers, including years as an optometrist, ownership of a jewelry store and bakery and finally his printing business.

Shell grew up in Columbus, Ohio, where his father was a tailor. The family, formerly Shilansky, had migrated from Bialystok, Russia, early in the 20th Century.

After graduating with a degree in optometry from Ohio State University, Shell married Marjorie Aronsson, the daughter of Maurice Aronsson, and moved to his wife's hometown of Detroit. Joining together with a dentist and podiatrist, he and the other two professionals came together in a business on John R and Woodward. Eventually in the 1940s, Shell took advantage of an opportunity offered to him by a J.L. Hudson executive and moved into a store adjacent to the J.L. Hudson's garage on Broadway. For more than two decades, his optometry practice flourished in that spot. Drawing on his earlier experience as an apprentice jeweler, Shell incorporated a jewelry business into his practice, eventually naming his shop Shell Optical and Jewelry.

Through family connections, Shell also added to his busy schedule when he accepted an executive position with the National Baking Company, then in the hands of the Elson family. Later, he joined the Aronsson Printing Company as executive vice president, a position he held until his retirement.

Shell holds fond memories of life on Broadway Street. He was a regular at Bonjo's, a corner eatery on John R and Broadway. To satisfy an urge for corned beef, he and other merchants often went up the street to Lefkofsky's Deli, located in the Broadway Market.

Shell recalls no particular trouble or violence, but eventually the fear of danger at night prompted him and many other fellow merchants to close or relocate. One of Shell's employees, an African-American optician, later purchased the business.

Paul's Cut Rate Drugs, Joseph Deutch

A major fixture on Broadway for many years was Paul's Cut Rate Drugs, established in 1924 in the Hastings Street area. Joseph H. Deutch relocated the store to Broadway at a time when others began leaving the area, after the Detroit riots in 1967.

In the 1970s, a local newspaper ran a feature on the drug store, describing it as "America's friendliest family pharmacy" and dubbing Joseph Deutch, as he was known by most of his customers: Mr. Paul. The column referred to "Mr. Paul" as a man who made friends everywhere — the young, the old and the well-known, including Dr. Armand Hammer, founder and CEO of the Occidental Petroleum Company, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Sr., the father of the civil rights leader.

Deutch had a reputation for attentiveness to the special needs and desires of his customers. The store was the place where people could go in search of old remedies, many of which today are common staples of health food stores. Paul's stocked senna leaves, blackberry leaves, passion flowers, slippery elm bark, tansy tea, chamomile flowers, hyssop and gum myrrh to name a few. "If you feel depressed or 'down in spirit,'" noted the column, "visit Mr. Paul and he'll cheer you up ... and improve your health at the same time."

Both Joseph Deutch and his wife, Elsie, were born in Russia. In Detroit, they became very active with the Allied Jewish Campaign and were long-time members of

Courtesy of Lenore Deutch Singer



PAUL'S CUT RATE

Proprietor Paul Deutch, far right, stands beside his son, Marty, and the special guest of honor, Martin Luther King, Sr. at the 1967 grand opening of his bustling store, Paul's Cut Rate Drugs.

Congregation Shaarey Zedek. They devoted themselves to their community and their business until it closed in 2001.

Midwest Fur Company, Irving Pokempner

One of Broadway's most familiar figures was Irving Pokempner, lovingly called "Po" by all who knew him. He was frequently seen trudging from his Midwest Fur Company to the nearby offices of the Jewish Community Council, located on Madison Avenue.

Pokempner lived through the terrors of the Russian Revolution, escaping from Ponivez, Lithuania, in 1927. He made his way to the United States via New York City, later coming to Detroit, where he established Midwest Fur in the early '40s.

As remembered by his son, Joshua, "Po" had a passion for life. His concern for the community often overshadowed his focus on his business. He earned a reputation as a social activist and is mentioned frequently in Sidney Bolkosky's book, *Harmony & Dissonance: Voices of Jewish Identity in Detroit, 1914-1967*. Pokempner was active with the early Labor Zionist movement, Workmen's Circle and the Jewish Community Council. He took strong positions on critical issues of the time, the role of organized labor among them.

Pokempner became close allies with Irving Bluestone, assistant to United Auto Workers President Walter Reuther. Bolkosky quotes Bluestone's characterization of Pokempner as "one particularly daring young man, Irving Pokempner, who braved the barricades to smuggle food into the strikers."

As a “secularist and culturalist,” Pokempner was one of those who strongly supported offering cultural programming at the Jewish Community Center on the Sabbath. He was also a staunch defender of the Jewish Community Council when the Council and the Jewish Welfare Federation were at odds. Pokempner also became a member of the “Contributors Committee for a Democratic Jewish Community.” He closed and liquidated his store in 1971.

Display Creations Inc., Henry Leopold

Henry Leopold might best be called the Historian of Broadway. He was in business on the street for dozens of years, watching its pace and culture evolve. He seemed to know every nook and cranny in the area, as well as virtually all of the merchants.

In 1922, Henry’s father-in-law, Harry W. Himelhoch, and his three brothers established the business known far and wide as Display Creations, Inc., a business that sold display items such as racks and shelving to retail stores throughout the Detroit area.

Leopold relocated the business to the bustling Broadway Street in 1951 and soon after opened another business in a nearby building where a shredding machine ground plastic sheeting into artificial snow for retailers nationwide. Leopold ran Display Creations, Inc., until the business closed permanently in 1991.

Leopold was active in the Broadway-Randolph Merchants Association, which sought to win support for major downtown redevelopment projects. Many plans were put forward to revive the area, including a shopping mall, but none achieved success.

Throughout his life, Leopold has been devoted to the Jewish community. He was active with the American Zionist Association youth group. As a young businessman, he joined the Probus Club, an organization composed of business and professional men whose purpose was to provide scholarship aid to deserving college students. This, in turn, led him to the Hebrew Free Loan Association, the oldest social service agency in the Detroit Jewish community, of which he became president in 1980. In addition, Leopold was one of three national leaders who organized the International Association of Hebrew Free Loans, which today offers mutual consultation and advice to its many members.

The House of Watchbands, Sidney Max and family

Among the crop of original Broadway businesses that still exist and are family owned, is The House of Watchbands, now located in Southfield, Madison Heights and West Bloomfield. The third-generation business — now under the direction of mother Dolores, sons Michael and Daniel, daughter Alissa Goldberg and her husband Howard — continues to sell an ever-changing collection of watches and bands and repairs timepieces of all types.

Grandfather Sydney L. Max emigrated from Poland and opened his first store in Detroit, called Max and Feinberg. The business sold jewelry in the Metropolitan Building on Grand River and Broadway. In 1927, Max relocated to Broadway, eventually renaming his business The House of Watchbands, which functioned primarily as a watch repair store. The large storefront windows that faced both Broadway and John R were best used to attract shoppers, decided Max. So, rather than drape blinds across his windows, he began displaying show cards of watchbands.

Courtesy of the Max family



HOUSE OF WATCHBANDS

What began as a family business remains a family business. Working together in the early 1940s are Sydney Max and his son, Sheldon. The business today is operated by Sheldon's children.

Meanwhile, Clara, Max's wife, volunteered to run the watchband business so that he could continue his craft as a jeweler. By 1942, their son, Sheldon, joined his mother in running the business. Eventually, the family opened two additional locations in downtown Detroit.

The business prospered under Sheldon, with many dignitaries and notables shopping there. Governor George Romney became close to him and was known to give him Tigers ballgame tickets.

The House of Watchbands remained on Broadway until 1976 when the building was torn down to make way for a parking structure. Today, a People Mover stop marks the spot where the store once stood.

The Pants Store, Harry Goodman

A unique shop on Broadway was The Pants Store, next to Conn's Clothes. Harry Goodman and partner, Jack Evintz, were the owners. Goodman came to Detroit from Cleveland in 1927 to manage the store and purchased it in 1932. In 1950, Broadway was widened and the store moved one building down. Its entire stock of trousers was moved in one day by Goodman's 15-year old son, Paul, and eight of his pals. Mr. Goodman took the boys to lunch at Greenfield's cafeteria.

Goodman used to say, "If times get tough, a man can go without a shirt, without shoes, but never without pants." The Pants Store was the first Jewish-owned shop on Broadway to employ an African-American salesperson in 1952. All through its years in business, a large sign, "We Match Your Coat and Vest," remained over the door until the shop was sold in 1968.

Alexander Licht Wholesale Ladies' and Children's Clothing

Alexander Licht Wholesale Ladies and Children's Clothing moved to 1326 Broadway from Jefferson Avenue in 1934. The Broadway shop had been a lighting fixture store with hundreds of outlets in the ceiling. A huge inventory of clothing filled the second and third floors of the building. Like other Broadway establishments, Licht's building was steam heated by underground pipes from Detroit Edison.

After Licht closed his clothing store, it became Lafayette Electronics, owned by Joe Blumenthal. In 1964, the building was sold to another retailer, High Fashion. Today, this building stands just a block away from the new Detroit Opera House but is vacant and boarded.



Courtesy of Jerry Licht

A Broadway fixture for many years, the neatly adorned store sold women's and children's clothing.



Janis Waxenberg is a retired Oak Park and Detroit Public Schools history teacher and school counselor. A lifetime Detroit resident, Waxenberg taught Jewish history at many area synagogues and schools and has always held an interest in the history and culture of the local Jewish community.

Alan D. Kandel retired in 1984 from the executive staff of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit. He is a founding member of the Institute for Retired Professionals of the Jewish Community Center. Kandel has been an active contributor to Michigan Jewish History and serves on the advisory board of the Jewish Historical Society. In 2000, Kandel received the Leonard N. Simons History Award from the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan and in 2003, he was selected by Jewish Apartments and Services for its "8 Over 80" event honoring senior adults for their contributions to the betterment of our community.



Reading the Buildings of Our Past

Edited by Wendy Rose Bice

Lee Shai Weissbach, professor of history and associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Louisville, travels the country researching the history of Jewish communities in the United States. He has also conducted studies of Jewish life in France. In 1998, the Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies at Wayne State University funded Dr. Weissbach's study of Detroit's synagogues and the patterns of Jewish life. The following is a summary of his monographic brochure, published by the Cohn-Haddow Center in 2000, "Building Identities: Detroit Synagogues and the Patterns of American Jewish Life."

It is easy to stare, sometimes for what seems like hours, at a photograph of Old Woodward or Hastings Street from the early 1900s...a stew of chaos with horses, carriages, pedestrians and street vendors moving in and around each other. We lose ourselves in the image, trying to imagine, to recreate in our minds a day in that lifetime. Historians delve further. They go to the documents, statistics, artifacts and oral histories, looking for clues and piecing together the puzzle that allows us to gain a better understanding of the life and people, of a particular time and place.

Lee Shai Weissbach looks at buildings. Weissbach finds the nuances of historic buildings, especially synagogues, revealing, like the letters that are penned by participants in historical events. The synagogues document our architectural and geographical past and offer an understanding of patterns of Jewish life in an urban environment. Weissbach writes, "Nothing marks the presence of a Jewish community more clearly than the appearance of houses of worship."



Photo by Tom Fougere, 1998.

Lee Shai Weissbach at the
Adath Jeshurun synagogue in
Louisville, Kentucky.

A Trail of Historical Clues

Studying local synagogues reveals the obvious: the migration of the Jewish community from Detroit's epicenter to the northern suburbs and the locations of the residential communities; exterior facades showcasing the wealth of the community while interiors highlight the congregation's values, traditions and the diverse nature of Jewish worship.

Yet, these buildings also unveil a complex mix of information available from no other source. Subtle clues embedded in cornerstones, windows and inscriptions pro-

vide the opportunity to explore how a particular congregation identified itself along the spectrum of denominational diversity. Then there are the innocuous items, like the single-sheet toilet paper dispensers that can be found at the original northwest Detroit location of Adat Shalom on Curtis Street. These, according to Weissbach, indicate that the Conservative congregation was concerned that members should not tear paper on the Sabbath.

Patterns also emerge by examining the location of the *bimah* and the reader's table in various synagogues. In Orthodox synagogues, for instance, the *ba'al tefila* (the person leading the service) stands upon the *bimah* at a lectern facing the ark containing the Torah scrolls. The platform is situated in the middle of the worship space in order

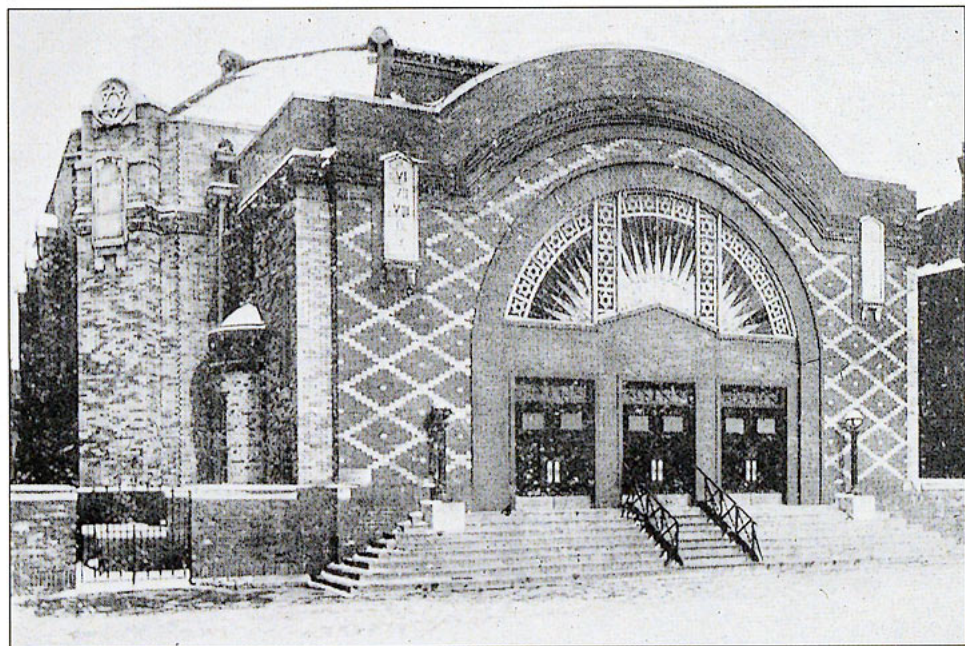


Photo from *The Jewish Community Blue Book of Detroit 1920* (Detroit, 1920).

The Beth Jacob synagogue on Montcalm Street, around 1920, in what was once a Detroit Jewish neighborhood.

to reinforce a sense of inclusiveness, intended, in part, to convey the idea that those conducting the service are *shlichei tzibur*, representatives of the congregation rather than functionaries in positions of special authority.

In some Orthodox congregations, however, the *bimah's* position varies. At the Elmhurst Street synagogue built in 1928 by Congregation B'nai David, the *bimah* was located at the front of the sanctuary. Perhaps, explains Weissbach, this was to maximize the limited space within the sanctuary. Conversely, most Reform congregations position the *bimah* at the front of the sanctuary with the reader's table facing the congregation.¹

Weissbach finds the most interesting *bimah* arrangements within those congregations where the physical plan suggests "an uncertainty about the positioning of the person leading the service or reading the Torah." The ambivalence reveals how many American Jewish congregations struggled with their identity within the standards of

Photo by Lee Shai Weissbach, 1998



The interior of the Mishkan Israel Nusach H'Ari synagogue on Nine Mile Road in Oak Park, showing the central *bimah* typical of Orthodox houses of worship.

Reform and Orthodox practices. The struggle is most evident within Conservative congregations. In some, such as Beth Shalom in Oak Park, the *bimah* is designed to be mobile to allow for a variety of configurations.²

The nuances allow historians to reconstruct a picture of the community's religious practices. "If," writes Weissbach, "we were to discover a town or a neighborhood that had no synagogues

with lecterns facing the ark, or one that had no synagogues with lecterns facing the congregation, we would know a great deal about religious practice within the local community."

The Role of Synagogues in the Community

It is also interesting to consider the role synagogues have played within the community. In the 19th Century, Weissbach writes, synagogues were essentially houses of prayer. Small, sometimes cramped buildings devoted little, if any, space to non-liturgical activities. By the early 20th Century, however, some Reform congregations had begun to conceive of an "open temple" that would welcome members and non-members throughout the week for spiritual and social purposes, while some Conservative congregations had added social halls and other facilities to their buildings.³

By the last half of the 20th Century, nearly all synagogues were designed as multipurpose complexes, integrating the functions of community center, educational center, meeting place and banquet hall into their role as central places of worship.

More than anyplace else in the world, the synagogues and temples in America highlight the interconnectedness American Jews have with their country and religion. The inscriptions found on building cornerstones and above their doorways are a varied collection of English, Hebrew and Yiddish. The style of the architecture itself reveals not only design trends of the ages, but also a pattern of connection between Jewish communities throughout the country. Moorish elements are obvious in the buildings constructed in the middle and late 1800s. Later, at the turn of the 20th Century, classical designs dominated, especially among the wealthier Reform congregations. And as Jewish communities fled the cities in favor of the suburbs beginning in the late 1950s, the boom in synagogue construction led to the design of a more functional building in which the ark wall of the sanctuary faced the street and the offices, classrooms and social halls played a much more dominant role. Representative of this trend in the Detroit area is Temple Emanu-El, built in 1957 in Oak Park.

Examining the role of synagogues in the harmony of American Jewish life is much like glancing at that old photo. Each piece of information adds to the understanding

of the whole, confirming what we suspected, adding intrigue to what we ponder. The buildings are further documentation. They provide, Weissbach concludes, "confirmation of what we have learned elsewhere while furnishing superb illustrative material to help us interpret the story of Jews and the urban experience."

Recently the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan had the opportunity to pose a few questions to Dr. Weissbach:

How did this project come about?

David Weinberg, director of the Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies at Wayne State University and the organizer of the Center's 1999 conference on "Jews and the Urban Experience," was familiar with the work I had done earlier on the way synagogue buildings can be utilized as sources for studying the American Jewish experience.

My initial project in this regard was a 1995 book I published using the synagogues of Kentucky as a case study. As a social historian with a long-standing interest in architecture and other elements of material culture, it was natural for me to become involved in the way that buildings could be read as "documents" to help us understand a great many aspects of a culture's lifestyle, philosophy and values.

What other cities have you explored in this detail?

The first city I explored in depth was Louisville. However, I also investigated the synagogue history of several smaller cities in Kentucky in connection with my book project as well: Lexington, Paducah, Covington and Ashland, for example.

Indeed, my interest in small-town Jewish life is at least as great as my interest in the Jewish experience in large and mid-size cities, and the book project I have just completed deals with what I call the "classic era of small-town Jewish life" in late 19th and early 20th Century America. Among the Michigan towns covered in my latest book project are Benton Harbor, Muskegon, Hancock, Kalamazoo and Jackson.

How long did you wander the streets of Detroit?

Because of academic and personal connections in Detroit, I have gotten to know the area over several years, but my intensive study of the city's synagogue buildings, especially its older ones that no longer serve as Jewish places of worship, took place during several intensive forays into various Detroit neighborhoods around the time of Thanksgiving in 1998.

I must tell you that some of my Detroit-area friends were concerned about my venturing into certain parts of the city now considered somewhat dangerous but, to the contrary, I had some very rewarding encounters with African-American clergymen whose congregations are now using some of Detroit's former synagogues.

What did you find in Detroit that intrigued you?

Perhaps the thing that most intrigued and gratified me as I explored the synagogue history of Detroit is that so many of the area's early and mid-20th Century temples and shuls are still standing, even if they are no longer in use as Jewish places of worship. It was wonderful not only to read about structures such as the 1916 Ahavath Achim on Delmar or the 1921 Ahavath Zion on Holbrook or the 1925 Mishkan Israel on Blaine, but to visit these buildings as well.

Photo by Lee Shai Weissbach, 1998



Detail of the former B'nai David synagogue on Elmhurst Avenue in Detroit, showing one of the winged creatures on its façade.

I also found some of the individual synagogues of Detroit to be quite fascinating. I was intrigued by the winged creatures adorning the 1928 B'nai David building on Elmhurst, for instance, and by the Egyptian-inspired ornamentation of the 1951 Temple Israel on Manderson. Of course, it was also a joy to get to know such world-famous structures as Albert Kahn's Beth El on Woodward and Percival Goodman's Shaarey

Zedek in Southfield.

How similar or dissimilar are the architectural clues of Detroit to other communities?

In general, I would say that the synagogue architecture of Detroit does not depart in any dramatic way from the synagogue architecture of other cities in the United States, nor do we find architectural clues in Detroit that are absent elsewhere.

But in a way, that is the point. My essay on Detroit synagogues argues, among other things, that the way we "read" synagogue architecture in one locale can provide a model for the way we can study the topic in other places, and the similarities one finds across the country is itself one of the clues that suggests the interconnectedness that has always existed between America's various Jewish communities.

Of course, the fact that Detroit's Jewish community is so large and diverse, going back to the 19th Century, makes the city an ideal laboratory for studying synagogue architecture and the way it reflects the American Jewish experience.

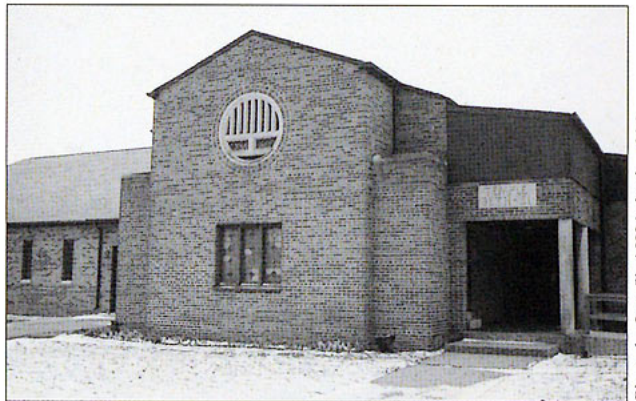


Photo by Lee Shai Weissbach, 1996

The former Temple Beth-El on Britain Avenue in Benton Harbor, erected in 1949, one of many buildings attesting to the Jewish experience in Michigan's smaller cities and towns.

What clues are modern day synagogues leaving for future historians?

In many respects, future historians will be able to learn about America's Jewish communities by studying their synagogue buildings in exactly the same way that current historians can study the buildings of the past. Buildings built today tell a lot about the location of Jewish enclaves, for example, and about the wealth of congregations and their priorities. These are all topics that can be explored in terms of synagogues built in the past as well.

Still, I imagine that there are a number of specific features of contemporary synagogue design that will provide very useful clues for future historians trying to understand American Jewish congregations at the turn of the 21st Century.

For example, when future historians discover that just about every substantial synagogue built in the late 20th or early 21st Century includes day-care facilities with toddler-size play equipment, they will learn something about the importance of child care for Jewish families today and about the tendency to rely on religious institutions for that kind of care.

Similarly, when future historians discover that most contemporary synagogues are being built with a *bimah* that is very low and with other features that bring the clergy physically closer to their congregants, they will have clues about the relationship that most congregations want to develop with their rabbis and cantors.

So too, when future historians find that every synagogue built or renovated today provides elevators, wheelchair ramps and wide doorways, they will have evidence of the recent concern with accommodating those with disabilities.

The list of clues that future historians will be able to interpret could go on and on, and they may well think to look for answers to questions that we are not even asking ourselves today.



Photo by Lee Shai Weissbach, 1998

The cornerstone of Temple Israel on Walnut Lake Road in West Bloomfield, provides information about the history of the congregation and echoes the style of inscriptions on its previous building.

The Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies was established in 1988 as a cooperative venture between Wayne State University and the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit/United Jewish Foundation to link the Jewish community to the university. Activities of the Cohn-Haddow Center include scholarly lectures, concerts, films and international conferences.

1 "Building Identities: Detroit Synagogues and the Patterns of American Jewish Life."

2 *ibid*

3 *ibid*

A 20th Century Man, Detroit Sculptor Samuel Cashwan (1899-1988)

By Norma Wynick Goldman

The January 1926 *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* announced with pride the acquisition of a major marble sculpture titled "Interlude" by the young Detroit sculptor Samuel Cashwan.

The *Bulletin's* enthusiastic review of the piece speaks of the "simplification of form, the uninterrupted flow of one line into another" that transforms the young woman musician into one "lost in an ecstasy of meditation." The donated piece was a gift from Albert Kahn, David Brown, D. M. Ferry, Jr. and William Gray. The sculptor was only 25 years old, recently returned from three years of study in Paris at the École des Beaux Arts.

Samuel Cashwan was born in Cherkassi, a small town near Kiev in the Russian Ukraine, on December 26, 1899, four days before the turn of the century. He preferred, however, to be known as a 20th Century man. His family moved to New York City when he was 5 years old, and his early schooling was in New York public schools. The family moved to Detroit when Sam was in high school; by this time he was the second oldest of six children. After graduation from high school, he enlisted in the army in 1918, but only got as far as boot camp in Texas when the armistice was declared. He was discharged with his citizenship papers and went on to complete his education in the Detroit area at the John Wicker School and Detroit City College.

While he was still living with his family, his sister Alice brought home a friend from Teacher's College named Vera Sokolov. Sam and Vera fell in love and married. Sam's father was a cabinet maker and house builder, and Cashwan had to decide between going into business with his father or following a career in art. His wife and her father, an engineer, encouraged him to follow his heart, and thus Cashwan went to New York where he studied art at the Architectural League. He completed his formal art training at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris, studying under the highly regarded artist Antoine Bourdelle.



Interlude by Samuel Cashwan 1926

Courtesy of Detroit Institute of Arts

Settling in Detroit

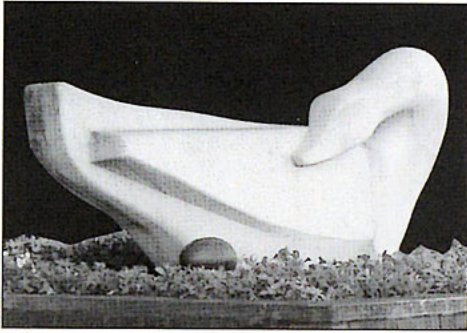
On his return to Detroit, he and Vera set up housekeeping in the unheated carriage house of an old mansion on East Jefferson Avenue, which served as home and studio. They once had to burn the wooden steps to the loft as firewood. This is probably the studio which he invited Louis Redstone to share with him in the summer when Redstone came home from the University of Michigan School of Architecture. Redstone became a renowned architect and the two maintained a lifelong friendship.

When the mansion and carriage house were demolished, the family rented an apartment in the Dexter-Linwood area, with Cashwan keeping a studio near Woodward in a storefront at 47 Watson. Later, he rented studio space above a shoemaker's shop on Woodward, just north of Peterborough, an ideal spot for his daughter, Helen, to watch the many parades down Woodward from the large studio windows. Helen tells how she and her mother spent many Saturdays and Sundays at the studio, taking a casserole for lunch, watching her father work and then going to the movies.

During those years Cashwan was teaching sculpture at the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts, the art school housed nearby on Woodward at Eaton, where he was the head of the Sculpture Department from 1926 to 1942. He also taught sculpture part time at the University of Michigan. From 1936 to 1942, Cashwan had the honor of serving as Michigan supervisor of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Arts Project, the exciting new program of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal for America. It was an ideal time of life for a sculptor, said Cashwan in an article, "The Sculptor's Point of View," in *Art for the Millions* (1973). He describes how the WPA gave the artist "a free hand in the creation of sculpture without the sterilizing control of committees or of limitations as to personal style."



Samuel Cashwan in his studio with maquettes for larger pieces of sculpture, 1941



**The Goose That Laid the Golden Egg by
Samual Cashwan, 1965**

Serious, Playful, Abstract

Personal commissions were coming in for Cashwan, thanks to the architectural ethic of Louis Redstone, who believed that art works should be incorporated into architecture and who always reserved space for sculptural decoration in all of his buildings. In a personal interview, Redstone described the decoration on the exterior of his Manufacturer's Bank in Detroit as an excellent example of this kind of integration of art and architecture. There, the 27-foot-high facade seems alive with light bulbs, but

the facade is lit only by the reflected sun on facets of the stainless steel screen.

In the Detroit metropolitan area, Cashwan's early work appears in the facade reliefs of St. Aloysius Church (1936). His subjects thereafter ranged from serious portraiture (Abraham Lincoln) to abstract ideas of philosophy. In a playful mood, he created "The Goose that Laid the Golden Egg" (1965) in the Westland Shopping Center and the "Whale" (1968) at Northland Shopping Center in Southfield. Cashwan designed these two shopping center pieces as interactive works which children could enjoy by crawling over and sitting upon. Eventually insurance problems ended that interaction.

In a serious mood, his "Philosophers" (1970) enhances the lobby of Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Southfield. Untitled pieces decorate banks and offices throughout the Detroit area, many of the buildings designed by Cashwan's friend, Louis Redstone.

Beyond the Detroit area, Cashwan produced "Aquarius," the water carrier, for the Water Conditioning Plant in Lansing (1939), which appropriately pours from an urn pure water for the Lansing area. Nearby at Michigan State University, Cashwan's sculptures decorate the Music Building with "Three Musicians" (1940), the Abbott Street Entrance Marker (1939), the Olin Memorial Hospital reliefs (1939) and "Prometheus" (1948) for the Union Building. An early, realistic sculpture is a double life-size standing portrait of Abraham Lincoln for the Lincoln Consolidated Training School in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Cashwan's metal sculpture for the General Motors Corporation in Lansing, "Open Cage" (1966), represents only part of his involvement with GM and the automobile industry. In 1942, Cashwan left his teaching at the Society of Arts and Crafts to begin working for GM helping redesign the nose sections of war planes and submarines to make them more effective. He was respected at GM as an artist working in the design and product development department, creating classes in sculpture for the clay models of the new cars. He then became the designer for the GM new car annual exhibits at the Waldorf Astoria in New York.

Until he left GM in 1965, Cashwan spent the years blending his artistic work into the industrial world and incorporating techniques learned from industry into his art works. He continued experimenting with metal, wood, stone and glass for the rest of his artistic career.

A Modest Man

By mid-life, he had moved from Detroit to Farmington, near Inkster and Eight Mile roads, residing in a house featuring a sky-lit studio. In this new studio, he completed the maquette for a large piece of stone sculpture over the doorway for a building at Michigan State University, only to learn that the stonemason he had contacted to create the work had died. Thus, on scaffolding with an air-hammer, he executed the huge work himself. This first commission at MSU helped him pay the mortgage for the house and studio. After he retired from GM, he completed projects in his house and created sculpture in his studio. Sometime after 1971, Cashwan moved to Raleigh, North Carolina, to be near his daughter, Helen Cashwan Kelly, and her family. There, he began a new life with a new studio and designed the doors which he titled "The Gates" for Temple Beth Or in Raleigh.

Cashwan was a modest, private man. He loved classical music and always worked with music playing in the studio. He did not seek out exhibitions or reviews of his work during his lifetime. He exhibited at many Michigan Artists Exhibitions, once winning the Scarab Club Gold Medal. He was included in an exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, where he was featured as one of a group of 18 sculptors in the United States. In 1987, there was a retrospective show at the Sarkis Gallery of the Center for Creative Studies (his former school, the Society of Arts and Crafts, renamed and in a new location), arranged by one of his former students and Louis Redstone. Cashwan died the following year.

After his death, Merita Gilliam, owner of a gallery in Raleigh, catalogued the work that Cashwan had left behind and arranged for exhibitions of his work at various places. In addition to his marble "Interlude," the Detroit Institute of Arts owns three other pieces of Cashwan's work: "Rising Figure" and "A Woman," both in stone (1942) and "Shelter" in green terrazzo. All these pieces will be seen in the Twentieth Century Art collection when the DIA reopens its galleries after renovation. Samuel Cashwan indeed became a 20th Century man.

In his article on the sculptor's point of view, Cashwan described the exciting new atmosphere during the WPA for artists and craftsmen, telling how skilled modelers, stone carvers, and ceramists — those who for years had been doing only routine jobs — finally had an opportunity to work at their beloved crafts. He summed up his philosophy about being a sculptor in what the WPA allowed the artist to do: "The greatest good a sculptor can perform is to create, not for a museum or a private collection, but for the common meeting-places of men, to enhance and ennoble everyday life."



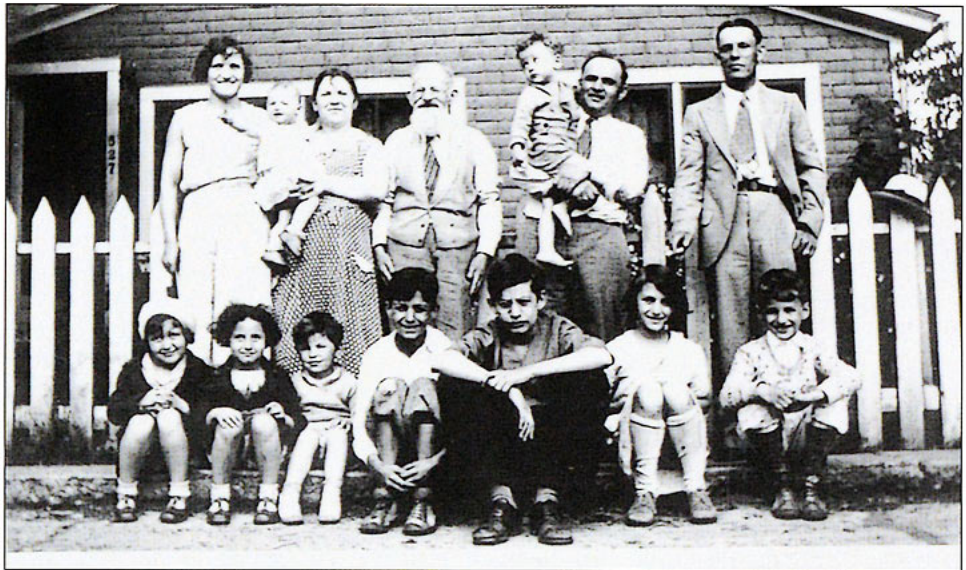
Norma Wynick Goldman, Interdisciplinary Studies Department of Wayne State University, is retired from the WSU Classics Department after a 40-year long career. Presently she is working with the new WSU Society of Active Retirees (SOAR) and is also staff advisor at the Jewish Community Center for the Writers' Corner and editor of the annual Writers' Journal.

Remembering Jackson: Author Faye Moskowitz Speaks of Her Small Town Jewish Childhood

By Steven Weiland

Faye Moskowitz is an eminent Jewish-American writer of personal essays and short stories. To say she is a Jewish writer refers not only to her background but also to her persistent interest in the experience of American Jews. Her stories explore the struggle of immigrant generations acclimating to America and its culture and how their children, feeling at home in the United States, understand their Jewish identity.

“Who will testify, who will accurately describe our lives if we do not do it ourselves?” she asks. “We cannot be unaffected by what has gone before; we recapitulate history, our own and the world’s, each time we draw breath.”



JAY STREET, CIRCA 1932

Happily nestled in her mother’s arms, baby Faye Stollman is surrounded by aunts, uncles and cousins on Jay Street in Jackson. Pictured are: back row (l to r): Edith LaZebnik, Sophie Stollman (holding Faye Stollman), David Shlomo Eisenberg, Sam LaZebnik (holding Bob LaZebnik), Aaron Stollman. Front row (l to r): Shirley, Bernice and Don Davidson; Herb, Bill, Jeanette and Jack LaZebnik.

Moskowitz spent her earliest years in Detroit among Orthodox Jews, where Yiddish was the primary language. In 1933 or 1934, at age five, Moskowitz's parents, Aaron and Sophie (Isenberg) Stollman, moved the family to Jackson, Michigan, where Faye first experienced being in the minority and facing the conditions of Jewish assimilation.

Years later, after her own children were grown, Moskowitz decided to follow her passion and study literature as an undergraduate and then graduate student at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., where her husband Jack (also from Detroit) practiced law. Her first teaching job was with 7th and 8th graders in Washington.

In her 50s, Moskowitz launched her writing career. Using the experiences of the social activism she and her husband prided themselves on, Moskowitz became an activist of memory, insisting on it as indispensable to our character and our Jewish identity.

Her books about Jewish life in Michigan and the universal questions of family life and memory are: *A Leak in the Heart: Personal Essays and Life Stories* (1985), *Whoever Finds This I Love You* (1988), *And the Bridge Is Love: Life Stories* (1991), and *Peace in the House: Tales from a Yiddish Kitchen* (2002).

Moskowitz's Jackson childhood plays a prominent role in her work. Her memories helped direct her early writing and prompted her to search out the continuities in her life. As she says: "There is beauty enough and ugliness enough and love enough and hate enough for any of us to select from and shape our own absolutely personal combinations. But this shaping must be a conscious thing, a reaching back and forward for those details that create pattern and form and motif in a life. To see living as a connection is to bevel the rough edges, miter the corners, blur the divisions so that time becomes a chain of always accessible segments, not fragments, of knowledge and experience."

Faye Moskowitz is now chair of the English Department at George Washington University, where she also teaches courses in creative writing. She is a popular speaker around the country on writing and Jewish life. The following interview took place in June 2002 at Moskowitz's home in Washington, D.C.

What role did your years in Jackson play in your sense of yourself as a Jew?

They were so formative in my life. Being outside the Jewish ghetto of Detroit and being suddenly plunged into a gentile world made me understand I was a Jew. I didn't know that before. Jackson was where I began being recognized as smart and somehow that was also tied up with my Jewishness. At least in my own mind. I knew I was a Jewish child in a gentile city. I was not allowed to join the Girl Scouts because they met in the church. Things would come up, though, to remind me I was Jewish. My mother took me to Jacobson's department store when the Rosenbergs came to manage it and Mrs. Rosenberg showed me a portrait of Mrs. Jacobson. And she gave me a little strand of pearls.

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

Did your family have much contact with the Jackson Jewish community?

My parents weren't socializers — it was enough for them to visit my aunt and my uncle. There was only a handful of Jewish families, enough to sustain a temple and a Sunday school for the kids. My parents ended up sending me to the small, reform



Courtesy of Faye Moskowitz

CITY IRON AND METAL, JULY, 1942

Aaron Stollman, Moskowitz's father, moved to Jackson around 1933 and began City Iron and Metal. He is pictured in the scrap yard. "The only other scrap dealers were my uncle Sam's business and Glicks, our competition," remembered Moskowitz.

galut (exile), in Jackson. She ended up writing a book about her life. For years, she said to people, "I'm gonna write a book, I'm gonna write a book about my life." Every year she said "I'm writing in my book." And then one day, there was this manuscript. She'd written it in Yiddish. Her daughter translated it into English and her son, a doctor in New York, had a friend who showed it to Random House. They published it! It's called *Such a Life*. It's a highly romanticized version of her life in Europe. The author, Edith LaZebnik, is my Aunt Itkeh from Jackson.

What differences do you remember between the two places?

Life in Detroit was one thing, life in Jackson another. A lot of that came through the voices, mainly of the women. I never heard my father complain about Jackson.

Temple Beth El because they wanted some Jewish community for me. I went to Sunday school where we did plays and colored pictures of Moses and things like that.

We weren't really part of the temple community. Joining a temple would have been impossible for an Orthodox family like mine, especially because my father's parents were still alive. So, we really didn't get to know very many Jewish families (in Jackson).

My parents hid our participation in the Reform temple from the Orthodox relatives in Detroit. We went to Detroit every week for our Jewish fix. I also went to Detroit in the summer to learn to read Hebrew.

You said you had an aunt and uncle who lived in Jackson?

Yes, and as my Aunt Itka would tell you, she was "buried" there in

Jackson was where he made a living. It came from the women and their discontent with being in exile and the dream was always to move back to Detroit. So while for my mother Jackson was exile, I was really torn between loving it, loving growing up there, and this often expressed wish of hers to get out of there.

What about school?

Jackson pioneered a kind of special education that was extremely important to me. When I was in 5th grade, I was sent to the Pearl Street School. It was called an "opportunity school" and it was for what we would now call gifted children. But it also was a school that had asthmatic children who had classes with the windows wide open all winter and were arranged in sort of sleeping bag arrangements. There were deaf and mute children who learned sign language...children who were visually impaired. It was an entire school devoted to special education and quite enlightened in its own way.

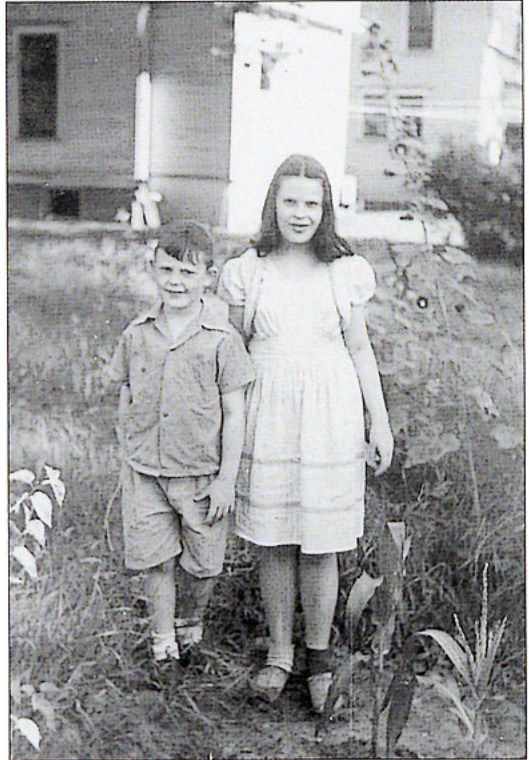
How did you keep up with things?

We got a great deal of our news from the *Forward*. I think now, how did the *Forward* come to Jackson, Michigan? But it did. It came in the mail and my father would discuss the news with me. And of course, the radio had a great deal to do with shaping my sense of self, because on the radio came Gerald L.K. Smith and Father Coughlin (through the mid and late 1930s). Those were things that were palpable and they scared us to death. Father Coughlin was much more frightening and immediate to me than the notion of someplace far off in Europe. We knew where Royal Oak was. We had seen the Shrine of the Little Flower. And that was about the scariest, the single scariest thing I can think of.

Did you encounter any anti-Semitism in Jackson?

We had to rely on neighbors like everybody else does, and there were a number of people that my father referred to as decent. Our neighbor for a time, a Danish optometrist, started me as a stamp collector by giving me his duplicates.

I think my parents felt that there were anti-Semites in Jackson especially given their own backgrounds, Europe and the pogroms and the fact that the gentiles were not very good to Jews in the old country. I think they carried that with them.



Courtesy of Faye Moskowitz

Victory Garden, July 1942
 Standing in their Victory Garden,
 young Hymie and Faye Stollman stand
 shoulder to shoulder at their home on
 Fourth Street in Jackson.

They had a suspicion that even though they were treated decently, our neighbors probably didn't care for us. And I had every Jewish kid's epiphany when my best girlfriend said "You killed Christ, you killed our Lord." It was a bolt from out of nowhere. I haven't forgotten that. I can still feel the shock of that moment, its sense of betrayal and bewilderment. That would not have happened to me in Detroit. Even though it was a big city, as children we didn't go out of our neighborhood except to go downtown to Hudson's. Everything we needed was in the Jewish ghetto.

How did World War II influence your life in Jackson?

As a kid I corresponded with soldiers. It was my part of the war effort. I lied about my age to *The Jackson Citizen Patriot*. Soldiers who wanted to have pen pals sent their names into the paper, or their parents put their names in the paper. So you could write to a "Dear Friend in the Service," which is what I did. We collected tin foil balls, and the cannon in the park was dismantled and melted down for bullets. We had ration cards and my mother had to beg Mr. Markowski, the grocer, for cigarettes for my father. We hoarded canned goods, and I felt hideously guilty about that.



Courtesy of Faye Moskowitz

THE CANNON, 1939

Moskowitz and her cousins spend a playful afternoon in the neighborhood park, located at Jackson and Mason streets in Jackson, Michigan. A few years later, the cannon would be removed and used for scrap during World War II.

How did your Detroit relatives react to your life in Jackson?

Everybody came to Jackson. It was summer camp. All summer long, the Detroit cousins came to Jackson, to kvetch about the terrible water and how it smelled because it was from artesian wells, and so it didn't smell like Roman Cleanser, it smelled like rotten eggs. And as much as they griped about it, everybody loved to come, the kids all loved to come ... to summer camp in my aunt's house or my mother's house.

What happened when you left?

I moved back to Detroit in time for me to enter 8th grade in 1942. I don't think there can be a worse time for a girl except maybe in 12th grade. I moved back into an established community that didn't have any room for me. I needed to find a community of my own. Given the person I was already becoming, because of the Jackson years, I didn't really belong in the Jewish ghetto. The Zionist movement was perfect for me. I was beginning to think about the world, a homeland for the Jews—a place where a person could be a Jew and not think about being a Jew. The movement was a natural for a person like me. My family wasn't happy about it. I stayed with the movement until I married. That was a very hard break.

My friends weren't going off to college, they were going to Israel and I wasn't. Many of them were very angry, thinking I was a "deserter." I carried a lot of guilt about the Zionist movement and my "betrayal" of it, and I poured that into politics and organizing, which I did for many years.

When did Jackson first appear in your work?

I started with poems because they were shorter. I learned from writing poetry how to be economical, how to make my writing as intense as I possibly could. And then I moved to autobiographical essays, one of them contrasting Hanukkah and Christmas in Jackson — what it was like to celebrate Hanukkah in a town where hardly anybody did that. That piece was published in the *Washington Post* and picked up in their syndicate. It went all over the United States. I ended up doing eight "Hers" columns in the *New York Times*, some based on my experiences in Jackson. The response was amazing. So many Jews wrote me and every letter was another story. Every letter said, 'I see what you said and I remember.' And so each story led to another which made me realize that my readers were looking at my story and thinking of their own.



Faye Moskowitz writes personal essays and short stories about being a woman and being Jewish in America. Her childhood years in Jackson and Detroit are the basis of much of her writing.

Do your Jackson years ever come up now when you travel and speak as a Jewish writer?

I was giving a reading shortly after I published *A Leak in the Heart* and I kept saying Jackson, Jackson, Jackson. And a woman in the audience said, "You know, your upbringing in Jackson? That was exactly like mine." And I said "Do you mind if I ask how old you are?" I realized we must have been in Jackson at the same time. We started doing a little Jewish geography, and finally, it was clear that she was from Jackson, Mississippi. Yet growing up Jewish in a small town was so much the same to her, was so familiar to her that she mistook my Jackson for hers.

What reminds you of Jackson these days?

My husband Jack belongs to a Yiddish reading group here in Washington. He recently told me that going to these classes gives him so much joy. For him, every Yiddish word he retrieves brings up a host of memories. That's what it does for me, too. He will say, "Do you know what such and such a word is?" And I will think, "Yes, I haven't heard that word for 65 years and I know what that word means. And then the kitchen comes back, and then the whole context comes back."



Steven Weiland is Professor of Higher Education at Michigan State University. He was director of MSU's Jewish Studies Program from 1995 to 2002 and is a new contributor to Michigan Jewish History.

A Physician at Sunrise: Dr. Peter Shifrin

By Charlotte Dubin

As the story of Sunrise Cooperative Farm Community fades into history (see “Jewish Farming in Michigan,” *Michigan Jewish History*, Fall 2002), the memories continue to be vivid for one of its last surviving residents, Pauline Blum Robb of West Bloomfield.

Some of Robb’s fondest recollections revolve around the late Dr. Peter Shifrin, then a young doctor, who helped keep the Sunrise community healthy in body and spirit.

Pauline Blum was a teenager in 1934 when she arrived with her parents at the Saginaw Valley communal farm established the previous year by a group of Jews seeking to create a new life in the midst of the Depression. Back in New York, her parents had read about the agricultural project in the Yiddish daily newspaper, *The Forward*.

For most of the members — unemployed city folks — farming was a foreign experience requiring much more than a little adjustment and a lot of hard work. But for the three dozen young people like Pauline, Sunrise felt like a year-round summer camp with some schooling and chores thrown in. It was there that she met Sam Forman, a summer worker from Canada whom she would later marry.

Always Eager to Lend a Hand

Robb has vivid recollections of Dr. Shifrin, who not only treated the residents for various ailments but also shared the spirit of the farm. She remembers how the doctor would often help pitch hay or mount a tractor during the peppermint harvest.

The 27-year-old physician from Detroit saw Sunrise Farm for the first time right after its birth in 1933. It was the July 4th weekend and the farm was packed with visitors from throughout the Midwest who had read about the poor people launching a noble experiment on the fertile, 10,000-acre former Prairie Farm.

The Russian-born Shifrin immigrated to the U.S. in 1923 with his brother and sister, joining another brother already living in Detroit. He attended Central High School and City College, earning a medical degree from the Detroit College of Medicine (today Wayne State University). At the same time, he worked evenings and weekends repairing watches with his brothers.

In his memoir of Sunrise, founder Joseph J. Cohen wrote: “Dr. Shifrin had lived through the horrors of the Civil War in Russia, had endured all the privations of the period of Military Communism during the first years of the revolution in that country. He was very much interested in our enterprise, and we invited him to join us and take care of the health of our members. At the time he told us that he had other plans for his future, and could not see his way clear to join an enterprise like ours.

“Nevertheless, a few days later, we received a letter from him, offering his services without payment for the summer. We accepted gratefully, and Dr. Shifrin joined our ranks. He immediately set up a health centre and clinic, with a few beds for minor

cases, and made arrangements with a hospital in Saginaw for the treatment of any major cases that might occur.”

Cohen continued: “Dr. Shifrin was a great help to us during all the years we remained in Michigan. He was an exceptionally able physician and a highly intelligent man, sincerely devoted to the interests of the community. In the fall of 1933 he took up postgraduate courses in public health at Michigan State College in East Lansing, 55 miles away, but he still looked after our health and we made arrangements from this time onwards to pay him a small and almost nominal sum for his services. In all, he stayed with us for two-and-a-half years, and pulled us through many difficult health situations.”¹



Ten years before the birth of the Sunrise Farm Cooperative, a young 17-year-old Peter Shifrin poses politely for the camera. Did the young man have visions of a future that helped so many others?

More than Medicine

The difficult situations requiring Peter Shifrin’s attention were occasionally more than medical. His nephew, Dr. Louis Shifrin of West Bloomfield, says Peter was used to physical labor, having worked on his father’s small farm in Vetka, Belarus — an experience which may have prepared the young man for helping with agricultural issues at Sunrise.

An able horseman, Dr. Shifrin guided the members in care of horses and cattle. But he also had a keen understanding of people, demonstrated time and again throughout his stay at Sunrise and later in his practice as a physician. “He was brusque, but very likable and a part of everything at the farm,” Pauline Robb recalls. “We had a wonderful friendship.”

Wrote Joseph Cohen: “...On at least one occasion, his decisive action played an important part in giving our members confidence in their own ability to overcome the difficulties they were likely to encounter in farming.”

Cohen described an incident in which hired teamsters went on a sit-down strike during the grain harvest. The Sunrise members, inexperienced in the use of large agricultural machinery, had been warned to stay away from the machines and teams of horses. “Let’s take the teams out ourselves!” Dr. Shifrin suggested. The men followed him with a will. He donned his overalls, harnessed the horses, and in very little time the heavy wagons were rolling behind the teams on their way to the threshing floor... From then on, most of the work was done by our members, and the number and cost of hired help were both steadily reduced.”²

Dr. Shifrin’s Career After His Farming Years

In 1935 — three years before the farm would be sold — Dr. Shifrin left Sunrise to take up postgraduate work in orthopedic surgery at the University of Michigan. During his training, he paid his first visit to what was then pre-state Israel. In 1937,



Dr. Peter Shifrin pictured here in his later years. The devoted physician and community leader passed away in 2001.

with Arabs attacking Jews in towns and on roads, he joined a group of Canadian Habonim (Labor Zionist youth) who were defending the Jewish Quarter of Safed from Arab marauders.

After graduating from U. of M., he opened a practice in Detroit in 1939 and two years later married Esther Rubin*. With the outbreak of war, Dr. Shifrin enlisted in the U.S. Navy, served from 1941-46 and rose to the rank of commander. He was injured during the Pacific campaign.

Upon his return to Detroit, Dr. Shifrin resumed his practice, which continued until his retirement. During his long career, he treated generations of patients. He was chairman of orthopedic surgery at Grace Hospital and at Sinai Hospital, where he was a founding physician, and served on the staffs of Beaumont Hospital and Henry Ford Hospital's West Bloomfield Clinic.

Dr. Shifrin's interest in the Jewish community and Israel never wavered. He chaired the Health and Welfare Division of the Jewish Welfare Federation (today the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit) and was president of the Fresh Air Society, the Federation's camping agency. With his wife, he returned to Israel many times, both on private visits and on Jewish Federation-sponsored missions.

About his uncle, Louis Shifrin says, "His serious professional demeanor may have concealed from many his underlying social idealism and adventurous character, one example of which was his involvement in the Sunrise Cooperative Farm.

"In his later years, he often expressed his admiration for the members' idealism and commitment to create a communal agricultural society as a solution to sufferings caused by the social and economic upheavals of the Great Depression.

"But he felt this motivation was also the farm's weakness," Louis Shifrin adds. "As the country slowly climbed out of the Depression, the incompatibilities and inexperience of some of its members, combined with the growing economic opportunities in the general society, made it easier to abandon their idealistic dreams to pursue more realistic goals."

Peter Shifrin died at age 95 on October 16, 2001. While he left no written record of his years at Sunrise, he left a host of memories among those whose lives he touched.

**Dr. Shifrin's wife, Esther, to whom he was married 62 years, passed away April 27, 2003.*



Charlotte Dubin is former communications director of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit and was city editor of The Detroit Jewish News from 1964-74. She is a member of the advisory board of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.

1 In Quest of Heaven, by Joseph J. Cohen, 1957, p. 45)

2 Ibid, page 47

The Beginnings of Temple Beth Shalom in Marquette County

By Willard Cohodas
Edited by Aimée Ergas

The year 2002 marked the 50th anniversary of the 1952 dedication of Temple Beth Shalom in Marquette. Below are reminiscences of prominent citizen Willard "Bill" Cohodas, written in 1988. Cohodas, the third generation of this prominent Michigan Upper Peninsula family, is an active leader in the preservation of U.P. history.

My earliest memory of High Holy Day services in Marquette County dates from 1920. That year, we had services in Negaunee in the old Eagle's Club building, on the third floor, next door to Lowenstein's store. A rabbi from the theological school in Chicago always conducted the services. The rabbis who came to our area were very Orthodox. When my family moved to Ishpeming in 1942, the Jewish community held High Holy Day services at the Legion Club rooms. Students from the Conservative Jewish Theological Seminary in New York led those services.



BAR MITZVAH

(left to right) Proud father, Harry Koenig (seated, far left) looks on as his sons Michael (left) and Steven (right) share in the honor of cutting the *challah* at their Bar Mitzvah. Student Rabbi Joseph Olosov (center) officiates.

upon an article in our local paper about Temple [sic] Shaarey Zedek in Detroit, which was offering religious school training by correspondence course. We immediately wrote [Rabbi Morris Adler] and got started with their lesson plans. This continued for several years.

In 1951, the High Holy Day services were led by Kenneth Bromberg, a young rabbi from New York. When he asked the children how they liked the service, our nephew, Howard Cohodas, then about 7 years old, asked why we couldn't have our own building like his friends who attended church. We adults took this as a wake-up call. There had

been Jews in Marquette County for over 75 years, and we had never done anything to build a temple.

Dedicating a building and a community

On May 19, 1952, a group of about 125 people from Marquette, Ishpeming, Negaunee and Munising met to officially organize the Beth Shalom Community Center, Inc. Officers were elected, including Isador Dubinsky, Ted Getz, Betty Narotzky and myself, with Arnold Cohodas as chairman of the board of directors.

Arnold worked with the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company to purchase a piece of land on Prairie Avenue in Marquette. Because this land was part of the Ishpeming park system, no one would be able to build around the proposed building. Arnold drew rough sketches and specifications and worked with Walter Meyer, a Marquette



Temple Beth El's Confirmation Class of 1954

architect, to put them into blueprint form. They projected a building with a low amount of upkeep, as simple and functional as possible for the small area involved. The local firm of Pajula and Maki was engaged to construct the building.

On Sunday, June 29, 1952, a large group attended the groundbreaking ceremony and prayer service. Arnold and his son, Howard, checked the site

almost daily for three months. On Sunday, September 29, a dedication program was held, and a bronze cornerstone was unveiled.

Although the building was not quite completed, we began to use it for religious school classes and monthly services. There were about 15 children in the first religious school, five of them making up the children's choir. Many gifts from our community and from around the world enabled us to furnish the temple. I conducted the adult and children's religious services during the first year.

The official dedication of Temple Beth Shalom was held on Sunday, June 7, 1953, conducted by Rabbi Richard C. Hertz of Temple Beth El in Detroit. Guests on the pulpit included a Catholic priest and three Protestant ministers. It was the first time they had all worshipped together, and the first time they had stepped onto the *bimah* of a Jewish house of worship.

During the service, Samuel Lowenstein presented his family Torah to the temple. Joe Fine also presented the Fine Family Torah. Both Torahs were well over a hundred years old and had been brought over from Europe when the families came to the United States. I obtained new rollers and linen thread and stitched the parchment to the new rollers myself.

Rabbi Cronback

The story of our search for a rabbi to conduct the first High Holy Day services in our new temple is worth relating. We wanted to engage the same rabbi who had

been with us when we first began planning our new temple, but his fee was beyond our budget.

In August 1953, I contacted the Hebrew Union College to find a student rabbi for our services. Apparently all the students had been given assignments in July for the holidays. But one name was suggested to me: Rabbi Abraham Cronback, a professor emeritus in his 80s who occasionally went out for holiday services. I called the rabbi and told him our story, and he said to me, "Mr. Cohodas, I will come." I was so taken aback that I couldn't believe my ears. When I asked him what his fee would be, he said, "Mr. Cohodas, if you pay me I'll come, and if you can't pay me, I'll still come."

Before Rabbi Cronback's arrival, I found out that he was the only rabbi who had agreed to officiate at the funeral of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, convicted spies who were executed in June 1953. The feelings of the American people and especially American Jews were very divided over the issue of the Rosenbergs' execution, and I didn't know how our community would react.

My first question to Rabbi Cronback when he arrived was, "Why did you agree to officiate when all the other rabbis refused?"

I will never forget his answer: "We teach in Judaism that when a person commits a crime and he pays the penalty, he is then exonerated from all guilt and entitled to all the rights of the Jewish faith." The ten days Rabbi Cronback spent with us in Marquette County were memorable.

The congregation wanted me to continue to conduct monthly services in our new temple and have a rabbi for the High Holy Days. However, I felt that if we were to continue as a temple, we had to have a regular rabbinic leadership. We set up a program with Hebrew Union College to have a rabbinic student with us on a monthly or bimonthly basis and this has continued for 35 years. *[Editor's note: The temple today continues to use the services of rabbinic students.]*

Over the years, I have done an occasional service and officiated at special occasions. My wife and I, and later our children, taught religious school for many years. The first wedding in our temple was the marriage of our daughter to one of the visiting rabbinic students.

In 1962, we commissioned a series of stained glass windows illustrating the Ten Commandments from Raymond Katz, a New York artist. The windows were created by the Rohlf Stained Glass Window Company of New York, using only European glass. Our Beth Shalom windows are full of meaning and beauty.

The Hebrew inscription over our temple's *bimah* translates: "All its paths are peace." We chose this inscription because our name, Temple Beth Shalom, means "House of Peace." I hope this history will keep the memory of early Temple Beth Shalom alive, and my wish is that this beautiful little temple in the Upper Peninsula will carry on for many years.



Author's note: This short history is dedicated to my brother, Arnold M. Cobodas, the builder of Temple Beth Shalom. He passed away on November 16, 1987. — Willard Cobodas, 1988.

Archived Treasures

Buried in acid-free files and boxes across the state are thousands of photographs depicting historic moments in time, people and places from across the decades. Beginning this year with the Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives at Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan Jewish History will feature photos from one of the many archives within the state.



This image is of Henry Lenhoff on leave during a tour of duty in the Navy during WWII. From the Lenhoff collection.

A Peek Inside th

The Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives of Temple Beth El, the best known in the Detroit Jewish community, are housed at Temple Beth El's records — Michigan's first Jewish synagogue, established in 1850. Where our collections are rich in documentary evidence of this history, we also have family collections — including over 800 family files and Jewish organizational records. These photographs reflect the diversity of our community at Temple Beth El, as well as how much



Isaac Agree Memorial Society 17th Annual Anniversary Dinner, donated by Beverly and Robert Canvasser (Canvasser Collection)



Boy Scouts at Temple Beth El. (left to right) unknown, Walter S. Shapiro, Marshall Loewenstein, c. 1940s. Image donated by Marshall Loewenstein.

The Files of the Leo M. Franklin Archives

...le Beth El is probably
...y as the repository of
...ish institution, estab-
...e filled with fantastic
... have many other col-
...l collections and other
...phs from recent acces-
...nd our collections here
... we have grown within

... recent years. The Franklin Archives continues to serve researchers interested in Detroit Jewish history with regular office hours, our extensive searchable database (available at our website) and research services via email, phone and fax. The Archives also presents numerous workshops and programs throughout the year, including our Archives Lecture Series. If you are interested in doing research at the Franklin Archives or any of our programs, please contact the Archivist, Holly Teasdale, at (248) 851-1100, ext. 3137 or franklinarchives@earthlink.net, or check out our website at www.tbeonline.org.



...niversary, Dec. 18, 1938. Image
...ser family seated last table to left).



“MYSTERY” PHOTO... The Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives is proud to have recently attained the collection of the local offices of the Labor Zionist Alliance and Histadrut. Included within this collection are a few unidentified photographs, including this photograph from a Histadrut scrapbook... Any of these dashing gents look familiar to you? If so, please contact the Franklin Archives at (248) 851-1100, ext. 3137

This store front, known as The Lillian Shop on Livernois in Detroit, was owned and operated by Lillian (Kaufman) Mayer (c. 1920s). Image donated by Charles Mayer.



Midland's Temple Beth El: At 45, This Congregation is Alive and Well

By Stuart J. Bergstein

In 1995, just days after the death of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Midland's only Jewish place of worship, Temple Beth El, hosted a memorial service open to the community. In addition to members of the 45 congregant families, nearly 60 others from the community attended the service. It was not surprising — Temple Beth El's sanctuary and school building had long been an open gathering place for the community.

There is some evidence that Jewish peddlers, fur traders and cattle buyers were visitors to the Midland area in the 1870s and 1880s; however, the first known Jewish settlers were Abe and Bessie Lewenstein who came to Midland about 1890. They were listed in the Michigan State Census of 1894 as residents and parents of a two-year-old son, Seligman. At the time of the census, Abe was 30 and Bessie was 27.



Courtesy of Stuart Bergstein

THE INAUGURAL TEMPLE BETH EL SEDER

Officiated by Rabbi Marc Samuels in 1958, the congregation of the newly built Temple Beth El gathers for a traditional Pesach seder.

A family by the name of Marrienthal or Marenthal was known to have lived in the Midland area around 1908-1910. They had a yard goods, corsets and collars business on Main Street. Little more is known about this family.

Abe Surath came to Midland about 1915; his wife, Bessie, arrived a short time later. Marvin Stein remains the longest resident of the local Jewish community, having arrived with his parents in 1929.

Throughout the first half of the 20th Century, most of the Jewish people who settled in Midland pursued business careers.¹ In the early 1940s, the Dow Chemical Company, the city's major employer, hired its first Jewish employee, Bill Stein. Soon after, the company began hiring young Jewish engineers and chemists, many of them young men recently returned home from their service in the war. By 1955, nearly 50 Jewish families lived in the community.

Establishing a Midland Congregation

Many of the early families affiliated with Bay City's Temple of Abraham congregation (which later became Temple Israel); their children were driven nearly 20 miles to attend Hebrew lessons and Sunday school. A bimonthly adult study class was conducted in Midland by Rabbi J. Kratzenstein of Bay City.

By 1956, interest grew in starting a local congregation. Organizational meetings began. With the advice and assistance of Rabbi Katz of Saginaw and the leadership of Ralph Cutler and Leonard Bergstein, words were followed by deeds. A building on Bay City Road that formerly housed a machine shop was purchased by eight Jewish families.

The costs of erecting a new synagogue were underwritten by generous founding families. Leonard and Esther Bergstein engaged the services of a nationally prominent architect, Alden B. Dow, paying his fees and the refurbishment costs themselves. The Cutler and Surath families provided a home to be used as a rabbi's residence, matching the congregation's monthly payments until the home belonged to the congregation. Joel and Rose Kahn presented a new piano to the congregation at a well-attended meeting on July 1, 1957.

At that meeting, the fledgling congregation adopted its constitution and bylaws and chose the name, Temple Beth El. Rabbi Marc Samuels, a 1957 graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary who was also a Holocaust survivor, signed on as the congregation's spiritual leader, staying three years. Dr. Melvin Josephs was the first president. The congregation affiliated with the Conservative movement and joined the United Synagogue of America.

Temple Beth El received Torah scrolls from its sister congregations in Bay City and Saginaw, and also one from the Bergstein family. Ben and Beatrice Lerner presented the congregation with a beautiful, hand-carved wooden door, installed and ready to greet congregants at the formal dedication, December 29, 1957. Among those in attendance were the 52 original member families; the first Sunday school teachers, Ruth Ann Bergstein and Joan Saphier; the first sisterhood president, Rose Kahn; Alden Dow, the architect; Mayor Glenn Warren of Midland; Reverend Donald Buteyn, president of the Midland Ministers Association, and Rabbi Albert Raab, from Temple Abraham in Bay City.

In a short time, Jacob Kurtz was engaged as cantor and the religious school began preparing children for their *b'nai mitzvah*. A memorial wall was erected for members

to record the passing of loved ones.

In 1960, Rabbi Louis Sanker began his tenure as rabbi of Temple Beth El. A native of England, the rabbi took time away from his temple duties to teach philosophy and ethics at the nearby Delta College. His arrival coincided with a time of change at the temple. Over the next five years, many of the founding members passed away, including Ralph and Bessie Cutler, Al Levine, Leonard Bergstein and Henry Shenn.

TriCity Jewish Community Association

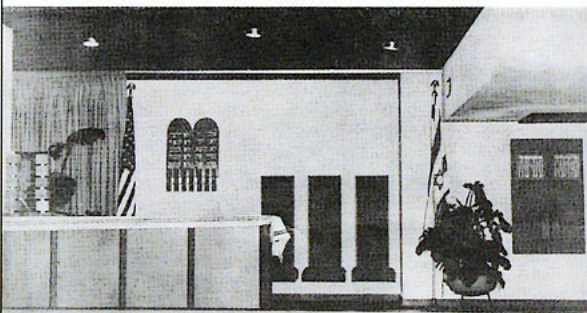
By the time the temple celebrated its *bar mitzvah* in 1970, a four-room school wing had been added to the building. Yet, as one of the state's smallest congregations, retaining rabbinical services for longer than a year or so proved difficult. Temple Beth El and Saginaw's Temple B'nai Israel decided to jointly hire Rabbi Rubenstein, a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary. One week he'd officiate in Midland and the next in Saginaw. In his absence, the lay membership conducted services. Rubenstein and his successor, Rabbi Armon, a native of Argentina, each stayed just two years.

Finally, the members of the Midland, Bay City and Saginaw communities formed the TriCity Jewish Community Association and began searching for a rabbi. While vacationing in the United States in 1987, Rabbi Robert Scott applied for the position. After being accepted, Rabbi Scott left his South African congregation and relocated to mid-Michigan. A graduate of the Reform Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Rabbi Scott served his Conservative congregations well. He supervised the religious schools, Sunday school and all Jewish activities in the tri-city area, remaining a fixture on the *bimah* for 13 years.

When Rabbi Scott retired in 2000, an idea surfaced to unite the Midland, Saginaw and Bay City communities into one congregation headquartered in Bay City. Many of the Midland congregants decided to remain with their Temple Beth El, while others — primarily those with children wanting a religious education — joined with the new congregation.

DEDICATION PROGRAM

December 29, 1957



TEMPLE BETH EL
MIDLAND, MICHIGAN
RABBI MARC E. SAMUELS

OFFICERS

President Melvin Joseph
Vice-President Louis Mendler
Secretary Mrs. Robert Hirsch
Treasurer Theodore Post

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Stuart Bergstein
Julius Grossberg
Joel Kahn
Mrs. Sildene Sachs
Mrs. William Surath

HONORARY TRUSTEES

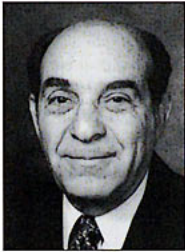
Leonard Bergstein
Ralph Cutler

Attended by congregants,
dignitaries and community members, Midland's
Temple Beth El was dedicated with song and
ceremony in December 1957.

Temple Beth El Becomes a Reform Congregation

At this time, the Temple Beth El congregants expressed a strong desire to adapt their congregation to a Reform practice. In 2000, Temple Beth El officially became a Reform congregation. A part-time rabbi from Detroit visited the temple every six weeks, while members conducted services in the interim. In 2001, Mark Messler, a para-rabbinical student from Hebrew Union College began conducting twice-monthly Friday night services and assisted Rabbi Hal Greenwald over the High Holidays.

In 2003, the Tri-City relationship between the three communities came to an end. Bay City remains a Conservative congregation, utilizing the services of a full-time cantor/Hebrew school teacher. In Saginaw, the original temple, B'nai Israel, merged with a small Reform congregation and began holding services in rented quarters. Midland's Temple Beth El remains a thriving community congregation with an active membership of 40 families.



Stuart J. Bergstein has been active in the Midland community for many years, working with many Jewish organizations. He is a founding member and past president of Temple Beth El and a member of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. He and his wife, Ruth Ann, are the parents of four sons.

1 The arrival years of Midland's earliest Jewish families:

Lewenstein	1890	Levine	1933	Kolbert	1939
Marrienthal	1908	Tepper	1933	Klasky	1939
Surath	1915	C. Fisher	1934	Grosberg	1941
Meinstein	1917	S. Weinberg	1934	Ostrofsky	1942
Weiner	1917	Fahner	1935	Cash	1945
Pappas (Shenn)	1924	R. Cutler	1937	Ginsberg	1948
Stein	1929	S. Jacobson	1937	Stark	1950
Bergstein	1930	Eisenberg	1938	Cherkinsky	1951
Kahn	1931	Mendelsohn	1938		

Celebrities & Celebrations

A Priceless Opportunity to View the Dead Sea Scrolls

In collaboration with the Israel Antiquities Authority, 12 of the originals of the 2,000-year-old Dead Sea Scrolls were on exhibit this year at the Van Andel Public Museum of Grand Rapids.

The one and only time that these priceless fragments have ever been authorized to be on display outside the land of Israel, this spectacular major exhibition attracted international visitors and attention to this distinguished western Michigan museum.

Regarded among scholars as the greatest archeological find of the 20th Century, the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit awed visitors who stood next to room-sized photographic blowups of the Qumran community and the Judean Desert. These images brought to life the awesome landscape where, in the 1940s, a Bedouin shepherd boy accidentally stumbled into a remote cave to find pottery urns containing the ancient fragments.

The incredible discovery of the scrolls, hidden 2,000 years earlier when the Jewish nation was conquered, reveal the history of the Second Temple Period (520 BCE — 70 CE). The historical and archeological context of the scrolls was vividly illustrated and discussed not only in the exhibition but also in the accompanying catalog, which highlights the circumstance of the find on the eve of Israel's 1948 War of Independence.

A wall-sized timeline placed the scrolls and Hebrew, Islamic and Christian biblical history in helpful perspective. Of great interest was the illustration of some of the original conservation and archival errors which resulted in some dete-



The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit at the Public Museum of Grand Rapids. The Exodus scroll fragments (foreground) was just one of the many displays featured in this exhibit.

rioration of the fragments, contrasted to more current, improved conservation procedures.

Ceiling-high vertical banners next to each dimly lit, heavily secured display of original fragments translated the text and placed it in biblical and historical context. Fragments of Psalms were on view, as were excerpts from Exodus, hand-written on parchment two millennia ago and used in the Passover seder service today.

"The Dead Sea Scrolls, Catalog of the Exhibition," is available for purchase from the Public Museum of Grand Rapids. Containing photographs of the landscape where the scroll's fragments and artifacts were found, and a selection of scholarly interpretive essays, the catalog can be purchased from the publisher for \$25 at: www.eerdmans.com.

—*Judy Levin Cantor*

Rabbi Sherwin Wine Retires on the 40th Anniversary of the Birmingham Temple

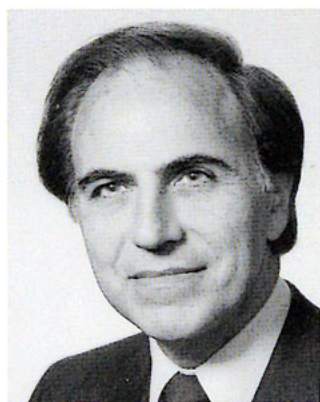
Bitter and sweet, this has been a memorable year for the Birmingham Temple and its leader, Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine, who founded the Humanistic congregation in 1963. After a continuous history of devoted leadership, Rabbi Wine retired as head rabbi of the temple he created and led these past four decades.

It is rare for a philosopher and visionary also to be the leader of an organization, but Sherwin Wine indeed had that ability. He led the growth of a cadre of believers from a tiny storefront office on Telegraph Road in Birmingham to a worldwide movement, training and ordaining its own rabbis. Rabbi Wine was the driving force for developing this movement that, once despised by some, has now grown to be recognized and accepted as a branch of Judaism.

He found inspiration and time to do all this while functioning full-time as a rabbi, creating a close-knit temple family, traveling and working with groups around the globe, earning an enviable reputation as a lecturer and author.

The congregation celebrated its milestone year with many special ceremonies, including the April unveiling of an exhibit of the archival history of the Temple. Pera Kane and her committee — Carol Gorosh, Cheryl O'Donnell and Charlotte Nelson — were honored at this service, as well as Mark Luria, who created a special celebration book for the membership. A 40th reunion retreat was held at the Grand Bend Resort in Ontario, along with regular springtime Shabbat Reunion Services. In mid-April, all adult confirmation graduates since 1979 were honored at a special program led by Marilyn Rowens.

In May, all the past *mitzvah* and confirmation students were honored, then on June 6, a tribute to the past and future leadership of the temple was held. Wedding



Rabbi Wine

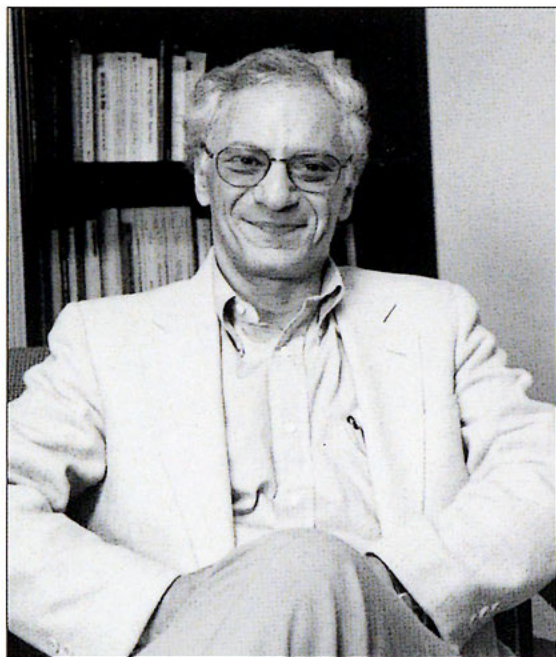
bells rang on June 20 in a celebration for all couples married by Rabbi Wine during the past 40 years.

Musically, the temple presented a "Best of Show" choral concert, directed by Maria Cimarelli, music director. The lively presentation honored Jewish composers and artists and was beautifully sung by artists from the Detroit Opera Company in the annual Dorian Samuels Memorial Concert. This was followed in May by "Days of Wine and Moses," a concert written by Birmingham Temple member Milton Landau and conducted by Arthur Rose leading the "Templesingers".

In mid-May Rabbi Sherwin Wine was chosen as the American Humanist Association's "Humanist of the Year," and finally, a retirement celebration on June 27 featured an evening of distinguished speakers, music and festivities.

Although retired from the Birmingham Temple, Rabbi Wine is poised to continue to influence the future of the secular Humanistic Judaism movement. —*Pera Kane*

Preserving Our Past: Sidney Bolkosky and the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Project



Professor Sidney Bolkosky is the author of several books on local Jewish history and is currently directing the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Project at the University of Michigan.

For more than two decades, Dr. Sidney Bolkosky, professor of history at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, has devoted much of his personal and professional time to preserving the stories of the survivors of the Holocaust.

Under his direction, the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Project, housed at the University of Michigan-Dearborn Mardigian Library, has become an online resource for students, professionals and historians seeking firsthand information on the Holocaust. Now, with the click of a button, the voices of men and women who survived the Holocaust recount numerous memories... from the streets of Poland and Russia to the battlefields of World War II and the forced labor camps where their families and friends perished.

Housed on the former estate of Henry Ford, the university has

committed resources to support audio and video interviews of Holocaust survivors since 1982. In 1994, Bolkosky's project received a significant three-year grant from the Max M. Fisher Jewish Community Foundation, enabling the professor to expand the project internationally.

Working first with Online Computer Library Catalog, the international library network, and then through his department's own technology, Bolkosky and his team have now mounted some 40 interviews on the Voice/Vision website: holocaust.umd.umich.edu. Complete transcriptions and audio are accessible, with maps accompanying each of the interviews and photographs with some of them. Both audio and video are available through interlibrary loan.

In 2002, noted historian Christopher Browning visited the Dearborn campus to use some of the project's tapes for his study of the forced labor camp at Starachowice. He examined the interviews, lunched with faculty and staff, had dinner with project volunteers and donors and delivered a lecture to a full auditorium that included several survivors.

Browning was one of 1.7 million visitors to the Web site in 2002, an increase of 74 percent from the previous year. Approximately 121 people visited the site each day, with the average "hit" lasting around 15 minutes. Those visitors have come from across North America and from Israel, Germany, France, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and other nations.

Chancellor Daniel Little has committed full support to the project and the university has helped provide a full-time archivist, Jamie Wraight. A deeply devoted group of volunteers include survivor Abe Pasternak, Dr. Max and Rena Bardenstein and Suzanna Hicks, a transcriber in Georgia. The archive has maintained working relationships with the Yale Video Archives and the U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, sending copies of the interviews to both places.

"We believe that because of such dedication, professional and academic solicitude, Holocaust memory and education will be guaranteed," says Bolkosky. Like the interviews, the project has dedicated itself to the preservation of public and personal history and memory, honest and thoughtful, with sensitivity and rigor—hallmarks of the university.

For further information regarding the Voice/Vision Project, contact Jamie Wraight at jwraight@umd.umich.edu or by phone at 313-593-6300. —*Wendy Rose Bice*

The Max and the Max M. Fisher Headquarters of United Jewish Communities

The plaque on the Max M. Fisher United Jewish Communities building in New York City reads, "We are all trustees of our Jewish heritage ... with an obligation to cherish it, improve it and guard its future." The words are those of the building's namesake, Max M. Fisher, one of the most influential and devoted Jewish philanthropists in our nation.

In Detroit, the nearly complete Max M. Fisher Music Center at Orchestra Hall stands as a testament to Fisher's devotion to another of his passions: the preservation of the city of Detroit and education.

UJC Headquarters

Dedicated last September, the building is a fitting spot for Fisher's name to be memorialized. UJC represents 156 Jewish federations and 400 independent communities across North America. Through its annual UJA Federation Campaign, the agency provides life-saving and life-enhancing assistance to those in need, and translates Jewish values into social action on behalf of millions of Jews in hundreds of communities in North America, in towns and villages throughout Israel, in the former Soviet Union and nearly 60 other countries around the world. The Jewish federations of Ann Arbor, Detroit, Flint and Grand Rapids are represented by the UJC.

Honorary chairman of the UJC, Fisher, 95, has long been one of its most ardent supporters. In 1999, he was a guiding force in the historic merger of the United Jewish Appeal, the Council of Jewish Federations and United Israel Appeal. He also served as president and national chairman of United Jewish Appeal (1965-1967), president of the Council of Jewish Federations (1969-1972), chairman of United Israel Appeal (1968-1971), president of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit (1959-1964), founding chairman of the Board of Governors of the Jewish Agency for Israel (1971-1983); and in other leadership posts in the Jewish and general communities.

The Max

In 1994, Peter Cummings, chairman of Peter D. Cummings & Associates, chairman of the board of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the son-in-law of Max Fisher, approached his father-in-law with a proposal to help fund the expansion of Orchestra Hall.



Standing in front of Orchestra Place are (left to right) Sam Frenkel, Max Fisher and Peter Cummings.

ately referred to as "The Max," creates a new music center complex consisting of the restored and modernized Orchestra Hall — a 2,000-seat space built in 1919 and listed in the National Register of Historic Sites. The new facility will include a 500-seat performance hall known as the Music Box, and a 15,000-square-foot Jacob Bernard Pincus Music Education Center, which will support the DSO's youth ensembles and other educational activities.

Fisher, who turned 95 this past year, realized that the grand orchestra "palace," which almost faced a wrecking ball 30 years ago, had the potential to become a world-class music and education center.

On October 9, 2003, the Max M. Fisher Music Center will open to the public, 135,000 square feet of new public space and backstage support facilities on the north side of Orchestra Hall. The \$60 million project, affectionately

2003 Eight Over Eighty at Jewish Apartments and Services

Courtesy of Jewish Apartments and Services



Top row, left to right: Walter Stark, Leah Snider, Alan Kandel, Leonard P. Baruch. Bottom row, left to right: Bea Kreichman, Lenore Dunsky Weiss, Frita Roth Drapkin, Lester Burton.

Eight over Eighty is a yearly event presented by Jewish Apartments and Services that honors eight senior adults, 80 years or older, who have dedicated themselves, their time and talents to the Detroit Jewish community. The sold out event, held at the Norma Jean and Edward Meer Jewish Apartments in West Bloomfield, raises funds that are used to provide low-income residents with food subsidies. More than half of the 800 residents rely on the subsidies for their kosher meals.

This year's honorees included Alan Kandel, 86, one of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan's most passionate advisors and board members.

350 Years of Jews in America: 1654-2004

Jewish Historical Society Joins the Coalition for the Celebration

In 1654, 23 Dutch Jewish refugees from the Portuguese colony of Brazil arrived in New Amsterdam, today's New York City. Originally refused permission to stay by Peter Stuyvesant, the Governor of the colony, the refugees appealed to the Dutch government. Upon their orders, Stuyvesant granted them asylum. This was the very beginning of a remarkable 350 year American Jewish experience!

The 350th anniversary of the arrival of the first Jews in North America will be commemorated nationally beginning in September 2004. Designated by the U.S. Senate as American Jewish History Month, the observance will include an exhibit at the Library of Congress in Washington and on-going celebrations throughout the nation.

Numerous events and activities are planned not only to celebrate this milestone but also to help educate the public on the contributions of American Jews to the history and development of our nation. Events are being planned at the state capitol in Lansing, the Jewish Ensemble Theatre, the Jewish Film Festival, all the Jewish studies departments of Michigan universities and for every synagogue and temple pulpit.

Judge Cohn and Judy Cantor are urging Jewish Historical Society members to become involved in the 350th legacy by participating in the People's Oral History

Project. Community members are being encouraged to record their own family history and preserve these memories at the Jewish Community Archives. Assistance and guidance are being made available for this unique project.

The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan's website, www.michjewishhistory.org, has a link to "350 Years of Jews in America" with a list of all activities planned by the partnering organizations. —*Judith Levin Cantor*

Michigan Jewish War Veterans Exhibit Opened

On Memorial Day 2003, the permanent exhibit "We Were There: Michigan's Jewish War Veterans" opened at the D. Dan and Betty Kahn Building of the Jewish Community Center on the Eugene and Marcia Applebaum Jewish Community Campus in West Bloomfield.

The exhibit highlights the experiences of Michigan Jewish soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines who fought in the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, Korea and Vietnam. Their many stories are revealed through text, photographs, excerpts from newspaper articles and letters. Uniforms and other artifacts also are on display. An interactive touch-screen kiosk holds information on those who died in the service of their country, some suggestions for further reading on American Jews in the military and addition-



Meyer Shear, a pilot with the US Army Air Corps in World War II, flew bombing missions in France and Italy. He was awarded the Purple Heart and Distinguished Flying Cross.

al stories of veterans, including rabbis who served as chaplains.

A highlight of the World War II section is the Congressional Medal of Honor awarded posthumously to Lt. Raymond Zussman, the only Jewish soldier from Michigan and one of only two Jewish Americans to be thus honored. —*Heidi Christein, Exhibit Curator*



Dr. Paul Gold, a physician who served with the 11th Armored Tank Division in Vietnam in 1968, was awarded the Purple Heart and the Silver Star. He is pictured in an APC – armored personnel carrier.

Seferim/Books

From Suwalki to St. Ignace: A History of the Rosenthal, Reinhertz, Blumrosen, Winkelman and Related Families, Volumes 1 and 2

By Alex E. Friedlander, Ph.D.
Breakaway Productions, 2003, 1,600 pages

Even to the eyes of a seasoned genealogist, the massive contents of *From Suwalki to St. Ignace: A History of the Rosenthal, Reinhertz, Blumrosen, Winkelman and Related Families* is impressive.

Spanning 200 years, nine generations and 1,600 pages, the two-volume set is, as author Alex E. Friedlander notes, “not simply a list of names and dates,” as family history books often are. Instead, says the highly regarded genealogist, the book is for future generations who will find that “the lives of people living now will be of just as much interest as the lives of people who lived in Suwalki or Manistique in 1850 or 1900.”

The tale, as it is told, begins in 16th Century Suwalki Gubernia, a heavily wooded district on the northeast border of modern-day Poland, with the town of Suwalki at its center. Friedlander presents a fascinatingly thorough lesson in Russian/Polish/Lithuanian Jewish history, detailing the migration, religious and commercial climate afforded to the Jewish population under various rulers and regimes. The information is gripping, even for those whose Jewish roots don’t trace back to the region.

Prior to 1800, no Jews inhabited the town of Suwalki. Under the Prussian government, Jews were forbidden, among many other restrictions, to engage in agriculture, own land, or operate liquor or beer breweries. By the late 1700s, the Prussian government began to relax its regulations, hoping to bring a return of peace and order, economic growth and land reform. In 1802, most restrictions were lifted and the first Jews headed to the bustling border city of Suwalki. In 1827, 1,209 Jews



Dozens of historically significant photos illuminate the rich history of the families traced in the two-volume set.

The above picture shows the arrival of goods for Saulson’s store in Grand Marais.

Courtesy of Dr. Friedlander



In 1906, members of the Saulson family gathered at Beth Olam Cemetery in Detroit for the unveiling of Esther-Hinde Saulson's headstone.

were listed in Suwalki. By 1860, the Jewish population had swelled to 7,525, 63 percent of the total population of Suwalki.

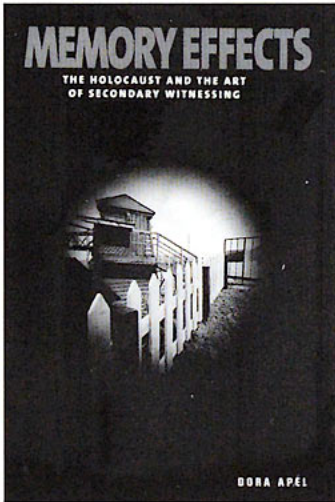
A few years later, during the Polish uprising of 1863 and the famine of 1868-69, the Jews of Suwalki began leaving the area en masse, and what few Jewish families were left by the 20th Century were obliterated during World War II. The Jews of Suwalki fled to ports around the globe, to Hungary, Warsaw, Hamburg, Paris, England, Sweden, South Africa, Jerusalem and America. Many found Michigan and its wooded northern boundaries a perfect home.

While tracing the families, Friedlander met with both enormous genealogical successes and challenges. "It appears that nearly every person carrying the name Blumrosen (or Bloomrosen) worldwide is a member of this family, and nearly all of them — 799 direct descendants of Sholom son of Wolf Blumrose (born c. 1787) — have been located," writes Friedlander of the Blumrosen and Winkelman families.

The direct descendants of Yankel Rosenthal (born c. 1764), son of Shepsel Rosenthal, on the other hand, proved far more elusive. The large family emigrated from Suwalki in the 19th Century to unknown places worldwide, and even though Friedlander considers the lack of information on the family one of the discouragingly incomplete sections of the book, he still managed to identify 1,522 descendants of Yankel. One of them is Shirley Saulson Mersky, the book's sponsor who did the original search for her ancestors and worked with Dr. Friedlander.

Mersky's vision and passion for her own family history and Jewish heritage led her to Friedlander, who spent five years compiling information and amassing the database of more than 5,600 names. Now living in Sarasota, Florida, Mersky was born in Manistique, the town Friedlander calls the "crossroads for three of the principal families in this book. In addition to the Blumrosens, both the Rosentals and Winkelmans were represented in the mercantile history of the town." Mersky's vision of a tribute to her family has been truly realized in the completion of this comprehensive project.

From Suwalki to St. Ignace is available for purchase. Contact Shirley Saulson Mersky, 1301 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34236. — *Reviewed by Wendy Rose Bice*



Memory Effects: The Holocaust and the Art of Secondary Witnessing

By Dora Apel
Rutgers University Press, 2002, 241 pages

Artists have always had a role in the documentation of the political and social climate in which they live. From the early decades of the 20th Century, artists in Europe served as witnesses to the growing horrors of the time.

The suppression of modern art and ideas in Germany, which had begun under the Weimar Republic, was fully embraced by Hitler and his regime. In 1934, Hitler made his first public speech

against "degenerate art" at Nuremberg.

His attack was directed against artists, their supporters and the new ideas represented in the work. Jewish and gentile artists were persecuted. Teachers and museum curators were dismissed from their positions for discussing the new ideas. Thousands of artworks were confiscated, held up for ridicule, sold and burned.

In *Memory Effects: The Holocaust and the Art of Secondary Witnessing*, Dora Apel addresses the role of the artist as witness from the Holocaust to the present day. In an engaging and logical manner, Apel guides us through the complexities inherent in the art of witnesses, especially those she refers to as secondary witnesses, "those artists who confront the horror of the Nazi genocide and the suffering of its victims, and who continue to bear witness... to events they have never seen or experienced. Because of their distance from the events, however, secondary witnesses do not deal with the Holocaust directly but in ways that bring to the surface the tensions and discontinuities between the past and the present, ambiguities, impasses and lacunas that are part of the 'memory effects' of the Shoah."

Because the Holocaust has had such a problematic reception in our society, these artists, our contemporaries, explore these ideas because they must, because the history is part of our collective past, the past which informs all artists. The Holocaust and its effects must be fully addressed as part of the process of remembering and understanding.

Apel discusses the work of the contemporary artists Shimon Attie, Frederic Brenner, Vera Frenkel, James Friedman, Matthew Girson, Erich Hartmann, Mikael Levin, Pier Marton, Rachel Schreiber, Susan Silas, Marina Vainshtein and Jeffrey Wolin. Each of the 12 represents an innovative use of media and uses historical photographs as a beginning tool to create installations, documentary stills, interpretive video, interactive Web sites, paintings and tattoo performance rituals.

The Writing on The Wall: Projections in Berlin's Jewish Quarter (1992-1993) by Shimon Attie, is one of the most accessible of these works. Attie, an American Jew whose grandfather lived in Berlin, visited East Berlin in the 1990s and saw essentially

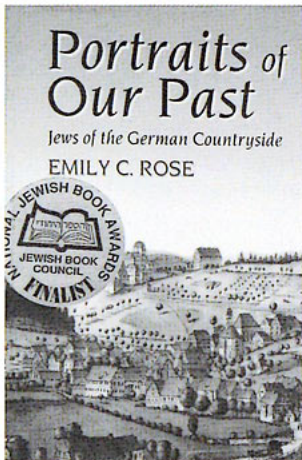
no signs of the East European Jews of the 1920s and '30s who had lived in the old Jewish quarter; no sign of former residents obliterated by the Nazi genocide.

Attie's *Writing on the Wall* project was a temporary installation of old black and white archival images of former inhabitants projected on the sides of carefully selected buildings in East Berlin. The intention was to evoke the past and in so doing, according to Attie, "to interrupt the collective processes of denial and forgetting." With the phantom images of people he projected on the wall, Attie juxtaposed the past onto the present in order to create a new dynamic and perhaps trigger a dialogue about the Holocaust.

Apel's prose reads with the ease of a great story, yet the historical truth of her subject resonates on profound levels. The work of these artists reflects a contemporary interpretation of man's inhumanity to man, clearly establishing the relevance and, indeed, necessity of Holocaust memory in today's art. Apel is herself a secondary witness as she is able to evoke the past through a history she herself did not experience but recalls poignantly through the memories of her family.

Apel's book becomes a memory effect itself as it "brings to the surface the tensions and discontinuities between the past and the present...." In her discussion of the art of these 12 secondary witnesses, Apel has performed a *mitzvah*, for while she focuses on artists who look to the past in order to express the reality of the present, she affirms the importance of retaking and shaping one's Jewish identity through art. —

Reviewed by Sally Schluter Tardella, an artist and special lecturer at Oakland University in the Department of Art and Art History.



Portraits of Our Past: Jews of the German Countryside

Emily C. Rose

The Jewish Publication Society, 2001

350 pages

Renowned for its legends, folklore and traditions, the Black Forest region in Germany offers few vestiges of the Jews who once lived there. But in Mühlingen, Michelbach, Rottweil and other rural villages and towns that once dotted the land, there are Jewish family records that have survived centuries of upheaval.

Meticulously researching her family tree in the villages of her ancestors, author Emily C. Rose paints a richly detailed canvas of 18th and 19th Century life in the Black Forest from a Jewish perspective in *Portraits of Our Past: Jews of the German Countryside*.

A finalist in the 2001-02 National Jewish Book Awards, the book is a masterwork of genealogy and historical research. From 1994 to 1999, the author spent summers in Germany, locating original documents, books and sacred papers. Unable to read

German, Rose anxiously awaited the translation of the more than 2,600 documents before she began to piece together the story. In the meantime, she poured through more than 1,000 secondary sources. Clearly a labor of love, what emerges from this effort is a sweeping and engaging chronicle of the social, political, economic and religious forces that shaped the experience of a Jewish community previously unknown.

Portraits of Our Past opens with a description of two large paintings of unknown ancestors hanging in the New York City apartment of the author's grandparents. The images of a well-dressed gentleman holding a silver snuffbox and a woman whose eyes do not focus fuel the story: of marriages and children, commerce and social status, settlements and synagogues, "Hunger Years" and riots, emancipation and immigration, and finally resettlement in Chicago and Ann Arbor. As if by grand design, members of the Berlzheimer, Gundelfinger and Kaz families transcend the lively intimate narrative to play historically significant roles, both in Germany and in America.

In 1799, for example, the trader and military purveyor Moises Kaz had been asked by the town of Rottweil (where no Jews had been allowed to live since the Middle Ages) to save it from Napoleon's army by buying the silver owned by the churches and guilds. Kaz also succeeded in having the King of Württemberg allow Jews to own real estate.

Another branch of the family is noted for holding the first Shabbat service in the state of Michigan in 1845. In the 1870s, an assimilated Berlzheimer living in Providence, Rhode Island, shortened the family name and established the Berlitz School of Languages.

Standing as one more testimony to the resilience and resourcefulness of Jewish communities throughout history, *Portraits* is a fascinating read, enhanced by numerous illustrations, maps, tables and notes. A selected bibliography, a section on Jewish tradition and research guide complete the book. Those wishing to delve into the subject further will also find a wealth of information on the author's Web site www.PortraitsOfOurPast.com.

Rose has begun working on a second book, *Sitting Pretty: Nine Brothers from Baseball to Bakelite*. The story traces the ancestry of her maternal grandmother's Prussian Jewish ancestors, among them nine brothers who immigrated to Chicago in the 1870s and founded S. Karpen & Bros., which became the largest upholstered furniture business in the world. "It will be a family story, a Jewish story, an immigrant story, a story of the development of industry by immigrants," said Rose in a brief interview for *Michigan Jewish History*. "A story of the change in the American family as reflected in home furnishings, and more." — *Reviewed by Vivian Henoch, Associate Director of Marketing and Communications, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.*

In Memoriam

**Mary Shapero
1931-2002**

Devoted to the Preservation of Local History



“The challenge of history is to recover the past and introduce it to the present,” wrote David Thelen, former editor of *Journal of American History*. Maybe more than anything, that is what Mary Shapero sought.

Fighting the cancer that robbed her health, but not her vitality, Mrs. Shapero, known by many for her social activism and fund-raising efforts, passed away on September 8, 2002. In her 71 years, this ardent leader, fund-raiser, mother and grandmother accomplished much.

Born in Blairsville, Pennsylvania, Mrs. Shapero grew up under the care of her paternal grandparents, Minnie and Reuben Einstein. Her mother, Ruth, passed away a few months after Mary was born. Mary frequently traveled to Detroit to spend time with her maternal grandparents, Hattie and Rabbi Leo M. Franklin of Temple Beth El.

“My mom grew up in the shadow of some very interesting people,” remarked her son, Rabbi David Shapero. “Of course, we are all familiar with Dr. Franklin’s work. Rueben Einstein was a socialist and ran for Congress against Eugene V. Debs in the early 1900s.” Einstein the socialist and Franklin the activist poured a sense of social justice and clarity of purpose into their determined granddaughter.

By the time Mrs. Shapero graduated from Lake Erie College in Ohio, then married her beau, Walter Shapero, in 1952, her organizational talents had become obvious. As the wife of a young attorney, she founded the Law Wives Association at the University of Michigan, an organization which still exists, and joined the League of Women Voters.

“My mom led very much by example,” remembered her son, Rick. “She was a passionate and determined person, a champion of many causes. But, it all came back to being a mom and helping my brother and me develop a strong sense of justice. She was a super role model.”

When not joining in lively dinner table debates or fishing with her husband and children, Mrs. Shapero actively spent time volunteering for Planned Parenthood of Southeast Michigan, Friends of the Detroit Public Library, American Jewish Committee, the Sanctuary (a shelter for runaway children) and the Leo M. Franklin Archives at Temple Beth El. She and her husband, U.S. Bankruptcy judge Walter Shapero, were active supporters of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. To each she brought organization and leadership — and her knack for raising funds.

“She had clarity of purpose and believed in what she did,” said Judge Shapero. “She could transmit that to people and they would get involved. She was very proud of the difference she made in the many organizations she became involved with.”

In these last years, though, one place, one cause seemed to consume Mrs. Shapero. Tucked away among the religious school classrooms at Temple Beth El, the synagogue her grandfather presided over from 1899-1941, is the Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives. Shapero fought doggedly to ensure the archives vitality and its perpetuity.

“She knew the archives were an excellent resource for our community,” said Judge Shapero. “Over time, family, Judaism and this community became important issues to her. She saw the need to meld the past into the future.” — *Wendy Rose Bice*

Judge Martin Doctoroff **1933-2002** **Mediator of Justice**

When thinking of Marty Doctoroff the immortal words of William Shakespeare come to mind: “His life was gentle, and the elements of goodness so mixed in him, that nature might stand up and say to all the world: This was a man.”

Marty was a man of courage, a man of integrity, a brother, a husband, a father, a grandpa, a lawyer and a judge who brought rare gifts of self and spirit and love to this world.

Born in 1933, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Marty was the eldest of the three sons of Abraham and Rose Doctoroff. He attended Boston Latin School, then graduated from Harvard and went on to earn a law degree at the University of Michigan.

During the spring of 1954, when Marty was a graduating Harvard senior, Marty met Allene Miller, the daughter of Arthur and Jennie Miller of Detroit. Later that year, Allene came to the old Waterman Gym to register for the University of Michigan’s fall classes. Amid the throngs of students, she spotted the first year Michigan law student, Marty Doctoroff. The couple married in 1956 and eventually had four sons: Daniel, now Deputy Mayor of New York City; Mark, about to begin classes at the Culinary Institute of America; Tom, the CEO of J. Walter Thompson in China; and Andy, a partner at Honigman, Miller, Schwartz and Cohn in Detroit.

After graduating from law school in 1957, Martin began his career as an FBI agent. After three years, he began what would become a thriving family law practice. A self-styled John Kennedy Democrat, his specialty in conflict resolution and his subsequent passion for mediation led to his appointment by former Governor James Blanchard to the Michigan Court of Appeals in 1987 and his subsequent ascension to the post of Chief Judge in 1992. He took his career and responsibilities to the community very seriously. He was involved as an officer and board member with countless legal associations and became president of the Michigan Chapter of the Anti-Defamation League.

Marty was both fiery and emotional. He disliked conflict and animosity, and was a social man with countless friends who were drawn to his quick wit, his playfully flirtatious nature.

For his sons and his friends, Marty was a model of integrity and morality, with a sound judgement and a clear sense of right and wrong. Of his father, Andy said, “He taught us by example how to be good people. He had no greed, no interest in things. His was a world of ideas, achievement and family.”

Dan said, "Our father was a constant presence in our lives, and gave us lots of room to become whatever we wished to be."

Allene Doctoroff passed away in 1999. It was at that time that Marty sought medical care for what were already developing symptoms of ALS. He passed away in July, surrounded by friends and family. — *Rabbi Daniel Syme*

Emma Lazaroff Schaver 1905-2003

A Life of Song and Compassion

When Emma Lazaroff Schaver died on January 26, 2003, at the age of 97, the world not only lost a renowned opera star, a fervent Zionist, a generous philanthropist and devoted patron of the arts, but also a compassionate wife, mother, grandmother and friend to the countless people whose lives she touched.

"Emma Schaver was truly a woman of extraordinary compassion and generosity. Her life was based on her love of Judaism and the Jewish people. Her legacy of involvement in Jewish life and causes and the many educational institutions she supported both here and in Israel were most important to her. Her commitment to these causes will be missed by the community and by her many friends," said Harvey Beim of Bloomfield Hills, a longtime friend of the Schaver family.

Emma Lazaroff was an infant when her parents, Jacob Lazaroff and Tzippe Henye Velinsky, left their small village near Yekaterinoslav, Ukraine, and came to the United States with their seven children, of whom Emma was the oldest. They went first to New York and moved to Detroit in 1914 after the outbreak of World War I.

Yiddish was her first language, and her parents, both followers of the Lubavitch Hasidic movement, instilled a strong tradition of Jewish culture and values.

From childhood on, music and singing were a major part of her life. After graduating from Northern High School, she studied at the Detroit Conservatory of Music while holding various jobs to help support the household. At 16, she traveled to New York to attend the Juilliard School of Music, where she later received an honorary degree. She also attended the Chicago Conservatory in Illinois.

Schaver became a critically acclaimed opera star, singing with opera companies throughout the world. She was a soprano soloist with conductor Leonard Bernstein



and sang with many symphony orchestras in the United States and in Israel, including the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Haifa Symphony.

In 1924, she married Morris (Moshe) Schaver, spending 30 happy years with him until Mr. Schaver's death. They shared a strong devotion to Israel, Jewish values, education and the arts, and were known for their generosity to the causes they supported.

Mrs. Schaver's love for Israel and the Jewish people prompted her to join the first cultural mission to Europe, sponsored by the World Jewish Congress and the United Nations, where she traveled from camp to camp entertaining Jewish survivors with Yiddish and Hebrew songs. When she saw the condition of the people and realized how much her presence meant to them, she volunteered to stay for six months. She later wrote a book entitled *Mir Zyznen Do!* ("We're Here!") about that experience.

"She was always amazed at the power of the Jewish people to bounce back, at their remarkable spirit," said Oak Park author and historian Irwin Cohen.

"She was the biggest star ever in the history of our Jewish community," said Cohen, who is weaving Mrs. Schaver's life story into his upcoming book *Echoes of Detroit's Jewish Communities: A Comprehensive History, 1760-2003*.

"She always downplayed her accomplishments, yet if you go through Detroit's Jewish weeklies dating back to the 1930s, an article about her talent or good deeds seemed to appear on a regular basis," he added.

In 1995, Schaver received the Leonard N. Simons Award for the Preservation and Dissemination of Michigan Jewish History from the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan for her charitable efforts and Zionist activism and her numerous musical concerts for Jews in the displaced persons camps after the war.

Like her parents, Schaver was devoted to the Lubavitch Foundation, serving as its local honorary chairwoman and supporting every one of the 19 Lubavitch institutions in Michigan.

"Mrs. Schaver always used her talents and resources for the strengthening of Jewish life and education, both locally and worldwide, and, as a deeply compassionate woman, she personally helped countless others to bring their dreams to fruition through her encouragement and support," said Shirley Zimberg of Oak Park, who was Mrs. Schaver's personal secretary for the past 10 years. "She was quite a woman. She knew all the prime ministers of Israel; she sang for (David) Ben-Gurion in Tel Aviv and had tea with her friend Golda Meir."

Mrs. Schaver supported a multitude of organizations, both locally and abroad, including cultural and arts organizations, Israeli organizations, educational institutions and the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. — *Ronelle Grier*

Jewish Historical Society President's Report 2002-2003

By Robert Kaplow

This has been an active, productive year for the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. I would like to thank the board members and the officers for their assistance. I would also like to thank my wife, Lois, for her support.

Mission Statement

With the leadership of board member Bob Rubin, the able assistance of Steve Posen and a committee consisting of myself, Sharon

Alterman, Joan Braun, Judy Cantor and Jim Grey, we reviewed the functions and purposes of our organization and adopted a new mission statement for the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan:

"Our mission is to educate, celebrate and promote awareness of the contributions of the Jews of Michigan to our state, our nation and the world."

We are very excited about this mission statement that will guide us in planning the Historical Society's programs, services and particularly its future.

Commemoration of 350 Years of Jews in America

In keeping with our mission statement, the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan has been invited to participate in the 2004 Michigan commemoration of the 350th anniversary of the arrival of Jewish settlers in America. The Historical Society is part of a coalition spearheaded nationally and in Michigan by the American Jewish Committee.

Youth Tours

For many years, the Jewish Historical Society has led tours of historic Jewish Detroit. The commentary and content of the program was aimed at those who had grown up and lived in Detroit. We realized though that a large segment

"... Our mission is to educate, celebrate and promote awareness of the contributions of the Jews of Michigan to our state, our nation and the world..."



Chuck Domstein, Harriet Siden, Adele Staller and Jim Grey are standing in the Beth Olem Cemetery, one stop on the historic Jewish Detroit tours.

of our community knew nothing about the city's rich Jewish history: our children. Thanks to funding from the Max M. Fisher Jewish Community Foundation and through the efforts of another excellent committee consisting of Jerry Cook, Ellen Cole, Judy Cantor, Adele Staller, Carol Weisfeld and teachers from various Hebrew schools, a new tour aimed at 5th and 6th grade students has been developed.

"Settlers to Citizens: A 21st Century Tour of Historic Jewish Detroit" has been extremely well received by students and educators. With a strong focus on Jewish contributions to the current revitalization of the city, the tour tells the story of historic Jewish Detroit in a fresh way. The tours are now being offered to adult groups, a perfect attraction for the upcoming 350th commemoration activities.

We've received many thank-you notes. Allow me to share a few with you. The first is from a teacher:

This note comes with my heartfelt thanks and gratitude for providing my students with the wonderful opportunity to go on a tour of old Jewish Detroit. Through your generosity and Adele Staller's superb leadership, we all enjoyed an extraordinary tour. You have opened the eyes of my students to both the past and present of the world around them. I know that this trip touched and enriched their lives. You each deserve high praise for what you are accomplishing in reaching out to young people and broadening their knowledge of our community. This trip is sure to have lasting memories, and we are grateful to you.

The following note is from Jeremy, one of the students:

Dear Members of the Jewish Historical Society,

I am truly grateful that you made our field trip possible. You enabled my class and I to gain knowledge that will help us today and be useful tomorrow. I can only hope that other children will also have a chance to learn a fraction of what you gave us.

And a note from Jennifer:

Thanks for giving us a bus for the tour for Jewish Detroit. It was fun going on the bus because we usually go in cars. I didn't know there was so many Jewish people in Detroit back then. I learned a lot. It was interesting. Be sure to thank the bus driver for putting up with all the noise.

Our hope is to expand these tours; however, additional funds are needed to continue this program and increase the number of students and adults we serve.

Website

This year we were also successful in getting our website, www.michjewishhistory.org, up and running. The website committee with whom I served consisted of Judy Cantor, Hugh Broder, Stan Meretsky, Fred Apel, Marc Manson, Wendy Bice, Charlotte Dubin, Aimée Ergas and Betty Pernick.

This is another project for which we received funding from the Max M. Fisher Jewish Community Foundation. The website contains membership information, links to the Society's calendar, other related sites and the on-line version of our journal, *Michigan Jewish History*. The contents of every Journal are being uploaded to the site; when complete, visitors can look up articles in the Index, click on the story and automatically be brought to that page. It may take a while to get all of the journals online, but our webmaster, Noah Krugel of EPK Designs, is making wonderful progress.

Journal

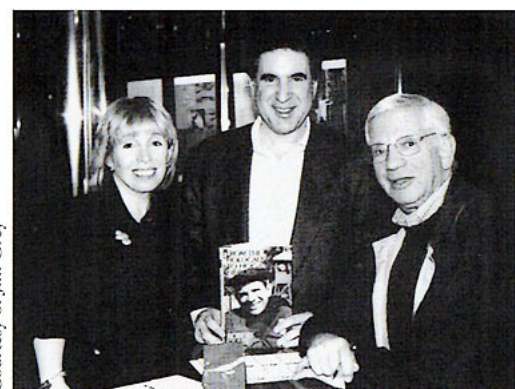
Last fall, we published the 42nd edition of *Michigan Jewish History*, containing an excellent variety of scholarly articles and highlights of the past year in our community. *Michigan Jewish History* is the longest continuously published journal of local Jewish history in North America and is circulated not only to members of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan but also to researchers and libraries worldwide. Our reach will broaden significantly now that the contents of the *Journal* are being added to our website.

Yearbooks

I am very proud of the progress we have made with our yearbook project. We have collected more than 600 high school yearbooks from the greater Detroit area, some dating back to the early 1900s. Our books are now stored in a secure room at the Meer Apartments in West Bloomfield and we are in the process of loading the names and data into a searchable computer database. The residents of the Meer Apartments are helping us with the data entry, a project that has been well received by these volunteers. I want to thank Marc Manson for all the work he has done on this project. We are also indebted to Jewish Apartments & Services and the management of the Meer Apartments for their tremendous cooperation and assistance with this program.

Programming

As noted in our mission statement, one of the main functions of the Jewish Historical Society is to present a variety of programs throughout the year. Thanks to the work of Harriet Siden and Myrle Leland, our co-vice-presidents for programming, we had a very full agenda.



Courtesy of Jim Grey

The JHS co-sponsored a special reading and presentation by author Robert Clary. Beside him are Lois and Rob Kaplow

We conducted a very successful tour of old Jewish Detroit. In late winter, we filled another bus and escorted a large group to the Michigan State University museum to see the excellent exhibit, "The Uneasy Years: Michigan Jewry from the '30s and '40s." Another program was a lecture, "Archives in Your Own Community," by Heidi Christein, the former Jewish Community Archives director.

We also co-sponsored several events, including Boomie Silverman's illustrated account of her genealogical research in Poland and the Ukraine and a fascinating lecture on

the Jews of China by Chinese Professor Xu Xin of Nanjing University. At the Jewish Book Fair, we co-sponsored a presentation by Robert Clary, author of *From the Holocaust to Hogan's Heroes*; and we also joined in sponsoring the Ruth Adler Schnee exhibit at the Janice Charach Epstein Gallery.

One of the year's highlights was the unveiling of a permanent historical exhibit at the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield. "We Were There; Michigan's Jewish War Veterans" honors those Michigan Jews who served our country from the Civil War to the Vietnam War. Items on display include the Congressional Medal of Honor that was awarded posthumously to Raymond Zussman, one of only two Jews ever to get our country's highest award for bravery under fire. It is a wonderful exhibit, and we are very pleased to have been an active participant in its development.

We hosted a sold-out tour of William Davidson's personal collection of art,



Courtesy of Jim Grey

The 2003 Leonard N. Simons History Award for the Preservation and Dissemination of Michigan Jewish History was awarded to Matilda "Tillie" Brandwine, seated front row, center. She is flanked by (left) Adelle Staller, annual meeting co-chair and (right) special guest, Julie Fisher Cummings. In the back are (l to r) annual meeting co-chair Jim Grey, JHS president Robert Kaplow and keynote speaker, Peter Cummings.



Courtesy of Jim Grey/Burt Shifman

**2002-2003 JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS
AND BOARD MEMBERS**

(Top left to right) James Grey, Ellen Cole, Judith Cantor, Joan Braun, Sharon Alterman, Eveleen Budnitzky, Suzanne Shifman, Myrle Leland.
(Bottom left to right) Adelle Staller, Diane Pomish, Charles Mayer, Robert Kaplow, Sylvia Babcock, Benno Levi, Harriet Siden.

including ancient glass from the Holy Land, at the headquarters of Guardian Glass. The Society's closing event of the year was the annual meeting and luncheon, keynoted by Peter D. Cummings, chairman of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and of RAM Development Corporation. He presented a fascinating report on redevelopment in Detroit with a focus on Orchestra Place and the new Max M. Fisher Music Center.

With great pleasure, we awarded the 2003 Leonard N. Simons History Award for the Preservation and Dissemination of Michigan Jewish History to Matilda "Tillie" Brandwine. Ms. Brandwine was recognized for her many accomplishments in the Jewish community, especially her role in creating Michigan's the invaluable computerized "Irwin I. Cohn Jewish Cemetery Index," a central registry of Michigan burials to facilitate genealogical research.

As you can see, this has been a busy and most exciting time. I am looking forward to working with the board, officers and volunteers as I continue my leadership role. Together, I am sure we will see 2004 become another memorable year for our Society.

From the Editor

by Wendy Rose Blice

One year ago, I sat down to review the long list of story ideas proposed for the 43rd volume of *Michigan Jewish History*. They were, for the most part, loose concepts... no authors, no sources, no visible means of completion. I wondered how I would ever manage to compile an entire issue. A dozen months later, the journal is complete and I am in awe of the tremendous support and people power this publication enjoys.

No man is an island; nor any publication the work of a sole man or woman with a pen. The pieces you've read in this issue are included because people whose passion for history and lore exceeded their need for fame and fortune. None of our authors or editors is paid for their work, they are volunteers and deserve to be credited and thanked.

I'd like express the deep gratitude of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, but I also wish to go one step further. As an author, I can attest that the greatest, most meaningful thanks is knowing that readers have enjoyed your work. In that spirit, I am asking readers of this publication to share it with others and encourage them to become a member of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.

The work of the Jewish Historical Society is vitally important to the preservation of the rich cultural heritage of our community. I look forward to being a chronicler of its growth and having the privilege of working with others with a shared interest in the years to come.

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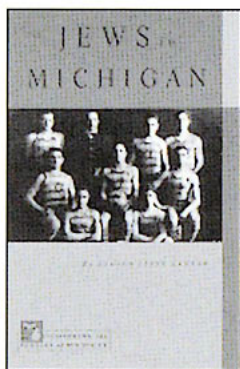
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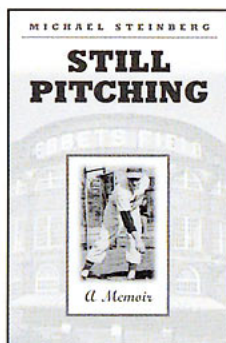
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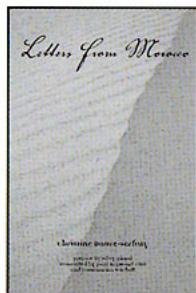
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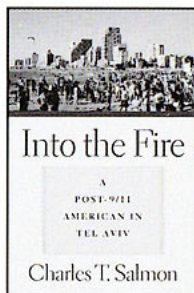
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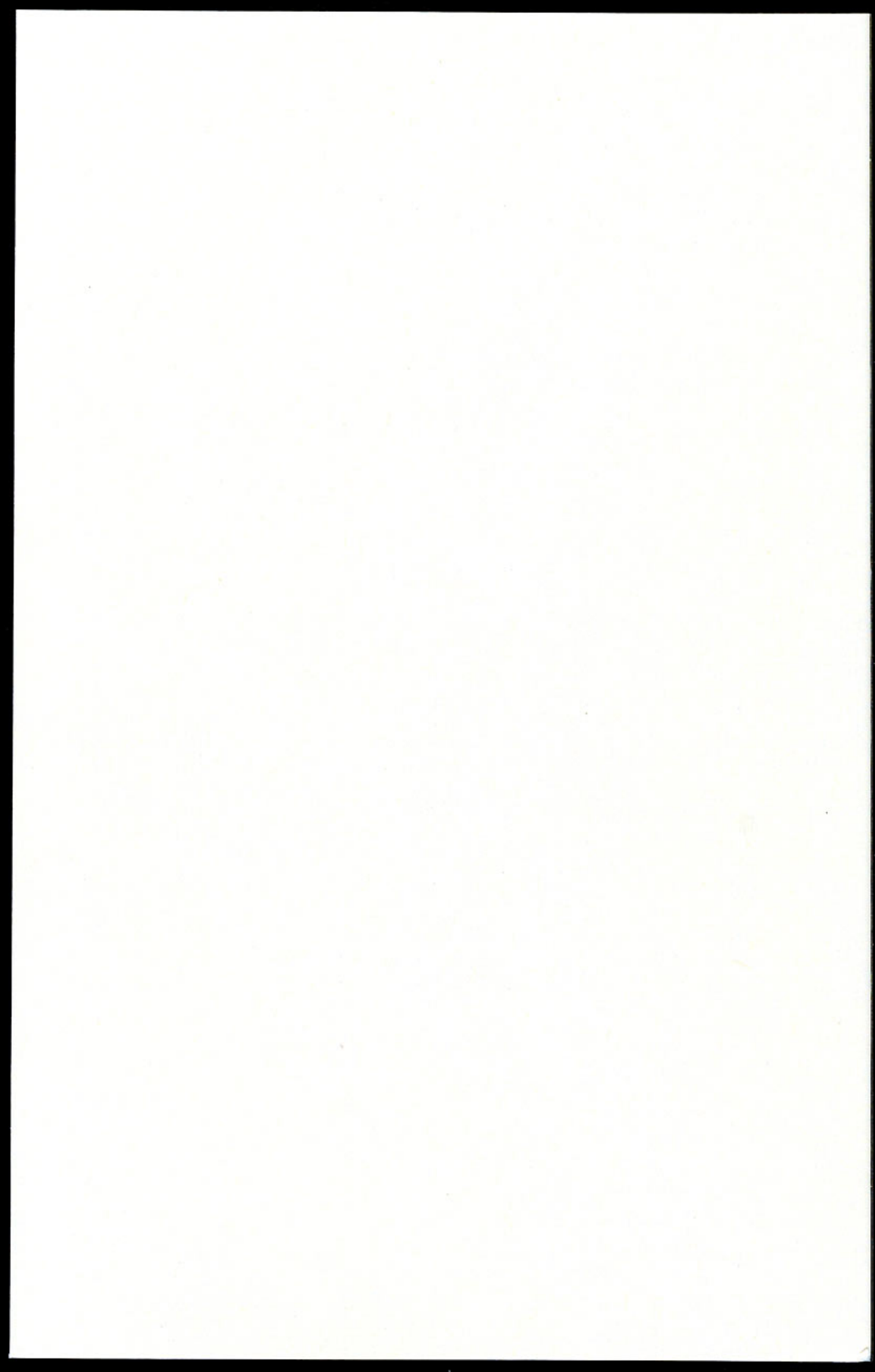
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